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Artículos científicos

Revisión sistemática sobre consideraciones teóricas para la transformación de universidades en organizaciones de aprendizaje

Systematic review on theoretical considerations for the transformation of universities into learning organizations

Revisão sistemática sobre considerações teóricas para a transformação de universidades em organizações de aprendizagem

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Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo teórico es realizar una propuesta para el mejoramiento de las estructuras de la educación superior. Ciertas dinámicas aceptadas en las instituciones educativas dificultan la productividad, la transformación y el crecimiento. Los resultados de esta revisión sistemática crítica proponen la aplicación del concepto de *organizaciones inteligentes* a las instituciones educativas. Este tipo de revisión crítica contempla referencias reconocidas en el tema que traen consigo aspectos conceptuales para desarrollar una teoría o modelo. Para la transformación de las instituciones, se sugieren procesos para la reestructuración de los modelos educativos. Igualmente, se propone la mejora del ambiente institucional mediante el desarrollo de habilidades de liderazgo, el empoderamiento docente y la apertura al cambio. La propuesta de cambio se enfoca en el desarrollo personal de los docentes, alumnos y las estructuras institucionales para desarrollar una actitud abierta al cambio y al aprendizaje.

Palabras clave: cambio organizacional, cultura organizacional, *coaching*, liderazgo, organizaciones de aprendizaje.

Abstract

The objective of this theoretical article is to make proposals to improve the structure in higher education institutions. Certain conditions in educational institutions generate an ambiance that hinders productivity, transformation, and development. The results of this critical systematic review propose the transference of the concept of *intelligent organizations* to the higher education institutions. To do so, the proposal aims at restructuring educational programs. The improvement of the organizational ambiance through the development of leadership skills, teacher empowerment, and openness to change are also encouraged. This proposal focuses on personal development of faculty, students and institutional structures to develop an open attitude toward change and learning.

Keywords: organizational change, organizational culture, coaching, leadership, learning organizations.

Resumo

O objetivo deste artigo teórico é fazer uma proposta para a melhoria das estruturas do ensino superior. Certas dinâmicas aceitas nas instituições de ensino dificultam a produtividade, a transformação e o crescimento. Os resultados desta revisão sistemática crítica propõem a aplicação do conceito de organizações inteligentes às instituições de ensino. Esse tipo de revisão crítica contempla referências reconhecidas no assunto que trazem consigo aspectos conceituais para desenvolver uma teoria ou modelo. Para a transformação das instituições, são sugeridos processos de reestruturação dos modelos educacionais. Da mesma forma, propõe-se melhorar o ambiente institucional por meio do desenvolvimento de habilidades de liderança, capacitação docente e abertura à mudança. A proposta de mudança centra-se no desenvolvimento pessoal de professores, alunos e estruturas institucionais para desenvolver uma atitude aberta à mudança e à aprendizagem.

Palavras-chave: mudança organizacional, cultura organizacional, coaching, liderança, organizações que aprendem.

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Introduction

The main objective of education is to change the way of thinking and broaden the vision so that people have better life options. Currently, education faces various challenges such as working with low-income students. These students are exposed to socially adverse environments, so they spend more time trying to survive and are especially vulnerable to changes. They feel isolated from the world, therefore, they are prone to unfortunate events, poor academic performance, behavioral problems, identity problems, falling behind, and dropping out of school (Jensen, 2009). Growing up in an adverse environment, they are constantly absent from school, partly due to lack of interest and negative attitudes that some parents have towards education. Some studies have found that there is a direct relationship between cognition and emotions, so students who do not feel socially accepted have poor academic results.

On the one hand, many students have difficulties accessing education. On the other hand, the use of technological devices has led to greater opportunities for training, communication, and job growth. Digital communication occurs faster and at lower cost. In response to the above, companies have modified their forms of organization and, shortly, educational institutions must also do the same. Nowadays, many companies hire personnel who live in different geographical areas. Consequently, once university students graduate, they will not only compete in the local or national labor market, but also internationally. These changes in business structures demand changes in university education, in the concept of education and in the mentality of educational authorities and teachers.

For Grahn-Laasonen (2018), in many countries university education has begun to be considered a resource to increase productivity and to generate growth and new jobs. In countries where people are recognized based on their merits, the motivation of young people to study academically is very high. Several of the richest countries in the world today do not have natural resources, but intellectual resources: people with quality training in the areas of science, technology, and medicine. Lacking resources, the inhabitants of these countries look for ways to innovate that allow them to generate products or services to survive. These countries have become providers of highly qualified and innovative personnel that are hired by other countries. The more complex the work a person performs, the less likely it will be replaced by technology. Poor training leads to fewer job opportunities, lower salaries and routine jobs that are easily replaced by technology. Therefore, it is necessary to promote the culture of development and constant updating in university students.

