

## **Lack of meritocratic processes at the Central University of Ecuador**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study examines meritocracy in the context of the Ecuadorian State, highlighting its particularities, applicability, and evolution in the Central University of Ecuador. Despite regulatory advances, the implementation of meritocracy faces challenges due to clientelism and practices such as nepotism and favoritism, which compromise efficiency and transparency in public management. The work reveals the need to strengthen meritocracy to guarantee fair and merit-based processes in public institutions. The analysis ranges from historical reforms to the present, considering the relevance of meritocracy in public and academic administration.

**Keywords:** Meritocracy, Clientelism, Public administration.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this research is to examine meritocracy, its particularities, elements, applicability, and evolution in the Ecuadorian State; It should be noted that this study made it possible to know, from the state and specifically from the academic and administrative level, a new management system focused on efficiency, transparency and responsibility that regulates the correlation between the Central University of Ecuador and its "associates": the higher public education market and civil society to efficiently meet social requests.

By taking meritocracy as a pattern of government, freedom in the application of administrative and institutional processes, guarantors of citizen cooperation, which favors a controlled and equitable regime for the application of public power that strengthens the meritocracy model established by the Ministry of Labor, the governing body in matters of the administration of human talent and remuneration in the Ecuadorian Public Sector.

From another perspective, meritocracy has been accepted by the Central University of Ecuador, from a theoretical point of view, considering that the construction and development of reforms have made it possible to transport to the public administration, the Central University of Ecuador, the processes of hiring teaching staff through meritocratic policies, reducing the clientelistic philosophy.

These procedures are planned in the training, ethics, and culture of public service that citizens demand today, inescapably influencing institutional meritocracy. The meritocracy analyzed by the Central University of Ecuador allowed us to ask, through the application of interviews with both academic and administrative staff, that the different dissertations and actions of authorities respond to a model of



meritocracy that is affected by the scarce practice of meritocracy in the processes of recruitment, selection, promotion, and promotion. This qualitative study is academic, carried out in the period 2006-2017, a stage of transformation and major administrative changes at the Central University of Ecuador, governed by centralism in decision-making and a hierarchical scale marked by political power and control. In the campaigns for the election of authorities, a new model of meritocracy was proposed, agile, transparent and flexible based on a new institutionality; however, it was affected by the lack of meritocratic processes, not only in the Central University of Ecuador but in the entire state institutionality, adapted in a clientelistic *modus operandi*, which affected the entire public administrative system. During the development of this research, the little functionality of the meritocracy model was evidenced, so the point of reflection would be to analyze the administrative and academic direction of the authorities in power, which allows the construction of a meritocracy model seen as an agent of change and transparency that promotes transparency, trust and equal opportunities.

## **MERITOCRACY AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS**

Important regulatory advances have materialized, despite the low valuation of human capital, which has limited the virtues that promote the reform of the State, this has highlighted the complex problems present today; particular and reductionist interests have promoted the inequality that is still alive and operating, which is entrenched in the social and labor order (Nogueira 1999, 101-8). These errors in the design of administrative policies have forced the implementation of meritocracy processes that value and recognize the people who add value to the institution.

Political interests such as nepotism, influence peddling, clientelism, cronyism, or favoritism, exclude efficiency and productivity in the academic management of the Central University of Ecuador. However, legality in social practice is not solved with the creation of normative bodies, but goes further; that is, to change models of thought and an organizational culture of improvement. In this sense, meritocracy could be analyzed as an aristocracy of talents, based on the privilege that the person has for his or her performance, under the criteria of identity, responsibility, talent, ability, effort, principles, and values. From these parameters, the individual seems to be responsible for his or her achievements and failures in the workplace (Barbosa 1999, 149-50).

According to Jorge Durand, today's institutions are characterized by corruption, corporatism, and clientelism, they are key spaces for backwardness, where the promotion of meritocracy should be an obligation for their development since this allows the processes of recruitment, selection, hiring, and job promotion to be applied under parameters such as the merit of people (Durand 2015).

To dogmatize an order and permanence of democracy, meritocracy appears; a concept that Jiménez defines as equal opportunities, based on knowledge, intelligence, abilities, and skills, that is, merits should



be an application standard to fill a vacancy and occupy a job in teaching.

Berggruen and Gardels add that meritocracy is made up of skills and knowledge with "rich experience" beyond degrees and diplomas, absence of prejudices, public not private vision, that is, the general interest, committed to the "should be", "know how to do" and "know how to do" and finally wise in practice (Jiménez 2014, 195-200).

Livia Barbosa, for her part, states that meritocracy is a criterion of hierarchy, applied under the characteristics of aristocracy of talents; that is, the performance and skills of people, talent + knowledge + ability + effort is considered, therefore, equality of opportunity is a preponderant factor when measuring performance (Barbosa 1999, 1-2).

Jorge Antonio Herrera Llamas in his article calls meritocracy "the adequate exclusion of those who lost the competition to occupy a job" (Herrera 2013, 14). In the same way, prioritizing and emphasizing the importance of academic access by merit is also a way of betting on the construction of career plans for academic staff in bureaucratic organizations such as the Central University of Ecuador, under the hypothetical that the consolidation of a professional bureaucracy is one of the most suitable elements to guarantee that the State can effectively carry out its functions. (Bohórquez Méndez 2015, 51).

Therefore, justice, understood as acceptance in the application of new policies, processes, and selection norms satisfies the new way of governing, that is, these measures seek to justify order, control, and power before society (Crespo 1990, 120), however, meritocracy should not be seen as an instrument of political practicality, ideological and professional that establishes authoritarian absolutism in the face of democracy and transparency in access to teaching positions in public higher education institutions.

To generate a transparent and fair public administration in the Central University of Ecuador and that the State is responsible to its citizens, based on compliance with the legal principles established in the regulatory bodies in force, respecting the rights of citizens and the application of meritocratic tools for hiring and/or job promotion processes, will contribute to a transparent, continuous and effective administrative management model that guarantees free access and transparent development of the competencies of teachers in Ecuadorian public higher education institutions.

## **MERITOCRACY IN THE ECUADORIAN CONTEXT**

Meritocracy was born in response to the annulment of the "title race" as Mariana Lima Bandería calls it, access to positions of higher hierarchy is not directly related to the profile of the person about the position, this practice has forced the government to reformulate public policies and administrative processes of human talent such as the selection and hiring of personnel in the public sector.

Public institutions are created to achieve the objectives set by the State, during their trajectory build norms and rules that allow their stability and duration in time and space, promoting social order



through the solution of social and institutional problems, generating a status that legitimizes the *raison d'être* of the institution.

