

# Design of employment preparation stage for preschool education graduates

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**Abstract:** The employment preparation stage ensures the continued development and improvement of specific performance models related to the employment of new graduates. With the application of scientific methods, shortcomings have been discovered in the design of this stage. In this sense, it aims to design employment preparation actions for the career of a bachelor of education degree. Early childhood education leads to the diagnosis, modeling, structure, and organization of actions. According to experts, these can help solve career problems in one's career.

**Key words:** employment preparation; recently graduate; performance models; professional problems

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## 1 Introduction

In recent decades, the profound changes in the world economy, science and technology, and social and political nature, as well as their relationship with new forms of knowledge production, require universities not only to have the ability to respond to new challenges, but also to have the ability to respond to them accordingly, so as to cultivate professionals who can adapt to changes and generate new knowledge to meet the increasingly complex needs of society (Horruitiner, 1999).

The studies carried out on current trends in the world and their comparison with the Cuban reality, the follow-up of the performance of graduates, the vertiginous advances in science and technology, the global informatization of society, together with the current process of implementation of the *Guidelines of the Economic and Social Policy of the Party and the Revolution*, lead to think about the way in which the current training model responds to the demands of this.

That is why the urgent educational needs of the present and future can only be met through the concept of continuing education, which is based on the idea that individuals receive education throughout their lives and recognize all educational opportunities provided by social life. Therefore, it is necessary to design a continuing education system for professionals that is effectively connected to society, which includes three stages: undergraduate training for a wide range of professions, employment preparation, and graduate training. (Ministry of Higher Education, 2016).

Bachelor's degree in Education. Preschool education is one of the training programs for education professionals in universities, responsible for the continuing education of preschool professionals. La Universidad Marta Abreu de las Villas is the guidance center for this profession, certified by the National Accreditation Committee.

The "E" course design for this profession envisions continuous training of the professional from the undergraduate level, which forms the foundation of all their performance, ensuring mastery of performance patterns with the required breadth. Research based job training is a discipline that plays a fundamental role in both basic and vocational training, and

it ensures its relevance and provides greater performance opportunities in its different areas of action.

The basic document for the development of the "E" curriculum in Cuban higher education states that continuing education is a process of training and career development, in which the interaction between universities and employer institutions plays a key role, with students and professionals playing a leading role. The document itself points out that although the necessity of lifelong training is clear, there is no harmonious and consistent connection between these three elements, which helps to provide continuous training for professionals, limits the necessary professional performance required for production and services, and hinders the potential development of high skilled labor. (MES, 2016).

Therefore, it is necessary to design and closely interact with employer organizations in the curriculum to maintain continuity between different stages of continuing education. More precisely, this article provides a method for action design in the employment preparation stage of a bachelor's degree in preschool education.

## **2 Development**

The "E" course for a Bachelor's degree in Education. The work of preschool education professionals is to provide comprehensive education and care for young children. This action model aims to educate and promote the comprehensive development of young children through two educational and nursing methods, providing guidance for educational actors and institutions in families, communities, and environments; there is an action system that guides the educational process and increasingly inclusive practices.

This graduate works in the fields of education for children from grades one to six, education for primary school grades six from different backgrounds in urban and rural areas, promotion of non institutional curriculum models, and as a teacher in a teacher training school specializing in children's education.

Considering all of these and the current needs and prospects of Cuban social development, the professional issues, goals, and teaching skills of early childhood educators have been determined, enabling them to play a role in literature, guidance, and research based on their basic skills.

In the curriculum model of this profession, labor investigation training is considered a comprehensive major discipline to ensure the development and mastery of the performance patterns specified in the professional personnel model, and to utilize the educational potential of labor investigation activities to provide comprehensive training for students.

The comprehensive main subject is a part of the basic curriculum of the Career Teaching Process Plan for preschool education. It belongs to the discipline that is conducive to engaging in this profession and integrating work research and training content. Its basic purpose is to comprehensively develop and model performance in different performance fields. In these fields, the relationship between theory and practice is concretely reflected, and the development of theoretical, practical knowledge and teaching professional skills is consolidated.

The discipline is based on the study-work principle, the practical educational and research activity as a source of motivational stimulation, the theory-practice link as an expression of the instrumental and metacognitive domain, the system character of the direction of the educational process and the characteristics of preschool education. This favors ideopolitical formation, education in values, as well as their professional pedagogical performance in the different contexts of action, which contributes to their personal and professional development.