With the automation of daily activities, more jobs will be created, but greater social inequality will also be generated. The most prepared people will be able to adapt to changes and obtain jobs that require creativity, abstract reasoning, and critical thinking. On the contrary, the jobs that will be replaced are those that do not require specific training. Therefore, people who performed them will not have developed the necessary skills to adapt to the new demands. "Education is, and will increasingly be, the secret of job survival and individual prosperity" (Oppenheimer, 2018, p. 61).

The International Commission on the Futures of Education [ICFE] (2020b) points out that the future is formed in educational institutions, for which the consciousness and identity of the human being may need to be transformed. This historical moment favors the review of the purpose of education and educational organizations. For its part, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) has favored a humanistic approach to human and educational development. In order to achieve this type of development, scientific research processes for the generation and application of knowledge must be inclusive. The pandemic highlighted the existing inequalities in the world regarding the preparation to move towards digital and distance learning. The trend in education suggests that hybrid, asynchronous, extramural and different media and methods of communication will be more and more frequent (ICFE, 2020a). For this type of teaching to be effective, priority must also be given to the development of the person and not only academic skills.

Higher education is the key to change and transformation to an equitable and inclusive society, through the best training of its students (Ibarra et al., 2020). To achieve this, it is necessary to modify the institutional evaluation and educational programs, based on sustainability and social justice. In this new world context, academic standards will be increasingly higher, which implies modifying the forms of institutional evaluation (Boud, 2020).

Development

As part of this proposal, a critical review of the literature was carried out to answer the review question about the good practices that allow the growth and transformation of universities, as well as what features the universities of the future will need to have. The systematic review is a means to better understand the research previously conducted in the area of knowledge (Tai, Ajjawi, Bearman & Wiseman, 2020). For their part, Booth, Sutton

and Papaioannou (2016) describe that the objective of the critical review of the literature is to carry out an evaluation of the quality of the studies. This type of review results in the elaboration of a conceptual model or theory that identifies the significant factors that allow us to understand a specific phenomenon.

In order to identify successful practices that have made it possible to transform organizations into learning institutions, studies from various countries with different methodologies were considered. Several of the authors included in this review have become authorities on the subject. The document review includes references from 1998 to 2019 in order to understand the evolution of the concept of intelligent institutions and the importance of transforming universities. The reason for this is that the literature mentions the effects that university education has on the lifestyle of its graduates and on the economic development of countries.

In this review, concepts presented in books were included, since excluding gray literature from a systematic review biases the estimation of effectiveness of certain concepts presented in scientific articles (McAuley, Tugwell, & Moher, 2000, as cited in Booth et al. al., 2016). These authors also mention that, in the social sciences, many research results are published not only in articles, but also in books, book chapters, or reports.

The question to answer with the systematic literature review was: what are the theoretical concepts or innovations that have allowed the transformation of educational organizations? The search was carried out in databases using the terms: smart or learning universities, organizational change and organizational culture. Studies carried out in different countries were included to have a global vision of what the literature on the subject suggests. Likewise, some books related to the subject were considered in which good practices for transforming organizations were mentioned. In this review, we found studies in which organizational culture and change principles were applied to educational contexts. For the analysis of the texts, a thematic analysis was carried out, which is suitable for making summaries when the findings are varied and numerous (Goagoses and Koglin, 2020). The following tables present the authors, the date of publication, and the concepts that were considered in this critical systematic review of the literature. Table 1 shows the articles and Table 2 the books and book chapters.

Table 1. Articles included in the systematic review

| Autors | Year | Results or concepts |
|------------------------------------|------|--|
| Bedoya and García | 2016 | Literature review on effects of fear on workers and in an organization. Some of the effects mentioned are loss of creativity, resistance to change, reduction of productivity and inefficiency in administrative tasks. |
| Caicedo and Van Gameraen | 2016 | Survey on the United States to Mexican immigrants on effects of unemployment on physical and mental health. One of the main reasons for unemployment is immigrants' low level of education. |
| Campa | 2019 | The automatization of tasks and its effects on the demands of the job market. Employees with a low educational degree tend to be unemployed. |
| Carrera, Govea, Hurtado and Freire | 2019 | Correlational study on public institutions in Ecuador on unemployment and its relationship with crime and violence. Higher indexes of crime are caused by a low educational level, unemployment, and economical inequalities. |
| Córdoba | 2016 | Documental review on university models and their influence on research training in Higher Education Institutions. |
| Gallego and Gil | 2012 | Proposal of a model to build intelligent or learning organizations through leadership skills development. The model proposes to create a learning culture with mentoring and coaching. |
| Gómez and Herrera | 2019 | Statistical methodology using equilibrium indexes, growth and production on several countries. It explains the effects of globalization on economic growth and unemployment in several countries. |
| Loria and Salas | 2019 | Literature review on models of payment of Mexican unemployed young adults. Some of the reasons of the unemployment are the low level of education and the job market demands. It also mentions the differences between the qualifications needed for an employment and the salary offered. |