In this same line of analysis, Bandeira points out that culturally the country has limited itself in generating processes of promotion and career of the public servant based on the academic degree, leaving aside the merits, abilities, and competencies of the person. These approved constructs, socially, legally, and culturally, are embodied in a discourse of government (Bandeira 2012, 1-4). Therefore, the existence of a meritocratic system allows academic institutions to effectively exercise control and power over society, anchored to a democratic, sovereign, and decentralized State of rights, and duties, as stated in the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador of 2008.

This model has made it necessary to generate impartial, transparent, and fair mechanisms to access teaching in the public service. However, since the Political Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador was promulgated on March 6, 1945, Ecuador had a model of a liberal and independent regime, in article 141, numeral 20 establishes that the State will guarantee that: "Admission to public functions and jobs, according to merit and ability". For its part, Article 76 of the 1967 Constitution invokes that in Ecuador as a democratic and republican country: "The administrative career is instituted to ensure the stability of public servants and the efficiency of the administration based on capacity, merits, legality and probity and the opposition and competitions as a system of selection and promotion."

Finally, Article 79 of the Political Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador of August 11, 1998 states that: "For the same purposes, merits, training, and postgraduate specialization shall be especially encouraged in the ranking of university and polytechnic professors," while Article 124 states: Art. 124.- "(...) Both entry and promotion within the civil service and the administrative career will be made through merit and competitive examinations. Only by exception, public servants will be subject to a regime of free appointment and removal" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility 2013).

Currently, the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador of 2008, published in Official Gazette No. 449 of October 20, 2008, states in Article 61, paragraph 7, that: Article 61.- "To perform public jobs and functions based on merit and abilities, and a transparent, inclusive, equitable, pluralistic and democratic selection and appointment system that guarantees their participation, with criteria of equity and gender parity, equal opportunities for people with disabilities and intergenerational participation."

Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, approved on October 20, 2008, published in Official Gazette No. 449. Just as Article 228 states that "Entry into the public service, promotion and promotion in the administrative career shall be carried out through merit-based competition and competition, in the manner determined by law, except public servants who are popularly elected or freely appointed or removed.", for its part, Article 329 states that "the process of selection and promotion of employment shall be based on requirements of skills, skills, training, merits, and abilities. The use of discriminatory criteria



and instruments that affect the privacy, dignity and integrity of people is prohibited." As can be seen, the meritocratic process is framed in formal legal bases from 1945 to the present, which promotes a public administration based on the professionalization of its servants.

This restructuring in the Ecuadorian public administration gave way through Executive Decree No. 737 published in Official Gazette No. 441, on May 5, 2011, to the creation of the National Institute of Meritocracy, whose mission was to "strengthen public management in Ecuador, guaranteeing the application of a technical system of merits in competencies, skills, abilities, and values, focused on creating the technical capacities necessary to effectively exercise the *raison d'être* of the institutions, that is, the mission, both in the design of policies and in the neutral exercise of public authority" (National Institute of Meritocracy 2016).

On February 1, 2016, through Executive Decree No. 901, the President of the Republic, Rafael Correa Delgado, merged the National Institute of Meritocracy with the Ministry of Labor to give continuity to the established processes and maintain the institutional values: professional ethics, excellence, commitment, honesty, transparency, proactivity, innovation, and impartiality. promoting equality in legality in all processes (National Institute of Meritocracy 2016).

This historical context on meritocracy in Ecuador can be observed under the legal context and as a State project in which equity and equality of working conditions are forged through transparent and democratic instruments, it is undoubted that its application has allowed in some way the consolidation of the public service, however, the level of clientelism present in the selection and hiring of public officials who enter the public sector is still questioned, particularly the Central University of Ecuador without a prior public competition of merits and opposition, a vicious circle that is carried out under the modality of occasional contract, the same that when carrying out a special exam it is based on illegalities and evidence of corruption.

## **CONTEXTUALIZATION OF MERITOCRACY**

The word bureaucracy appeared in 1745 coined by Vincent de Gournay, it is derived from the union of the French word bureau, translated into Spanish as "desk" plus Kratos which means "government", literally it will be understood the government exercised from the desk. Currently it is a term associated with the inefficiency and paperwork immersed in the administration of the State linked to intervention in social life, for Alfred Sauvi the "bureaucracy is the basis of power support", while for Fernando Vallespín bureaucracy is "a series of very technical and precise criteria of rationality, which open up a whole landscape shrouded in thick mists where it is not always easy to find one's way around" (Jiménez 2014, 55, 57 and 67).

The job stability of public servants based on bureaucratic public administration gave way to the



prologue of mediocrity that ended up positioning and consolidating the mediocre and providing slow and inefficient processes of the staff (Chica Vélez 2011, 62). Weber argues that bureaucracy is an organizational model that allows the "accumulation of power in administrative tasks that tends to become power exercised by professional employees" (Jiménez 2014, 99).

These ideological prejudices based on the technification and alienation of power gave way to the technocracy that for Fueyo Álvarez was the era of the "rebellion of the instruments against man" (Fueyo Álvarez 1956, 11). The technocratic phenomenon occurs due to its structure and functioning, exhibiting authoritarian attitudes that affect processes of State reforms framed by a scientific and technological process, which appears due to a professional deterioration, Merton technocracy is defined as The intense division of labor has become a splendid resource to avoid social responsibilities. As the professions are subdivided, each group of specialists finds it increasingly possible to "throw the buck on the other" as regards the social consequences of a job, on the position, it seems, that in this complicated transfer of responsibility, there will be no last one to be taken by the devil.

When terrified by the resulting social dislocations, each specialist, confident that he performed his task to the best of his ability, can easily reject the possibility of them. (Jiménez 2014, 141). For Barbosa, scientific management and labor relations were born from Federik Taylor, with whom he suggested the methodology of personnel efficiency to measure human production, for the year 1937, Mosher Kinsley pointed out that the performance evaluation for management recognized merit, seen as the record of aptitudes and work habits, this philosophy made it possible to point out the people who produced and who did not (Barbosa 1999, 155-6).

To generate new strategies for governance models, meritocracy appears, through more intelligent forms of governing, as Berggruen and Gardels state, establishing means of well-being and personal fulfillment (Jiménez 2014, 189, 193).

Michael Young says that meritocracy is the assignment of jobs to people according to their merits, posing a reality that equalizes unequalizes, and impoverishes the less favored sectors of society, under the domination of the ruling and technocratic elites. For his part, Michel Walzer points out that it is complex equality to build a social order where there is no inequality or domination. Therefore, it corresponds to the fair distribution of jobs for the best-qualified individuals (González Oquendo 2003, 81).

Arbitrariness in public affairs forced the creation of systems where merit is a preponderant factor, which allows institutions to be strengthened and the efficiency and effectiveness of public officials to be increased, eliminating the arbitrariness of the appointing authority (Méndez 2015, 321).

