

# MENDIVE

## REVISTA DE EDUCACIÓN

*Translated from the original in Spanish*

### **Competitions, skills and performance. Notes and reflections for a debate in Cuban pedagogical training**

### **Competencias, habilidades y desempeño. Apuntes y reflexiones para un debate en la formación pedagógica cubana**

### **Competências, habilidades e desempenho. Apontamentos e reflexões para um debate na formação pedagógica cubana**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

In recent times, the study of competences has been strength in Cuba from the pedagogical and didactic point of view. Therefore, it is necessary to continue working on the basis and relevance of the use of this term. This article analyzes the origin and theoretical basis of competencies, the diversity of points of view in its conceptualization and the lack of coherence in the structuring of curricula and programs with a competency approach by using document analysis method. Similarly, the authors disagree with the use of the term competence in the process of teacher training presenting their points of view on it. Finally, they conclude that there are similarities with the skills, so they are pronounced for the improvement of the term professional performance in the educational process of educators in Cuba. In this way, they aim to analyze the viability of the use of the term competence in the process of teacher training in Cuba.

**Keywords:** competence; skills; curriculum for skills; professional performance.

#### **RESUMEN**

En los últimos tiempos, el estudio de las competencias ha cobrado fuerzas en Cuba desde el punto de vista pedagógico y didáctico, por lo que es necesario continuar trabajando en cuanto a las bases y pertinencia del empleo de dicho término. Con el objetivo de analizar la viabilidad del empleo de la competencia en el contexto de la formación de profesionales de la educación en Cuba, los autores, mediante el uso del método de análisis documental exponen el origen y bases teóricas de dicho término, la diversidad de puntos de vista en su conceptualización, así como la falta de coherencia en la estructuración de planes

de estudio y programas con un enfoque por competencias. De igual manera, se cuestionan el empleo del término competencia en el proceso de formación de docentes y exponen sus puntos de vista al respecto. Finalmente, concluyen en que existen similitudes con las habilidades, por lo que se pronuncian por el uso de desempeño profesional en el proceso formativo de los educadores.

**Palabras clave:** competencias; habilidades; currículo por habilidades; desempeño profesional.

## RESUMO

Nos últimos tempos, o estudo de competências ganhou força em Cuba do ponto de vista pedagógico e didático, pelo que é necessário continuar a trabalhar sobre as bases e a pertinência da utilização deste termo. Com o objetivo de analisar a viabilidade do uso das competências no contexto da formação de profissionais da educação em Cuba, os autores, utilizando o método de análise documental, apresentam a origem e as bases teóricas deste termo, a diversidade de pontos de vista na sua conceptualização, bem como a falta de coerência na estruturação dos currículos e programas com uma abordagem baseada nas competências. Do mesmo modo, questionam a utilização do termo competência no processo de formação de professores e apresentam os seus pontos de vista sobre o assunto. Finalmente, concluem que existem semelhanças com as competências e que, por isso, são a favor da utilização do desempenho profissional no processo de formação dos educadores.

**Palavras-chave:** Competências; aptidões; currículo por aptidões; desempenho profissional.

## INTRODUCTION

Beyond the diversity of opinions, it is necessary to study the term competence, because it is essential to update and permanently frame the teacher training process, in line with international trends, since, in recent years, the use of this term has increased worldwide: Almerich, G.; Suárez-Rodríguez, J.; Díaz-García, I. and Orellana, N. (2020); Cañadas, L.; Santos-Pastor, ML. and Castejón, F.J. (2019); Aldana, J., Salón, M. & Guzmán, N. (2019); Ronquillo, E.; Cabrera, C. and Barberán, J. (2019); Mugarra, C.; Bebert, G. and Telford, T. (2019); Amador (2018); Guzmán, (2017); Climent, J. (2017); Hortigüela, D., Pérez- Pueyo, A. & Fernández-Río, J. (2016); Jato, E., Cajide, J., Muñoz, M.A & García, B. (2016); Hernández, I; Alvarado, J.C. and Moon, S.M, (2015) and especially in Cuba: Cuesta, A. (2019); Rodriguez, D. (2019); Valcárcel, N. (2016); Gonzalez, V., Lopez, A. And Valdivia, E. (2016); Fariñas, G. (2015), (2011), it is no less true that the titles of the graduates for competency - based curriculum, are considered most valid.

