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Artículos científicos

Incidencia del trabajo colaborativo de docentes universitarios en el contexto de la acreditación internacional

Incidence of Collaborative Work of University Teachers in the Context of International Accreditation

Incidência de trabalho colaborativo de professores universitários no contexto de acreditação internacional

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Resumen

En las organizaciones educativas el factor más importante es el humano, clave para el cambio y el mejoramiento. El presente documento busca respuestas a la siguiente pregunta: ¿cómo podría el trabajo colaborativo entre los docentes universitarios incidir de manera positiva en los procesos de acreditación de los programas educativos? Esta investigación bibliográfica de carácter expositivo primeramente aborda el trabajo colaborativo entre universitarios; continúa con la evolución de la acreditación en México y en el contexto internacional, y finalmente propone algunas acciones para vincular a ambos, trabajo colaborativo y acreditación, con la calidad educativa. Los procesos de acreditación de programas educativos demandan que los trabajos colaborativos entre docentes cumplan con la necesidad de compartir el conocimiento e incrementarlo. Los resultados llevan a las premisas recomendadas: 1) difundir los productos y logros entre los integrantes de la propia comunidad universitaria; 2) publicar los resultados a través de las redes de investigación de las universidades; 3) abordar la innovación articulando procesos creativos; 4) trascender en la



coherencia de contenidos y 5) contribuir a la calidad de los programas. Por último, se considera que sería importante contar con esquemas de seguimiento para medir y evaluar el impacto de los trabajos colaborativos en la calidad de la educación, acorde a los parámetros de acreditación internacional.

Palabras clave: acreditación; calidad de la educación, docencia, trabajo colaborativo.

Abstract

In educational organizations, the most important factor is the human, key to change and improvement. This document seeks an answer to the following question: how could collaborative work between teachers have a positive influence on accreditation processes of educational programs? This expository bibliographic research first addresses the collaborative work between university students; continues with the evolution of accreditation in Mexico and in the international context, and finally proposes some actions to link them with educational quality. The accreditation processes of educational programs requires that collaborative work among teachers respond to the need to share knowledge and increase it. The recommended premises are 1) dissemination of the products and achievements among the members of the university community itself; 2) publish the results through the research networks of the universities; 3) address innovation by articulating creative processes; 4) transcend the coherence of content, and 5) contribute to the quality of the programs. Finally, it would be important to have monitoring schemes to measure and evaluate the impact of collaborative work on the quality of education, according to the international accreditation parameters.

Keywords: accreditation, quality of education, teaching, collaborative work.

Resumo

Nas organizações educacionais, o fator mais importante é o humano, chave para a mudança e o aprimoramento. Este documento busca respostas para a seguinte questão: como o trabalho colaborativo entre professores universitários pode influenciar positivamente os processos de acreditação de programas educacionais? Esta pesquisa bibliográfica expositiva aborda primeiro o trabalho colaborativo entre estudantes universitários; continua com a evolução da acreditação no México e no contexto internacional e, finalmente, propõe algumas ações para vincular o trabalho colaborativo e a acreditação com a qualidade educacional. Os processos de acreditação de programas educacionais exigem que o trabalho colaborativo entre os professores atenda à necessidade de compartilhar conhecimentos e aumentá-los. Os resultados levam às premissas recomendadas: 1) divulgar os produtos e realizações entre os próprios membros da comunidade universitária; 2) divulgar os resultados por meio das redes de pesquisa das universidades; 3) abordar a inovação articulando processos criativos; 4) transcender a coerência do conteúdo e 5) contribuir para a qualidade dos programas. Por fim, considera-se que seria importante contar com esquemas de monitoramento para medir e avaliar o impacto do trabalho colaborativo na qualidade da educação, segundo parâmetros internacionais de acreditação.

Palavras-chave: acreditação; qualidade da educação, ensino, trabalho colaborativo.

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Introduction

The accreditations of academic programs at the university level guarantee the recognition of the quality of educational programs, as stated by Boderó (2014) and Elías (2015). As part of the accreditation process, in addition, substantive information of all higher education institutions (IES) is made transparent, namely: services, processes, academic and administrative procedures, sources of financing, among others (Council for the Accreditation of Higher Education [Copaes], 2019a). According to the National Association of Universities and Institutions of Higher Education [Anuies] (2019), accreditation originates in order to maintain quality levels in teaching. According to Jiménez (2013) and Mendoza and Ortegón (2019), accreditation has evolved to such an extent that now, beyond being considered an option that an HEI can take, it is already an almost mandatory commitment to adopt quality standards more and more high and deliver concrete results that can be validated and valued.

