



## The PUCEM Community and its Binding Impact in the Province of Manabí

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**Abstract:** The relationship with the community strengthens the relationship of social, cultural and ecological support for university students. The aim of the study is to present the results obtained in community-linking projects, described as the university's response to the challenges presented in the country to carry out binding collaborative activities for the purpose of exploring attitudes and skills, based on the questionnaire of community support received, in addition to the relationship and community support with various actors and psychosocial indicators, discusses the implications of the results in the analysis of community support both individually and community, and number of projects presented, with a qualitative, descriptive and non-experimental analysis, working with the entire population. In a way of permanent extension services to society, articulating academia - research - community, thus reaching the most unprotected populations of the cities and surrounding cantons. The indicators evaluated show a successful evolution of community projects, motivating the improvement and expansion of the services provided by our students, professional teachers in the different careers, strengthening the identity, traditions and training support in the province of Manabí.

**KEY WORDS:** LINKAGE, COMMUNITY, SOCIAL PARTICIPATION, LOCAL ANALYSIS

### I. INTRODUCTION

The Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador Headquarters Manabí, located in the Province of Manabí, Zone 4 of Ecuador, in 2017 was accredited by the Council for Evaluation, Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Higher Education, which produced a satisfaction to the University Community of the Country, the society of Manabí and the general public. The results were the result of the effort and deployment of the university actors in their different functions of the Academy, Research and Linkage with the community.

When Justo Sierra, in 1910, introduced the idea that the academic activity of education should not remain foreign to the social needs and problems of

the country, the extension of higher education and research towards society was established as one of the basic principles of the University. From then on, what to do about higher education institutions acquired one of their most important commitments: to contribute their means to national development (Moreno, 1998, pp. 25), cited by Campos & Sánchez (2005)

The training systems at universities in Ecuador have reached a high level in basic, professional and qualification subjects. It should be noted that at each level of academic training, they have practical hours and links with the community, giving them a social sense, directing future professionals to the world of work. The social commitment of educational work must guide action, in order to transform truly democratic



institutions and communities, for which they must immerse themselves in their immediate context and be actors for change from a perspective of social citizenship, necessarily linked to an inclusive participatory perspective, as the epicenter of a construction of community coexistence (Ferrer & Clemenza, 2009). (Viera, Loor, & Roberto, 2016)

Linkage with the community is based on a pedagogical methodology and therefore its objective is to generate more and better learnings in the students. For this reason, linkage with the community is not taken as an extracurricular activity, which is located in the free time of the students, but is taken as a way to develop the curricular contents of a module by discovering, applying and deepening the disciplinary concepts in its link with real situations and the resolution of concrete problems (Pardo, sf) (Viera, Loor, & Roberto, 2016) Conceptually, two types of indicators can be distinguished in the measurement of university linkage with third parties: activity indicators and impact indicators. The former measure the effort of universities oriented towards interaction with the non-academic community, while the latter measure the results of such efforts in terms of social and economic impact (Molas-Gallart et al, 2000). Cited by (D Este, Castro, & Molas, 2009) Some recent publications describe key issues to be considered by HEIs to increase the likelihood of effective linkages with industry. For example, Nelles and Vorley (2009) have emphasized that for an educational institution to be entrepreneurial, it requires aligning at least five areas: structures, systems, strategies, leadership, and culture. (Cabrero, Cardenas, Arellano, & Ramirez, 2011). The linking projects are justified by the fundamental objectives of the National Plan for

Good Living for the Republic of Ecuador (PNBV, 2013), among them:

Objective 3. To improve the quality of life of the population

Objective 5. To build spaces for common meeting and strengthen national identity, diverse identities, plurinationality and interculturality.

Objective 7. Ensure the rights of nature and promote territorial and global environmental sustainability.

The contribution to improve the quality of life to associate with the various activities carried out in PUCEM, improving the quality of education, skills, cultural strengthening through knowledge and environment with teaching strategies and strengthening of montubia identity.

The improvement of the quality of life conditions with the contribution of improvements in the added value of the product or service that the communities and sectors where the binding work was carried out.

Maintaining, respecting and strengthening the identity of the nationalities that are found in the places where the Institution of Higher Education IES, makes connection in Manabí, strengthens the identity of the manaba with its customs, traditions, legends and stories that make this an attractive tourist as well as the natural and patrimonial wealth that has for the delight of those who live within the province.

Art. 9 .- Higher education and good living .- Higher education is an indispensable condition for the construction of the right to good living, within the framework of interculturality, respect for diversity and harmonious coexistence with nature (ASSEMBLY NATIONAL, 2010)

The rights of nature in their different natural resources have made it possible to minimize the impact in the different sectors where work is



carried out and keep alive the patrimonial resources that make of Manabí a tourism sector by nature, proclaiming the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador headquarters of Manabí PUCEM, the principles of conservation and organic preservation of the sectors inventoried or referring to the area.