In Cuba, strengths for tackling this problem become, in the first place, the philosophical bases, since the educability and capacity for growth and perfection of the human being are recognized. From the sociological point of view, the role of socialization and social factors is recognized. In correspondence with the conception of psychic development, it is necessary, both in theory and in practice, to defend the integral, harmonious and multifaceted personality since its historical determination. In second place, the fact that the Cuban pedagogy, throughout its evolution, has shown the unity of the informative and educational as

inseparable categories in which the data, knowledge and the facts integrate with feelings and values, which is embodied in the beginning in the unity of instruction and education.

Similarly, from psychology, important approaches have been developed in the study of the personality category, when conceiving the dialectical integration of the inductive or affective motivational and executing, or instrumental cognitive spheres, which is recognized as the principle of unity of affective and cognitive.

The reasons stated above lead the authors to the need to investigate the origins and theoretical bases of the competences, for which reason the results of the bibliographic review carried out are presented below.

Talcot Parsons, an American sociologist, who created the theory of social action, introduces the term achievement, focused on the valuation of human beings for the concrete results they obtain in life (Parsons, 1937); this aspect favored the so-called triumph mentality as an inherent aspect of the *American Way of Life*.

In the decade of the 70s, Noam Chomsky uses language competence understood as the ability to speak, paying attention to grammatical operations that are activating according to the dialogic capacity of people (Chomsky, develops 1972). It puts competition as a mental structure that individuals possess in their genetic endowment and that it is activated through communicative performance, which is derived from a link between competition and performance.

The Bologna Process, in 1990, enables a space of higher education in Europe cohesive, competitive and attractive,

which makes it easier mobility of graduates of universities in the emerging European community; Practical intelligence is seen as the possibility to function intelligently in the various situations of life, for the sake of solving problems without having to do a lot of analysis and reasoning.

On the other hand, (Tobón, 2006) is another author who has ventured into the subject by basing the competency-based approach, articulating it with complex thinking, and notes that "... cultural psychology has brought to the concept of competencies the principle that the mind and learning is a social construction and requires interaction with other people, being suitability influenced by the same context..." (p. 3).

This Colombian author draws attention to the significant contributions to the study of competences, and the consideration he makes when stating that Historical- Cultural Psychology makes contributions to this topic, when the origin of the term dates from American sociology and psychology from constructivist and behavioral approaches.

In the Tuning Convention and later Alfa Tuning for Latin America, they have been projected for the contribution to the credit accumulation and transfer system. This has been materialized in the project "Definition and Selection of Competences" (DSC), carried out by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Higuera, E *et al.*, 2018), in order to guide educational actions for Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, similar to the first world educational systems; which in the end becomes straitjackets for contexts that

differ substantially from those generated by these theoretical approaches.

All this in order to ensure that the degrees of university graduates from third world countries are valid in other parts of the planet, and graduates can work and succeed in any country, an aspect that when thoroughly and deeply analyzed is more complex than what really focuses; This topic deserves a special approach in other works.

These considerations indicate that the treatment of the subject of competencies acquired an eclectic view based on the promotion of educational policies for the third world, far from pedagogical science, whose epistemological foundations understand education as the only object of study, with Principles, laws, categories and methods that print consistency to the educative practice in the Cuban context, which in turn is nourished by a psychology of dialectical materialist orientation based on Lev Semyonovich Vigostki, away from the focus of the so-called achievement society.

On the other hand, when it is analyzed the curricular changes made in Cuba in 2015 to the university careers, not professional models are conceived on the basis of skills; therefore, disciplines and subject programs, while declaring some competencies, continue to develop general and specific professional skills. This means that the competition, within the context of Cuban pedagogical careers, lacks coherence from the pedagogical and didactic point of view. This aspect will be demonstrated more solidly later in this article.