While discussing public administration, the need to establish meritocratic processes arises, the idea of working based on merit is strengthened, rewarding people who have it during their working career or to access a job. Its application is resolved by decree or resolution, that is, by a formal legal body that seeks to



be socially legitimized. One of the challenges of public administration is the consolidation and legitimization of meritocracy, positioning the public official as the one responsible for the democracy and transparency of the administration, under principles of equality. For this reason, the creation of the Merit and Competitive Examination as an instrument for personnel selection is considered to date the most democratic and partial recruitment technique that guarantees equal employment opportunities (Bohórquez Méndez 2015, 361-366).

## **MERITOCRACY AND ITS CORRELATION BETWEEN WHAT SHOULD BE AND REALITY**

The commitment of the main actors: civil society, political society and the State responds to the construction of effective governance that legitimizes and constitutionalizes a democratic order, based on a responsible State apparatus. However, the arbitrariness of power affects democratic processes (Jiménez 2014, 23, 29 and 34).

If the meritocratic ideology is applied, the ideal the ought to respond to the fact that every position should be occupied by the people with the best performance (Barbosa 1999, 4), however, according to Ramírez, clientelism, cronyism, influence peddling, reciprocity of favors or nepotism have historically predominated, and even though these practices have been annulled with the creation of norms and laws, in reality, it is an enduring characteristic in higher education public life, which has generated meritocracy as a statement of goodwill and desire for intentions in current laws (Bohórquez Méndez 2015, 62).

Entry into the public service constitutes an effort, responsibility, and respect for the legitimate aspiration of applicants to participate in vacancies offered by the State, which characterizes impartiality in the application of the law, in this sense what is sought through meritocratic mechanisms is to generate an efficient administrative career system (75 and 150).

However, according to Alfredo Ramos, populism as a source of legitimation is the beginning of alternatives that reduce the construction of a democracy, which is diluted, ensuring a set of unfulfilled promises. Yves Mény and Yves Surel stated that populism is the way for ideological corruption, using ambiguities through political expression, exploiting the anger and frustration of citizens who become sellers of dreams and promises based on the positioning of power (Jiménez 2014, 13, 39 and 41).

From the theoretical and legal point of view, Ecuador's public institutions have a human talent management model that responds to meritocratic processes, which through its academic institutions seeks to train and train public servants, however, it can be seen that reality does not obey what is projected and established in the rules or the objectives of a modern State.

In practice, this merit model does not operate in its entirety, which distorts the reality of those who enter an institution through merit and competitive examinations, carrying out technical knowledge evaluations, interviews, and technical tests of suitability for the position, while other people enter with an



occasional contract, thanks to a supposed "adjustment of profile to the position" that often becomes a mechanism for hiring inefficient people that hinders and takes away credibility from public management. However, clientelism linked to the function of recruitment and selection of personnel is being displaced by the criterion of meritocracy to achieve efficiency in the management of the State.

The political discourse associated with meritocracy and performance management, conceived from the perspective of personal growth within public institutions, has generated job instability in public servants, despite the set of meritocratic mechanisms established in the country.

The suppression of appointment budget items, the generation of contracts for occasional services, and even the purchase of resignations, make it necessary to analyze the deterioration of the public service, contradictorily if we observe that most merit-based competitions and competitions are for technical officials; that is, to fill jobs within the occupational group scale between SPA1-SP7; However, I allow myself to infer that positions of middle level or higher hierarchy, teaching, are established by relationships of trust or by professional growth supposedly based on a job profile, merits, abilities, competencies and experience.

These processes, which are often contrary to the declarations of will embodied in the law and in the discourse of the rulers that maintain the message of labor equality, transparency, and equity, and legality and that ensure the efficiency and continuity of the administrative career, lose their meaning when demonstrating the fragility in the application of the law. such as the recruitment of personnel, the professional career, and even the training and education of teachers and public officials.

The growth of occasional contracts with short periods of validity is evident, then they are the winners of rigged tenders, the applicability of Executive Decree 813 that establishes the mandatory purchase of resignations and even the suppression of items to restructure the public entity, these mechanisms, contrary to the meritocratic processes partially established, have generated instability and job insecurity in the Ecuadorian public sector.

## **MERITOCRACY AND ITS IMPACT ON THE FULFILLMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES CASE OF THE CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF ECUADOR**

The administration of human talent in the public sector, specifically in the higher education sector, has a differential treatment since personnel are managed under different regulations such as: Regulations on the Career and Ranking of Professors and Researchers of the Higher Education System, Organic Law of the Public Service and Labor Code.

The impact of meritocracy on a higher education institution becomes a complex issue since it labels teachers according to their type of contract, assignment time, function, profile, and title of the position. As the university is the entity destined for discussion, creation, teaching, and learning, the





Central University of Ecuador has been transformed into a political scenario, and the search for power in management, research, and resources, this framework makes the academic and administrative management of the staff a complex task. Gómez points out that public universities have not been able to find a way to effectively and legitimately manage their resources, which has given way to bureaucratic levels with constant partisan and group submissions, aligned with an academic political plan that distorts the *raison d'être* of the university.

The authoritarianism of the central administration or the ambition for power delegitimizes all meritocratic forms in personnel selection. The university should determine processes and protocols for the selection and hiring of its directors, teaching, and administrative staff aligned with their capacity and experience, as well as with the institutional project (Cortés Moreno 2011, 214-7).

Meritocracy should be worked on from the profile of the position, knowledge, experience, and training as well as behavior, unfortunately, the clientelistic system, has often put behavior into play over knowledge and experience or vice versa, but usually there are few people hired or winners of the competition, who meet the aforementioned requirements.

The improvement in public service is based on generating objective selection criteria oriented to the basis of the competition, the mission of the position, and the *raison d'être* of the institution. The leading profile that the State fulfills when it comes to developing a regulatory body that provides optimal working conditions and administration of human talent intrinsically generates the subordination of the public official to the State; although the creation of instruments such as performance forms contribute to feedback and professional growth in practice, it is a tool that currently continues to bring frustration and difficulty to workers (Barbosa 1999, 7).

One of the arguments that "violates" meritocracy is its threat to the loyalty of officials, altering the social order; In this sense, the emotional bond (clientelism or cronyism) is a factor present during the process of selecting and hiring personnel. Joan Prats states that the distribution of public offices in the hands of political parties is a corrupt and clientelistic practice that suppresses powers and loyalty and gratitude to the party stands out, delegitimizing the political system (Bohórquez Méndez 2015, 315). In this sense, meritocratic processes are often hindered by the lack of independence and autonomy in the Central University, which obeys individual or partisan interests.

In the specific case of the Central University, the application of meritocracy and the implementation of merit-based competitions and competitive examinations for teaching and administrative staff sometimes presents political interests, or the presence of illegitimate appointing authorities that have prevented the generation of this type of competition for some years now, which has led to continuing in the structuring of teams under criteria of trust, cronyism, and favoritism.