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|----------------------------|------|---|
| Merino, Privado and Arnaiz | 2019 | Survey on young Spanish and unemployed graduates. Relationship of graduates' personal traits and probabilities to find a job. The study suggests that emotional intelligence and the development of resistance, optimism, autonomy and self-efficacy improve probabilities to find a job. |
| Ortiz and Zacarías | 2016 | Interviews to Colombian university authorities. Relationship between university models and their quality on education. |
| Peng, Gao and Zhao | 2019 | Survey to employees and authorities in a governmental enterprise in China. Leadership styles and their relationship with the success of the organizational members. |
| Pérez and Guzmán | 2015 | Narratives of researchers in a public university in Mexico. Differences in academics' research training in Mexico and hinder conducting research in educational institutions. While evaluation standards consider research activities, organizational conditions may hinder them. |

Source: author's elaboration

Table 2. Books included in the systematic review

| Autors | Year | Concepts |
|--------------------------|------|---|
| Blanchard and Bowles | 1998 | History of the processes in an area of an Enterprise. Three conditions are observed in the employees: they are aware of their job's importance and its impact in the world, team work to achieve a shared objective, and ethics as a guide to make decisions and take action. |
| Clawson | 2013 | Principles of leadership and strategies to make a change. recommendations to make leadership have influence on three levels: behavior, thinking and beliefs. |
| Daft | 2015 | Principles of leadership, strategies to develop leadership skills and their application in different contexts. |
| Dweck | 2017 | Define and explain fixed mindset and growth mindset concepts. It makes recommendations to transform a fixed mindset into a growth mindset to achieve meaningful objectives. |
| Friedman | 2006 | As a consequence of a global economy, countries without natural resources depend on the education of their population to compete in the global world. In a flat world, people on leadership positions will need to continue improving their abilities. |
| Kaufman and Guerra-López | 2013 | Recommendations to analyze needs in different organizational levels. This analysis allows to know the real situation and propose strategies to change and improve productivity. |
| Kouzes and Posner | 2012 | Leadership practices to transform institutions with commitment, loyalty and motivation of their members. The practices are modeling the behavior, shared vision, empowerment of followers and motivation. |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|---|
| Marquardt | 2011 | Definition of the concept intelligent organization or learning organizations. The concept embraces a systemic model, work dynamics and the search of excellence. These objectives are achieved with empowerment of the followers and openness to lifelong learning. |
| Maxwell | 2009 | Strategies to develop critical thinking and lifelong learning. Some advantages of critical thinking are: openness to learning, openness to new perspectives, creativity, strategic solutions and strategical thinking. |
| Northouse | 2015 | Principles of leadership and recommendations to develop leadership skills. It suggests strategies to develop a shared vision, improve the organizational culture and strategies to handle conflicts. |
| Sailer and Franck (book chapter) | 2018 | Recommendations to change educational institutions throw changing their role on society. The institutional change should begin with a change of mindset and recognition of opportunities. |
| Senge | 2006 | It presents learning disabilities that prevail in organizations and impede growing. This book also presents five disciplines for organizational growth: personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, teamwork and systems thinking. |
| Sleezer, Russ-Eft and Gupta | 2014 | Guides and models to make needs analysis and stablish objectives to transform an institution. |

Source: author's elaboration

One of the findings of the review was that there is a significant relationship between personal growth and academic growth in order to transform institutions into resilient and adaptive organizations towards social changes. The results found are classified thematically to support the answer to the research question that was formulated at the beginning of the review.

Automation and unemployment

Campa (2019) points out that automation will not make jobs disappear in general, but only those for which intermediate training is needed. In the future there will be a minority of individuals in privileged situations and a great majority of people with precarious or degrading jobs. With technological changes, jobs that will replace those that are no longer needed will emerge. New technologies are changing the current concept of work. Its benefits will not be shared equally as less skilled employees will be replaced by machines or software. In this way, those who would have the highest profits would be the best-trained workers, so the best way to combat unemployment in the future is technological and scientific education. Digitization should not be considered the main cause of unemployment, but rather as one of the factors that contribute to increasing it.