It calls the attention that in the Cuban curricula in the area of science teaching, in research work, results of research projects, master's theses and doctoral

degrees in the last ten years, competition reaches a growing presence, and modeling of teaching - learning processes that belong to a curriculum designed by skills. Such a situation places us in a theoretical and practical incongruity.

The teachers and researchers trained in the Cuban pedagogical school of the last 30 years, wonder if it will be necessary to incorporate the term competence into the process of training education professionals, or if the most prudent course would be to continue with the approach addressed in relation to skills, and the consequent enrichment of studies on pedagogy, didactics and personality psychology with a dialectical - materialistic orientation (Far íñas, G, 2011), (2015) to contribute to pedagogical professional performance as the main result of the training process (Remedios, J., 2005).

In order to analyze the viability of employing the competition in the context of the training of education professionals in Cuba, the authors have carried out a theoretical study, using documentary analysis as a method seen as a process based on search, recovery, analysis, criticism and interpretation of data obtained and recorded by other researchers in documentary sources, printed, audiovisual or electronic, etc.

To carry out this Article a total of 32 works of recognized authors at international level were checked, of which the 78 % corresponds to the last five years and the rest constitutes necessary consultations, because they represent different stages in the study of the competitions. The criteria of researchers who oppose the use of the term competencies were analyzed, and some contradictions regarding the curricular conception and its approach

from didactics are reflected, which allowed the corresponding reflections to be made, as well as the arrival at conclusions.

## DEVELOPING

Regarding the origin and theoretical bases of the competences, the diversity of criteria in their definition is striking. In the linguistic field it refers to "... the existence of one hundred and twenty-three meanings of the term, which highlights, on the one hand, the interest in the expansion of the concept, and on the other, the imprecision in its use ..." (Fariñas, 2011, p. 342), which it is illustrated in the analysis presented below.

For a more objective study, the authors have located the use of the term competence in the labor, pedagogical and psychological fields; in terms of the work, professional skills as the effective exercise of capabilities that allow the performance of an occupation, compared to the levels required in employment are seen.

The Cuban Ministry of Labor and Social Security defines labor competence as "... the set of theoretical knowledge, skills and attitudes that are applied by the worker in the performance of his occupation or position, in correspondence with the principle of demonstrated suitability and the technical, productive and service requirements, as well as those of quality that are demanded for the proper development of its functions..." (MTSS, 1999, p. 3).

Similarly, the ILO defines labor competence as "... a social construction of meaningful and useful learning for productive performance in a real work

situation that is obtained not only through instruction, but - and to a large extent - through learning for experience in specific work situations..." quoted by (Valcárcel. N, 2016, p. 148).

This same organization defines professional competence as "... the suitability to perform a task, or perform a job effectively by possessing the qualifications required for it (Valcárcel. N, 2016, p. 23).

From a pedagogical point of view, Sergio Tobón sees competencies as "... complex performance processes with suitability in a given context, with responsibility" (Tobón, 2006, p. 5)

For his part, Norberto Valcárcel understands by competencies "... the set of knowledge, attributes, values, attitudes and skills that are developed through formal or non-formal instruction through meaningful learning to enable the effective performance of an individual" (Valcárcel. N, 2016, p. 248).

Below, some definitions are exposed from the psychological point of view:

Suárez refers to competencies as a " psychological configuration that integrates various cognitive, metacognitive , motivational components and qualities, in close functional unity, that self-regulate real and efficient performance in a specific sphere of activity, based on the performance model socially desirable in a specific historical context "(Suárez. C, 2007, p. 5); while Gonzalez V. *et al.* (2016, p. 2) defines competition as "complex formation which incorporates in its functioning, cognitive and motivational resources".

This analysis leads us to the fact that, in the first place, there is a great diversity of definitions with entries as dissimilar as

suitability, social construction, capacity, behavior, attributes, actions, complex processes, and psychological configuration, which shows inaccuracies and terminological dispersion.