For this reason, the principle of merit as a personnel selection mechanism has been a partial



practice due to the political context that the university is going through (Bohórquez Méndez 2015, 340-1).

The internal creation of a functional body and the description of positions based on skills, knowledge, experience, and competencies could be the starting point for the creation of meritocratic processes for those candidates who are hired by the higher education institution outside of a merit-based competition and competition. A personnel administration instrument through which the functions and labor competencies of the jobs that make up the staff of an entity and the requirements demanded for the performance of the same are established, constituting the technical support that justifies and gives meaning to the existence of the positions in an entity or organization. (Bohórquez Méndez 2015, 365).

This type of instrument, legal and procedural practices will cooperate in the entry of academic and administrative staff on merit, giving the university a value in the fulfillment of its institutional objectives, avoiding falling into arbitrariness when forging the administrative and academic careers of its officials, teachers, and researchers.

## **LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK ON MERITOCRACY**

Concerning meritocracy, the Civil Service and Administrative Career Law, issued on April 26, 1978, through Official Gazette No. 574, whose scope was to guarantee efficiency and effectiveness in the management of the public administration, states in its Article 96 that suitability tests will be carried out for the selection of candidates, to occupy public positions, about promotions and transfers, Article 100 states that: "Career public servants who are on an equal footing with other public servants and with persons outside the Civil Service, in the case of promotions, shall enjoy priority, taking into account their merits and qualification of services." Article 101 also states about qualification for promotions that "Promotions shall be made taking into account the efficiency of the servants, measured through periodic qualifications and, in addition, years of service". In 2003, through Official Gazette Supplement No. 184, a new Civil Service and Administrative Career Law was issued, the purpose of which was to improve the productivity of the State through the efficient management of the administration of human resources.

Concerning the selection of personnel, Article 72 establishes that access to a public post shall be made through the respective merit-based and competitive examination, which evaluates the suitability of the candidates, while Article 73 states that about promotions, the public servant must also pass the established competition.

It is important to note that since the enactment of this law, new processes have been established, so much so that the performance evaluation process was incorporated, to identify and improve the development of personnel, for which Article 87 of the aforementioned regulation established that the objectives of the evaluation would serve as a basis for: "(a) Entry into the Administrative Career; (b) Promotion and dismissal; and, c) Granting of other incentives provided for in this Law or the regulations,



such as honorable mentions, study licenses, scholarships and training courses."

Subsequently, the law was amended, so that on May 12, 2005, with Official Gazette No. 16, the amendment of the new Civil Service and Administrative Career Law came into force, which established in Article 71 that the entry of personnel to a public post shall be carried out through merit-based competition and competitive examination. The same process will be carried out to fill vacancies due to promotions, as established in Article 72 of the aforementioned regulation. Article 89 states that in order to establish efficiency in the public service, the merit and competitive examination system will be applied, guaranteeing the stability of suitable servants.

On October 6, 2010, through Official Gazette Supplement No. 294, the Organic Law of the Public Service, in force to this date, entered into force, which in detail, for the aforementioned regulations, states in its Article 121 that "the public service career will be based on a system of merit and competition, that guarantees the entry and promotion of people to develop professionally in a series of positions that can be exercised in a work career within the same institution".

About the personnel selection process, Article 176 establishes that the selection of the suitable candidate for the job shall be carried out through merit-based competition and competition, as well as promotion and promotion as established in Article 177, paragraph a). It should be noted that the current regulation details from articles 179 to 188 establish the subsystem of recruitment and selection of personnel that is based on public merit and competitive examinations.

From the law issued in 1978 to the present date, the regulations have explicitly denied nepotism as a process of prohibition to hold a public office or position. In the case of access by teaching staff, in 1990 the Law on the Teaching Career and Promotion of the National Teaching Profession was issued, through Official Gazette No. 501, a regulation whose purpose was to protect personnel who exercise teaching. Article 11 of the aforementioned regulation stated that "All teachers shall enter the national education system, through a public merit-based competition and competitive examination." For the year 2000, the Higher Education Law was modified, which was issued on May 15, with Official Gazette No. 77. Article 50 states: "To be a regular professor at a university or polytechnic school, it is necessary to have a university or polytechnic degree, to win the corresponding merit and competitive examination, and to meet the requirements indicated in the respective statutes." Teacher evaluation was also incorporated to measure academic performance annually, as cited in Article 53 of the aforementioned law.

Finally, the Regulations on the Career and Ranking of Professors and Researchers of the Higher Education System, approved by resolution RPC-SO-037-No. 265-2012, on October 31, 2012, by the Council of Higher Education. The purpose of this regulation is to regulate "entry, dedication, stability, remuneration scales, training, improvement, evaluation, promotion, incentives, cessation and retirement." Article 20 states the entry of teaching staff, stating that: "Academic staff entering public and private higher



education institutions must submit their resume with supporting documentation that proves compliance with the requirements and merits such as experience, training, publications and the others required in these Regulations". In the same way, it regulates the requirements for access to academic staff as auxiliary tenured, principal tenured, associate tenured, principal tenured, and principal research tenured, indicating that to achieve this dignity the teacher must go through the corresponding public merit and competitive examination.

This regulation of the teaching ladder, from its chapter III the entry of academic staff, from articles 37 to 47, indicates the process of the corresponding merit and competitive examination that will be carried out by higher education institutions, guaranteeing the suitability of the applicants. Although the regulation aims to regulate and transparency processes, it is also true that clientelism, cronyism, or payment of favors is still present in the hiring processes of personnel in the Ecuadorian public sector.

Despite all the efforts to establish a personnel management system in the public service, it can be said that it has not been possible to achieve a professional structure based on merit and excellence in the development of skills and competencies. On the contrary, the public service has been characterized as the antithesis of a professionalized bureaucracy, through partisan influence, generating a circle of inefficiency (Latin American Association of Public Administration 1987, 56).

Therefore, we can point out that merits go beyond the norm, a change in social and cultural perception is required that focuses on the merits, abilities, competencies, and experience of a person to access positions in the public service.

These aforementioned capacities, competencies, skills, knowledge, and experiences understood in meritocratic processes, remain an arbitrary practice for those who have the power to nominate the ideal candidate to enter the public service. However, with the aforementioned legal provisions, access to public service remains a universal right under the concept of transparency and equal employment opportunities.

## **APPLIED RESEARCH METHOD STUDY**

To apply an exploratory methodology that allows examining the issue of meritocracy at the Central University of Ecuador, it was decided to familiarize itself with the phenomena under study, as well as to identify the important factors to carry out a more in-depth analysis (Blanco Jiménez and Villalpando Cadena 2012, 33).

