

MENDIVE

REVISTA DE EDUCACIÓN

Translated from the original in Spanish

Orientation referents to promote the social relevance of specialized training for the school principal

Referentes orientadores para favorecer la pertinencia social de la formación especializada del director escolar

Referenciais orientadores para favorecer a pertinência social da formação especializada do diretor da escola

Pedro Valiente Sandó¹, José Javier Del Toro Prada¹

¹ Universidad de Holguín. Cuba. ORCID:
<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8954-3452>;
<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0499-6613>,
E-mail: pedrovalientesando@gmail.com

Received: April 27th, 2020.

Approved: June 24th, 2020.

ABSTRACT

The social relevance of the training of school principals, as a specialized process, is associated with the quality of the information used for its planning, which is currently insufficient. The objective of the research was to establish which orientation referents should be used to provide relevant, sufficient and timely information in the definition of the objectives and content of this training

process, in order to ensure that it is socially relevant. Its scope was based on a methodological strategy that started from the systematization of research experiences and other previous works, developed through the use of empirical (documentary review) and theoretical methods (analysis-synthesis, induction-deduction) and methodological procedures (content analysis and triangulation) of educational research, which made it possible to identify which orientation referents are more widely used and considered more important. Based on these results, a theoretical-methodological proposal was modeled. Those That supports referents that, in the authors' review, should be considered in the design and implementation of specialized training for school principals, adjusted to the Cuban context; Although feasible to be taken into account, with the corresponding adjustments, in other scenarios. In this regard, the proposal recognizes as the most important: a) the content of national educational policies; b) the particularities of the context of educational institutions; c) the content of the principals' professional management activity; d) the diagnosis of the educational needs and potential of the directors and; e) the modeling of qualities for an ideal performance of school principals.

Keywords: specialized training; main school; social relevance; orientation referents for training.

RESUMEN

La pertinencia social de la formación de los directores escolares, como proceso especializado, está asociada a la calidad de la información que se utiliza para su planeación, que en la actualidad resulta insuficiente. La investigación tuvo como objetivo fundamentar qué referentes orientadores deben ser utilizados para proveer información relevante, suficiente y oportuna en la definición de los objetivos y el contenido de ese proceso

formativo, a fin de asegurar que este resulte socialmente pertinente. Su alcance se sustentó en una estrategia metodológica que partió de la sistematización de experiencias investigativas y otros trabajos precedentes, desarrollada mediante la utilización de métodos empíricos (revisión documental), teóricos (análisis-síntesis, inducción-deducción) y procedimientos metodológicos (análisis de contenido y triangulación) de la investigación educativa, que posibilitaron identificar qué referentes orientadores son más empleados y considerados más importantes. Sobre la base de estos resultados, se modeló una propuesta teórico-metodológica que fundamenta aquellos referentes que, a juicio de los autores, deben ser considerados en el diseño y realización de la formación especializada de los directores escolares, atemperada al contexto cubano; aunque factible de ser tenida en cuenta, con las adecuaciones correspondientes, en otros escenarios. Al respecto, la propuesta reconoce como los más importantes: el contenido de las políticas educativas nacionales, las particularidades del contexto de las instituciones educativas, el contenido de la actividad profesional de dirección de los directores, el diagnóstico de necesidades y potencialidades educativas de los directores y la modelación de cualidades para un desempeño ideal de los directores escolares.

Palabras clave: formación especializada; director escolar; pertinencia social; referentes orientadores de la formación.

RESUMO

A pertinência social da formação dos diretores de escolas, como processo especializado, está associada à qualidade das informações utilizadas para seu planejamento, que atualmente é insuficiente. A pesquisa visou o fornecimento de uma base para a qual referências orientadoras devem ser