Its main challenge is to offer a consistent education, where the foundations of an educational program and its results are consistent with each other and also offer tangible responses to the labor demand in which its graduates will be inserted. For this, the functions and responsibilities of the teaching and administrative staff must be clear and directed to the fulfillment of the objectives of each educational program. In the current context, educational programs have the need to be accredited not only locally, but also internationally (Rama, 2009). This need marks the course of the various academic and administrative activities of the institutions and affects the fundamental decision-making that seeks to ensure a higher quality in education (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [Unesco] , 2015). Likewise, an international accreditation increases competition, can improve international cooperation and exchange, facilitate cross-border education, improve the legitimacy of educational institutions and facilitate international comparison. (Miranda, 2019).

In any organization, the most important resource is precisely the human, which is key to change and improvement. Knowing this, this article seeks an answer to the following question: how could collaborative work between university teachers have a positive impact on the accreditation processes of educational programs? First, the conceptualization of collaborative work is addressed, to continue with the evolution of accreditation in Mexico and in the international context. Finally, actions are proposed to link collaborative work and international accreditation with educational quality.

The collaborative work of university teachers

Collaborative work, as defined by Maldonado (2007), is one that constitutes an interactive learning model that invites us to build together, for which it requires combining efforts, talents and competencies through a series of transactions that allow achieving the goals established in consensus . The same author adds that "it is the set of instructional or training methods for use in groups, as well as strategies to promote the development of mixed skills: learning and personal and social development" (Maldonado, 2007, p. 165). Likewise, she refers that its characteristics are:

- 1) It has the condition that there must be reciprocity between the participants.
- 2) It involves sharing experiences and knowledge.

- 3) Promotes the acquisition of skills and attitudes that occur as a result of group interaction.
- 4) The construction of consensual learning is through the cooperation of group members
- 5) Authority is shared and everyone accepts responsibility for the group's actions.

Now, it is necessary to specify that collaborative work between teachers arises from the need to share knowledge, increase it and even favor metacognition; they have resulted in what is known as academic peer production. The principles that guide them are shared by those who take part in the projects and the members are considered to be experts or good connoisseurs of the issues they plan to develop together (López, 2015). The knowledge society demands facing new challenges and opportunities for higher education to evolve: academic collaboration is a tool to complement skills and share experiences between universities (Rodríguez, 2015). Collaborative work between teachers from different countries was widely considered in the literature review by Ángel and Cano (2011). It was evidenced that one of the most complex processes when approaching this type of project is the mediational one that generates interactions between the participants, taking into account that individual or group entities are formed according to the purposes. By lacking the requirement to be formally integrated by the research body, it generates more loyal ties and promotes ties of commitment, correspondence, fidelity and camaraderie. In the age of knowledge, both the Internet and information and communication technologies (ICT) have facilitated new ways of interacting and communicating. As it evolved, a new form or model of academic behavior also emerged where, through collaboration between members of different educational communities, the final products are enriched. Nowadays, collaborative works are increasingly easier to promote, develop, locate, spread and be seen simultaneously by many people, regardless of where they are and regardless of physical proximity. Simply locate scientific journals to find articles with authors from different regions working together. In addition, there are documents whose contents are open to be modified, corrected and enriched, even by people who did not participate in the process of their creation.

Certainly, as Dorta (2016) reflects, a university is better known on the international scene to the extent that its results in the field of science become more visible and measurable. And this, decidedly, generates added value to quality productions. Collaborative work in academia is distinguished when there is a reciprocity between a set of individuals who know how to differentiate and contrast their points of view, in such a way that they come to generate a

process of knowledge construction (Revelo, Collazos & Jiménez, 2018). However, López, García and Larios (2018) abound in the factors that invite researchers to work in collaborative schemes, among which we can mention the search to access certain groups, the complementation of technical skills and disciplinary domains, the recognition of greater visibility and impact, support for mobility and training of human resources. Experience tells us that collaborative groups are not fully regulated. So they do not necessarily answer an ongoing research question that is attractive to participants, whether it is basic or applied. Collaboration tends to be spontaneous, of mutual interest and, many of the times, more or less explicit. Similarly, whether by academics from the same or a different educational organization (intra-institutional or inter-institutional), the issues are worked on in more or less depth. And the same happens when it comes to local or international approaches, starting from a common goal, where the answer should satisfy everyone. Along these lines, Domínguez, Crhová and Molina (2015) summarize the importance of the appearance in the 2000s of academic bodies - within the framework of the Teacher Improvement Program (Promep) of the Ministry of Public Education (SEP), today Program for Teacher Professional Development, for the Superior Type (Prodep) - to organize academic work, and also reflect on the various dynamics of performance of these in different universities in Mexico. In a very brief way, it is alluded to that the objective of an academic body is that full-time professors, through groups, work collaboratively in such a way that they impact within their own institutions and communities with the generation of new knowledge.