We must consider Article 351 of the Political Constitution of Ecuador, which states that: "the higher education system will be articulated to the national education system and the National Development Plan; the law will establish the coordination mechanisms of the higher education system with the Executive Function. This system will be governed by the principles of responsible autonomy, co-government, equal opportunities, quality, relevance, integrality, self-determination for the production of thought and knowledge, within the framework of the dialogue of knowledge, universal thinking and global scientific technological production "(Ecuador, 2015).

In addition to all this baggage of regulations, the Organic Law of Higher Education (LOES, 2010), which stipulates in the chosen articles, follows: Art. 88.- Services to the community.- To comply with the obligatory nature of the services the community will tend to benefit rural and marginalized populations, if the nature of the career allows, or to provide services in free care centers. Art. 125.- Programs and courses of connection with society.- The institutions of the System of Higher Education will carry out programs and courses of connection with society guided by the academic staff. To be a student, you will not need to meet the requirements of the regular student.

In the Regulation of Academic Regime of the Council of Superior Education in the Title VI. Linkage with the Community. Chapter I. Art. 78.- Relevance of careers and academic programs.- It will be understood as pertinence of career and academic programs to the fulfillment of the constitutional principle of pertinence in the system of higher education established in article 107 of the LOES, promoting the articulation of the formative offer of research and of links with society, with the constitutional regime of Good Living, the National Development Plan, regional and local plans, social requirements at each territorial level, and international scientific and humanistic currents of thought.

In Chapter II. Linkage with society, continuing education and teacher training. Art. 82 Linkage with society.- The association with society refers to the programs of continuing education, network management, cooperation and development, international relations, dissemination and distribution of knowledge that allow the democratization of knowledge and the development of social innovation.

Higher education institutions should have a model of linkage with society, which will ensure the integration of the three substantive functions of higher education: teaching, research and linkage with society, for the management of knowledge according to their domains, research lines, current academic offerings and community needs at the local, national and regional levels, responding to the principle of relevance.

Institutions of higher education may create specific institutional instances to manage the link with society, in order to generate programs, specific projects or interventions of public interest. (CES, 2013).



PUCEM adopts the concept of community linkage, understanding it as "the ability and effectiveness to respond to the transformation needs of society and promote sustainable human development through the substantive functions of higher education institutions. In this way justice, solidarity and social equity are achieved. "

At present all the universities have included within their student development links with the community, society or community, in addition to associating departments that are bound to these ends with a social focus, where what is sought to achieve is the training of professionals in a more humane way and sensitive to the various problems that the current society lives.

## METHODOLOGY

This article is based on a bibliographical review and a qualitative, non - experimental, with descriptive cut was used. It was worked with the entire sample, in the year 2014 with 731 students in interrelated projects of PUCEM and the careers available in the Province of Manabí such is the case of Agroindustries, Business Administration, Marine Biology, Hydraulics, Ecological Tourism distributed in different cantons of Manabí and a work carried out in the Province of Esmeraldas, in 2015, 508 students from the 5 careers were worked in the urban and rural areas of the cantons in Manabí. In 2016 there was a decrease in projects as they focus on concentration, follow-up of those previously proposed and focused on the lines and segments of evaluation of higher education regulators. The project has an innovative concept that has great acceptance by the students of the different university levels in the careers of the Manabi headquarters, as well as for university students, many of whom have been

willing to cooperate with active participation and research, which is and will be the key to achieving the goals of the project. It should also be considered that due to the natural phenomenon happened on April 16, 2016 and its subsequent consequence, it was not an obstacle to the progress of the projects as it was strengthened and interlinked links of community support such as Techo Ecuador to which added students and teachers to achieve their goal as it is to provide shelter to families affected by the marginalized sectors of some cantons in Manabi. The attention to diversity in the population based on the need in addition the change and social commitment that is promoted from the academy for the transformation of the future professionals, with Ignatian formation strengthening the values, the ethics and the culture of the respect and tolerance to the individualities.

There are differences from the point of view of community work, in the careers of business administration, tourism, marine biology, agroindustries and hydraulics, each one has its relevance and exchange of experiences and knowledge in the process of student training, developing sensitivity , skills and strategies to be implemented in their community work, but also in the populations where the intervention takes place and the development needs have similarities at the regional level.

It is also necessary to know the purpose of each individual within the project, taking into account the differences presented by students and the community environment, in order to provide, support and advise people adequately.