utilizadas a fim de fornecer informações relevantes, suficientes e oportunas na definição dos objetivos e conteúdo deste processo de formação, a fim de garantir que ele seja socialmente relevante. Seu escopo foi baseado em uma estratégia metodológica que começou com a sistematização de experiências de pesquisa e outros trabalhos anteriores, desenvolvidos através do uso de métodos empíricos (revisão documental), métodos teóricos (análise-síntese, indução-dedução) e procedimentos metodológicos (análise de conteúdo e triangulação) da pesquisa educacional, o que permitiu identificar quais referências orientadoras são mais utilizadas e consideradas mais importantes. Com base nestes resultados, foi modelada uma proposta teórico-metodológica, que fundamenta aqueles referentes que, na opinião dos autores, deveriam ser considerados na concepção e implementação de treinamento especializado para diretores de escolas, temperado ao contexto cubano; embora seja viável ser levado em conta, com as correspondentes adaptações, em outros cenários. Neste sentido, a proposta reconhece como mais importante: o conteúdo das políticas educacionais nacionais, as particularidades do contexto das instituições educacionais, o conteúdo da atividade profissional dos diretores de escola, o diagnóstico das necessidades educacionais e do potencial dos diretores, e a modelagem das qualidades para um desempenho ideal dos diretores de escola.

Palavras-chave: treinamento especializado.

INTRODUCTION

Since the nineties of the last century, the need for the professionalization of the school principal's activity has been increasingly recognized and greater

importance has been attached to his specialized training, which is assumed to be an intentional, formal, specific and managed. In this regard, Bush (2019) points out: "... the 21st century (...) announces a fundamental change in attitudes, accompanied by a limited but tangible change in policies and practices. There is a growing awareness that experienced leadership is a specialized function that requires specific training" (p. 24). And he adds: "... the development of effective leaders should not be improvised, but a conscious process designed to produce the best possible leadership for schools" (p. 29).

Consequently, the guarantee of the Specialized Formation of the School Principal (FEDE) as a formal, specific and directed intentional process, is based on the imperative that process is an appropriately planned. This implies a correct definition of the objectives and the content of the pedagogical process that is inherent in it, which should result in its social relevance, understood as:

... responsiveness of actions (programs, systems, strategies, etc) training (initial or continuing), which are designed and developed, relevant social needs present and perspectives and requirements that flow from them for educational policy, the operation of the educational system, school institutions, and the management process of the latter (Valiente, Del Toro and González, 2016, p.146).

The assurance of relevance, from the planning of the training actions, depends on the quality of the information available for that sub-process, which does not

know or concerns its sufficiency (in terms of quantity), but also its opportunity and, especially, to the variety of sources from which it has to come, to point towards what objectives ("for what") and on what content ("in what") should the training be designed.

It is assumed that these informative sources are nominated for the design, redesign, execution and evaluation of the training, with the term of guiding references, used with this meaning by Valiente Sandó *et al.* (2018) and in other previous investigations carried out in Cuba.

The consulted literature shows a broad consensus regarding the need to use certain guiding references as providers of information inputs to project the training of school principals. As Poggi (2001) points out:

Thinking (...) issues related to the training of managers implies addressing the articulation of objective conditions, linked to the definition of tasks (which are presented in the prescriptions and regulations on the role, as well as in the definition of working conditions), with the concerns and expectations prioritized by macro and micro-political levels, as well as with the set of social representations that weigh on the role of the school leadership, from those who exercise it as from other social and educational actors (supervisors, teachers, students and parents, for example) (p.17).

In line with what was pointed out by Poggi (2001), several authors allude to the importance of considering the content of the Direction Professional Activity (APD) of school principals (what the principal must do as part of his managerial work), as a guiding reference for his specialized training.

Many of these authors (Dempster *et al.*, 2019; Muñoz, Amenábar, and Valdebenito, 2019) propose or enunciate specific contents identified in their studies, associated with the tasks, functions, responsibilities, and roles that school principals must perform: the educational policies and their legal framework; planning, coordinating and monitoring the school curriculum; the training and development of skills for leadership and school improvement focused on learning, among other contents.

Another guiding reference recognized by specialists in the subject, perhaps the most widely valued in the practical experiences of training of school directors, is the knowledge of their needs, potentials, interests and expectations. The information on these aspects allows a closer approach of the objectives and specific contents of the training actions to the individual and group particularities of the subjects being trained.

Huber, Skedsmo and Schwander (2019) affirm in this regard: "The reality and experiences of the participants, their needs and problems should become a point of reference and a starting point for the selection of content and the methods applied..." (p. 202); "... represent the starting point for planning perfection and continuous training" (p. 232).