As already noted, the definitions of competence are diluted in the fields of work, pedagogical and psychological, in which knowledge, skills, values and attitudes and sized in knowing, knowledge, know-how and knowing how to be are mixed, aspects that when they are analyzed closely, correspond to levels of assimilation addressed by the Cuban pedagogy, with the intention of achieving professional performance increasingly efficient.

In summary, the subject of competences is theoretically controversial and contradictory, since they are identified with a great diversity of definitions that lead to a terminological confusion given by the diversity that is found in the consulted literature. These aspects show the need to deepen from a theoretical point of view, in correspondence with the viability of using this term, in tune with the results obtained in the practice of teacher training to achieve unity of criteria.

A particular reflection deserves the frame of competence as a configuration of personality, since as it has been analyzed in previous paragraphs, this has been defined as a psychological configuration, and in studies carried out in Cuba, personality is conceptualized as a configuration of Individual subjectivity, fundamentally conscious and self-regulating, which entails, in its functioning, the integration of the affective motivational and instrumental cognitive spheres.

This analysis is not at all unaware of the existence of predominantly inductive psychological formations, such as

ideals, interests, self-worth, convictions, aspirations, intentions, worldviews, as well as character and predominantly executives, such as habits, skills and abilities.

The studies of González, F., Mitjans, A., Bezerra, M. (2016), conceive the personality in an integrated way, to which is added the idea that competition is a psychological configuration; therefore, it interrelate dynamic states different and contradictory during social interactions of the subject through different emotions produced between these activities and, of course, these dynamic states can be generalized to other configurations corresponding to its strength and its meaning, from the subjective essence of the personality, since these configurations, according to this author, are constantly linked to each other, revealing the dynamic, complex, irregular and individual character of the personality, which in essence has a subjective character and is conceived as a configuration of configurations.

Then, on the logic of what was said, competition would come to replace the configurations of the personality, destroying all kinds of theoretical consistency of such analyzes, since locating the competition as a configuration of the personality, as it focuses on the cited studies, it would replace the psychological formations that work integrating the affective and cognitive spheres, as indicated by the integrating character of the personality. In this way, competition emerges as a super category, which would replace personality, denying terms that, historically in the development of psychological science, have preceded it and are scientifically based.

These criteria are shared by the research community that for over forty years have been embracing the tenets of the historical cultural approach, because if one considers the historical evolution of the categorical apparatus of psychological science, do not need such a loan, as if the affective-motivational and cognitive-instrumental areas form an integrated whole, only separated for study and better understanding, this implies that in its performance of personality is energized.

Likewise, if it is recognized that the needs and motives that mobilize the performance of the subjects are as diverse as the subjects who possess them, then there is no reason to speak of competencies as goals to be achieved in the training process such and as if one were talking about a skill with its functional invariants, which, as is known, do not change regardless of whether the motives change in the subjects. If so, how would it be possible to teach skills if its didactic structure cannot be established beforehand?

Similarly, there is a tendency to relate to the performance competition, for example, Garcia. (2015) considers that competence is part of the professional performance of the teacher, while Zentina, C.; Magaña, D. and Avendaño, K. (2017) affirm that it is necessary to study the competences in people who maintain high performance.

Seen in this way, it is sufficient to evaluate professional performance, as it has been conceived up to now, at least in the MINED and MES systems; With the constant improvement of the evaluation system, a judgment can be made on the level of development that each professional has, regardless of whether the person is competent or not, since the integration between knowledge

and values is achieved, in the same way, thinking about the ability that contains the affective and the cognitive, if you think about the aforementioned competition, which in the long run what it does is establish a terminological entropy, which has nothing to do with the categorical apparatus of the cultural historical approach.

Given the confusion created, it is imperative that we expose some criteria of some authorities of pedagogy and contemporary psychology, both nationally and internationally, about the disadvantages of using competition in the training process, especially of education professionals.

