

 <https://doi.org/10.56238/alookdevelopv1-031>

Breno Jaime Amaral Souto

Social services
Trainee at the Court of Auditors of SC,
in Engineering and Knowledge Management
Graduate Program in Engineering and Knowledge
Management – Federal University of Santa Catarina
(UFSC) Florianópolis – Brazil
E-mail: ssoutobreno@gmail.com

Marta Silva Neves

Pedagogue
Corporate University and
Social and Environmental Management
Graduate Program in Engineering and Knowledge
Management – Federal University of Santa Catarina
(UFSC) Florianópolis – Brazil
E-mail: martaneves242@gmail.com

Adriana Falcão Loth

Psychologist
Development Area
Organizational Human
Graduate Program in Engineering and Knowledge
Management – Federal University of Santa Catarina
(UFSC) Florianópolis
E-mail: adrianafloth@gmail.com

Ernestina da Silva Alves

Psychologist
Recruitment and Selection Consultant
Public Servant in the Area of Organizational Human
Development of Jonville City Hall
E-mail: tina.psyco@gmail.com

Patricia de Sá Freire

Knowledge Management
Professor of the Department of
Knowledge Engineering at UFSC

Graduate Program in Engineering and Knowledge
Management – Federal University of Santa Catarina
(UFSC) Florianópolis
E-mail: patriciadesafreire@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The Knowledge Society passes through a complex, competitive and dynamic world portrayed in technology, globalization, reconfiguration of productive practices, and work flexibility, among other aspects. For survival and development, organizations started to work in networks with a view to co-producing more effective results. However, not all networks produce the expected results. The authors of this study identified in the literature the construct "learning networks", defined as network learning by Louise Knight (2002). 5 stages of corporate maturity of inter-organizational networks, and to evolve between them, multilevel learning, proposed by corporate universities, is necessary. In this sense, corporate universities will contribute to the improvement of multiple actors, stimulating involvement, involvement, learning, production of knowledge, meanings of products, results, and businesses. The article aims to identify a public knowledge gap about the relationship between corporate universities and learning networks for their application in the sector. An exploratory-bibliographic study was carried out based on an integrative review and content analysis. few studies on the relationship between the constructs of corporate universities and learning networks and the application in the sector of collaborative networks and public knowledge, for the creation and learning of organizational learning.

Keywords: corporate University, learning networks, Public sector

1 INTRODUCTION

The Knowledge Society goes through a complex, competitive and dynamic world portrayed in technology, globalization, reconfiguration of productive practices, and work flexibility. These demands, pointed out by contemporary society, foster education for a solid performance in structuring for work.

In organizational environments, strategies are sought to address these aspects, including the development and performance in internal and external networks, the co-creation and co-production of more effective results for the actors involved, and the organizations in which they operate (Kempner-Moreira and Freire, 2020).

Regarding networks, five stages of maturity were identified by Kempner-Moreira and Freire (2020), starting with the exchange network and reaching the learning network, which leads to the constant learning of all its actors. The authors of this project identified in the literature the construct "learning networks", defined as *network learning* by Louise Knight (2002).

This construct is defined as learning performed by a group of networked organizations as a group, and not only by an organization of the network in isolation (Knight, 2002). In addition, the focus of study for the learning of a set of subjects whose transformations entail or not in the development of research in the corporate universities of the respective organizations that integrate.

The term Corporate University (UC) created by Meister (1998, p.8), configures UC as a strategic umbrella for the development and education of employees, customers, and suppliers, seeking to optimize organizational strategies, in addition to a learning laboratory.

In this sense, the UC has the opportunity to contribute to the connections of actors and their participation in networks, stimulating engagement, involvement, learning, knowledge production, and improvement of products, services, and results for the business.

According to Antonelli, Cappiello, and Pedrini (2013, p.1) the UC "may represent a choice consistent with a strategy, to diversify and expand the utility company, in increasingly deregulated and contestable markets."