In coincidence with the aforementioned, other authors, such as López Yáñez *et al.* (2018), emphasize that the design of the training of directors must be adjusted

to their specific characteristics and needs; as well as consider their life experience and professional career, their beliefs and their conception of the managerial role. This involves investigating "... prior knowledge, subjective theories, attitudes, expectations, goals and motivations of potential participants" (Huber *et al.*, 2019, p.232).

Previous references indicate the existence of a broad consensus on the need for diagnosis as a necessary requirement in order to form a training offer relevant, from a precise determination of the needs and educational potential of school leaders who will participate in the training actions. In this sense, Muñoz *et al.* (2019) ponder "... the importance that training programs focus on content connected to the needs of educational leaders and that such content allows managers (...) to enhance their pedagogical leadership" (p.52).

The question, regarding the content of national educational policies and those specific to the training of school directors, is seldom explicitly posed among the guiding referents that must be taken into account to determine the objectives and content of teacher education. These managers, even though their consideration could be inferred from formulations that are made in many of the works examined.

For the authors of this article, the content of educational policies must constitute the primary guiding reference for the conception and implementation of the FEDE, while they establish the objectives, priorities and transformations of a strategic nature that are the essence of educational change and they should be given preferential attention in school institutions. They largely determine the content of the APD of the school principal and require the development and consolidation of their managerial

professional skills, which are increasingly specialized.

Poggi (2001) points out in this regard:

"... the training of managers of educational institutions cannot be carried out outside the definitions that and on the educational institution in particular promote educational policies ..." (p.16). As Young (2019) asserts: "... national, state, and in some cases district leadership standards are used to frame and align training programs" (p. 51). This "... not only provides a shared vision of training in school leadership, but tends to influence the content and focus of training, practices, evaluation and professional development" (p. 52).

Along with the importance of educational policies, great importance is also attached to consider the particularities of the context (the community and local environment) of the educational institution as a necessary reference to guide the planning of training (Dempster *et al.* 2019 ; Sandoval Estupiñán *et al.* , 2020; Slater, García and Mentz, 2019). In this regard, Dempster *et al.* (2019) state that training programs have to be "context sensitive" and that, therefore, "... the challenge for the planners responsible for learning is to design and provide programs that link macro and micro contextual learning with the realities of the participants "(p.251).

Slater *et al.* (2019), meanwhile, warn: "The training of directors and the

development of leadership are not carried out in the abstract. Designers of managerial training programs must be aware of the context in which those programs are implemented" (p.313).

As a recommendation to achieve a balanced consideration of educational policies and context in training planning, Dempster *et al.* (2019) advise that "... the people responsible for the professional training of school leaders must reinforce the importance of an understanding of the socio- cultural characteristics of the local environment, while paying attention to educational policies, their main lines of action, the imperatives of the educational system and the organizational limitations "(p. 243).

Although less weighted than those previously discussed, the consideration of profiles of qualities or ideal competences of the school director, previously modeled, constitutes an important guiding reference to be taken into account in the planning of the FEDE. Such profiles can offer highly relevant guidelines for deciding towards what objectives to direct training actions, what content to select for its materialization and what indicators to determine to diagnose the needs and potentialities of subjects in training and evaluate their effects.

The bibliographic review made it possible to locate some specific proposals for competency profiles designed to favor the orientation of the training of school directors (Valiente, 2010; Young, 2019). The experience of training school leaders in the United States, in most of its states, is based on the adoption of standards that specify what school leaders should know and what they should know and allow guiding the general training of school leaders. Regarding its contents and the competences to be achieved (Weinstein and Muñoz 2019; Young, 2019).

Huber *et al.* (2019), in turn, justify the modeling of school management competencies as a reference for the self-evaluation of the participants on the professional development they have achieved and as a starting point for the *coaching* processes.

As can be seen from the analysis presented above, there is a consensus regarding the need to take into account certain guiding references, providers of necessary information, as an indispensable premise to guarantee, from its planning, the relevance of training. Such sources of information are associated, among other variables, with national educational policies, the particularities of the context in which school institutions are located, the content of the APD of school principals, the diagnosis of their educational needs and potentials, the modeling qualities for ideal performance of school principals; as well as the international trends that mark the evolution of educational policies, the management models of school institutions and the training models of their managers.