### **Considerations Opposite to the Competency Approach**

We agree with the outstanding Spanish pedagogue José Gimeno Sacristán, when in the text *Educate by competences, what is new?*, qualifies the competition as "... a new language, a jargon, a technique turned into an ideology that is easy to take root in wasteland ..." and later asserts: "We are not surprised that the teachers, tired of seeing the fashions on show happen for the same figures, stay as a spectator, mute before this frenzy" (Sacristán, J, 2008, p. 57).

Such criteria crystallize in the figure of the prominent Cuban psychologist and university professor Gloria Fariñas, when she affirms that "...The theory of competences has become a setback in science ..., the vanguard of current scientific thought seeks integrative and dialectical approaches ... (Fariñas, G, 2011, p. 346) and an approach that only produces practical results without substantial contributions in the theoretical field is questioned.

Likewise, we agree with Dr. Fariñas when states that "... the competition is to establish itself as a unique and universal category, able to include other concepts (values, knowledge, skills, abilities, etc.), Even without delving into the specific nature of each one, nor establish a hierarchical or historical order among them, regarding the orientation of human development in its integral character..." (Fariñas, G, 2011, p.346), since we believe that the Cuban specialist, that the Competition could be the inducing component of the skill that mobilizes the subject for achievement motivation.

Meanwhile, Rodolfo Mauricio Bicocca asserts that "... Teaching based on Competences (EBC) remains today a questionable approach by its strong economist matrix, weaknesses and theoretical contradictions, lack of unanimous agreement, their application problems, and its strangeness in the educational field and for its submission of the university to market criteria". Bicocca - Gino (2017, p.217) refers to the contrast between instrumental knowledge of high technical utility that promotes education based on competence in universities and the high temporal expiration of these with little formative potential.

An interesting reflection is provided by Juan Climent who, in an analysis carried out in the context of the current capitalist society on the origin, development and decline of individual competences, observes that "... the promotion of the training approach by competences far from favoring the Lifelong learning can discourage it, being ineffective and very expensive" (Climent, J., 2014, p.149); concludes by proposing that "...competences are much more than an instrument of educational and labor policy to raise the competitiveness of the productive apparatus, and extend to other spaces, interests and purposes

of life in society, no less important" (Climent, J., 2014, p. 166).

The previous ideas strengthen the criteria of the authors of this article related to the inappropriateness of using this approach in the Cuban training process, which as a society, despite needing productive efficiency, cannot renounce the achievement of an integral human being with solid cognitive and instrumental handles, to drive along the life with attachment to the values and inalienable rights contained in the curriculum, which prepares for solving professional problems based on who can perform in dissimilar contexts, without the risk of facing technological expiration, and provided with functional invariants that make them optimal despite the abrupt changes brought about by contemporaneity.

### **The competencies and the curriculum**

One of the deficiencies in the didactic and pedagogical context worldwide, regarding the implementation of curricula by competences is their lack of organization from the structural point of view. Specifically in Cuba, it cannot be concluded that it is a difficult because it has already been pointed out that the curriculum is conceived based on skills. The Cuban problem lies in trying to form competences from a skills curriculum. In the attempts to adapt disciplines and subject programs to a competency approach, there are serious dispersions of form and content. Not infrequently, disciplines and subject programs are designed whose objects of study and objectives refer to competencies. The same occurs with methodological indications and general strategies designed for careers.

In this sense, the following questions arise:

Will it be necessary to design the curricula by competences?

Would it be more prudent to continue with the skills without giving up, of course, the attitudinal axiological component that they already contain?

Why, if in theory, in educational research, the term is assumed with ease and high frequency, does it not appear the same in the curricula of Cuban pedagogical careers?

It is no less true that in Cuban educational practice some insufficiencies are evident, which some specialists predict to be able to solve if aspects of the competency approach are assumed.