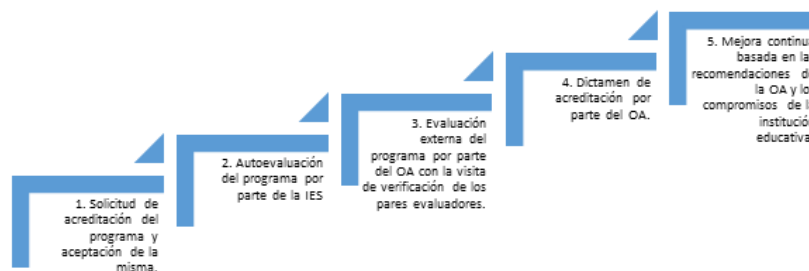
Although it is assumed that researchers contribute efforts towards achieving this common objective, this is not always fulfilled in reality, derived from other interests that are more personal and of a recognition nature. To cite one example, Bozeman and Craig (2013) found that one of the motivators for collaborative research in academic bodies has more to do with the formation of human capital, mainly postgraduates, than with the innovative application of knowledge. In parallel, Branco and Craig (2010) state, according to the results of their research, the importance of affiliating academic bodies with university research centers would improve productivity and facilitate the collaboration of teachers. At the same time, it is envisioned that an interesting alternative for collaborative work between university professors would be the increasing integration of academic bodies into research centers, since it would promote the influence on the collaboration models and productivity of researchers, and would facilitate interdisciplinary and inter-institutional participation. To end this section, it should be concluded that collaborative work between peers, like that from academic bodies,

is determined because each person has their scope, their structure, their specific record of findings and commitments.

The accreditation of educational programs in Mexico and the world

Accreditation is a process by which an IES submits its academic programs to an evaluation in order to obtain, by a recognized and endorsed non-governmental organization, the recognition that its academic offer meets quality standards. Therefore, it constitutes a reliable source of credibility and trust, as expressed by the Accreditation Council for Administrative, Accounting and Related Sciences [Caceca] (2018). It has its immediate antecedent in the evaluation processes that acquired growing importance throughout the world from the 1980s, according to Jiménez (2013). Organizations such as Unesco and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have internationally promoted actions aimed at external evaluation through a review process that seeks to guarantee quality in HEIs. Academic programs are evaluated based on previously established standards and criteria, and the process is carried out by an external body recognized by Copaes (2019b) through the accreditation process described in Figure 1.

Figura 1. Proceso de acreditación



Fuente: Elaboración propia con base en Copaes (2019b)

University accreditations seek to guide educational institutions and make information about their services, purposes, methodology, procedures, processes, criteria, parameters, products, results, administration and sources of financing transparent. The standards that are determined to limit the points that require further analysis and evaluation in the study programs are: management, training, infrastructure, results and planning. The differences in methodologies, instruments and accreditation standards (undergraduate or graduate) have to do only with the nature of the study plans, since variations will be found to understand, for

example, the forms of evaluation of a faculty of arts and a Faculty of Engineering. All this combines a trigger in improving the quality of educational services offered by accredited institutions. It should be noted that there are two types of accreditation: institutional and specialized. The first assesses institutional quality in general and the second examines specific study programs.

Accreditation in the Mexican national context

In Mexico, the Inter-Institutional Committees for the Evaluation of Higher Education (Ciees) were created in 1991 as non-governmental organizations, whose main activities are aimed at the diagnostic evaluation of academic programs, institutional functions and accreditation of programs and spaces. academics. Later, in 2001, Copaes was established. Among its functions, it stands out that of regulating the accreditation processes and providing certainty of the academic, technical and operational capacity of the accrediting bodies. It should be clarified that it does not accredit academic programs nor does it have the possibility of punishing institutions that do not pass the accreditation process, since this corresponds to the accrediting bodies. According to Copaes (2019b), “accreditation is the result of a process of evaluation and systematic and voluntary monitoring of the fulfillment of the university functions of an HEI” that allows obtaining reliable and objective information on the quality of the academic programs that it develops (para . 1). It also allows society to certify the quality of trained human resources and the different processes that take place in an educational institution. In this sense, HEIs must be the first responsible and guarantor of the quality of the academic programs they host. Accreditation rests on the permanent search for excellence and represents the collective effort of the university community to render accounts to itself and to society on the relevance, relevance and quality of its being and institutional work.

