

Science, Innovation, and Control of COVID-19

La Ciencia, la Innovación y el enfrentamiento a la Covid – 19

Dr. C.Jorge Núñez Jover^{1*} <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7245-5476>

¹President of the STS+I at the University of Havana. Academic coordinator of the Network for Knowledge Management and Innovation for Local Development (GUCID), Ministry of Higher Education.

*Corresponding author: georgerafael1949@gmail.com

Received: 02/08/2020

Accepted: 16/08/2020

I would like to thank my colleagues at journal *Challenge of Management*, from *Ignacio Agramonte Loynaz* University of Camagüey for the opportunity to make some introductory comments in the second issue of 2020.

For years, the Network for Knowledge Management and Innovation for Local Development (GUCID), adjoined to the Ministry of Higher Education, has kept a fruitful relationship with *Challenges...* These ties are based, among other reasons, on the same goal of multiplying the contributions of our universities to form human talent, science, technology, and innovation with a view on local development.

More specifically, both GUCID and *Challenges...* have tried to study and display the creativity deployed by Cuba, the people, the government, and the scientific community to fight the novel coronavirus. This issue is a proper example of the above.

The second issue of 2020 is also a sample of the relentless effort made by the journal to reach higher levels, now through a program of comprehensive development that includes the bilingual edition of full articles, starting in 2020. In addition to it, the journal will be published every four months from 2021 on; achieve complementation of reviewing peers using SciELO to enhance peer reviewing and editing; have a more systematic editing process of issues; and more. Within a changing context, *Challenges of Management* and GUCID are joining efforts.

In that sense, certain transformations taking place in Cuba are worth mentioning, since they will have an impact on higher education, as well as in our shared goal of strengthening local development engagement.

As we are succeeding in our arduous fight against COVID 19, the Cuban government is pushing for the implementation of pending agreements taken at the Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC). This process will speed up important economic and social transformations, always from the perspective of a nation defined as independent, sovereign, socialist, democratic, prosperous, and sustainable.

As part of on-going institutionalizing changes, the nation has adopted new policies to Encourage Local Development, whose implementation is expected to be fulfilled by means of the national strategy, aiming to create stronger municipalities to act the main local institution, with the necessary autonomy, and a solid economic and productive base, according to their potentialities.

This policy includes a key tool to make progress within the process of decentralizing competences, resources, and decisions, which will produce a remarkable increase in the relevance of municipalities. Universities and their affiliates in the municipalities are expected to be the key players of these changes.

Without a doubt, *Challenges...* and GUCID will embrace these transcendental changes with renovated grounds for stronger collaboration.

Several aspects stand out regarding the present issue. As expected, the UC, in collaboration with other organizations and professionals in the province, assumed the academic and moral duty of tackling COVID 19.

To meet the challenge, in response to the petition of the Council of Defense and the Ministry of Public Health in the Province, the UC set up a research work

group with the goal of undertaking the COVID 19 challenge. It was made of several subgroups, which produced results such as, analysis of local statistical information of health care, physical-mathematical models describing time-related behavior of the pandemic in the province, and optimization and automation of assurance processes, led by doctors González Torres, Héctor Sánchez Vargas, Julio Madera Quintana, and others. The outcome of their efforts was considered relevant, and have been published in this issue.

It also includes article entitled “Government Management, Higher Education, Innovation, and Local Development”, in which the contributions made by the President of the Republic of Cuba, Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez and General Coordinator of GUCID Dr. C. Aurora Fernández González, PhD, combined into a research paper published in this issue of the journal. I am obliged to make a comment in relation to the above contribution.

For approximately a couple of years, science and innovation were identified as two of the pillars of government management. Consequently, a tremendous effort is being made to mobilize the scientific capacities of the country to generate the changes demanded by our society through active and systematic discussions with the government.

The experience acquired along the fight against COVID 19 has confirmed the importance of the alliance between science and government. The results of science, achieved through government-led inter-sectoral and trans-disciplinary coordination, have contributed to pandemic control in large part of the country.

This alliance has started to produce results in terms of food and nutritional sovereignty, and it is encouraging transformations for local development.

Now I should conclude my remarks. Again, I thank my colleagues at *Challenges of Management*, particularly

Dr. C. Ramón González Fontes, PhD, for kindly allowing me to share these ideas with the readers.

There are still many CHALLENGES up ahead, and the journal can rely on GUCID to expand further.