This discipline combines academic, work, research, and extension components as a substantive process of its university training. Its content is conducive to the exercise of the profession and has an impact on all years of university education, preparing for the employment preparation stage. Its design ensures the successful achievement of the overall goals, teaching professional skills, functions, and qualities specified in the professional mode. Therefore, it plays a crucial role.

Job training in the Bachelor's Degree in Education. Preschool, from the different curricular changes occurred in the Higher Pedagogical Education with the Study Plan E described above, occurs in three fundamental scenarios: the central headquarters, the municipal university centers and the teaching units as stated in Resolution 2/2018 of the Minister of Higher Education: Regulations of teaching and methodological work of Higher Education. It guarantees the exercise of the profession and the introduction of the student in the research activity as an essential way to solve problems inherent to it.

This discipline integrates all the content of the courses received by students, providing possibilities for the implementation of curriculum strategies.

The discipline proposes the development of professional pedagogical skills in the students that will allow them to base the solution to professional problems from the educational sciences, communicate with children, family and community agents depending on the needs and potentialities detected in the modalities of Early Childhood Education and the different contexts of action, diagnose the child, the group, the institution, the family and the community in the modalities of Early Childhood Education and the different contexts of action, direct the educational process in the modalities of Early Childhood Education and in the different spheres of action of the preschool educator, investigate professional problems for their solution by scientific means.

The execution of this discipline in the different years of the career in close link with the teaching units and labor entities will help students prepare for employment preparation including: understanding the philosophical, sociological, psychological, pedagogical and didactic foundations of the work in Preschool Education in the different contexts of action that enhances the integral development of children of different ages; the application of methods and techniques for the diagnosis and characterization of the child, the family and the community and the investigation of the problems they may face in their pedagogical practice; the development of skills to develop an educational communication in the different contexts of professional performance of the preschool educator and the understanding of the psychological and pedagogical foundations of educational guidance, based on the comprehensive diagnosis of children and educational agents.

The "E" course has determined the principles that form the basis of this model. These principles have been established as the guiding ideology of the training process: the indivisible unity between education and teaching, and the link between learning and work. These principles have been specifically reflected in each stage of continuing education.

The principles of job research apply to graduates, as employment preparation or job training is considered the second stage of their comprehensive training.

According to Decree No. 364 on the training and development of qualified labor force mentioned in Article 3, in higher education institutions, the training and development of qualified labor force is a process mainly carried out in higher education institutions, and various entities participate in it based on the Mars principle of linking learning and work. This means that this process is closely linked to social reality, making significant contributions to the formation and reaffirmation of ideological, political, ethical, and aesthetic values, job responsibilities, and the development of professional skills with scientific, technological, and innovative thinking.

The decree itself stipulates in Articles 55, 56, and 57 that employment preparation work shall be designed and implemented in various entities with the aim of developing specific performance models related to their work among new graduates, whether in their career or in short-term higher education training programs. At this stage, the greatest responsibility lies with the entity coordinating with higher education institutions.

According to the law, employment preparation includes job training, which can be considered as a career advancement for graduate students. The entity has appointed a mentor to provide guidance and professional advice to new graduates on best practices based on extensive background training in university careers. During the employment

preparation phase, the entity takes action to achieve a positive work attitude among new graduates in accordance with the system's preparation, care, and incentive policies.

In different revision sources, the terms job training and employment preparation are used interchangeably, referring to the stage of continuing training for graduates. In the author's view, the meaning and function of this stage are no different. Authors like Espinosa and Alonso (2011) argue that the overall goal of vocational training for new graduates is to supplement technical and vocational training, providing them with all possibilities to improve their career performance and integrate into the workforce.

Researchers (Pinion, 1998) proposed that vocational training is a continuity of courses for new graduates during this period. During this time, trainees receive self-improvement, training, and/or specialization as needed to overcome inefficiencies, and become professionals in a given profession, and develop performance models appropriately based on their performance areas. This is a space that is conducive to the employer center contributing to the comprehensive training of new graduates, and the author agrees with this argument.

According to (Añorga, 1994), the vocational training period is a decisive stage for consolidating and reaffirming the careers of all subjects, as it must enter the work environment in a completely different way from being a training teacher and initiate a process of graduate improvement for him, which will enable him to promote and increase intellectual and human development related to practice, in correspondence with the demands of his/her time.

The author agrees with the above ideas, which reiterate the need to design actions that graduates must take during the employment preparation stage.