Characterization of the institutional program of Linkage with the community.

1) History of PUCEM





The presence of the PUCE in Manabí has occurred in response to a request that the Archbishop, José Mario Ruiz Navas, elevated to the Rector and to the Superior Council of the University in 1990. The answer was called Project PUCE Regional Headquarters of Manabí and that project was officially and definitively approved by CONUEP on January 15, 1993. Dr. Carlos Moncayo Albán SJ was in charge of doing the feasibility study, establishing the careers and programs, directing curricular planning, promoting internal approvals and CONUEP for the new Headquarters, to guide the architectural project, to coordinate all aspects of academic, organizational and indispensable national and international relations.

The Sede Manabí has three campuses, that is a peculiarity that is not found in other places, since in the case of Manabí a single campus had meant a difficult election and in opposition to the fact of a Province that counts on a series of cities of relative importance, that are cantonal heads in rivalry with the capital. Not only that. Once selected the races that were going to be offered to help the development of Manabí, it was necessary to choose placements in which productive activities corresponding to the field of each race were developed. In this way, the Chone campus was defined for the career of Agroindustries; the Coastal Resources (Marine Biology) and Hydroecology, and the campus of Portoviejo, for Business Administration and for technological careers that do not need to be located on the coastal profile, as in the case of Ecological Tourism. The Update and Training Program for Small and Medium Businessmen and the Professionalization of Teachers, would also operate from Portoviejo.

As a result, the Manabí PUCE comes to occupy the center-north space that lacked universities

proper (Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador, 1996)

Being an Ignatian University Headquarters that, in its particular and ordered way of knowing, understanding and transforming human realities, contributes with its presence and action to shape a world that responds better to the specific needs and cultural particularities of those who inhabit and forge the province of Manabí (PUCEM, 2006)

Since 2014, we have been working on new structures linked to the community, such as: social research, community and social work, culture, environment and ecology, internal and external continuing education, search for links with alumni and professionals.

Specific objectives of linkage with the community are as follows:

- Establish activities and programs that contribute to the analysis, study and solution of community problems.
- Identify strengths and service opportunities and link with the community, to develop proposals for strategic issues that will focus our support efforts.
- Make proposals with direct participation of the community, through participatory workshops.
- To contribute in the resolution of community problems according to our capacities and availability of resources.
- Look for participatory agreements with institutions that are interested in community and social support and development.
- Analyze and systematize permanently the accumulated knowledge and the contribution of the people involved in the linkage, which will allow replication in other communities
- Continuously carry out evaluation processes of the linking department as well as the projects that are being executed, in order to carry out an improvement process.



The transfer of the human talent and necessary inputs is made from an approach with the local leaders or representatives of the sectors that demand attention, previous study of relevance and impact of the raised objectives and the expected results. (Cortés-Guerrero, Daley-González, & Bravo, 2013).

The term community can be defined as a group or set of people who share common characteristics such as a language, customs, values, tasks, world view. Generally, in the community a common identity must be created, which is shared, so it is a bit difficult at the moment, as one of the assumptions of Globalization is the phenomenon of diversity and it seems that there is more that unite us, than those that unite us, therefore it is necessary to think locally, where we find the common and the meaningful. (Mingorance & Estebarnaz, 2009)

If productivity is related to the association of the community. Enríquez, (2011), quoted by Arriaga, Reyes, Carriel, & Ivette, 2016, states that: "It is a complex process of concertation among the actors, sectors and forces that interact in a given territory, to promote a common project of development, combining the generation of economic growth, equity, social and cultural change, ecological sustainability, gender approach, quality and spatial and territorial balance, in order to raise the quality of life of each family and citizen living in this territory and contribute to the development of the country and a better insertion of it in the international economy "

The levels of investment focused on the implementation of innovation processes and technological transformation at all levels would make Manabí one of the provinces with the greatest sustainability in human resources, producing research, inputs and technology

Testimonies of the related actors: "The rescue of this cultural museum In situ, allowed to develop the skill of the students, rebuilding the same, creating a library and an ecological path. Besides to experience closeness to the community, by explaining through training, the importance of culture in tourism" "After training the artisans changed the way of attention to their customers and even some of them innovated certain situations in their businesses" "The experience of being in contact with the community, sharing what one has learned in academic life and teaching the fishermen about their craft, was for me enriching, as well as allowing us to extend knowledge of university campuses to the field where are the people for whom we prepare as professionals ". "I believe that linking projects should be more focused on solving community problems of a social nature, not material; I do not think that building a bus stop improves the standard of living of a community. The university can contribute to this by finding solutions from academia and research so that linking projects generate an impact that can be recognized with change" "It can be concluded that the level of administrative efficiency of the Las Mercedes Convent Artisan Association is low, because administrative principles of a practical philosophical nature have not been adequately implemented throughout the life of the project; that is to say, as principles of a planned nature have not been implemented as for example short-term and long-term strategies "