Unemployment causes mental health problems and its effect is greater in socially and economically vulnerable populations (Caicedo and Van Gameraen, 2016). It generates the feeling of not contributing, of not being able to predict or plan for the future and the feeling of loss of a valuable or high social position. The longer a person is unemployed, the effects become more acute. On the other hand, the governments of some developing countries have argued that globalization is the main reason of unemployment, inequality, financial crisis, and the lack of economic growth in their countries (Gómez and Herrera, 2019). However, it has been found that the main cause of unemployment is due to the excessive growth of the active population against the lack of growth in the demand for work.

One of the purposes of education is to transform society and solve social and economic problems. In a study carried out in Ecuador by Carrera et al. (2019), it was found that the higher the unemployment, the higher the crime rates. Consequently, crime and violence increase the poverty rates of a country. Some factors that have been linked to criminal activity are low educational level, unemployment, and economic and social inequality. People who live with deprivation have feelings of frustration that they vent on those closest to them. At the same time, they find it difficult to take advantage of opportunities that could help them get out of the conditions in which they live.

In the study by Loria and Salas (2019) it is argued that young people from families with low economic income accept low-paid jobs and in precarious conditions due to their economic needs. In the case of young people from higher social classes, they prefer not to be employed in low-paid positions due to the disparity that exists between their salary expectations and the salaries offered by the market. Therefore, there is a waste of human

capital with high levels of education. In addition to these low remunerations offered by the labor market, another factor influencing youth unemployment is the disparity between the needs of the labor market and their academic training. Educational institutions provide them with a mainly academic training while the labor market requires this type of training, and other types of knowledge. On the contrary, young people who have a technical education oriented to the needs of the market have low possibilities of unemployment. This agrees with what was indicated by Merino et al. (2019), who argue that, in countries with high unemployment rates, the group of young people with highly specialized university education is less affected by unemployment.

Current universities

In some current educational institutions, the absence of systemic thinking has been observed, since decisions are made without considering how they will affect the institution and priority is given to personal benefit. In addition, deep-rooted mental models considered unquestionable can be detected, which makes it difficult to make changes that improve the institution. Traditionally, the shared vision is limited to following whoever assumes the leadership position in order to preserve benefits and comforts. All this shows resistance to change and learning. There is a lack of personal growth, so any suggestion for change generates a reaction, rejection and it is taken as a personal offense, rather than as a learning opportunity. Another common tendency is to look for external culprits and not take responsibility for the fact that reality is generated by one's own actions. The growth of others is seen as a threat and not as a strength for the institution, which generates quarrels and obstacles to those who work on their professional growth.

In many educational institutions, there is an organizational environment with toxic routines. Although there is tangible evidence of the priority of making changes, they fight to preserve the existing order. The worst threat to an institution is the people themselves, since the systems generate their own crises and the causes do not come from outside. Senge (2006) suggests five disciplines to turn an organization into an intelligent institution: 1) foster personal growth, 2) detect and change mental models, 3) establish a vision shared by all the actors in the institution, 4) foster the personal and team learning and 5) develop systems thinking. Resistance is a fear-based manifestation of the unknown, whereby people shut down from any evidence that change is necessary. In organizations where fear prevails,

creativity, innovation, concentration at work are affected, and resistance to change is perpetuated (Bedoya y García, 2016).

Smart universities of the future

The concept of intelligent organization has been shaped from the idea that an organization must have a work and learning mentality. Marquardt (2011) mentions that, in this type of mentality, learning is the product of daily work and not something that is acquired to be able to perform a job or task. Intelligent organizations constantly learn and adapt to changes, since they have the ability to predict them and generate the necessary conditions to face them. These organizations are made up of people who learn from successes and failures, which they see as a learning opportunity. For an organization to be able to transform, it needs to have five elements: learning, organization, adequate personnel, knowledge and technology.

Gallego and Gil (2012) propose a model for building intelligent organizations through the development of leadership skills that is based on the premise that learning institution models are not associated with organizational learning. The model proposed by these authors is based on four aspects: leadership, learning culture, learning of individuals in organizations and facilitators of organizational learning. By intelligent organization it is understood that it is an institution in which there is a philosophy that allows anticipating, reacting and responding to changes, complexities, and uncertainties. The extent to which these organizations facilitate learning depends on leadership coming from senior and middle managers. In this aspect, leadership is the key to intelligent organizations and a participative type of leadership is needed. For this reason, changes must be made in the organizational structures so that teamwork and the development of learning skills are encouraged.