Anuies is another association created to improve educational quality in Mexico; He has participated in the formulation of national programs, plans and policies, as well as in the creation of organizations oriented to the development of Mexican higher education. It is a non-governmental association, of a plural nature, that unites the main institutions of higher education in the country whose common denominator is their will to promote their comprehensive improvement in the fields of teaching, research and the extension of culture and services . Currently, it is made up of 203 universities and higher education institutions,

both public and private, from all over the country (Anuies, 2019). The World Bank (WB), Unesco, OECD and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) are four of the international organizations that exert a relevant influence on the educational policies of underdeveloped countries, especially in matters of higher education. Likewise, they have promoted at the international level actions aimed at external evaluation in order to formulate improvement policies and the search for excellence. As has already been seen, the accreditation system in Mexico is officially headed by Copaes, although there is also another body that fulfills in a certain sense accrediting functions, the Federation of Private Mexican Institutions of Higher Education (Fimpes). Table 1 shows the scopes of evaluation for each of them.

Tabla 1. Acreditadoras de programas académicos

	Copaes	Fimpes
Carácter de la acreditación	Voluntario	Voluntario
Método de trabajo	Autoevaluación y evaluación	Autoestudio con metodologías independientes
Procedimiento básico	Autoevaluación con la participación de todos los miembros de la institución. Evaluación por un organismo acreditador.	Autoestudio con la participación de los miembros de la institución y posterior visita.
Indicadores de desempeño	Cada organismo acreditador determina las áreas del programa académico a evaluar y cuáles son los respectivos indicadores.	Cuenta con 180 indicadores.

Fuente: Elaboración propia con base en Copaes (2019b) y Fimpes (2019)

However, accreditation is the formal and public recognition granted by an external entity to an academic program that has made significant progress in fulfilling its mission and

declared objectives, and thus satisfies an agreed set of criteria, indicators and standards of relevance. and quality established by an accrediting body. To the extent that the educational, research and extension activities and offers of a university institution grow and diversify, it is essential that control, cohesion and public reliability mechanisms exist and operate effectively with respect to them. This need has its maximum expression in accreditation, which is carried out by an accrediting body, which in turn is regulated by a higher authority. Currently, there are 30 organizations that have the recognition of Copaes to carry out the accreditation process of academic programs of IES in different areas such as social, medicine, science, technology, among others. In general, as Elías (2015) mentions, accreditation is a mechanism that finds its roots in the logic of the market. Its main function is to grant public recognition to those institutions and educational programs that have a minimum standard of quality. For this purpose, the evaluation is governed by an instrument called the General Framework of Reference, published by Copaes (2016), from which the technical-methodological guidelines arise to carry out the accreditation process of an academic program. In it, the necessary documents and tests (called evidences) are established for the accreditation process, the attributes to be evaluated through the indicators and the definition of each of the stages of the process. The instrument contributes to the continuous improvement of quality based on the results obtained. Currently, there are various associations dedicated to the accreditation of higher level study programs; Depending on the areas of knowledge, it is the body that grants the accreditation. Table 2 presents some of them.

Tabla 2. Organismos acreditadores mexicanos

Nombre	Sigla
Asociación para la Acreditación y Certificación en Ciencias Sociales	Acceciso
Asociación Mexicana de Facultades y Escuelas de Medicina	Amfem
Acreditadora Nacional de Programas de Arquitectura y Disciplinas del Espacio Habitable	Anpadeh
Comité de Acreditación y Certificación de la Licenciatura en Biología	Caceb
Consejo de Acreditación de la Enseñanza en Contaduría y Administración	Caceca
Consejo de Acreditación de la Enseñanza de la Ingeniería	Cacei
Consejo para la Acreditación de la Educación Superior de las Artes	Caesa
Consejo Nacional para la Enseñanza e Investigación en Psicología	CNEIP
Consejo para la Acreditación de Programas Educativos en Humanidades	Coapehum
Consejo Mexicano para la Acreditación de Enfermería	Comace
Consejo Mexicano de Acreditación de la Enseñanza de la Arquitectura	Comaea
Consejo Mexicano para la Acreditación de la Educación Farmacéutica	Comaef
Consejo Mexicano para la Acreditación de la Educación Médica	Comaem
Consejo Mexicano para la Acreditación de Programas de Diseño	Comaprod
Comité Mexicano de Acreditación de la Educación Agronómica	Comeaa
Consejo Nacional de Acreditación de la Ciencia Económica	Conace
Consejo Nacional de Enseñanza y del Ejercicio Profesional de las Ciencias Químicas	Conaecq
Consejo para la Acreditación de la Enseñanza del Derecho	Conaed
Consejo Nacional de Educación Odontológica	Conaedo
Consejo Nacional para la Calidad de la Educación Turística	Conaet
Consejo Nacional de Acreditación en Informática y Computación	Conaic
Consejo Nacional para la Calidad de Programas Educativos en Nutriología	Concapren
Consejo Nacional de Educación de la Medicina Veterinaria y Zootecnia	Conevet
Consejo Nacional para la Acreditación de la Educación Superior en Derecho	Confede