Regarding the sufficient and timely use, in training practice, of the variety of guiding references mentioned above, from previous diagnostic studies (Valiente Sandó *et al.*, 2018), insufficiencies that undermine the relevance of the programs and training activities, as they do not offer a plausible response to the social needs that are intended to be addressed from educational policies; as well as to those other needs, of an individual and group nature, that the school directors carry as their learning subjects involved in said training actions.

In the same way, the results of these studies, as well as contributions offered by other specialists, have shown that in the planning of training there is a tendency to ponder some guiding references (mainly the content of the APD and the diagnosis of needs and

educational potential of school directors), to the detriment of others such as the profiles of ideal qualities or competencies of directors, the preparation for school management received in undergraduate training and international trends regarding the training of these directors.

This problem, together with others that negatively influence the training of school directors, has generated "... a certain consensus in the academic world that (...) such training is not achieving an effective impact on the work of school leaders. As a result, an important part of the principals and directors would not be preparing adequately for the demands that today the school systems impose on their leaders " (Muñoz *et al.* 2019, p.46).

From the previous analysis, as recognized by Poggi (2001) and other scholars of the subject, the need for the comprehensive use of the diversity of references that can guide towards the determination of the objectives and the content of the training to achieve its greater contextualization and relevance is concluded.

Consequently, within the framework of the Project "Training of the School Director" (2012-2017), in which the authors participated, the insufficient use of guiding references in the design of the research was identified as a problem that should be answered from the research process. The insufficient use of the referents in the specialized training for school directors, which limits the social relevance of this process. For its solution, the objective was set: to base which guiding references should be used to provide relevant, sufficient and timely information in the definition of the objectives and content of specialized training for school directors, in order to ensure that it is socially relevant.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The eminently theoretical research was based on a methodological strategy that started from the systematization of research experiences and other previous works that were published in articles, books and research reports, by authors from Argentina, Australia, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, United States, Mexico, New Zealand, United Kingdom, South Africa, Switzerland and Norway. For this process, the unit of analysis was defined: the sources of information (nominated by the guiding referent authors) that are used in the planning of the FEDE, for the determination and selection of the objectives and content to be addressed in the programs and training actions, as well as to design its methodological conception.

The literature review was performed using document analysis and content analysis, which enabled the collection and organization of data and primary information around a defined unit of analysis. From the analysis- synthesis and the induction-deduction and the use of triangulation (of data and information) as a methodological procedure, it was identified which guiding references are most used, the importance given to them by scholars and specialists, as well as controversial elements present in the scientific debate on its use.

On the basis of the results of the systematization, the proposal was modeled. This implied deciding the guiding referents that comprise it, among which a systemic relationship was revealed and the arguments for its foundation were specified.

RESULTS

The theoretical systematization carried out allowed us to appreciate the

existence of a consensus in relation to the need to take into account certain guiding references, providers of necessary information, as an indispensable premise to guarantee, from its planning, the relevance of the training.

Based on this consensus, a proposal was prepared regarding which guiding references to use in FEDE planning, on which those considered most relevant in the Cuban context are based. The proposal, containing conceptual and methodological elements that can be very useful for managing the training process, includes five main guiding references:

- a) The content of national educational policies
- b) The particularities of the context in which educational institutions are located
- c) The content of the APD of school principals
- d) The diagnosis of educational needs and potential of the participating directors is in the training actions
- e) The modeling of qualities (profiles) for an ideal performance (desires) of the school directors

Each of these references provides specific inputs (data and primary information) that, when complemented synergistically, allow obtaining comprehensive, more concise information, to guide with greater relevance towards which objectives to direct training, with what content to achieve them and from which methodological conception optimize its apprehension.



Fig.1- Guiding references of the FEDE

a) The content of educational policies as a guiding reference for the FEDE

As they carry the main general guidelines and orientations that guide the actions of the multiple actors and structures that are part of the educational system and intervene in its operation, national educational policies constitute the primary guiding reference for planning the FEDE.

As public policies, the contents of educational policies, generally expressed in legal and / or political documents, refer to issues of the highest relevance for the educational system and the national interest. In contemporary circumstances, they also express trends that reflect consensus on education on a global scale.

Among others, the relevant contents of educational policies are: the aims and principles of education; the main directions (components) of the training process in educational institutions; the objectives and priorities that guide educational development; the priorities

and content of educational change; the structuring of the educational system; the philosophical, pedagogical and psychological conceptions that underpin the educational process; the conception of the school curriculum and its design; conceptions about the management process in educational institutions and supervisory action at different levels of the system and the elements concerning human resource management related to teaching staff.