The diversity of public institutions promotes diverse experiences of professionalization to the public sector, presenting themselves in different classifications, as reported by Ranzini and Bryan (2017): government schools (organizations linked directly or indirectly to the state apparatus, financed and/or maintained by public resources); institutions of higher education (promote courses of formal education in public administration and other courses in the field of public. some schools of government fall into this category); Corporate Universities (public/private sector for profit with the objective of developing competencies and valuing the organizational culture through corporate education activities); Non-governmental organizations (institutions not linked to the state apparatus, more than offering courses focused on public issues for various categories of public agents, politicians and citizens); party foundations (linked to political parties, aiming to promote education and political and citizen training for party militants and the population, in general).

However, Freire (2019) points out that "there are difficulties in implementing UC models, given the cultural obstacles found in organizations" (p. 12). Given this, the importance of the

organization's understanding of what is wanted with the UC is emphasized and once identified there is a need to exhaust the various forms of communication allowing users to be fed back on this culture.

Vargas and Abbad (2006, p.145), approach education as "programs or sets of educational events of medium and long duration that aim at the continuous training and professional qualification of employees".

The Training, Development, and Education (TD&E) that broadly comprises the survey of needs, planning, execution, and evaluation, inserted in an organizational context according to Borges-Andrade (1997, 2002), consider components of the organization influence and are influenced by these processes.

In the public sector, the formation of networks, whether intra or intra-organizational, is fundamental to partnerships, collaboration programs, joint projects, and continuous interaction between internal and external actors.

In his thesis, Wilber (2020, p.42) highlights that the public sector has also deserved attention from researchers in the field of inter-organizational networks since they are determinants for the realization of public policies and the promotion of cooperation between governmental organizations to access external resources.

From the reflections provoked by the discipline and experience of the proponent group of this research project, it is not noticed, so far, studies that explain the development of research in UC and the relationship of research with learning networks.

This aspect aroused the attention of the authors of the project as a challenge to assumptions to be verified. Thus, the theoretical gap described leads to the question: "How can learning networks influence the effective implementation of UC in public sector organizations?".

2 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

It was qualitative research, which according to Creswell (2010, p. 26) "is a means to explore and to understand the meaning that individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem".

The nature of this study was classified as theoretical, which according to Demo (2000), is dedicated to restructuring theories, ideas, and concepts, to improve theoretical foundations. A content analysis was also carried out which, according to Bardin (2011, p. 30) "Content analysis (it would be better to speak of content analysis), is a very empirical method, dependent on the type of "speech" to which it is dedicated and the type of interpretation that is intended as an objective."

The exploratory-bibliographic study is aimed at identifying the relationship between the UC and the research, and an integrative review is carried out with the following constructs: learning networks and corporate university. The survey was conducted in an electronic database: Scopus; Web

of Science; Scielo; Base of Theses and Dissertations EGC/UFSC. For the search process, the terms in the title, abstract, and keywords were considered, considering the following search strategy *TITLE-ABS-KEY ("corporate * universit *") AND (collaboration OR cooperation OR co-production) AND (learning AND network *')*). Regarding eligibility, studies focusing on the public sector and open access were adopted as inclusion criteria.

Regarding the exclusion criteria, studies aimed at the private sector and that were not related to corporate education were not considered. In addition to the studies found in the systematic search, 02 documents related to the constructs researched were included, by indication of a specialist. Chart 2 lists the selected articles and the respective databases used in the systematic literature search.

Table 2 – Quality of articles selected in the systematic literature search

| Bases | Total |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Scielo | 03 |
| Scopus | 16 |
| Web Of Science | 04 |
| Other identified documents | 02 |
| Total: | 25 |

Source: Prepared by the authors (2021).

The result of the exploratory-bibliographic study gave rise to the frame of reference presented in the next section. To organize the references, Medley Software was used to manage the bibliography, using an Excel spreadsheet for tabulation and classification of the data found.