In smart universities, the best-trained personnel in their area are hired and priority is given to training and academic performance. In these institutions, creativity and innovation are encouraged, two essential elements for solving everyday problems. Students' strengths are detected and they are helped to develop the necessary skills so that they discover what they like to do and train in that area. Teamwork is encouraged in which all members contribute from their strengths and abilities. These actions create a culture of learning throughout life and adapting to changes. Another of the actions carried out in these institutions is the promotion of reading the latest scientific advances in the areas of knowledge and the organization of events to have contact with leading authorities in the area.



In these institutions it is acceptable not to have all the answers, to be wrong and to accept the ideas of others when they are more appropriate than your own. The members have emotional intelligence and personal growth, follow coaching processes, and voluntarily participate in mentoring programs. Members with training, experience, good contacts, and personal authority are seen as valuable resources. On the contrary, these members in toxic institutions are considered a threat that undermines the established order, an attitude that shows the lack of growth.

University models for humanistic development and research

From its origin, the main activity of the universities was teaching; research was initially carried out outside them and was later incorporated. The university is an educational institution that has suffered the conflicts of different times and historical contexts. Traditionally, they have been in charge of granting undergraduate degrees, which are considered proof of intellectual competence and mastery of a discipline.

Córdoba (2016) mentions that there are three university models: the Napoleonic or French model, the Anglo-Saxon, and the German or Humboldt model. The first model had as a priority training people to occupy bureaucratic positions and persists in most higher education institutions in Latin America. The second model focused on training individuals to serve the needs of the State. The third model was created by Humboldt and encouraged research work and teachers to be researchers. The student was encouraged to think reflectively and critically, in addition to having contact with experts in the area. In this university model, the ability to carry out scientific research is developed, in addition to promoting moral values.

Many universities do not have favorable conditions for research and give priority to teaching and management activities. In students there is no culture of consulting academic journals and teachers do not encourage it either. Some teachers even ignore its existence or do not have the habit of reading this type of publications. Curricular designs focus on the transmission of curricular content. Universities must redefine their functions, structures, and processes to generate a new management model. In Latin America and the Caribbean, more than 90% of the universities are focused mainly on teaching (Ortiz and Zacarías, 2016). Research is a determinant of quality levels, since the educational programs focused on it are the ones that generally obtain accreditation or have high terminal efficiency indicators.

University professors, in addition to fulfilling various teaching activities, face the evaluation of their production and collegiate work, generally with colleagues who do not have the same skills or research training (Pérez and Guzmán, 2015). These new ways of working involve dealing with the lack of habit of working in teams, role conflict, lack of acceptance of the leader, rivalries and lack of collaboration. Developing research allows solving social problems from a scientific and well-founded perspective. The most recognized universities have researchers trained to produce knowledge and train new researchers. It is also necessary to include humanistic development content in the syllabus to enhance the strengths of the three university models.

Improvement of the organizational environment

One of the common situations in some educational institutions is a divided environment, with groups close to or antagonistic to authority. In this type of environment, injustices and rivalries arise, which do not allow teamwork or growth. This causes the rejection of contributions from members of opposing groups and, at the same time, generates rivalry, mistrust and waste of time. In these environments, academics do not get involved because they do not have support, their motivation decreases, academic productivity decreases, and quality teachers flee.

In the book *Gung Ho!* Blanchard and Bowles (1998) present the case of a factory whose main problem is precisely the lack of productivity. A plant manager is assigned to crank up numbers, but is pressured to make drastic changes and get immediate results. However, to achieve this type of change, it is necessary to take small actions that will pay off in the long run. Another of the problems detected in the company in the case is the relationship between the managers, who constantly criticize the way of working of the manager with the highest productivity of all the plants. A bad relationship between them is perceived, a campaign to devalue what is done in other departments and a great rivalry between them. These toxic attitudes and dynamics are present in most institutions, and they hinder learning from others or from those who obtain positive results.

To solve this type of problem, the authors point out the three precepts of *Gung Ho*. The first is that each person becomes aware of the contribution they make to society and performs their activities optimally to meet the established vision. The second precept is that everyone carries out the activities that correspond to them without affecting others, respecting the opinions, contributions, needs and feelings of their colleagues. The last precept is to



recognize the achievements and contributions of all collaborators. If these concepts are presented and personal growth is fostered through coaching advisers, the institutional environment can be improved and productivity increased. These processes help detect the ideas that prevail in the institution and that delay personal and professional growth. Likewise, detecting the abilities of each one of the members and placing them in the areas in which they would best perform fosters personal empowerment and improves efficiency.