Consequently, the consideration of national educational policies as a guiding reference for the planning of the FEDE, in particular of its objectives and content, responds to two demands: the need for full knowledge of the content of said policies by school directors, given the role that is recognized as figures representing the educational system in its institutions and the imperative to prepare them to assume the leadership of processes and perform functions and roles that come from the guidelines and directives that the policies establish.

For the FEDE planning, the specific policies that regulate the training of

school directors have special connotation. These are not only important to clarify its objectives and content, but also to design methodological conception. In the case of Cuba, said specific policies have the regulatory framework established for the preparation and improvement of the State and Government Tables established from Decree Law 196 of 1999 (Consejo de Estado de la República de Cuba, 1999), which provides for the preparation of strategies of development and improvement of the tables, including school principals, projecting medium and long term based on the needs assessment; as well as institutes the responsibility of the top managers in each instance in its preparation and achievement.

b) The particularities of the context in which educational institutions are located

The knowledge of the particularities of the context in which the educational institution is located and the development of skills and other qualities to interact with it, constitute a requirement for the performance of school principals.

In this context, which constitutes their community and local environment, the school principal must interact with the various socialization agents and agencies that share the responsibility of training the students with the educational institution. Similarly, it must know, on the basis of the diagnosis, to take advantage of the potential that the context offers; as well as to make viable the cultural and political influence that the educational institution must fulfill in its context.

Recognition of the diversity of contexts and complexity that each embodies requires managers of training to consider this variable as a guiding reference of

relevance for planning, particularly those actions aimed at solving needs training individual needs which develop through forms of organization focused on individualized learning (training, internship, consulting, *mentoring*, *coaching*, among others) and have as their stage the context in which the school director carries out his directive work.

From the community and local environment, there are also demands associated with problems that it faces, development goals and objectives, traditions and other cultural components, to name or mention some variables, before which the educational institution, due to the corresponding social responsibility cannot remain indifferent. The knowledge and understanding of this context by school principals and the consequent action to achieve the active involvement of their educational institution in its complex framework must be an explicit objective of the training actions.

The assumption of the particularities of the context, as a guiding reference for the planning of training, supposes that in the management of this process its diagnosis is considered, as an indispensable premise to identify the demands that the context poses to educational institutions and, therefore, to the APD of school principals.

c) The content of the APD of school principals as a guiding reference for the FEDE

The content of the APD of school principals defines what they must do as part of their managerial work. The information that can be obtained from this guiding reference is of vital importance for the definition of the objectives and the content of the FEDE, as well as for its methodological conception, as unanimously recognized

by specialists and scholars on the subject.

The school principal's APD refers:

... to the set of functions and roles of political-ideological, technical-methodological, scientific-pedagogical and administrative content that they develop, to ensure the concretion of educational policy, in correspondence with the economic, political and social conditions of the school and community context, for the sake of achieving the end and objectives of the school. Said activity is specified in the management of the teaching and non-teaching human resources in their charge and the processes in which they are protagonists (Santiesteban, 2011, as cited in Valiente, Del Toro and González, 2018, p.250).

The modeling of the content of the APD of the school director presumes to specify the spheres of professional action that concern him, the processes that configure these spheres, as well as the functions and roles that he must exercise to develop those processes. The spheres of professional performance are understood as "... areas configured by the pedagogical and administrative processes on which school principals operate ..." (Santiesteban, 2011, as cited in Valiente, Del Toro and González, 2018, p.251).

The professional performance spheres, processes, functions and roles that shape the APD of the school principal, guide the

identification of knowledge, skills and values that are necessary for their effective performance and must be addressed during training. They are not only an essential reference for determining this knowledge, but also to define the methods, means and appropriate organizational forms for their appropriation by managers in training for what should be taken into account their specificities as learners: adults who play a managerial role. As Huber *et al.* (2019) "Adults, as self-determined interlocutors, should be taken seriously, treated as subjects in this process, not as objects" (p.232).