Fuente: Elaboración propia con base en Copaes (2019b)

The diversity of the academic programs of the universities has led to the creation of these organizations in order to contribute in the best way with the task of promoting the specific actions that must be carried out to raise the quality of higher education in the country. Thus, it is sought that the accreditation processes in the various areas of knowledge have a specialized body with due relevance and heterogeneity. In my opinion, accreditation systems alone do not solve quality problems in education. However, I believe that it does facilitate the formulation of strategies based on the results of each of the indicators. In a way to boost actions aimed at improving the quality of education. It's not about saying if it's right or wrong, it's about knowing where you are. More than three decades after the processes were created, understanding how accreditation influences the quality of education has not yet permeated enough and that is how we come across people who consider that an accredited HEI is not synonymous with quality.

Accreditation in the international context

The evolution in quality issues in education has transformed paradigms from national to international accreditation processes, from processes to products (professionals), from undergraduate and graduate to transversal. The accrediting bodies must now also attend to a greater diversity of levels, disciplinary fields and educational modalities, at the same time that other evaluators such as professional associations are inserted. This leads to a difficulty that in normative terms is still under study, since not only do national standards apply, but also require international agreements and understandings. Rama (2009) mentions that education beyond borders in terms of the new characteristics of internationalization demands international accreditation. And this, without a doubt, could be added to the globalization of many other processes of a cultural, artistic, etc. International accreditation introduces a question of quality of educational services from other countries that results in seeking answers to identify what is evaluated and accredited, how it is carried out and who carries it out, and in particular, what the impacts would be. In this regard, Rama (2009) emphasizes that, derived from the demands of quality and competitiveness, the evaluation systems have visibly evolved, as shown in table 3. This perspective reveals the gradual transformations that are a response to the dynamics of change and continuous improvement.

Tabla 3. Evolución de los sistemas de evaluación y acreditación

Desde su creación	Hacia su nueva perspectiva
Autoevaluación cualitativa	Autoevaluación cuantitativa
Evaluación de insumos	Evaluación de resultados y exámenes para el ejercicio profesional
Preeminencia de la autoevaluación	Mayor valorización del evaluación externa
Evaluación centralizada	Procesos de evaluación regionalizados
Evaluación académica	Evaluación de múltiples dimensiones
Evaluación para el mejoramiento de la calidad	Evaluación para obtención de recursos presupuestales
Evaluaciones de conocimientos	Evaluaciones de competencias profesionales
Evaluaciones presenciales	Evaluaciones a través de sistemas informáticos

Fuente: Rama (2009)

Another aspect of interest in relation to the importance of international accreditation are the results that the Global University Network for Innovation [GUNI] (2017) publishes on the accreditation of higher education in the world as a guarantee of quality. It is an investigation based on the opinion of experts to help identify future trends in aspects that today have not materialized but are developing. It provides information for decision-making, indicates possible lines of action on which to work in the future regarding issues of accreditation and quality of education in the world and its explicit recognition in society. The report reflects the results and analysis of 11 questions, from which number four is extracted for the purposes of this document: "On how necessary is international accreditation". This was the one that received the highest score of all those in the questionnaire, confirming the increasing need of HEIs for international accreditation. In 2019, GUNI produced another report that was presented in various forums to provide the academic community, policy makers and decision-makers within higher education with a diagnosis and analysis of the current state of affairs, and offer proposals that can broaden horizons towards an integrated approach much needed for knowledge.