3 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Initially, training in companies was carried out by a team member or supervisor, inserting new employees into the context and procedures of the work (Bell et al., 2017). As companies realize that training people adds tangible benefits, such as the average cost of operation being reduced by execution time; the costs of materials for the reduction of waste and defects; the costs of improving the flow of products from industry to the consumer; the overall costs of creating a "psychological climate" in employees Mcgehee and Thayer (1962), organizations begin to create specific units to develop this function and enable employees to develop skills necessary to perform functions, routines, standards, and tasks (Barley, 2002)

There is no consensus in the literature on when effectively these units responsible for training appeared in companies, and there are several versions. Let's look at a few. Paton et al. (2012) report that it is with the creation of *corporate colleges* in the DuPont and Edison organizations in North

America in the nineteenth century (Paton et al., 2012). Morin and Renaud (2004) state that the first unit was created in the 1920s when General Motors acquired a night school that trained workers in the automobile industry.

The General Motors Institute had as its main focus the training of engineering and management skills. Allen (2014) states that they begin with World War II, with the creation of Northrop University to aid in the war effort. Gould (2005) points out that the origin was a program offered by General Electric in the 1950s. Andresen and Lichtenberger (2007) mention the emergence for the first time, in 1955, with the founding of Disney University.

Pasos and Ruiz (2013) state that the emergence took place in 1960 with McDonald's Hamburger University, followed by other companies such as IBM, Disney, General Motors, Motorola, AT&T, Ford and Boeing. Although there are several versions for the emergence, what we have consensus in the literature is that at the end of the last century and the beginning of this, these educational units in companies had great growth, and began to be named Corporate Universities - UCs. UCs proliferated in the United States in the 1990s and in Europe and Asia in the following decade (ALLEN, 2014). Meister (1999), who popularized the name UC, said that this phenomenon exceeds the number of academic universities until the year 2010, a fact verified by Chernykh and Parshikov (2016).

In addition, the number of conferences, consultancies, and publications has grown continuously (Paton et al., 2012; Pasos and Ruiz, 2013). Regardless of how the UC was understood, named, or appropriated, it is understood that companies over time adopted a way to make people who produced their products or perform their services, make deliveries with more quality, lower cost, and greater competitiveness. Some characteristics differentiate training and development from the corporate university, according to Hourneaux et al.

Another difference cited by Hourneaux et al. (2008) is about UC versus corporate education, where the first is the representative element, that is, the unit, and the second is the process or the way this unit is used.

To promote the collective learning of essential knowledge through structural levels such as operational, tactical, and strategic, also considering the individual, group, organizational and societal interests, Freire (2019, p. 36) identifies through the literature in chronological order, the seven different guidelines and the respective characteristics of UC:

Table 1 - Characteristics of corporate university

| Author (Date) | Guidelines | UC Features |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Allen (2002) | Level of Activities Involved | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational training/training • Training/training and management and leadership development Executive • Courses that allow you to obtain some university credits • Package of courses that allows you to obtain a degree at the university |
| Rademakers (2005) Margherita and Secundo (2009) | Focus strategic of the program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School – focus on task – the goal of improving the efficiency of the individual • College – focus on delivery – the goal of aligning organizational goals with individual skills • University – focus on human capital development – the goal of co-create and co-produce for the implementation of the strategy |
| | Focus strategic gives UC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competence and development • Change management • External customer (end customer, user, citizen) • Strategic business • Academic research |
| Abel and Li (2012) | Archetypes of UC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training department • E-learning platform • Corporate Universities • <i>Stakeholder university</i> |
| | Factors of UC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment and execution • Development of skills to support business needs • Learning and Performance Evaluation • Partnership with academia and technology to support learning |
| Antonelli, Cappiello and Pedrini (2013) Pacheco et al. (2012) | Scope of the content Offered | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Generalist •Administrative •Operational. |
| | Management of the knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational memory – Focus on content •Organizational memory – Focus on the process |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of critical knowledge • KM Processes • ICT Strategies • Communication techniques • Knowledge systems • Knowledge governance – Learning and leadership |

Source: Freire (2019)

It is also appropriate, from the above, and within the view of the authors, to understand the definition of UC. For Phillips, (1999) A process where all levels of employees, and sometimes customers and suppliers, participate in a variety of experiences to improve job performance and increase learning for business impact. Allen (2002, p. 29) in turn, defines UC as "an educational entity as a strategic tool intended to support the organization in achieving its mission by conducting activities that cultivate learning, knowledge and wisdom, both at the individual and organizational level."