Researchers (Addine, 2006) argue that curriculum design is seen as a dimension of the curriculum, revealing the methods, actions, and outcomes of diagnosing, modeling, structuring, and organizing curriculum projects. On the other hand (Alvarez, 1997), the tasks at the design level were clarified and stages were integrated to provide clearer guidance on the tasks and their expected outcomes. It specifies the name and content of each task, making it applicable to the specific implementation of any educational level and curriculum design.

The author of this article undertook the three tasks of course design proposed by Alvarez including diagnosis of problems and needs, modeling and structure, and organization of implementation, and provided detailed explanations in the design of the employment preparation stage for the Bachelor of Education degree.

Combining theoretical, empirical, and mathematical methods for diagnosing problems and needs. As a theoretical method, analysis, synthesis, reasoning, and induction are used, thus including other methods operating at this level, such as structural systematics, which enables research to achieve systematicity and follow logical structures in its development process, and overall organize the elements that constitute the action design of the employment preparation stage.

In the stages of accumulating experience information and designing stock valuation, empirical methods were used, including literature review, group interviews, and triangulation techniques, to compare the above methods.

Literature review played a key role in the design process, analyzing documents such as the "E" course, the development foundation documents for the "E" course, documents prepared by the National Vocational Education Coordination Committee, education strategies, resolutions and methodological guidance from the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Labor and Social Security.

The actions formulated were evaluated using the user standard method. 18 teachers were selected from the National Career Council. The evaluators should meet the following requirements: holding a master's degree and/or doctoral degree in educational science or other scientific branches; having teaching experience in higher education and/or preschool education, and being proficient in early childhood education. The mathematical proficiency method used is percentage

analysis for processing and quantifying data.

The triangulation method used makes it possible to determine regularity:

§ The "E" course for the Bachelor of Education degree profession. Preschool education defines the basic aspects, career issues, career goals, fields of action, spheres of action, overall goals, and functions of early childhood educators in continuing education.

§ The documents reviewed do not provide specific instructions on how to address career issues during the three stages of continuing education.

§ The professional group has designed three components for the undergraduate stage (academic, work, research), rather than for the employment preparation stage.

The diagnostic results make it possible to model and structure the employment preparation stage for implementation in the workplace.

The author modeled based on occupational issues, as this is consistent with (Horruitiner, 2006), where she emphasized the need for performance models in higher education in Cuba based on occupational issues and due to a universal process.

This was carried out with the participation of the Provincial Early Childhood Management Bureau and the working entity where female students are located. These actions correspond to the educational action areas of sixth grade primary school in different urban and rural backgrounds where the graduates of the 2019-2020 academic year are located.

Here are everyone's career issues and actions.

1. Education on values, attitudes, and behavioral norms in the context of universities and society, especially understanding the role and social importance of early childhood educators.

Actions

§ Study of documents that regulate the work of formation of values in the institution, among them: *the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba, The Director Program for Strengthening the Formation of Values and Citizen Behaviors, Brochure for the Formation of Moral Qualities and Cultural Hygienic Habits and the Methodology for Their Application*, ephemeral that work with children of early childhood, the work with the Martian notebooks, the work and organization of the historical site in the institution, the Martian chair and its importance in the work of value formation in the institution.

§ Conduct theoretical research on the nine components of Cuban education content to achieve comprehensive training for young children in continuing education curricula. These are patriotism, citizenship and law, science and technology, health and sex education with a focus on gender, aesthetics, science and engineering, labor, economy, and occupation, used for communication, environmental promotion of sustainable development, social guidance, and projection.

§ Carry out activities with the teachers of the institution and the one year old children they work with to treat the nine components of Cuban education content, in order to achieve comprehensive training for young children.

§ Direction of educational activities for the formation of emotions, feelings, behavioral norms, positive qualities of the personality and patriotic and civic formation of children, from the pedagogical activity itself and by personal example.

2. Utilizing different language resources for educational communication, in order to establish effective interaction in different action contexts, and achieve the goals and objectives of early childhood education.

Action

§ Provide methodological guidance for researching educational programs and disseminating early childhood curriculum.

§ Deepening in the methodological treatment of the different contents of the communication dimension in one's year of work.

3. Diagnose the comprehensive development of children, groups, institutions, families, and community environments to determine their characteristics, and creatively design teaching and cross departmental guidance strategies or alternative solutions, adopting increasingly inclusive approaches.