For the collection of information of the present research, a structured interview was applied as an instrument to obtain data that helped to deepen the knowledge of meritocracy at the Central University of Ecuador, this valuable tool allowed people around the word to express their experiences and experiences about the object of study.

The interviews allowed the broad expression of ideas, under a flexible structure created the illusion



of an informal conversation, but at the same time standardized (Rodríguez García and Cortez Alejandro 2012, 101-2).

As a first stage, 11 open questions were prepared aligned with the central theme and objectives of the research, this instrument was applied to 20 people, including administrative public servants and teachers, who have known the academic and administrative trajectory of the Central University since 2006.

The purpose of the study allowed the sample of twenty people who worked during the period 2006-2017, to cause findings that shone out the ideological positions of the interviewees, therefore, being a study of a social nature, the application of the interview to the sample in question, allowed to study and understand the discursive process based on experiences and knowledge.

One of the advantages of operating small groups was having a thoughtful charge analysis of each of the interviews conducted. Clarifying the contexts and anchor points of the discourse based on meritocracy at the Central University of Ecuador, relating and interpreting the results obtained in the expressions with the object of study.

The questions applied in the interview allowed us to know people's attitudes, ideologies, knowledge, sensations, and thoughts. Teaching and administrative staff of the university who worked from 2006 to 2017 were interviewed. To be able to count on a broader spectrum of participation, seniority, and work activity, this contributed to the results attending to a social phenomenon that is meritocracy, from the Central University of Ecuador.

Being a qualitative study, it allowed that, from the experiences of individuals, communications, and discourses, among others, we can dissect, build, report and interpret the attitude and critical discourse of the administrative and teaching staff in the face of the particular issues of the object of study.

The open questions showed the understanding of the subject, in the face of the politicization and partisanship of the university under an approach of a new public administration that promotes equality, access, and professional growth by merit in the educational labor market.

The interview is an instrumental conversation, an instrumentalization takes place concerning dialogue. Enjoying a good conversation is no longer in itself a goal, but is a means to provide the researcher with descriptions, narratives, and texts for him to interpret and report on according to his research interests (Kvale 2011, 39).

Interviews were conducted from August 6, 2006 to September 4, 2017. This resulted in a broad and detailed survey of information, which made it easier to learn about the experiences and experiences of the interviewees at both the hierarchical and operational levels. Subsequently, each of the interviews was transcribed. As a second part, the data were tabulated and analyzed to study the particularities, experiences, congruences, and contradictions of the speeches and oral expressions of the interviewees, this



gave way to the process of classification and coding, based on the keywords emitted in the discourse, which implied that the categorization and survey of the results obtained are susceptible to content analysis from the recognition of an experience both implicit and explicit. To know and qualify the level of meritocracy that exists in the Central University of Ecuador, which helped to measure the effectiveness of the academic and administrative management applied by the institution in question.

## **DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE**

Discourse analysis, according to Ana Lia Kornblit, involves unraveling the "complex conceptual structures" that are based on people's ideas, beliefs, and feelings, this description is usually complicated as the concepts are intertwined with each other, this implies establishing determined and subjective meanings that show something of society and the environment in which the individual develops.

The discursive technique allows the researcher to explain and interpret the stories individually, but at the same time globally (Kornblit 2007, 9-24). The variety of stories and points of view express individual experiences that prevent the homogenization of the data that quantitatively formulate data collection techniques. Through discourse, it is possible to infer the transparency of the information given, legitimized and processed that influences the person's thinking (Kornblit and Verardi 2007, 118), which goes beyond lived experience.

On the other hand, Foucault, quoted by Íñiguez Rueda, defines discourse becomes: Discourse is a phenomenon of expression, it is the verbal transcription of a synthesis made by another party (...) Discourse conceived in this way is not the manifestation, majestically developed, of a subject who thinks, who knows, and who says it; it is, on the contrary, a set where the dispersion of the subject and its discontinuity with itself can be determined (Íñiguez Rueda 2003, 76).

According to Mikhail Bakhtin, linguistic use in social life is closely linked to the various human activities and dynamics, this reflects the peculiarities of the speaker's thoughts and feelings through discourse, thus defining that there are two discursive genres, the primary or simple one that constitutes the events of everyday life, while the secondary or complex genre is composed as a product of intellectual elaboration (Matus 2007, 134-5).

Discourse analysis is one of the tools that allows, through language as an axis of understanding and study of social processes, diverse in traditions, practices, and culture that allows the perceptions of the interviewees to crystallize. For Antaki, language is the carrier of meanings and ideas in the sense in which the speaker encodes words, in this sense one of the advantages of this methodology is the importance it derives from everyday social action, understanding and learning what people express and say in the framework of a conversation (Íñiguez Rueda 2003, 83, 91).

As it is a methodology applied to a social field, it allows the analysis of discourse as a socio-



discursive practice and with a multidisciplinary approach proposed as an element of communicative interaction, related to social dynamics.

Social and cultural phenomena are components that construct people's discourse, therefore, the use of language allows factors such as meritocracy to be addressed with a focus on equality, democracy, and justice (Universidad de Ibagué 2011, 32).

So much so that discourse analysis is a tool that allows us to investigate and describe, for Michael Stubbs quoted by Íñiguez Rueda, Lupicinio, discourse is: Discourse analysis is a very ambiguous term. I am going to use it in this treatise to refer mainly to the linguistic analysis of spoken or written discourse, which occurs naturally and is coherent with reality.

In general terms, it refers to the attempt to study the organization of language above the sentence or phrase and, consequently, to study larger linguistic units, such as conversation or written text. From this, he deduces that discourse analysis is also related to the use of language in social contexts and, specifically, to the interaction or dialogue between speakers (L. Íñiguez Rueda 2003, 85). As it is understood, discourse is a complex structure that reveals explicit ideas that are easy to detect and other implicit or hidden ideas that force us to unravel ideas and opinions (Zaldua Garoz 2007, 15).

Therefore, the word is the unit of analysis of this type of methodology that qualitatively describes the message expressed, however, the analysis of discourse can be seen as the meaning of the expressions and their relationship with the position of power of the individual (Conde, Fernando; Álamo, Gutiérrez 2009, 28).

Being a qualitative study focused on the social sciences, discourse analysis is a tool that, as can be seen, has several edges such as communication, psychology, and linguistics, in this sense, it can be observed that, in the analysis of the data obtained through this methodology, the interpretation of the language and speech of the interviewees is sought.

Discourse becomes a social practice of the construction of knowledge and knowledge that is defined based on formed experiences. Therefore, if we look at discourse from a meritocratic approach, we can highlight that this methodology is capable of making illegalities and contradictions in governance visible, thus opening the possibility of understanding social subjects, from alternative discourses that originate the problem, allowing us to investigate the impact of discourse in the workplace, through linguistic practices (Stecher 2010, 97; 99).