"Through this collective work and focused on the micro-business class, it was possible to determine current conditions of micro-enterprises, their forms of work and development, as well as their aspirations in the commercial field. This can determine a plan of action for the benefit of this sector of the economy. "



"The linking project was implemented up to 50% of its implementation due to the event of April 16, 2016 (earthquake), laboratories and museum, all the infrastructure of the university was affected, which is why no workshops towards the secondary student community and ecological and environmental club of the cantons "

### III. RESULTS

In order to evaluate the results obtained in the execution of regional institutional linkage programs, the following indicators were established that enabled the data to be obtained:

Number of students participating in the projects during the analysis period.

Number of teachers participating in projects during the analysis time.

**Table No.1.** Information on projects carried out by years and main actors.

Years	Participating students	Participating teachers	Projects carried out per year
2014	731	45	45
2015	508	42	42
2016	306	30	30

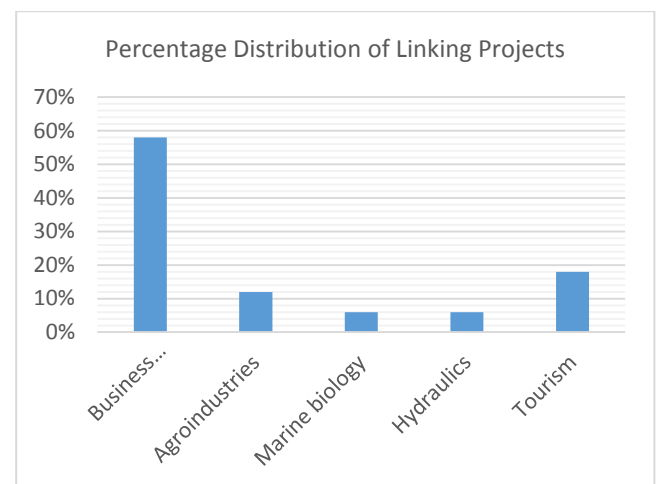
**Source:** Department of Community Relations. 2017

Table N°1, shows the decrease in the students who participated in the different projects, due to the establishment of parameters for the evaluation of the linking projects in addition to the student withdrawal factor and transfer to public universities, proximity to the study centers and other factors that affected in these years without letting pass the modality of modular studies that was maintained since the presence of PUCEM in Manabí, at present the change of the modality of

studies standardized for all the universities like is the different schedule.

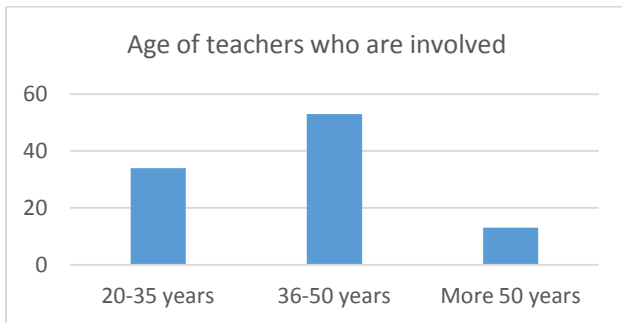
It is also possible to observe the decreases in the participation of participating teachers and projects carried out, this to the aforementioned changes and to the establishment of new internal policies that modified the way to carry out projects of connection, incorporation of teachers full time, teachers with appointments and dedicated at times to the exclusive fulfillment of hours of bonding.

Graph N ° 1.



Of the total of the projects presented, 58% of the linkage projects belong to the Business Management Career, 18% to Tourism, 12% to Agroindustries, and 6% to Marine Biology and Hydraulic Engineering, this ratio is in proportion to the number of students that are counted in the different careers, in addition to being the commitment of the students to carry out community activities in different sectors to support the change of the productive matrix, conservation of the heritage and the environment, to maintain the spaces of community research for the development of peoples and include artistic activities of social actors.

Graph N°2



It is important to recognize the experience that the teacher can have on the basis of age and knowledge, so 53% are between 36 and 50 years old, followed by 34% of teachers between 20 and 35 and 13 % is greater at age 51, this can be an indicator or relevance factor when planning and planning a community engagement project.