The quality of education at the higher level

Postmodernity is characterized by substantive criticism of the forms of action of society in modernity, and this has led social groups to seek alternative ways to achieve higher levels of efficiency and effectiveness in any of the fields of human activity (De Hoyos, Jiménez and Álvarez, 2015). Education has not been excluded from such impacts, and phenomena such as globalization have had various effects on it. Thus, many Mexican HEIs have had to integrate various elements into their curricular models that serve as benchmarks for comparison with other study programs not only in Mexico but in the world. Although this cannot be unilateral; Rather, it must be derived from the explicit recognition of society, so it is essential to have an accreditation. Certainly, at present the issue of education has become a central point in almost all governments, and therefore it is a factor of analysis for the development of countries. The Global Competitiveness Report 2017-2018 (Schwab, 2018), published by the World Economic Forum, is an example of the above. In it, 137 economies were analyzed: Mexico ranked 80th in the field of higher education and 104th in the quality of the educational system. Having a benchmark ranking is important because it allows making comparisons based on different elements of judgment. Occupying such a mediocre position means that Mexico must work hard, since it has organizations whose function is precisely to improve the quality of education. On the other hand, this report also evaluates the factors and policies that determine the level of productivity of a nation, among which the following variables stand out:

- Basic requirements (institutions, infrastructure, macroeconomic environment, health and primary education).
- Drivers of efficiency (higher education, training, efficiency of the goods market and efficiency of the labor market, development of the financial market, technological readiness and size of the market).
- Innovation factors (business sophistication and innovation).

The constant low performance in some countries has caused concern in international organizations, such as UNESCO, which, in conjunction with the World Bank, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Program for Development (UNDP), the United Nations (UN) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in 2015, organized the World Education Forum with the participation of more than 160 countries. One of the most representative products of this forum is the Incheon

Declaration and the Framework for Action for the realization of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Unesco, 2016), which expresses various commitments on a new vision of education. In the section “Towards 2030”, a new vision of education of the aforementioned document stands out, that declaration 10 highlights the importance of accreditations of educational programs, since they arise as a public recognition that is made to the institution education in question or to a program or professional career.

We are committed to promoting quality lifelong learning opportunities for all, in all contexts and at all educational levels. This includes greater equal access to quality technical and vocational education and training, higher education and research, paying due attention to quality assurance. In addition, it is important that flexible learning paths are offered, as well as the recognition, validation and accreditation of the knowledge, skills and competences acquired through informal and non-formal education. (p. 8).

The quality of education must be a reflection or product of various components that characterize each educational institution. Bodero (2014) cites that educational quality would be integrated from two concepts: first, education as a complete system where diversity exists, and which as such is characterized by containing multiple strongly connected subsystems; it is a service whose nature is difficult to describe. Second, there is quality, which derives from the Latin *qualitas* and which means 'property or set of properties inherent to a thing'. Certainly, the issue of educational quality has to do more directly with the expected results of the educational processes. In this sense, the proposals and recommendations derived from the measurement of educational quality must be incorporated into actions to improve educational processes. In other words, it is intended that the new study plans are the product of the recommendations issued by the accrediting bodies. Thus, educational quality is embedded in the context of a country's development and should be in accordance with international accreditation models. It is not that the process alone solves all the problems that have been identified, but rather that it provides numerical indicators that serve as a starting point for the definition of actions and goals that are aimed at achieving better results. Subsequently, the reaccreditation begins with the review of how the responses to the recommendations are progressing. In many cases, improvements are found, but unfortunately progress is not even in all indicators. This will depend on the possibilities of each organism. Although it should be mentioned that in some cases the results of the process only serve to

argue the management of extraordinary resources for the HEI, without a real improvement. This is a reality in various universities in our country. In the document OECD Reviews of Evaluation in Education. Mexico 2012 (Santiago, McGregor, Nushe, Ravela and Toledo, 2012), supported by the OECD, the SEP and the National Institute for the Evaluation of Education (INEE), highlights the role of evaluation as a fundamental instrument to achieve quality and equity in education. The report has three purposes: "1) to provide perspectives and advice to Mexican educational authorities; 2) help other OECD countries understand Mexico's approach and; 3) provide data for a final comparative report of the project" (p. 3). As is known, the SEP is responsible for the national educational policy and the general strategy for the educational system. The expansion of said educational system in our country, without a doubt, has been impressive, although, as mentioned in the aforementioned report, the challenge persists to strengthen the components of the evaluation framework, in such a way that they ensure the articulation, coherence and complementarity of face to improvement. Now, as a benchmark in Latin America, for several years we have been working on the issue of quality assessment in education; To cite an example, there is the case of the members of the Pacific Alliance (regional integration initiative), made up of Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru. In it, he highlights that Peru has been working on evaluation since 1980, Chile since 1982, Mexico since 1988, and Colombia since 1989, which is why more than 25 years of experience have been accumulated on the subject. As a result of this work, according to the QS Higher Education System Strength Rankings 2018 (QS World University Rankings, 2018), Chile occupies position 32, Colombia 34, Mexico 31 and Peru figure beyond position 50 out of a total of 75 countries included. This ranking assesses and compares the general strength of higher education within each country and its performance in four areas: strength of the education system, access to world-class higher education, performance of the leading educational institution, and the impact of national investment that surrounds the educational system in question. In his work, specifically the section dedicated to systems for measuring and evaluating the quality of education, Arancibia (1997) formulated his objectives as follows: generate regional standards, establish an information system and dissemination of its progress , develop a research program on education quality variables and strengthen the technical capacity of the respective ministries. In this sense, it considers that education involves changes between factors and products, so it must have a control system that allows knowing how it is operating and if the final products conform to the pre-established quality standards. This implies two aspects: on the one hand, to continue

teaching without information about what is being learned; on the other, that a national system for measuring academic performance be instituted and also obtaining information to improve learning.