For Renaud Coulon (2008) UC is a generic name given to educational frameworks based on organizations (private and public, commercial and non-commercial), to help implement strategies of the organization.

Corroborating with Chin T., Yang Y., Zhang P., Yu X., and Cao L. (2019) UCS is according to the authors, corporate social innovation, as they collaborate beyond the development of human capital thus spreading critical knowledge among actors, allowing an interrelationship with local institutions and communities, and can be an innovation strategy co-creating products and processes for the collectivity and the environment.

Meister (1999) was one of the first authors to write on the subject highlighting the emergence of a non-hierarchical, leaner, and more flexible organization, the new focus of organizations, according to the author would be on the capacity of employability, thus making fundamental the change in the global education market. The author also bases the corporate education model on 5 pillars: the emergence of flexible organization, by processes and horizontalization, the emergence of knowledge management, volatility of information and obsolescence of knowledge, focus on employability, and change in the general education market.

It should also be noted that corporate education should align with the organization's strategies. Rhéaume and Gardoni (2016) corroborate this understanding, identifying UC as a strategy or an interactive engineering method that allows the transfer of information to employees, as well as allows senior management to learn from them.

According to Kempner (2020, p. 62), "organizations need learning to renew their strategies, materialize innovation and produce results." This innovation strategy is considered a valuable investment to strengthen the skills of workers and thereby increase the feeling of indebtedness and gratitude for the benefits of learning, raising the normative commitment of the worker.

In this sense, Elia and Poce (2010) bring an interesting reflection on the current world of learning within organizations, especially in the complementarity of the physical and online dimensions. They highlight the effective role of important collaboration tools, learning management systems, and experiences to develop imagination in the most varied ways possible, aimed at learning. They highlight the *Stakeholder University model*, developed by Margherita and Secundo (2009).

As an effective response to the critical challenges identified in implementing thriving learning experiences. As described by Freire (2019), the Stakeholder University model is related to the penultimate stage of the UCR model - Corporate University in the network, followed only by the UCR stage, which goes further, addressing in more depth the role of technology and collaboration for learning and the importance of network learning for the maturity of the corporate education system.

Figure - Stages of evolution from UC to UCR model



Source: Freire et. (2016b)

Still connecting the main constructs of this research – corporate universities and learning networks – it was found in Kempner-Moreira and Freire (2020) the identification of five stages of maturity of the networks, the last and most advanced being the stage called learning network, in which the maturity of the network leads to the constant learning of all its actors in a very fluid way. According to the authors, it is = important that the networks evolve from the later stages to reach the level of learning, where the network achieves more effective results for all stakeholders involved.

It is perceived that learning networks are attributed to great impacts on the evolution of organizations, driven especially by corporate universities when they assume their strategic role. That is, improving the effectiveness of collaborative technologies will require aligning the design of learning environments with corporate and shared cultures and visions.

In this sense, for Kempner-Moreira and Freire (2020a, p. 63-64) the place of learning, as well as the workplace, "is defined by the nature of our relationships with other students, teachers, and administrators, as well as the learning agenda, structures, and outcomes."

The authors ask about the learning agenda and the role of information technology in defining this agenda. Still, how the university is structured to support learning, and to what degree information technology strengthens (or weakens) its organizational foundations?

