

Entrepreneurial trajectories in people with disabilities: Characteristics and conditioning factors through case studies

Trayectorias emprendedoras en personas con discapacidad: Características y condicionantes a través de estudios de caso

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Background

People with disabilities are included in groups at risk of inclusion when entering the labor market, anchored in the barriers and difficulties generated by the condition of disability itself. The scientific data indicates lower employment rates and a situation of inequality marked by qualitative and quantitative indicators, which require the validation of the guarantees and rights of the group, in a context that respects the use of ethical intervention standards from the professional guidance services. In this framework, entrepreneurship is situated as a job opportunity linked to demographic, psychosocial and contextual factors anchored linked to processes of construction of professional and training trajectories, which places the bases of the configuration of entrepreneurial professional projects from a systemic perspective and ecological. Among the aspects involved we find: motivation, concerns, empowerment, work experience, external support and accessibility to financial resources. At the same time, the entrepreneurial career and the performance of the entrepreneurial role require the implementation of specific and personal competences, which are located in the professional trajectory such as leadership, creativity and self-esteem, as well as other psychological ones linked to the business context. , planning and decision making. All of them lay the foundations for professional identity, training and the necessary skills for entrepreneurship.

Aims

The purpose of the research is to analyze the characteristics and conditioning factors of entrepreneurial professional development of people with disabilities in socio-community settings. With this intention, professional, training and life trajectories, motivations and conditioning factors and perceived needs are analyzed in depth. A perspective based on the exploration of personal and professional-business construction is adopted, to obtain the keys and proposals for improvement in training and guidance interventions in the area of social entrepreneurship.

Method & Procedures

Case studies and life stories are applied to analyze the foundations of career construction and the emergence of the business idea from the condition of disability. We work with four cases on professional/training/life trajectories, strengths, and obstacles and barriers encountered. The cases are described and the stories intersect, presenting entrepreneurship as an advantage for professional development, within a framework of solidarity and social support. The cases are selected looking for a structural representativeness through the application of criteria, such as: the recognized disability, the variety and the balance of personal characteristics, making use of ethical considerations that guarantee the elaboration and treatment of the data. Life story is used as a technique for collecting information, through 12 interviews structured in three phases. The data is analyzed based on previous codes, the result of the field work and the review, and constitute the categories and subcategories of the study dimensions, working a mainly deductive category system. An analysis of each personal history is carried out and subsequently the material obtained with the FODA analysis is triangulated, maintaining a constant work process with the informants for the construction, analysis and editing of their stories.

Results & discussion

The description of life stories allows us to visualize the professional and training trajectories of entrepreneurs with disabilities, through their speeches and to establish their characteristics, motivations and perceived difficulties. Intrinsic motivations lay the foundations for the development of social projects anchored in: empty niches, the baggage of experience, the entrepreneurial spirit, the search for independence and opportunities; and on extrinsic motivations based on income. Both are perceived as strengths and an opportunity to resolve inequality in the labor market. In his speeches, the informants highlight the advantages of flexibility are highlighted, as well as the development of personal competences, the importance of learning and innovation, and the development of communicative and emotional competences when building entrepreneurial professional projects. Likewise, it is evident that disability generates physical, visual and auditory barriers, along with economic barriers that are related to how the competition of products in the market and the characteristics of the labor insertion processes that they face disabled people. The first are solved with strategies such as teamwork, decentralization of tasks and functions, and adaptations to contexts. The latter require solutions such as lowering costs and marketing, and optimal knowledge of the labor context (market) in which they are inserted. Ideas arise such as the incorporation of the figure of the mentor and the need to study market changes, as well as to respond to the needs for economic advice and the lack of guidance in self-management and promotion of the entrepreneurial professional project.

Conclusion

Some keys to entrepreneurial success are concluded, highlighting forms of solidarity economic and business development, and evidencing their contribution to social transformation; it is also concluded that orientation and training for entrepreneurship form a key tandem to stimulate an entrepreneurial career, and qualitative methodology is a powerful tool for reflection and personal/social transformation. Specifically, it concludes the existence of a transfer of skills learned in the life / career path towards the entrepreneurial project. The presence of business ideas that takes place in the framework of empty niches that provide community services in the context of the solidarity economy is also verified. These are supported by the contributions of new technologies, specific skills, experience in the sector, the ability to learn and recognize opportunities, and socio-emotional skills. Potentials based on interests for innovation, the forms of entrepreneurship linked to associative and cooperative environments, the exercise of career management skills and the concern to learn and be self-taught are verified. The capacities of people with disabilities in entrepreneurship are evidenced through professional/vital trajectories, as well as from the motivations and conditioning factors in the personal and professional development processes of the group. These factors constitute the keys to the success of entrepreneurship in the sector and an opportunity to face inequality in the labor market. They would also contribute to social justice, through actions of professional orientation, which lay the foundations for promoting public policies for services and institutions that work in a coordinated and collaborative manner in favor of equality. These conclusions help align inclusive policies and proposals for social, psychological, and guiding intervention based on equity and social justice.

Keywords: case study, characteristics of the entrepreneur, disability, entrepreneurial career, social entrepreneurship, socio-labor inclusion

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