Development of leadership skills

Clawson (2013) states that leadership is about managing both your own energy and that of your followers. Being a leader depends on the person, on his influence and relationship with others, but not on the hierarchical position he occupies. This author establishes three levels of influence of a leader: at the behavioral level, at the level of thought and at the level of consciousness or attitude. Level one influences behavior and leads to mediocrity by expecting blind obedience from followers. Level two influences ideas and prompts action for the right reasons. Level three manages to reach the deepest part of the followers and change their way of being to share a vision. This last level of leadership is the most effective since it transforms values, beliefs and expectations. At this level, leaders inspire to act with conviction to achieve a purpose.

The development of leadership skills allows transforming challenges into opportunities for success. A leader inspires commitment in followers by showing his own commitment. The higher self-esteem a leader has, the more competence or empowerment he will promote among his followers, he will better detect the strengths of each one and will motivate them to apply them in the institution (Kouzes and Posner, 2012). A leader is a competent person who knows the ways and methods to carry out his responsibilities, helps to improve the institutional environment and encourages collaborative work. At the same time, he is well informed, so he can make pertinent decisions. He is aware of his strengths, thanks to which he achieves efficiency, productivity and an environment conducive to learning and growth. People who work from their strengths enjoy what they do, are able to set and meet goals, and generate appropriate solutions to the problems in their environment.

An educational leader is more effective if he knows about pedagogy, research, retention of school enrollment and has emotional intelligence (Northouse, 2015). Leadership is change and the leader must know how to manage the conflicts derived from the changes. An efficient leader manages to spread his vision to his followers so they focus on the benefits

that are achieved instead of continuing to perpetuate the conditions in which they find themselves. The leader establishes the institutional environment through structure, clear norms, coherence in his actions and standards of excellence. In this environment, followers work together effectively and higher levels of excellence are achieved. The division and segregation of the work group occurs among people who do not share the values and beliefs of the dominant group. These people do not receive the respect they deserve from others, so they lose interest in contributing to the institution or work individually. A good leader communicates with everyone and involves them regardless of their way of thinking, their personal differences, or whether they belong to a particular group.

The transformational leader creates awareness of the mission and vision and facilitates the potential development of the followers, motivating them to take into account the interests that benefit the group. One of the benefits of this type of leadership is that it produces changes in organizations, transforms beliefs, attitudes and followers' feelings. This style of leadership is related to level three mentioned by Clawson (2013), since it influences established beliefs, the culture of the organization, and manages to change the way people think and act. The professional success of each member of an institution improves the effectiveness and results of the institution in general. Leadership style positively influences the professional success of followers. A true leader helps followers identify their personal needs and set work goals through the motivation and guidance they provide. The better relationships between the leader and the followers, the greater the enthusiasm and effort of the followers (Peng et al., 2019).

Traditionally, following a leader has been confused with blindly accepting what is requested, however, followers must have the ability to reflect, contribute, and handle responsibilities (Daft, 2015). A person with leadership has the courage to admit when they are wrong, listen, trust and learn from others. He knows and understands himself, so he has the courage to act according to his ideals. A leader is constantly watched, so his appearance, behavior, actions, and attitudes communicate nonverbal messages that are imitated by his followers. Organizations become vulnerable when their leaders stick to traditional ideas to solve current problems. An effective leader objectively and constantly reviews his ideas and actions, as well as the effect they have on his institution. The mindset of a leader can be learned by developing independent thinking, openness to change, systems thinking, personal growth, and emotional intelligence.

Teacher empowerment

University professors are one of the engines that mostly drive economic growth. In a world where IQ is the highest good, it's best to hire as many bright people as possible (Friedmann, 2006). It is not possible to improve the economy of a country with people without educational training. Training people with quality education is providing them with the necessary tools to fend for themselves, generate resources and boost the economy of their country. The leadership of the personnel of an institution can be developed if a counseling program is established in which they are empowered, facilitating growth opportunities.

It is also important to have an organizational environment in which staff feel valued and respected to increase motivation and contributions. Motivation directly influences production, so it must be channeled towards the scope of the vision and mission of the institution. A high level of motivation in the members is the product of a good organizational environment, which, in turn, is determined by the attitude of the leader. Empowerment is achieved when there are trained personnel, to whom activities can be delegated to achieve the vision. It is important to promote training and constant updating in the area of knowledge. An employee who sees her work as an important and significant contribution is empowered and contributes to the success of the organization. An empowered person has a strategic vision, which is achieved by being up to date with the latest trends in order to study current issues from different angles.