And how the programs defined the desired outcomes or university experience and to what extent e-learning enriches that experience. Thus, Kempner-Moreira and Freire (2020a) provoke, stating that networks must advance from the simple discussion and exchange of information and experiences to effective collaboration between network actors and with actors from other networks, seeking to develop internal and external solutions and results. Information technology can bridge the perception gap between learning and working with vicious or virtuous cycles.

If information technology is used only to standardize, standardize, and quantify the learning process, e-learning often results in a vicious cycle that creates a work vision void of purpose, performance, and creativity. If learning technologies are applied to encourage agility, talent, and research, e-learning can result in a virtuous cycle that leads to a workplace definition strengthened by innovation, passion, and value.

Kempner-Moreira and Freire (2020b) and Mozzato and Bitencourt (2018) recall that the shared identity, represented by similar values, perceptions, context, purposes, and cognitions of the network organizations contribute to the success of their interactions.

Wiewora, Smidt, and Chang (2019) corroborate the fact that shared mental models promote the connection of the various levels of learning, from the individual to the network level. Concerning research within corporate universities, the importance of partnerships between companies and universities for social evolution has emerged (Yassi *et. al*, 2010; Elia and Pocê, 2010; Bessagnet *et al*, 2005)

In turn, Yassi *et. al*. (2010) points out three classifications related to the partnership between companies and universities to conduct research: the good, the bad, and the done. For them, the good side of these partnerships lies mainly in the encouragement to promote the public good, in the translation of knowledge into policies and practices, adding value to society. The bad may lie in the fact that members of the community perceive themselves as means for researchers to obtain funds for research and career advancement. And finally, the ugly is described as a sad trend in company-university partnerships, in which researchers are victims of conflicts of interest, even if they deny their existence. Universities must therefore take much clearer positions to prohibit research arrangements in partnership with funds that threaten social good or endanger sacred facets of university life. And universities must be prepared to act, with compassion,

But decisively, when the boundaries of academic integrity are extended by researchers whose financial or career interests blind them to the implications of their actions (Yassi *et. al*, 2010).

The literature researched and presented here evidenced the importance of collaborative and learning networks for the creation of organizational knowledge and that corporate universities should incorporate the environments and guidelines of these network stages constituting themselves into corporate universities in the network.

4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study developed a framework to analyze, from theoretical qualitative research "How can learning networks influence the effective implementation of UC in public sector organizations?". To reach the research question, a search was performed on the following platforms: Scielo, Scopus, Web Of Science, and other documents identified with a total of 25 articles.

The main results found in the research were: there is no consensus in the literature on when effectively these units responsible for training appeared in companies; the seven different guidelines and the respective characteristics of UC, it was also identified those five stages of maturity of the networks of the authors Kempner-Moreira and Freire (2020).

After conducting the integrative literature review and analyzing the results, it was concluded that the themes of corporate universities and learning networks are new, both for academic and non-academic researchers, since studies on Corporate Universities date from the end of the decade of 90 (Meister, 1998) and that of learning networks from the beginning of 2000 (Knight, 2002). The present theoretical survey identified a theoretical gap in the relationship between the two terms and their application in the public sector.

The barriers encountered by the researchers are related to few publications related to the theme, especially in the public sector, as well as research conducted and applied, primarily in the public service.

The theoretical survey also showed the importance of collaborative and learning networks for the creation of organizational knowledge, pointing out the need for corporate universities to incorporate the environments and guidelines of network internships to promote corporate universities in the network.

In addition, it is recommended to continue this study through the application of field research, to be applied to the public sector, to verify in practice how the implementation of corporate universities in the public area has taken place.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The present work was carried out with the support of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel - Brazil (CAPES) - Financing Code 001.