Practical problems do not justify the entry of competition into the categorical apparatus of Cuban pedagogy, which already has as its principle, as has been pointed out, the unity between the instructional and the educational. Such criteria, far from clarifying, places specialists at a scientific crossroads that leads to new questions:

- Are these shortcomings present in the practice or in theory?
- Will these shortcomings be resolved with a competency curriculum?
- Can competencies be developed from a skills curriculum?

The answers to these questions are diverse, and it would be very happy to give hasty conclusions; However, what is obvious is that the study of competencies and their introduction into Cuban educational practice is already a fact; Perhaps it has been imposed by a naive idiom, inconsistent with paradigms already established in Cuba, international exchange or the need to continue looking for alternatives to make education more effective.

Within the linguistic and didactic - literary field, they delve into the subject of competences Tiza, M.; Campos, E. and Castellón, Y. (2016), among others with important advances from the didactic point of view and in the scientific field. In general, these authors defend that designing a curriculum by competences does not mean in any way to give up skills, quite the contrary, they argue that it allows the instrumental cognitive component to be harmonized with the attitudinal value from the curriculum itself, reaching the discipline and the didactic arrangement that is the subject, intentionally designing it, from the interrelation of the components of the teaching-learning process and the pedagogical process.

In the methodological field, there are various criteria regarding the steps to follow to develop curricula and programs by competence and algorithms have been given that guide the work of curriculum design, (Parra H, 2015). Most recently Almerich, G.; Suárez-Rodríguez, J.; Diaz-Garcia, I. and Orellana, N. (2020), to the reference to the powers of the twenty- first century, mixing the terms skills with skills and abilities, causing greater confusion even to refer to the powers of high skill, without the establishment of the corresponding theoretical bases.

In the Cuban context, it calls the attention the work of Cuesta, A. (2019), from the CUJAE faculty of Industrial Engineering, in which reference is made to the determination of labor competencies, as well as to the selection of staff competency, including a competency -based training and performance evaluation of competency, without in the formative process a curriculum designed.

All this leads to the confusion of some Cuban researchers in the area of

educational sciences trained in a Martian, Marxist and Vigotskian pedagogical school when studying the theories of the pedagogical process and the teaching-learning process by competencies spread in recent years and imported with fuzzy and even "attractive" terms, which in their essences do not reveal, in all cases, qualities unknown or ignored by Cuban pedagogy and didactics. Neologisms, fancy phrases, idioms of effects, disguise theoretical and methodological knowledge already established in the pedagogical theory and practice of Cuba.

### **A look at the competences from the didactic**

Pedagogy, especially didactics, was in charge of making contributions, not only from its definition, but also from the way to achieve results in learning and, of course, in professional training.

Sergio Tobon and his staff, when facing the problem of evaluation, have dabbled in so-called units of competence, in which a performance verb, an object, an end and quality condition (Tobon, S., 2006). In the learning process, which starts from identifying and understanding the competences to be formed, it includes

the evaluation process to be carried out, the criteria, and the evidence, indicators by level of mastery, weighting and scoring, evaluation recommendations and feedback, achieving an impressive level of precision of the expected learning outcomes, with quality criteria included.

However, the coincidence with what Cuban pedagogues have contributed in the field of didactics about the components of the teaching - educational process, powerfully attracts attention, defining the objective as the guiding category of the pedagogical process containing a model that includes the social need, the social charge and expresses the purpose or the aspiration, referring to the fact that the result of the educational process is stated in advance and planned in terms of the changes that must occur in the way of thinking, acting and feeling of students, so we can say that since its formulation contains not only the knowledge and skills to be achieved by students but also the convictions, the feelings and the values to be developed.

This theoretical elaboration can be specified in the following examples:

### **Example No. 1.**

<b>Skill (Know to do)</b>	<b>Associated knowledge (Know and know)</b>	<b>Educational intentionality (Associated value) (Know how to be / know how to create)</b>	<b>Via</b>
Characterize	pedagogy as science	with respect to copyright from critical and original positions with gradual elevation of levels of independence	Through the use of nationally and internationally accredited sources.