Therefore, being a qualitative study will allow us to know the nature of the object of study, the word stands out as the only observable reality, and these communication codes allow analyzing and measuring actions, thoughts, relationships, and actions (Sáenz López, Gorjón Gómez and Quiroga 2012, 87-94). This type of analysis requires a good organization of data with a structured approach emphasizing the investigative and speculative that contribute to the interpretation and extraction of findings.



As they are qualitative data, the great variety of responses, experiences, and points of view according to personal experiences, reflects a large amount of data and a second interpretation that explains the common situations and refers to theory and detailed concepts (Gibbs 2012, 20-9).

## **LIMITATIONS OF THE METHODS AND TECHNIQUES USED**

As it is a qualitative research study, the data obtained will be interpreted and broken down, obtaining as a result truths, according to the subject of study; however, they can be elucidated but not adopted, which influences the verification of the empirical ideas obtained, in this sense the qualitative methodology, unlike the quantitative one, makes explicit the production of knowledge instead of excluding variables, as well as the interpretation, subjectivity of the data and reflections on the actions, ideas, feelings, and observations obtained in the context of the research. Therefore, the expansion of data increases the volume in the elaboration of the research, guiding the researcher to discern the information that is considered preponderant for the object of study from the qualitative data obtained, increasing its complexity (Gibbs 2012, 22).

Similarly, qualitative data are usually seen as presumptuous, lacking rigor and control, ridiculing the incongruity in the formulas applied based on social reality, annulling predictive validity and the constructs applied to research planning and foresight. Assuming the statistical analysis of the data collected by studies, descriptive and comparative experiments, and knowledge through measures that possess the truth and reality of the results (Ruiz Olabuénaga 2012, 11-2).

On the other hand, one of the limitations in the methodology of discourse analysis is the subjectivity of the information. From Billig's perspective, messages are ambiguous and effort is required to infer and interpret them, therefore, the role of the researcher is to conduct and apply all kinds of tools that allow interaction with the arguments inherent to what people say and clarify the hidden message.

The legitimacy and validity of information in discourse analysis is one of the great limitations of this methodology (Íñiguez Rueda 2003, 100 and 114). A systematic dichotomy of discourse analysis is the difference between what is manifested and what is hidden, there is no explicit rule or methodology that allows the hidden message to be discovered, the only means that has an impact is the observation and behavior of people, which allows inferring and inducing action from what is not manifested by the interviewee (Íñiguez Rueda 2003, 73).

## **SOME ELEMENTS FOUND**

During the collection of information and from the speeches held by the interviewees, it was possible to infer preliminarily that meritocracy does not guarantee good governance. On the contrary, it was shown that the fact that the Central University of Ecuador does not have the application of mandatory





meritocratic instruments, directly hinders the governance of the university, so during the interviews seven out of twenty people consider that the academic and administrative management of the Central University since 2006 has been moderately effective. since it has been "anchored to official public policies and regulations established by the State", so it was pointed out that the university has a lower "continuous improvement and is advancing in all administrative canons".

For their part, eleven out of twenty people announced that the "Central University has many administrative shortcomings", a "lack of internal instruments" and that the institution works by "people and not by conviction", in this sense it can be assumed that even though the majority of interviewees indicated their dissatisfaction with the academic and administrative management of the Central University of Ecuador, it was observed that compliance and application of the norm under the The conception of academic logics has allowed its evolution, adapting in some way to the demands of the State, even though it is a "long and complicated process".

The interviews under a discursive analysis approach, allowed the interpretation of events, to demonstrate that governance seen as responsible, participatory, and committed action with the environment, is affected since among the reflections of the interviewees it was stated that "the institution has not progressed", despite the "reorganization and restructuring of the administration" this cut in time between 2006-2017 was also affected by the high turnover rate of authorities, administrative and teaching staff, leading to instability and "lack of follow-up in the processes". However, in the words of the interviewees, the criterion was obtained that in "global terms the academic management of the Central University of Ecuador has improved," despite the "shortcomings impregnated in institutional management."

This ideology reflected in the answers of the interviewees demonstrates what Teun A pointed out. Van Dijk's "ideology is related to socially relevant issues (...) that is, with broad domains of social life, for which they often organize our thoughts" (Dijk 1980, 38).

In this same sense, if governance is looked at as a transparent and participatory process with society and public institutions, it can be observed that the interviewees made it known in a homogeneous way that the Central University of Ecuador has transparent processes, but that this is due to the regulatory compliance established in the Organic Law of Transparency and Access to Public Information (LOTAIP). However, "what the law mandates is charged" and it is made known to the public through "lavish events that socialize some of the institution's achievements, but transparency or access to information is not available to the public."

From all that was stated by the interviewees, it can be concluded that the relationship with society and with the private enterprise is still deficit spaces for the Central University of Ecuador. In the same way, discourse analysis is related to the beliefs expressed by the subjects in a social context, therefore, the



interaction of the discourse evidences the inference based on the beliefs, knowledge, and opinions based on the administrative management of the higher education institution.

Therefore, governance is related to the administrative and academic fragility of the Central University of Ecuador, when identifying this factor, the interviewees were asked what processes, from their point of view, would change in order to improve institutional administration, most of them pointed out from their knowledge and experiences that the generation of processes, procedures and controls, it would improve internal communication, organizational culture, the expansion of the academic offer, the construction of a functional organization that establishes the functions and roles of each area and its impact on university management, the hiring of personnel with skills, knowledge and experience so that they can develop effectively in the job position, but above all it was possible to glimpse that the central problem that affects the Central University of Ecuador and that the interviewees made known through their message was the "depoliticization of the university" and "breaking with the political ideologies aligned with the management of the government of the day". These cognitive systems reveal that the discourse expressed by the interviewees is framed in a social context that responds to political and partisan conditions within the university, therefore, the verbal interaction specifies their social position.

With the results obtained during the research, based on the object of the research related to meritocracy, it was detected that even though the State has worked hard in the valorization of human talent, there are currently a series of gaps and non-conformities with the norm, considering that particular interests often take precedence over institutional interests or the common good.

Although the norm has established and standardized certain processes, the current of thought that prevailed over the interviewees was that meritocracy is seen as "a conjectural process" that initially contributed to the incorporation of teaching staff as administrative based on cronyism or the so-called "sponsorship". These currents of thought could be called beliefs, which according to discourse theory are the construction of events, stories, and experiences, among others. Therefore, the expressions used during communication are decoded, analyzed, and interpreted strategically, to infer relevant details during the interview. Thus, "discourse not only expresses or presupposes the knowledge of the speaker but also the belief or knowledge about the knowledge of the receiver or other people" (T. A. Dijk 2002, 6-15).