#### Action

§ Research on Ministerial Resolution No. 111/1- which regulates the design, implementation, and control procedures of prevention work, Ministerial Resolution No. 238/2014, which covers the regulation of assessment systems for young children, and Ministerial Resolution No. 216/2008. Regarding the operation of schools and children's councils, R/M139/11- a sex education program with a focus on gender and sexual rights, and R/M125/85- the main direction for identifying, assessing, and caring for children aged 0-6 with special educational needs.

§ Study the psychological and educational characteristics of children in your group.

§ Diagnose the children of the group, their families, and the community background where the institution is located.

4. Through the use of games, environment, humanities, prevention, and gender equality, the two forms of early childhood education are collectively and individually educated, innovated, and developed to achieve the maximum comprehensive development of each child, guide their families and social groups, and be reflected in inclusive education strategies and practices that are conducive to improving quality and healthy lifestyles.

§ Research documents related to improving the national education system, with a focus on the early childhood education system, including education plans, education programs for different life years, and methodological guidelines; integrate early childhood education with education itself, special education, and primary education in terms of emotions and teaching.

§ Study of the Ministerial Resolution 200/2017 that regulates the methodological work of MINED. It should thoroughly study the particularity of early childhood education level and the operation of different levels of methodological work, such as cycle collective, territorial and group collective, the forms of methodological work and its particularities in the educational level.

§ Methodological preparation of the dimension and open activities as a means of preparation.

§ Deepen the organization and leadership of children's institutions, the living and teaching time of institutions and age groups, and the working relationship with teachers and non teachers.

§ Carry out activities at all times during the educational process of the group and children's families where he works.

5. Through educational research and the application of scientific and technological advancements, systematically evaluate the results of their training process and provide solutions for continuous career development and self-improvement.

§ Apply research-action methods from educational practice to solve problems in his work group.

§ Utilize information and communication technology as a teaching and educational tool, search for information, continuously update and communicate on social networks, develop computer skills, and master the technology of producing textbooks and media.

After the modeling was completed, the author completed the third task of the design, which is to organize actions in the labor entity to implement the employment preparation phase. For this purpose, the following tasks were carried out.

§ Determine the training needs of tutors of labor entities for the implementation of the actions of the employment preparation stage.

§ Plan and design training courses to prepare mentors for labor entities.

§ Provide differentiated training for guardians of labor entities to carry out actions during the employment preparation phase.

§ Monitoring, follow-up and evaluation of the differentiated training of the tutors of the labor entities for the implementation of the actions of the employment preparation stage.

The action design for the employment preparation stage has been submitted for user evaluation. For this purpose, we adopted the methodological suggestion proposed by Hernandez, Fernandez, and Baptista (2014), which we believe is appropriate due to its flexibility.

100% of the respondents value the system of actions designed as high, since it offers solutions to core problems of the continuous training of the Bachelor in Preschool Education. They stated that the purpose of these actions is to develop a performance model that Horuidin Silva sees as higher quality than what was discovered in the problem, by integrally characterizing the performance of the professional. They constitute the professional's knowledge, behavior and existence; they are expressed in his or her performance and involve the integration of knowledge, skills and values that ensure this performance. Their mastery allows the professional to be able to face all the professional problems previously identified, and even new ones that do not exist, arising as a consequence of the development of the professional activity. They correspond to the regulations of the resolutions of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security and respond to the needs of the students. 100% of the experts consider that it promotes motivation and can be generalized due to its relevance and some of the suggestions were already included in the design presented.

Universities are not only responsible for undergraduate education in society, but also for predicting its continuity. Therefore, the approach proposed by the author for organizations to implement actions in the employment preparation stage is valuable, as work entities and guardians play roles in it. Mentors are considered experienced individuals who directly support the development of graduates' work and provide them with the necessary tools to undertake high-quality tasks.

89% of experts believe that career guidance documents should be designed with actions aimed at training graduates in the preparation stage for employment.

### **3 Conclusion**

The employment preparation stage is designed and implemented in various entities with the aim of developing specific performance patterns related to their work among new graduates. During this stage, each entity coordinates with higher education institutions to take on the greatest responsibility.

From the perspective of the methods adopted, there are deficiencies in the design of the employment preparation stage, as both the "E" course and the career guidance documents developed by universities are unclear about the design of this stage.

The designed action system logically follows the tasks of diagnostic course design, modeling, course structure, and organizational work entity implementation, which helps graduates' continuing education by positively influencing the performance of professionals to solve career problems in their careers.

### **Conflicts of interest**

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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