

University Teacher's Role to Promote USR Actions in University Students: Experiences Inside and Outside Class

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Abstract: Today, social responsibility in the university is considered as an ethical dimension that every organization or institution should have as a vision and promote in its daily activity, opening the critical awareness of society, which requires a capacity for dialogue, communication of transmission of training, research and extension processes. In this sense, the social projection of universities is not only an external action, but also has an academic impact through the introduction of changes in the curriculum and pedagogies; greater relevance and a competency-based curriculum contributes to social projection by reaffirming practical and not exclusively theoretical knowledge in response to specific problems (Domínguez, 2009), following principles of ethics, good governance, respect for the environment, social commitment and the promotion of civic values, thus taking responsibility for the consequences and impacts derived from their actions.

For all the aforementioned, the role of the teacher plays a very important role, since their actions must not only be theoretical and communicative, but also practical for the university student to transform their way of thinking and acting in favor of the environment and the community.

Key words: actions, teacher, students, project development, university social responsibility, role

1. Introduction

Social Responsibility in the university constitutes a new way of envisioning the connection between its three elements: Teaching, research and extension, which must be articulated between actors and sectors that otherwise, would hardly have points of rapprochement. The main responsibility of the universities is to lead society in the generation of knowledge and capacities that allow us to face the global problems that we face.

Higher university education must assume its social responsibility and thus contribute to reducing indifference to the social problems that abound in society (Rebaza, 2017). University training should not be limited to a reduced vision of their specialty, which often prevents us from seeing the social problems in which we are immersed (De la cuesta, 2010). For students to graduate with a broad vision of the reality that they have had to live, the task of teachers is to generate in them concern, reflection and seek solutions to social and environmental problems, being responsibility and commitment those that achieve a significant impact on society. Therefore, the objective of the university must be the formation of good and cultured professionals, competent in an activity and at the same time with fundamental principles and attitudes in their life, with ethics and a set of convictions about

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the nature of the world and its possible service to society.

In university social responsibility, the role of the teacher is fundamental, since, due to the close contact they have with students, they are the one who can promote such awareness (Tréllez, 2006), generating in them the service directed to the community in favor of caring for the environment and promoting fairer living conditions, especially for the most disadvantaged.

The university professor must gather various innovative strategies to generate university social responsibility through interdisciplinary actions, achieving the development of communication skills, the degree of belonging, identity construction, environmental ethics, and the potentialization of teamwork, individual creative work and collective, the valuation of contributions, etc.

In my experience as a university teacher for ten years and my commitment to caring for the environment, I have promoted USR through the presentation and execution of environmental projects inside and outside the classroom, fostering in my students an interest in the integration of teams of I work transforming:

- 1) Proactive attitude. Throughout these years I have not only adhered to the tasks of social responsibility (Abarca & Freire, 2009). In order to comply, but I have included as part of my sessions, motivational talks to take care of the environment, reduce the consumption of sheets of paper; give the initiative to carry out MSW actions and/or projects.
- 2) Practice the 3Rs: recycle, reuse and reduce. Pardavé (2007), noting that it should not be only in theory but that this practice begins with us as university teachers (Begoña & De la Cruz, 2009). Therefore, throughout my work as a teacher, I asked my students from the different universities where I have worked that the presentation of assignments or tasks be in reused or recycled material. For example, manila folders were often replaced by folders made of recycled material such as almanacs, cardboard or maples, etc. Achieving creativity and reflection with a multiplier effect because many used to tell me: "when I am a teacher, I will do the same with my students".
- 3) Carrying out social responsibility projects in favor of the community. The development of RSU projects helps to do a more systematized and planned work in order to train university students who are responsible and committed to their reality, capable of discerning if their professional performance affects society positively or negatively, as well as their reflective criticism conscience for the sake of comprehensive disaster risk management in the region.

Next, I present the different projects executed in the last three years, thanks to the support of university students from the Puno region in Peru.

In 2017, the *"I want Puno, I want clean posts"* project was presented in the RSU project. The working group was made up of students from the Professional School of Civil Engineering of the Andean University "Néstor Cáceres Velásquez", Puno. The execution of the project consisted of cleaning the city's posts, many times they are used to paste posters or advertisements, the same ones that spoil the image of the streets. The financing for the execution of the RSU project was covered by me and with the support of Grupo Scire S.A.C. In the process and completion of the event, the students felt useful and happy to carry out this activity.

The project was executed on Fridays in September and October 2017.



Figure 1 Students Cleaning the City Poles

In 2018–2019, the RSU project called “I am a responsible teacher” was presented, a project within the classroom, where the participants were the students of the Professional School of Initial Education of the National University of the Altiplano in Puno region, Peru.





Figure 2 Presentation of Assigned Academic Work in Folders Made of Recycled Material During the Two Academic Semesters.

In 2019, I presented and executed the RSU project “I am a green lantern; I will avoid the use of plastic bags” The work group was made up of students from the III cycle of the Professional School of Civil Engineering of the Andean University “Néstor Cáceres Velásquez”, Puno. The execution of the project consisted of persuading the traders in the local markets to avoid using plastic bags when selling any product. The RSU project was financed by Group Scire S.A.C. as responsible for the project. In the process and at the end of the event, the merchants appreciated this initiative. The project was carried out for sixteen Saturdays (days of commerce of basic necessities such as vegetables, fruits and groceries).



Figure 3 Group “Green Lanterns” Ready to Talk With Merchants to Avoid the Use of Plastics.



Figure 4 A “Green Lantern” With the Biosafety Implements, Persuaded the Merchants to Avoid the Unnecessary Use of Plastic Bags

2. Conclusions

Education cannot be reduced to be an end in itself. It must be a fundamental means for our society to transform itself, assuming innovation and facilitating processes that lead to integrate research, technological development in the face of environmental problems for the benefit of others.

University teachers must prioritize those areas where a greater probability of generating significant development can be achieved, for example, research at the university must be much more relevant, which contributes to the knowledge of humanity and the improvement of people.

The requirement of society for education is the training of the teacher to be a social leader with the ability to socialize through knowledge, a source of wealth and power, contributing more actively to the strengthening of values; teaching students that any activity should be aimed at the service and well-being of human beings. The professional must be ethical, his function being to serve society; many times the professional loses sight of the

true good of his profession, the service, and is confused with external goods.

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