There are numerous proposals that define areas or spheres of action for school leaders, modeled in many cases with the deliberate purpose of serving as a benchmark for planning actions and training programs. Due to its adaptation to the Cuban context, the proposal presented in Valiente, Del Toro and González (2018) is assumed, in which 10 spheres of professional performance of school principals are identified:

1. the planning, organization, regulation, control and evaluation of the general work of the educational institution,
2. the direction of educational work,
3. the direction of the methodological work,
4. the direction of the training and improvement of teaching staff,
5. the direction of scientific-pedagogical work,
6. the school organization,
7. the direction of work with the family and the community,
8. work with the organizations of the educational institution,

9. the direction of other processes inherent to human resource management,

10. The assurance of material and financial resources.

Along with the functions that are associated with the processes that make up the stated spheres, the APD of school principals also implies the deployment of a set of roles. Many of them have been traditional in their managerial performance; others have come from the new content that has been incorporated into said management. The main ones are: representative of the Ministry of Education in the school institution, political activist and guarantor of educational policy, associated with the political content of their activity; curriculum manager, trainer, methodologist and counselor, linked to the pedagogical content of their work; planner, organizer, coordinator, resource manager and evaluator, linked to the administrative content of its APD; and leader, communicator, negotiator, spokesperson, promoter (of change, innovation, culture, collaboration), related to the relational content of their activity. (Valiente, Del Toro and González, 2018).

d) The diagnosis of the educational needs and potential of the participants in the training actions as a guiding reference for the FEDE

The diagnosis of educational needs and potential is the result of the process of obtaining, analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating information that provides criteria about the performance and professional training of school directors, allows characterizing the state of their current and potential development and identifying their individual and collective educational needs and potentials.

It constitutes a guiding reference of recognized importance for the conception of the FEDE. A correct use of the information that it provides for its planning, guarantees that the training actions are more pertinent to the individual characteristics, expectations, interests, motivations and the professional, individual and collective trajectory of the subjects that participate in them.

The diagnosis of educational needs starts from the assumption that its results are never final or complete; it must be understood, therefore, that any enumeration of needs is provisional and that the actuality of the identified needs must be constantly judged.

The educational potentialities, on the other hand, refer to the possibilities of prospective development of school principals on the basis of the development they have achieved; they represent strengths (in cognitive and metacognitive, procedural, attitudinal, motivational terms) that must be identified based on the individual projection and the collective actions of their specialized training.

The diagnosis of the educational needs and potentials of school directors is the result of an investigative process that involves: determining the objectives to which the process is directed; define its content, that is, on which variables data will be collected and information will be produced; define and apply methods of the research activity for data collection and the production of the information required to identify said needs and potential; and determine the educational needs and potentials that must be met in training. This process therefore takes place in three main moments: planning and organization of the diagnosis, data collection and obtaining of the information and conclusions of the diagnosis.

e) The modeling of qualities (profiles) for an ideal (desired) performance of school directors as a guiding reference for the FEDE

The aforementioned references are not sufficient to ensure the relevance of the FEDE, in an educational context in which the professionalization and specialization of the role of the school director is required. It is also necessary to take into account a set of ideal qualities alluding to knowledge, skills, abilities, values and attitudes, of which the director must be a carrier and that training must contribute to acquire and consolidate.

Often these ideal qualities are expressed in competency profiles and other types of models that reflect the knowledge, know-how and knowledge being necessary to carry out school management, which has resorted increasingly the skills approach. The authors of this work assume the competencies as complex and holistic formations, which are configured from the functional integration of qualities and attributes that have been established and consolidated in the subject: conceptual and procedural elements, attitudinal elements, motivational elements and others. Traits and characteristics of the subject's personality (Valiente, 2010).

There are many proposals for models of managerial skills or competences that have been designed to highlight the ideal qualities of the school principal. The researchers assume Valiente's proposal (2010), which can serve as a guiding reference for the design, redesign, implementation and evaluation of training, contextualized to the Cuban context. The author proposes a model of professionalism for school principals, in which it includes three basic managerial competences: political-ideological competence, technical-professional competence and the competence to exercise leadership, which characterizes

and accompanies a relationship of attributes (42) that configure them, useful for defining the objectives and content of the training.

The specificity of the political-ideological competence is associated with the identification and commitment of the manager with the philosophy and policies that support the educational system. It is configured from attitudinal qualities of character, which reflect beliefs and values in the personality of the executive and others state that possesses the knowledge and abilities required for the proper performance of its political role.