If meritocracy is understood as an inclusive element that promotes productivity and equal opportunities, during the spontaneous conversations with the interviewees it was possible to observe in the answers that the payment of favors or cronyism is a constant factor in the Central University of Ecuador and general in the institutionality of the public sector. It was unanimously stated that it is an issue "existing in the institution", invalidating the personnel selection process that the University has carried out under the established rules and policies aimed at personal interests. Thus, they pointed out that the "competitions were not transparent, a fact that can be demonstrated with the file of each official or teacher



at the date of the process carried out," which resulted in "delivering appointments without compliance with the requirements and procedures established for the public sector and without the person meeting the required profile of demands and competencies." This controversial discussion made it possible to outline the idea that the lack of application of meritocratic processes established in current regulations, as a process and as an ideology marked in the public institutional culture, affects the administration and competitiveness of the university, transgressing institutional norms, values, and principles.

Another element of meritocracy is efficiency and effectiveness in administrative and academic management since it promotes democracy and commits people and the institution to the generation of experience and knowledge of "should be" and "know how to do", as stated in the previous section.

The relationship of the discourse based on this element is developed under the perspective that effectiveness allows the achievement of institutional objectives, therefore the "trajectory, academic training, and professional experience" related to the job based on merit allows the development of the public entity since it promotes "new and better projects that are achieved through prepared and trained people". therefore, "the incorporation of servants who contribute positively to the fulfillment of institutional objectives" guarantees a true inclusion of personnel under quality criteria that are justified in the selection of the best candidate.

If we see the discourse of the interviewees is based on a not very diverse approach, it is understood that there are common criteria that describe a social context focused on an institutional culture marked in the university. Note that discourse is embodied under a social dimension but not an individual one, this communicative space describes not only what people think, but also what they do (T. A. Dijk 1997, 4) and what they aspire to, this social practice is immersed in the discourse that defines their interests in how to achieve meritocratic processes that positively affect governance.

Contradictorily, another small group of interviewees agreed that meritocracy "does not exist," which is an "administrative concept," is seen as a term "that has been worn out" due to its misuse and application in the public sector. This diversity of points of view denotes that meritocracy in detail as a norm and process could strengthen the development of the staff and therefore of the institution, despite the political interests and the poor applicability of the process has given way to a lack of credibility and legitimacy, even though most people state that meritocracy is effective since it rewards the individual with the greatest competencies, knowledge and skills to be developed in a given position.

This chain of events allowed us to delve into issues related to the personnel who have entered the Central University of Ecuador on merit and who have managed to win the respective competition. At this point, interviews were conducted with people who collaborated at the university and who work for the provision of services and with staff of the institution with appointment.

By having this diversity of reports, it was possible to identify that people who did not maintain a



fixed employment dependency in the institution pointed out "that people with a contract are those who make the most effort and try to move the institution forward" while people who manage to access permanent appointments work out of duty and not out of motivation. therefore they are people who do not make an effort since they have job stability" and unfortunately many of them think that they have "bought the job".

For their part, the appointed personnel said that the rules have generated changes and that by "having greater stability, they have the challenge of working for the institution." These notions of discourse allow us to infer that beyond the type of contractual relationship that the person has with the institution, each individual expresses himself or herself from his or her own interest, experience, and work position, defining and defending his or her ability to access and remain in his or her job.

Finally, the last factor that meritocracy considers is ethics, as a fundamental pillar when it comes to governing, so that unanimously the teachers and the administrative staff interviewed argued that "professional ethics is directly related to professional functions" and the "way of acting of the individual" within the institution so that "its development has a favorable impact on the fulfillment of institutional objectives."

The diversity of meanings, discourses, and emotions allows us to evidence the academic and administrative reality of the Central University, where meritocracy is born in response to a series of social problems and demands, in order to offer transparent selection processes and job growth, however, the chain of facts captured allows us to understand that inequality and cronyism, clientelism or patronage is impoverishing and lowering the level of productivity of the institution, promoting greater inequality, domination and power over the construction of a transparent social order.

Arbitrariness delegitimizes meritocracy as a recruitment technique, breaking the idea of responsibility, respect, and transparency that directly affects the achievement of institutional objectives. As can be evidenced, the different arguments based on the elements of the study, allow us to understand the interaction of the discourses with the different social contexts, the answers obtained during the interviews evidenced referential conditions in a set time, the facts reflected in their expressions made it known that meritocracy appears to be a process embodied under transparent and fair criteria of personnel selection, however, the results show that clientelism is a persistent behavior in the higher education institution.

In this sense, the expressions reflected that the discourse, and not the praxis, was based on previous experiences lived by the interviewees, therefore, the referential knowledge described the phenomena with inconsistencies in space and actions (T. A. Dijk, *Models in memory. The Role of Representations of the Situation in the Discourse Process* 1994, 43; 49).

On the other hand, governance shows ideologically based discourses, in the sense that the new



administration in power is seen as a model of participation that does not work and the lack of transparency constituted in social environments, however, the university is affected by particular interests in academic and administrative management. Therefore, ideological and political beliefs mark a discourse that is immersed in the use of language, collecting experiences of inquiry such as theoretical discourse without foundation and not practical.

## **CONCLUSIVE APPROACHES**

Governance is a form of administration legitimized under the consensus of society, private enterprise, and the State, therefore, the transversal axis of the university in the three edges is fundamental, since it contributes to the development of a responsible and participatory model.

According to what was evidenced in the results obtained, it is shown that the administration of the State of the current government with the generation of new regulations and their implementation has created uncertainty, ignorance, and errors in certain academic and administrative processes, creating government institutions that promote bureaucracy, growth of the state apparatus and non-compliance with the current Law.

It is not yet possible to consider, much less visualize, the academic and administrative advances of the Central University of Ecuador, although it is indeed in a constant process of change, the lack of internal policies and the lack of quality in democracy, have limited the consolidation of governance that responds to institutional needs and objectives.

Therefore, the consolidation of political actors, the public and private business sector, and civil society play important roles in the governance process, since the capacity to lead them generates constantly changing challenges, in this virtue, the interaction between a plurality (Mancebo 2012), means guaranteeing the improvement in academic and administrative processes, which means improving quality, responsibility in spending and guaranteeing democratization and justice in access to university. If we look at the results based on the object of study from the theoretical framework, we can understand that the administration of the Central University of Ecuador can be seen as a relationship of power and domination within the HEI, which response to the lack of openness, responsibility, and participation with social actors, bringing with it the disarticulation of the objectives with legal and social principles.

Thus, if we analyze governance seen from the discourses of the interviewees of the Central University of Ecuador, it must strengthen its administrative management framework under a democratic, fair, and responsible approach around institutional values and principles that guarantee the social participation of its different actors.

