



Editorial

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The Torreón Universitario Journal (Revista Torreón Universitario) is characterized by the important and complex multidisciplinary; indisputable and characteristic seal of the FAREM Carazo. The multidisciplinary orientation is conceptualized as an approach to scientific research that takes into account disciplines such as health sciences, technology, economics, education, and humanities, among others. In other words, there is a common macro situation, with differentiated objectives for each of the intervening disciplines. Considering this fundamental condition, today we address the general panorama of challenges for the development of higher education in the context of Central American integration.

The Central American integration process has been underway since 1960 by the Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration (SIECA) with significant achievements articulated in the short, medium, and long term, which have accelerated in the last 20 years, quadrupling the regional Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The Central American Economic Integration Model comprises a process that must go through the improvement of the following five stages: the Central American Free Trade Zone; the External Trade Relations; the Central American Customs Union; the Free mobility of Productive Factors and the Financial Monetary Integration. The region is currently working on the third stage of the Central American Customs Union Framework Agreement.

In addition, the Central American University Superior Council (CSUCA), the body in charge of promoting the development of higher education in the region, considers that educational integration promotes necessary changes that allow the continuation of regional integration processes. To this end, it promotes actions aimed at improving the level of higher education, starting from educational research; towards a flexible institutional framework, considering the reality, diversity, and multidisciplinary nature of local contexts of the territories, following

the processes of continuous improvement and educational adaptation, required to bridge the gaps of regional educational integration. Incorporating common, feasible, and dynamic aspects for the development of higher education in the countries. Contributing to guarantee, through education, the sustainability of integration processes.

Regional integration is the key to integration into the world.

The diagnostic and educational research processes guided by CSUCA have allowed finding limitations in higher education in the region, which are synthesized in some characteristics among which stand out: curricula based on contents and therefore expire very quickly, too many contents, which are taught with reduced practical activities and with little orientation towards the achievement of competencies, which concludes in an evaluation consisting of repeating the knowledge transmitted.

CSUCA recognizes that it is necessary to transfer to students, population, and professionals the necessary knowledge to allow the integration processes to continue. It believes that there is a delay in education, which prevents the appropriation of the knowledge of educational development that the region requires to sustain the economic development pursued by integration.

The actions implemented by CSUCA are diverse, allowing for the improvement of higher education in the region. It is appropriate, considering the nature of this text, to refer to the Qualifications Framework for Central American Higher Education (MCESCA). This is based on the International Standard Classification System for Teacher Education Programs (ISCED-T 2021) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as well as other similar instruments in Europe and other regions of the world.

The fundamental objectives of the qualifications framework include promoting curricular innovation in learning outcomes, incorporating competencies that lead to better performance in the application of knowledge, as well as promoting regional academic harmonization by defining a common reference. Provide greater transparency to degrees by incorporating a document that certifies the knowledge acquired in the teaching-learning process.

To conclude, it is necessary to mention that MCESCA considers that, to transform the current educational context, the incorporation in higher education systems of the essential competencies of the 21st century, highlighting learning skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, assertive communication, autonomous learning and teamwork, basic literacy in the following areas: information literacy, media literacy and technological literacy, life skills such as moral and ethical formation, flexibility, leadership, productivity, introspection, and social skills.