The technical-professional competence has as essential content the aptitude of the manager, which enables him / her to have a thorough and thorough knowledge of his / her APD and the deployment of the corresponding skills to act with it. This presupposes an updated knowledge, from the systematic diagnosis, of the most important variables related to all the subjects that make life in the school (students, teachers, other workers, the family), as well as the fundamental processes that take place in it. Its configuration results from the interaction and dialectical integration of a set of qualities that express the possession of knowledge, abilities, habits, capacities and experiences related to the multiple fields of knowledge that converge for the development of its APD, which the director must show in their professional performance.

The specificity of the competence to exercise leadership lies in the director's ability to interact with, and lead, the subjects he directs, with a high degree of commitment and motivation, within the reach of the institution's objectives. The central element of leadership resides in the communication capacity of the director that is expressed in his management style.

Muñoz *et al.* (2019), who specify it as "school leadership", from the analysis of various definitions of specialists on the subject, conceptualize it as :

... the set of practices that deploy the leaders of an organization that contribute to a sense and vision shared at school, that their influence time and mobilizes the behavior of its members, with the aim of improving the learning of their students; [like] ... an effect that is exerted indirectly through the influence that managers develop to improve the work carried out by teachers in the classroom (p. 45).

The leadership that a director can achieve is closely related to his personal qualities, particularly his exemplary and lifestyle. The personality of the director becomes an "instrument" for the successful exercise of his responsibility.

Whatever the proposal of ideal qualities of the school director is defined or assumed, its value will be transcendent if it is used appropriately to determine the content and objectives of the training program that is intended to be implemented and is used as a reference in the evaluation process., to assess to what extent the training actions have been effective.

DISCUSSION

The scope of the relevance of the FEDE starts from the premise that such a process requires adequate planning. This implies the availability of sufficient, timely and relevant information from a variety of sources that also give it an integral character.

Unlike the general approaches of the previous authors, who weight the planning of training from some specific and unrelated guiding referents, the proposal made conceives that such planning may be more pertinent if it is based on the comprehensiveness and completeness of the information that requires its realization. In it, unquestionably, lies its novelty.

The exposed conception reveals that the adequacy, timeliness and relevance of such comprehensive information only is achieved if it comes from the triangulation of data and primary information emanating from the policies that guide the educational system, community and local context of the educational institution, the content of the APD of the school principal, the modeling of the ideal qualities that make possible the deployment of such professional activity, and the identification of their training needs and potentials.

The proposal therefore contributes to offering a plausible and necessary response to face the key challenge in managing the training of school directors, which today sparks a wide debate: "... find an appropriate balance between standardization and personalization..." (Bush, 2019, p.30), to which they also allude (Weinstein and Muñoz 2019). In other words, it is necessary to achieve a balanced balance between the demands that for training stem from the policies that guide the educational system and the information from the local and community context, from the managerial professional content and the qualities for its effective performance; as well as the individual and group training needs that all these factors engender.

Consequently, the proposal is pertinent and current by offering the managers of the FEDE a theoretical- methodological framework, of unquestionable usefulness for decision-making, which concerns the

planning of the training process in their charge, which until now is not available in the growing accumulation of knowledge that has been generated in recent decades, around the training of school directors.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