**Example No. 2.**

<b>Skill (Know to do)</b>	<b>Associated knowledge (Know and know)</b>	<b>Educational intentionality (Associated value) (Know how to be / know how to create)</b>	<b>Via</b>
Characterize	parasitic diseases	With a critical attitude towards social irresponsibility in relation to diseases and their transmission, taking into account the concept of health as everyone's right in the Cuban socialist social project.	from its transmission routes, causal agent and manifestations in the sick

Next, a third example is exposed, but in this case taken from the proposal made by Sergio Tobon in the article entitled "Basics of competency - based training"

(Tobon, S., 2006), in which it is illustrated what the author calls the unit of competence.

**Example No. 3.**

<b>Performance verb (procedural ability)</b>	<b>Object</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Quality condition</b>
To plan	a productive or social project	To satisfy certain need of the community, to obtain economic income.	Based on certain drafting rules, following structure criteria established in the area.

As can be seen, in the didactic work with the competences a great similarity emerges with the Cuban proposals, even with slight differences between each one, for example, regarding the associated knowledge, which Tobón assigns to what he calls object, to the educational intent assigned to the purpose and to the quality condition. In no case the way is declared.

From the comparative analysis carried out, it can be inferred that, in the didactic field, in Cuba solid steps have been taken in the work to achieve the integral formation of the personality, which is projected from the objective as a guiding category and worked through the rest of the components of the process, such as content, methods, means, evaluation and forms of organization, as well as group, teacher and students, aspects that do not constitute the object of analysis of this article, but which have

been systematized in the Cuban educational context through Starting from the theoretical and practical experience of Soviet pedagogy with a materialist dialectical orientation, implemented since the sixties of the last century.

In the opinion of the authors, instead of competence, the professional performance of teachers in the Cuban educational context should be assumed, seen as "the preparation and responsibility of teachers to solve, independently and creatively, related problems with the tasks of instructing and educating students in different contexts of action (school, family, community) and in correspondence with the demands of the educational system, stated in the current pedagogical models, which are expressed in practice by complying with the professional functions"(Remedios, J., 2005, p.25 , 29); In addition, it offers three dimensions for evaluating the professional performance of teachers, namely:

- personality characteristics associated with creativity (professional motivation, originality, flexibility and cognitive independence)
- modes of action associated with teaching, methodological, investigative, guiding functions
- Responsible labor

## CONCLUSIONS

The competency approach constitutes an alternative in professional training to respond to the demands of the labor market; therefore, according to the postulates of psychology with a dialectical - materialistic orientation, there are no theoretical arguments to use it

efficiently in the context of Cuban pedagogical training.

There is a great conceptual dispersion of the term competence, which obscures its analysis and reduces the consistency of its use, especially if it starts with locating it as a configuration of the personality, since given the breadth with which it is focused, it leaves doubts as to the possibility of carrying out didactic work from the direction of the pedagogical process.

The use of the term professional performance is preferred, which, as seen by the authors, constitutes the result variable to be achieved in the educational process of educators and, although it is a not addressed topic with sufficient depth, it is better suited that the term competition within the epistemological apparatus assumed in Cuba.

The term competition in the Cuban educational context is not viable, while the skill, conceived from the vigostkian historical - Cultural School with materialistic - dialectic basis, summarizes in itself the cognitive, affective and attitudinal and allows comprehensive training of personality, expressed in professional performance.

As long as conclusive results are reached and consensus is reached, it is necessary to continue working by skills, which may be traditional; however, it is a category of greater importance in the Cuban context, both from psychology, pedagogy and didactics; In it, the objective is assumed as the guiding component of the pedagogical process that includes the link of instruction with education. Likewise, the results of the training process must be expressed in professional performance.

The terms competence and competent person are used in common language to refer to prepared persons, who carry out their professional activity with high levels of performance, as well as in any of its meanings; however, they suffer from a coherent theory to be employed as part of the pedagogical and didactic work, much less as an outcome variable in the process of formation of education professionals in the Cuban context.

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**Conflict of interest:**

Authors declare not to have any conflict of interest.

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