The determinants of quality in education refer mainly to management and administration, the profile of teachers and students, study plans, teaching-learning techniques, research and their articulation with teaching, laboratories and workshops and libraries, to the management of income, financing and management of resources. And also, importantly, to the relations with other institutions, to the connection with society and the exchange with other schools that are abroad. Finally, it must be added that, as highlighted by Mendoza and Ortigón (2019), quality in education is a complex concept that has to do with the multi-definition among the actors of a university community, characterized in at least two dimensions: expectations as processes and results that may be different according to the roles of the student or teacher; and the connotation of quality, which is different when analyzed in fragments, since they describe a part or the result of the educational process.

Proposal to link collaborative work and international accreditation to educational quality

The creation of accrediting bodies has made it possible to guarantee that academic programs meet quality standards, obviously each one in its specific subject, but all providing benefits to HEIs and their community. Some of them range from obtaining economic resources, public recognition as prestigious institutions, preference for applicants to enter an accredited study plan, certainty for students that the contents received are updated and in accordance with the demands of society and, by extension, that, once the program is completed, they will be competitive in the workplace, up to the participation of employers in the restructuring of the corresponding curriculum, and thereby generate interrelation with employers and better opportunities work for graduates. The HEIs in Mexico operate in an environment of international competitiveness; engaged in the certification of teaching-learning processes, adhere to the educational policy of the Mexican State that seeks to optimize educational quality. Derived from this, it is convenient to question about the term quality, as well as the progress and limitations of teachers as factors of quality, in order to know the possibilities offered by educational quality to the solution of community problems. The item that concerns in this document is that of the teaching staff as an indispensable

element in the educational process, of which various aspects are evaluated to determine if it meets the essential requirements according to established standards. Although since the beginning of the 21st century, educational policy has given strategic importance to evaluation as an essential tool for planning, accountability and policy development, even today there is a lack of a comprehensive framework that enables the connection of its components. This is even more evident when, in recent years, initiatives in evaluation matters privilege accountability over improvement in teaching processes.

Martínez, Tobón and Romero (2017) report certain problems regarding the methodology and the general accreditation model, since, in the search for compliance with the evaluation that leads to the accreditation of HEIs, instead of favoring quality educational practices, they show that their processes are seen as administrative procedures that must be met. Likewise, among their suggestions they point out that it is necessary to promote collaborative work, seeking to adopt a formative approach, taking into account the experience of the members of the educational community, in addition, of course, to the contribution to the accreditation process. As Ferreiro, Brito and Garambullo (2020) reflect, the way to go to achieve that a greater number of study plans have the accreditation of an internationally prestigious organization is still long. Therefore, it is essential to formulate strategies that guarantee that the university educational offer is of quality, congruent and coherent to participate in the national and international evaluation and accreditation processes, and direct actions in that direction. In the same vein, Cervera, Martí and Ríos (2014) make it clear that the results of an evaluation provide indicators for continuous improvement, to offer higher quality services. However, they also argue that, given the complexity of the inherent methodologies, there are still no answers to make a formative and not only informative evaluation. The foregoing adds to the relevance of this proposal in the sense that the results of collaborative works transcend beyond the authors or direct participants.

Discussion

This research has been carried out mainly with the intention of providing proposals for collaborative work between university teachers to innovate in both national and international accreditation processes. Faced with the question: could collaborative work between university teachers positively influence the accreditation processes of educational programs? The literature review certainly shows that it does, although it is also found that

there is a long way to go. The current strengths are that collaborative work has been carried out in response to the concerns of teachers who coincide in the interest of knowing points of view and good practices in different latitudes of our world. Likewise, it is emphasized that the new technological tools facilitate its realization. Obviously, for them to transcend and even subscribe to the issue of educational innovation, understood as the educational process, change and improvement that seeks to optimize student learning and contribute to quality (Zavala, González and Vázquez, 2019), it should be put attention to finding ways for its positive impact on the educational programs of our universities. One of the main limitations of this research work is that it focuses on the accreditation of educational programs in Mexico. Here we share the intention of opening a door of interest that attracts future research that makes it possible to establish new mechanisms to integrate findings and good practices on the subject of international accreditation. The generation of strategies that come from collaborative work between university teachers and that benefit the quality of educational services could well be one of the first elements to be considered when planning such work.