- Bush, T. (2019). Cultivo del liderazgo educativo: principios fundamentales. En *Cómo cultivar el liderazgo educativo: trece miradas*. (23-34), Chile: Salesianos Impresores S.A. <https://liderazgoeducativo.udp.cl/libros/como-cultivar-el-liderazgo-educativo-trece-miradas/>
- Consejo de Estado de la República de Cuba (1999, 15 de octubre). *Decreto-ley 196/99. Sistema de Trabajo con los Cuadros del Estado y del Gobierno*. La Habana: Consejo de Estado de la República de Cuba, Disponible en http://www.buenaventura.gob.cu/images/utilidades/descargas/documento_legal/16DecretoLey196-99SistemadeTrabajo.pdf
- Dempster, N., Lovett, S., Flückiger, B. y Johnson, G. (2019). Desarrollo profesional de directivos escolares: un acto de permanente equilibrio. Pp. 241-73 en *Como cultivar el Liderazgo Educativo: trece Miradas*. Chile: Salesianos Impresores S.A. <https://liderazgoeducativo.udp.cl/libros/como-cultivar-el-liderazgo-educativo-trece-miradas/>
- Huber, S., Skedsmo, G. y Schwander, M. (2019). Cómo aprenden los directivos y fortalecen su reflexión profesional en tanto líderes pedagógicos. Pp. 200-240 en *Cómo cultivar el liderazgo educativo: trece miradas*. Chile: Salesianos Impresores S.A. <https://liderazgoeducativo.udp.cl/libros/como-cultivar-el-liderazgo-educativo-trece-miradas/>
- López Yáñez, J., Sánchez Moreno, M., Altopiedi, M. y Oliva Rodríguez, N. (2018). Formación de directivos escolares mediante un programa basado en el coaching grupal, la retroalimentación y el análisis de la práctica. *Profesorado, Revista de Currículum y Formación del Profesorado* 22(1):481-500. <https://recyt.fecyt.es/index.php/profesorado/article/view/63654/38712>
- Muñoz, G., Amenábar, J. y Valdebenito, M. J. (2019). Formación de directivos escolares en Chile: situación actual, evolución y desafíos de su oferta. *REICE. Revista Iberoamericana sobre Calidad, Eficacia y Cambio en Educación* 17(2):43-65. <https://doi.org/10.15366/reice2019.17.2.003>
- Poggi, M. (2001). *La formación de directivos de instituciones educativas. Algunos aportes para el diseño de estrategias*. Buenos Aires: IPE/UNESCO. Recuperado de: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000129501?posInSet=129&queryId=a895b224-be77-45b3-91da-f91753d3130c>
- Sandoval Estupiñán, L. Y., Pineda Báez, Cl., Bernal Luque, M. del R. y Quiroga, C. (2020). Los retos del director escolar novel: formación inicial y liderazgo. *Revista Complutense de Educación* 31(1):115-24. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5209/rced.61919>

- Slater, C. L., García, J. M. y Mentz, K. (2019). Liderazgo en los directivos principiantes: hallazgos de un estudio internacional comparado. En *Cómo cultivar el liderazgo educativo: trece miradas*. (299-322), Chile: Salesianos Impresores S.A.
<https://liderazgoeducativo.udp.cl/libros/como-cultivar-el-liderazgo-educativo-trece-miradas/>
- Valiente Sandó, P. (2010). *Competencias laborales y profesionales del director escolar*. Gestipolis.com.
<https://www.gestipolis.com/competencias-laborales-y-profesionales-del-director-escolar/>
- Valiente Sandó, P., Del Toro Prada, J. J. y González, J. (2016). Principios de la formación especializada del director escolar. Una propuesta desde la sistematización. *REICE. Revista Iberoamericana sobre Calidad, Eficacia y Cambio en Educación* 14(1).
<https://revistas.uam.es/index.php/reice/article/view/2739/2939>
- Valiente Sandó, P., Del Toro Prada, J.J., Pérez Sarduy, Y. y González Ramírez, J.(2018). The Training of School Principals: A Study in the Cuban Context. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership* 46(2):258-78. DOI: 10.1177/17725321
- Valiente Sandó, P., Del Toro Prada, J. J. y González Ramírez, J. (2018). *Formar para la dirección escolar: inicios en la formación docente y formación especializada* [manuscrito presentado para publicación]. Centro de Estudios de Gestión Organizacional, Universidad de Holguín.
- Weinstein, J., y Muñoz, G. (2019). Introducción. En *Cómo cultivar el liderazgo educativo: trece miradas*. (5-22), Chile: Salesianos Impresores S.A.
- Young, M. (2019). Desarrollo y formación en liderazgo educativo: historia y prácticas contemporáneas en Estados Unidos. En *Cómo cultivar el liderazgo educativo: trece miradas*. (35-83), Chile: Salesianos Impresores S.A.
<https://liderazgoeducativo.udp.cl/libros/como-cultivar-el-liderazgo-educativo-trece-miradas/>

Conflict of interest:

Authors declare not to have any conflict of interest.

Authors' Contribution:

Authors participated in the writing process of this article and in the analysis of documents.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License.

Copyright (c) Pedro Valiente Sandó, José Javier Del Toro Prada