Systemic study plans to develop life skills

Many of the current educational programs do not meet the social needs of the environment. Kaufman and Guerra-López (2013) recommend carrying out an analysis to detect the needs of the region and, based on them, design educational programs that provide solutions to social, economic and cultural problems. A needs analysis indicates the gap between the current situation and the ideal situation, which also implies understanding the conditions that have caused the current situation (Sleezer et al., 2014). Social problems must be seen as an opportunity for improvement and as something that can be solved with the participation of highly trained and specialized personnel.

Given the constant changes generated by technology and the automation of routine tasks, human beings will need to develop various skills. Improving education increases the chances of finding a job, increasing self-esteem and health by feeling that you have a purpose in life. Changes brought about by technology will cause many routine jobs to disappear, but



other opportunities will emerge as well. In order to compete in the labor market, it will be necessary that, in addition to having a quality academic training, one must have skills such as intellectual curiosity, mental flexibility, teamwork and ethical conduct. These are what are called soft skills and are obtained when lifelong learning skills are developed from an early age.

Being an apprentice throughout life is a continuous process through which the necessary capacities to learn, to adapt to changes and to achieve the objectives that are proposed are increased. A successful person is one who is capable of altering the ways of acting that have given them results in order to adapt to new ways generated by social changes. The same could be said of educational institutions: the most successful ones will be those that adapt to social needs and train graduates who are open to change and transformation. Institutions must modify their curricula, forms of instruction and evaluation.

The educational models must resort to flipped classroom models, blended models or mediated by technology, in which the activities that can be done without supervision are carried out by the student independently. In these instructional models, time in the classroom is dedicated to clarifying doubts and the most relevant exchanges with the teacher. Task completion times will no longer be important to give priority to meaningful learning, the development of life skills and their application in real life. Regarding the forms of evaluation, these should be more flexible and related to professional practice.

Recently, various studies have been carried out to analyze the way of thinking of successful people and identify what makes them stand out from the rest. Dweck (2017) mentions two types of mindsets: fixed and growth. People with a fixed mindset do not believe in trying or asking for help to improve, and tend to misjudge their abilities by exaggerating them. They worry about how they will be judged by acknowledging their weaknesses and constantly trying to show themselves as superior. They make sure to do the same things that they already know in order to appear successful or perfect. They lose interest in difficult things, as that would make them look incompetent. Failure affects their self-esteem, so they look for external justifications for not assuming their own responsibility. For them, being successful means showing their superiority, they tend to judge, criticize and categorize people as superiors or inferiors. People with this mentality tend to be abusive and generate division and discontent in their environment. In addition, they attack those who do not obey them or think differently, make judgments and believe that the others are the ones who must change, not them.

Conversely, people with a growth mindset believe that qualities can be improved by working to perfect them. For them, anyone can change and learn through practice or repetition. They take risks, face them, and work to overcome them. They objectively evaluate their strengths and weaknesses since the work they must do to improve depends on it. They have perseverance and resilience, since on many occasions they work in adverse conditions to grow and achieve success. They see failure as an opportunity for growth, they love learning and challenges. They focus on self-growth, self-motivation and take responsibility for their development. Leaders with this mindset motivate their followers to grow, listen to them, and consider their opinions. They accept feedback as a means to detect their areas of growth and learning. They take challenges and persevere until they succeed; they bounce back from failure and help others grow instead of labeling or limiting them.

The mindset can be modified because it is made up of ideas. In educational institutions it is necessary to teach that failure does not mean lack of intelligence, but lack of experience and development of certain skills. Mindset is more important than intelligence since it is more feasible to achieve success with discipline than talent. The most successful people are those who, in addition to having a growth mindset, develop different types of thinking that allow them to detect opportunities and solve problems.

Knowing how to write is a reflection of knowing how to think or reason. It is necessary that university training practices are used for the development of the different types of thought. This will develop analytical thinking skills and a better academic writing of the graduates. Institutional change must start with an open or change mentality, leaving behind a mentality with an administrative purpose towards an entrepreneurial mentality (Sailer and Franck, 2018). This type of mentality allows you to recognize opportunities and have the ability to act quickly and precisely.