REFERENCES

- Antonelli, G. A. C.; Cappiello G. B. C.; Pedrini G. A. C. (2013). The Corporate University in the European utility industries. **Utilities Policy**, v. 25, 33 – 41.
- Bardin, L. (2011). **Análise de conteúdo**. São Paulo: Edições 70.
- Borges-Andrade, J. E.; Abbad, G. (1996). Treinamento no Brasil: reflexões sobre suas pesquisas. **Revista de Administração**, 31(2), p. 112-125.
- Barley, K. (2002). Corporate University, Structures That Reflect Organizational Cultures. In: ALLEN, M. (Ed.). **The Corporate University Handbook: Designing, Managing and Growing a Successful Program**. New York: Amacom.
- Bell, B.; Tannenbaum, S.; Ford, J.; Noe, R.; Kraiger, K. (2017). 100 years of training and development research: What we know and where we should go. **The Journal of applied psychology**, v. 102, n. 3, p. 305.
- Chin T., Yang Y., Zhang P., Yu X., Cao L. (2019). Co-creation of social innovation: Corporate universities as innovative strategies for Chinese firms to engage with society. **Sustainability** 11(5):1438, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/su11051438>
- Creswell, J. W. W. **Projeto de pesquisa: métodos qualitativo, quantitativo e misto**. 2. ed. Porto Alegre: Bookman, 2010.
- Freire, P. S. et al. (2016a). Universidade Corporativa em Rede: Considerações Iniciais para um Novo Modelo de Educação Corporativa. **Revista Espacios**. v. 37, n. 5.
- Freire, P.S.; Dandolini, G.; Souza, J.A.de; Silva, S.M. da. (2016b). Processo de implantação da Universidade Corporativa em Rede (UCR). **Revista Espacios**. v.37, n.23.
- Freire, P. de S.; Silva, T. C.; Souza, J. A. (org.) (2019). Gestão do Conhecimento para a Aceleração da Curva de Aprendizagem: um relato do plano de melhoria do processo de integração de uma das maiores organizações de software do Brasil. Curitiba: CRV.
- Freire, P. de S.; Silva, T. C.; Bresolin, G. G. (org.) (2019). **Universidade Corporativa em Rede: diretrizes iniciais do modelo**. Curitiba: CRV.
- Rhéaume L., Gardoni M. (2016). Strategy-making for innovation management and the development of corporate universities. **International Journal on Interactive Design and Manufacturing (IJIDeM)**, v. 10, n. 1, p. 73-84.
- Kempner-Moreira, Freire, P. (2020a). Redes Interorganizacionais de Aprendizagem para a Segurança Pública. **Revista Do Instituto Brasileiro De Segurança Pública (RIBSP)** – ISSN 2595-2153, 4(8), 59-77.
- Kempner-Moreira, Freire, P. (2020b). The Five Stages of Evolution of Interorganizational Networks. **Journal of Information and Knowledge Management**, v. 19, n.03.
- Knight, L. (2002). Network learning: Exploring learning by interorganizational networks. **Human Relations**, v. 55, n. 4, p. 427–454.
- Mcgehee, W.; Thayer, P. W. (1962). **Training: adiestramiento y formación profesional**. Madrid: River.
- Meister, J. (1998). **Corporate universities: lessons in building a world-class workforce**. 2ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Ranzini, M. de S. e Bryan, N.A.P. (2017, jun). Capacitação e formação para o setor público e os modelos de escola de governo no Brasil. **Revista do Serviço Público**. 68, 2
DOI:<https://doi.org/10.21874/rsp.v68i2.1004>.

Vargas, M. R. M.; Abbad, G. S. (2006). Bases Conceituais em Treinamento, Desenvolvimento e Educação –TD&E. Em: Borges-Andrade, J. E.; Abbad, G. S.; Mourão, L. (Orgs.). **Treinamento, Desenvolvimento e Educação em Organizações e Trabalho: fundamentos para a gestão de pessoas**. 1. ed. Porto Alegre: Artmed, p. 137- 158.

Yassi A., Dharamsi S., Spiegel J., ROJAS A., Dean E., Woollard R. (2010). The good, the bad, and the ugly of partnered research: Revisiting the sequestration thesis and the role of universities in promoting social justice. **International Journal of Health Services** 40(3):485-505. DOI:
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2190/HS.40.3.f>