By analyzing ideologies, the construction of governance in terms of a methodological, practical, and theoretical approach will promote ideas and their limitations, to establish procedures and processes



that strengthen administration and active citizen participation.

In this framework, the public interest is to promote development through academic and research contributions. Therefore, I dare to conclude that the lack of true institutional governance attracts shortages in meritocratic processes, despite legal advances to promote equal opportunities and to have effective and productive administrative and teaching staff for the institutional management of the Central University of Ecuador.

The plurality attributed in governance will be a determinant that the university will have to generate a process of participation of the State, civil society, and business, guaranteeing democracy and well-being that responds to the demands, interests, and needs of citizens, as Peters would call it "empowerment or participatory government" (Moriconi Bezerra 2011, 72).

On the other hand, if we analyze the administrative processes of the institution of higher education, we can infer that they are discretionary techniques, the sub-processes of human talent such as personnel selection, training, and professional growth it was possible to show that meritocracy is unable to privilege the best talents in an ethical, responsible and transparent way.

This affects the university to create transparent and participatory spaces, generating demotivation in the administrative and teaching staff, which in turn affects the results of public management. Although the discourse of the interviewees aligned that meritocracy is a parameter of income, growth, and promotion, the hidden message made it known that in practice the situation of the person, or the payment of favors, prevails over the performance and skills of people.

This inconsistency affirms the job insecurity in which the personnel selection processes were handled at the Central University of Ecuador. This configuration of the institutional structure and processes limits productivity and therefore delegitimizes the discourse of well-being and citizen participation that promotes governance. From this point of view, we can resolve that meritocracy is a regulated process, but not applied, constituting a "tool that values and scores people's abilities" but not as a mode of university management that seeks to transform personnel selection under a perspective of equal opportunities about work performance.

Therefore, meritocracy is seen as an administrative concept, but not applied, embodied in the discourse of a "revolutionary" government that seeks to reward the best performance. These discourses, often opposed, but immersed under the objects of the study affirm the complex scenario of the Central University of Ecuador, which allows us to discern that the lack of governance and meritocracy respond to management based on the accumulation of power exercised by authorities, officials, and teachers, hindering ethical, responsible and transparent processes that promote a change in the reason for being of the university.



## RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON FINDINGS

To contribute to the construction of governance and implementation of meritocratic processes, based on the objectives of the research developed, it is important to analyze an alternative of academic and administrative management that allows working together with the State, society, and private enterprise, leaving aside the structural administration focused on public enterprise, which limits the academic impact that the Central University could have as a university of Ecuadorian civil society.

For this reason, governance must be analyzed and embodied as an approach to inter-institutional cooperation in networks, that is, to build spaces for social, business, and state participation that guarantee transparent and legitimate processes, under consensual and formal decisions by the different actors, understanding the extent of their responsibility, role, and function.

Governance is strongly threatened by the politicization of higher education, as well as by the interests of partisan and even personal groups, according to the speeches of the interviewees, which generates a break with the approach of technical administration that works in favor of citizens in a consensual and transparent manner. In this sense, plurality, the design of policies, and the development of normative bodies will contribute to better performance, fostering an institutional culture of values based on democracy, and ethics, that is, going beyond a discourse that promotes participation and justice.

It is to recognize the need to establish policies, processes, and norms that promote the creation of networks that converge with public and private needs, solidifying and legitimizing development and its scope that, as a system of universities, these management processes are seen as the new administration should be conceived as alternatives for improvement but not as a solution to clientelism.

Therefore, it is recommended to build a culture and institutional procedure based on the principles and values of the Central University of Ecuador, which eliminates party domination and power rooted in the internal leaders of the day. These polluting elements limit effective governance that allows the development and triangulation of social, business, and state actors.

Considering a cultural change and working in a harmonious institutional environment for administrators and teachers, will legitimize a responsible management of the university and its "raison d'être". The rationalization in the management of the institution of higher education will collaborate with the prevailing conflict that the academic and administrative processes are going through, the homogenization of thoughts and total harmonization of decisions is not recommended, it is suggested to analyze the causes and effects that evidence the legitimate results by developing and maintaining technical processes, that is, to generate processes with institutional approaches attached to the norm and active participation will break ideological positions historically marked in the Central University of Ecuador.

Working from the academic and administrative side in the creation of a set of indicators that allow measuring the impact, transparency, responsibility, and participation of the university in society, will



contribute to developing effective management environments, through agile and flexible processes, which eliminate bureaucracy and promote governance, democracy, and equality, in response to the demands of the academic community.

It is also important to rebuild the regulatory framework and internal policies of the university. That is, to have rules that promote equal opportunities, teacher selection, entry, growth, and promotion. This will give way to the development of personnel focused on serving citizens, who reflect behaviors oriented towards the valorization of human capital.

The optimization of performance will make it possible to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in the labor development of administrators and teachers, without neglecting the moral dimension that establishes incorporating and strengthening institutional values, this turn of management and ideology and behavior, so much so that the reconfiguration of the management of the UCE can result in a sustainable administration with a view to citizen participation. that allows the impact to be measured through real and observable indicators. Therefore, human talent systems must be focused on fair, transparent, and equitable conditions, which eliminate the patronage or cronyism present in the hiring of officials and/or teachers within the institution.

The proposed changes must be applied and controlled by the Human Talent Management Area, within the university, thus allowing transparent and meritocratic personnel recruitment processes to be evidenced, which do not respond to particular interests.

These factors threaten governance, the reflection of an organizational culture and structure, corrupted by discretionary and particular purposes of power groups, excludes the projection of a culture of service, democratic and transparent. For this reason, it is advisable to promote meritocracy, work on changes in ideology, establish work practices that promote order and stability, will allow change from the job in which the person develops, therefore responsibly taking advantage of the knowledge, skills, and abilities of officials and/or teachers will guarantee the consolidation of institutional objectives. of the work area and the university.

These alternatives for institutional improvement will contribute to quality management, warmth and direct transparent and responsible processes so that it will be possible to work on achieving fair governance that promotes meritocratic processes embodied in an institutional reality and not only in a university discourse.

Therefore, this set of recommendations invites us to generate a proposal for a new management model, reconstruction from all academic and administrative aspects, which not only gives society, companies, administrative staff, teachers, and the State an image and reputation of an efficient organizational model, but also generates a change that grants an institutional "must be" based on commitment and the common good that is the fulfillment of the mission.





The organization of a new approach to academic and administrative management will make it possible to provide a public service such as higher education, under a concept of responsibility, well-being, and production, thus forcing the construction of mechanisms and controls that promote meritocracy under orientations of discipline, effectiveness, efficiency and labor responsibility. These reformist processes propose clear and effective mechanisms that require the active participation of internal and external actors, under norms of responsibility and commitment to citizens, inserted in an institutional culture that is characterized by social welfare.



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