In addition to the types of mindsets, it is necessary to develop systemic and strategic thinking, which avoids falling into collective thinking. Systems thinking allows you to see the whole picture of a situation from various aspects. These people have the ability to recognize that there are other perspectives besides their own. They constantly seek to see things from the eyes of others, so they become learners throughout life and tend to be more tolerant. Strategic thinking is fundamental since it allows to contemplate possible scenarios derived from the decisions that are made.

Although these two types of thinking contribute to the growth of an institution, it is necessary to avoid falling into collective thinking. This type of thinking occurs when the

members of an institution automatically follow a trend without reasoning or analyzing it. It is necessary to work in different teams with people from other areas of knowledge, or with a different academic background, to avoid falling into this type of thinking. One characteristic that academics must have is self-confidence in their knowledge and in their status to be able to accept the ideas coming from other members of their work team. A good leader brings together the right people at the right time and for the right purpose to arrive at a solution that benefits all parties. (Maxwell, 2009).

Discussion

In times past, the richest countries were those that had raw materials. In the world of the knowledge economy, the richest will be those capable of carrying out research and development projects that generate patents and dividends. Therefore, job opportunities and growth will be greater for those who have a better education and can develop this type of project (Oppenheimer, 2015). The capacity to develop applied research must be fostered in universities to generate products with the possibility of commercializing them. The greatest limitation for the growth of a country is the low quality of its education.

For universities to grow they must have a continuous external evaluation system. In addition, educational content must stop focusing on the past and focus on predicting future changes (Oppenheimer, 2014). One of the actions that can improve the quality of education is teacher promotion based on academic merit, which can be achieved through continuous training.

Merino et al. (2019) argue that recent graduates with certain developed psychological resources are more likely to find a job in less time. For this reason, it is recommended that universities offer courses that help students develop resilience, optimism, autonomy, personal growth, self-efficacy, and emotional intelligence. In addition to psychological resources and academic knowledge, transversal skills developed during university education are necessary in the workplace. Among these transversal skills, interpersonal or communication skills, teamwork, motivation, responsibility, problem solving, decision making, emotional intelligence, autonomy, adaptation to change and lifelong learning are considered essential.

The smartest and most successful people have the ability to predict future trends, anticipate changes, and see opportunities where others see problems or experience resistance. By anticipating events, they can take remedial action ahead of time. Nobody likes change

because it alters what is established, it implies losing control and relearning. Institutions fail because they resist change and thereby create competition. Leaders who resist change lose credibility and followers. The institutions of the future will need talented leaders, capable of managing the complexity of social changes. It is necessary to carry out interventions to improve the institutional environment to avoid division and rivalry between groups. Offering refresher courses, personal growth, development of leadership skills, ethics and emotional intelligence should be considered. These first actions improve the work environment and relationships, a fundamental element in creating an organizational culture focused on learning and open to change.

Conclusions

The fact that educational institutions are not a learning organization is an inconsistency that must be resolved. Educational institutions must have teachers who are lifelong learners. It is important to start the change from the authorities and teachers. The institutional culture is transmitted to the students, who in the future will be inserted in the labor field and will be part of the organizational environment. In the future, entrepreneurs open to lifelong learning will be needed instead of employees. Therefore, education should promote critical thinking, teamwork and problem solving. The key to transforming an institution is the leadership of managers, the empowerment of teachers and the development of the capacity to learn throughout life.

The greatest advances in humanity are due to the work of scientists, who learn by working as assistants to other people who have also had great achievements. With their work they promote progress, which is why scientific collaboration is increasingly used. Thanks to technologies, collaboration can take place between people specialized in their areas of knowledge, even if they are geographically separated. The most advanced societies in knowledge are made up of prepared people who respect those who have the courage to try things. This is the kind of mindset and attitude that should be fostered in universities to make them smart institutions.

Future lines of research

In the critical literature review carried out, concepts that favor the transformation of organizations into intelligent organizations were found. From this theoretical concepts, the following topics for future research can be suggested:

- 1) Effective actions to improve the institutional environment.
- 2) Modification of organizational structures for continuous improvement.
- 3) Improving accessibility to quality education.
- 4) Development of competition skills in the international arena.
- 5) Education for innovation.
- 6) Learning throughout life.
- 7) Inclusive education and respect for diversity.
- 8) New forms of institutional evaluation.
- 9) Ways of developing commitment or motivation towards learning.
- 10) Improvement of academic productivity.
- 11) Development of leadership skills for change.
- 12) Organizational structures flexible to the blended learning or flipped classroom.
- 13) Systemic and strategic thinking.
- 14) Strategies for teacher empowerment

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