It is important to highlight the generalized perception of teachers who develop activities according to the availability of resources, management of student resources in addition to sensitivity to acts that reveal the sentimentality and sustainability of projects in cases of work with people of different social classes and economic situations, keep in tune what would allow "to foster the impact of linking at the local and regional level where the headquarters is located", 84.1 percent of the respondents considered that the implementation of the project carried out responded to a prior planning defined, 62% in the project was incorporated the participation of other social actors and non-academic knowledge, and 63% also considered that the project was incorporated the participation of other social actors and non-academic knowledge, considering that there existed differences between university levels and teachers principals that develop activities within the careers and interact the knowledge between the careers and students, the development of the activities of bonding allow to reach this objective. This point is relevant since, according to this information, the PUCEM

perceives the development of projects linked to society as a means to collaborate directly with the community in which they perform.

Unfortunately, the aforementioned trend about the lack of technological resources in the management of projects linking modality was reported lack of procedures to manage projects related to the provision of technological services.

The collected data do not allow to identify the reasons that would explain the variations in the perceptions of the teachers, students surveyed with respect to the different effects that would generate the development of activities of coordination with social ventures. The limitations and the possibility of understanding some trends that would go against expectations: for example, identify the reasons why one of every three officials surveyed did not perceive that the implementation of linking activities would be related to the generation of income for their institution. In other words, it may be assumed that for officials interviewed it appears that it is easier to assess or perceive benefits from traditional linking practices or from the more frequent ones.

The development of different linking activities represents, of course, different requirements for each of the actors involved, given the variation in the complexity of managing projects and the incentives presented by each modality. Due to the above, the existence of variations in the type of modalities that are implemented among different educational institutions would open opportunities to identify the influence of certain indicators that would explain the initiation or consolidation of cooperative relations between social actors and their final products, the available capacities or the alignment of the academic production with the demands of the market. The study of the variations in the way in which the HEI is organized, its approach to the entrepreneurial





model and its associativity with certain influential factors would allow, therefore, to identify possible variables that would explain the absence or limited consolidation of linking activities in diverse contexts, or the consolidation of a model of spheres in balance.

For the interpretation of the results a summary of the achievements was made. It was possible to carry out a knowledge assessment on social and community work culture commemorating the zone and province where the students carry out the activities. Ecological and environmental aspects were documented, maintaining conservation activities and educating the population where activities are carried out with the primary resources. In the cultural line, the analysis of the traditions, legends and identification of the sector. This information provides a frame of reference for the historical, tourism, and social sector of the different factors that intervene in its evolution, and that should be considered as a basis in the planning of future activities.

It was possible to integrate members of communities of educational institutions, in the participations of the entrepreneurial activities, where they counted on their unconditional support, accepting to involve secondary students as participants of the project.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The scope of an important positive impact on the activities carried out where all the work produced by the students in the linked logs was documented, developing innovative and didactic documents and ideas towards the beneficiaries for the better understanding and the understanding of the training options about processes of elaboration, associativity, continuous improvement

in the ventures, culture of the province and the country.

Through the activities programmed in each of the projects, some coupled with the reality and duration of the academic period, bonds of fraternity were created, motivating students to continue strengthening the activities of culture and identity.

Culture and communication are specific media developed by human beings, who have needs. The most important social indicators are the family and the community-university relationship, so in this type of projects community mediation is very important as the social factor that brings together different social, cultural, economic, political and religious elements. Social problems are difficult to pose and generate solutions, because they have multi-ethnic and strong ideology and culture embedded in our environment, which assumes values and on the other hand positive support as negative management media and their representatives. The social problems today, due to globalization, always suppose the approach of a vision of interculturality and social inequalities.

#### CONCLUSION

The data and the object of this preliminary study allows to describe the conditions in which the actors of the HEIs are interrelated with the community to develop linking activities in the province of Manabí. However, due to the characteristics of the collected data, it is necessary to identify in detail the determinants that would explain the prevalence of projects in order to maximize the impact for the implementation of programs that generate ideal conditions to reach a goal achievable in the communities and by the



university establish bonding activities and contribute to achieve its objectives.

The relationship with the community can be understood as a proper function of teachers, students and their beneficiaries, the community, environment, social aspects. This strengthens the insertion and construction of "networks of action" that are beyond the HEI itself; that is to say, they include a program strongly related to other agents, such as the government, entrepreneurs, producing entities, educational system as a whole, research centers of the higher level, sectors of society, historians, that can collaborate in an operational structure planned in the construction and corroboration of framework agreements and more specific linking.

It was possible to carry out a solidarity work among the students of the PUCEM careers, community and other actors, benefiting in the projects and their executors.

Linking projects have generated an infinite number of documented activities that have borne fruit, commitments to an ecological, economic, social, professional, institutional and cooperative environment, so that activities have been carried out with respect, ethics and professionalism.

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