Premises to influence that collaborative work between university teachers transcends accreditation

As has been stated, the main objective of the accreditation of educational institutions is to promote the improvement of the quality of higher education. The process involves knowing how, when, where, what is taught and what is learned; Thus, collaborative work is important to strengthen the educational functions of teaching, research, extension and outreach. Currently, universities concentrate all substantive functions in teaching, however, there is a tendency to separate academics from research. If the research had a closer relationship with the teaching-learning process, it could lead to a significant improvement in the quality of education, so it is suggested to take into account the following considerations:

- Many of the collaborative work products do not even leave their institutions of origin.
 - It would be advisable to publish the results through the research networks of national and foreign universities, since they are an excellent means of dissemination. It is not necessary to be within an academic body and the visibility of researchers increases.

- Dissemination of the research products and achievements among the members of the university community itself.
 - The commitment of the collaborative work actors should be encouraged to permeate first among the teachers and students of the institution, for example, postgraduate to undergraduate and from researchers to teachers. The processes of accreditation and the updating of study plans would unfailingly obtain better results if this modality became a regular practice. In other words, with the same action, two or more effects can be achieved in terms of evaluations and the impact on updates of quality educational programs.
- What is built in terms of objectives and results of academic collaboration should be the starting point of what is translated into innovation.
 - Addressing the topic of innovation requires articulating creative processes that become part of the cognitive state of a user; it is seen as a novelty, regardless of whether it is adopted or not (Margalef and Arenas, 2006). The results of collaborative work approach creating or designing in congruence with the social reality of the HEI environment.
- University extension and linkage requires integration with the teaching and research processes.
 - Collaborative work is necessary in order to ensure the coherence of the content of the educational programs with their advisory, consulting, monitoring of graduates and links with various sectors, also impacting the results of international mobility.

The significance lies in the fact that the ultimate objective of a world-class education is to raise the level of well-being of graduates from greater competitiveness in the labor market, which will allow them access to better income from specialized jobs, better remunerated or viable and sustainable entrepreneurship schemes that positively impact their personal life, that of their community and that of the country in general.

Conclusions

The factors on which the accreditation process focuses to assess its quality are the direction, the administration, the teachers and students, the content of the curriculum, the teaching and learning processes or techniques, dissemination, linking and extension, as well as the infrastructure and financing aspects. Each of them is developed in different departments, and many times their own processes and procedures are built endogenously, without having a general vision and main objective of the educational institution, focusing on its very particular objectives, which is why some difficulties for the fulfillment of the quality standards they have to do precisely with the need to articulate each one of the departments and areas with the fundamental purpose of the HEIs. In order to build quality procedures under a common goal, it is essential to establish collaborative work as a way of working. Through the interaction of the various areas of the organization of the educational institution, a justified contribution would be obtained from each of them to the common goal, since this means a true exchange of information and knowledge, and not just a simple distribution of tasks and responsibilities; a true collaborative work that also includes a recognition of skills and adequate attention to the attitudes and postures that are taken. Collaborative work in structuring and accreditation of educational programs can also ensure a significant improvement in their quality.

As a reference, the IES in which I collaborate for some time began to strengthen the programs based on the results of collaborative exercises between teachers and students from different countries. There are degree work and degree obtaining with these contributions. The interest of this document lies in calling the attention of other institutions to integrate collaborative works, since, in my experience, during my participation in various accreditation processes, the issue of collaboration between international peers that contribute to the improvement of Educational programs have been little explored. The students, to whom we owe ourselves, know little or nothing about the results of these collaborations. Thus, even in their mobility programs they know little about jobs that could help in their internationalization process. Finally, it is advisable to have a long-term monitoring scheme in accordance with international accreditation parameters to be able to identify, measure and evaluate the impact of collaborative work on the quality of education.

Future lines of research

In order to continue with the contributions in this matter, it would be pertinent to contemplate lines of research that show the impact of the accreditation processes in terms of terminal efficiency and reduction of student dropouts. Likewise, it would be important to create models that facilitate the dissemination of the results of international academic collaboration to promote the active intervention of all those involved in teaching-learning and academic improvement. In such a way that it is reinforced that an accredited HEI is synonymous with quality and innovation, the responsibility of the entire university community.

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