Importance of Education Based on Citizens' Competences to Encourage the Competitiveness of the Knowledge Society

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Abstract
The following are the results of a research study aimed at analysing the development of social skills in children in transition grade for the promotion of their citizenship skills. The research process was based on the updated literature on social development in early childhood education, the promotion of social skills in children of preschool age, as well as proposals for the interpretation and application of citizen education in schools from the perspective of citizen competencies. A social/critical methodology was applied, which facilitated the combination of various tools and instruments. The final results facilitated the elaboration of a proposal for future promotion processes, as well as generating reflections on the importance of citizen competencies.

Keywords: citizenship, child education, social development, social skills

1 Introduction
The interaction of social beings and the intercultural approximation originate the
need to train people totally open to this process, which is why what is known as citizenship is redefined and positioned as one of the new forms of orientation. Education in the world today, more than ever, has an obligation to match the capabilities of each individual, and it is necessary that it be guided and evolved on the demands that promote a more plural and politically effective society, guided by the competencies of citizens that contribute to the change that is really necessary, which means allowing teachers to carry the initial momentum to sustain this progress [1].

It is the case that competency-based education is the channel for the adoption of a uniform, universal and direct mechanism, thus strengthening the identity and improving the tolerance of all those who live together within a common territorial margin or, in their absence, those who are integrated into such territory, which is why, day by day, the extension of new ideas, new mechanisms of educational orientation and the total development of the population can be appreciated [2].

Finally, the aim is to clarify the concept of the knowledge society and the features that characterize it, as key points of the contributions and research that outstanding authors have carried out on this subject, the purpose of which is to encourage the competitiveness of citizens who are in the process of transforming the information society into the knowledge society, through education based on citizen competencies, being basically the fundamental pillar of the latter the value of knowledge as a good and service that seeks that citizens are globalized and organized in community work collaboratively to create and apply the knowledge acquired in information and communication technologies (ICT), to use it in solving problems that have arisen in society over the years [3].

2 Methodology

For the present work, a qualitative research approach is chosen, within the framework of the action research, defining it as a way of studying, of exploring, a social situation, in this case an educational one. Qualitative research is that which studies the quality of activities, relationships, issues, means, materials or instruments in a given situation or problem. It seeks to achieve a holistic description, which attempts to analyse a particular issue or activity in great detail. This research works with contexts that are natural, or taken as they are, rather than reconstructed or modified by the researcher. Qualitative research essentially develops processes in descriptive terms and interprets actions, languages, functionally relevant facts and places them in a correlation with the broader social context [4].

The population to be studied in this research corresponded to the totality of the students of the Transition grade with oscillating ages between 5 and 6 years, as well as an analysis of the corresponding realities in some Colombian Caribbean institutions, among them are Colegio Colón de Barranquilla, Colegio de María Auxiliadora of Barranquilla, Institution Educativa Distrital Maria Auxiliadora of Barranquilla and Institution Educativa Nelson Mandela of Valledupar. The population sample of the study corresponds to twenty-four students of the Transition
grade of the Nelson Mandela Educational Institution of Valledupar, this group of students is considered pertinent, there are as participants an equal number of girls and boys, who were randomly selected from the total group that corresponds to seventy-five students of the Transition grade.

Likewise, a group of students from this particular institution are selected, taking into account criteria of accessibility, objectivity and vulnerable context, which provides elements of interest for the research group and has in turn facilitated the verification of the initial thesis with regard to the development of social skills and their direct relationship with citizen competencies as key elements of development. In order to achieve the central objective, a diagnostic instrument was applied to social skills in early childhood education, the results of which are then presented in the form of tables and reflections to facilitate the corresponding analyses.

3 Framework of Reference

During the last decade, the Colombian Ministry of National Education [5] has catalogued the concept of citizen competencies as those intellectual and acquired skills that allow the interaction of members of social groups. At the same time, it handled the theory of the integration of these communities, which respond to the perception and demonstration of the socio-emotional capacities that could be promoted through cognitive, communicative or emotional behaviors that are frequently used by the population [2].

Supposes another perception, and it is the one that refers to citizen competences as the behaviors executed in democratic societies that represent situations and cognitive acts, sentimental expressions and all those knowledge that make possible the correct action of the citizenship in the interrelationship within a democratic society, serving this so that the respect, the defense of the fundamental rights, as well as the perfect development of the permanent and plural peaceful coexistence and under the premise of the community, either under the social or familiar, national or international criterion or on any unifying condition is configured.

With respect to citizen socialization skills, authors such as [3] state that social relations end up playing a transcendental role within the different levels of education, learning and the socialization of human beings, thus assuming that with the use of these skills they can be provided at all times to favor interaction and development of the person, and can be reflected in perfect communication, avoiding rejection of their violent similarities or disadvantages due to the incorrect and inconsistent application of these skills. In another vein [4] reaffirms that in the context of these competencies there is a vital and intangible link with education, however, schools do not properly submit to the processes of monitoring, improvement, evolution, and erroneously perform in a timid teaching of these socializing qualities, being necessary to create the ideal scenario between the student and his or her relatives.

Similarly, [5] states that it should be borne in mind that socialization processes also depend on the interaction of nationals and foreigners, which is rooted in a constant flow of migrants who enable interculturality to be maintained in classrooms
and in different areas of society.

With respect to citizenship education, [6] notes that there is an enormous importance linked to the promotion of civic education, since this leads to the improvement of democratic values within social life, the peaceful resolution of problems and the capacity to act under the principles of justice and equity; however, its implementation often causes social and political conflicts for those who oppose such activities. Framed within the same idea [7], it states that the commitment to bringing values into the classroom allows students to recognize and emphasize the role of citizenship education as an instrument that guarantees learning a set of norms and principles that seek to maintain a social order within the school or in the society in which people live.

Alanis [8] state that citizen education begins in the initial formative stage, since it originates in the cycle of orientation and learning of the different forms of social participation, the other cycles being those that generate the necessary tools for personal, social and family development, serving this process for moral progress, overcoming subjectivism and placing oneself in the place of other sociable beings.

Now, society has changed over time, undergoing transformations that are geared to its evolution; Tobon [9] explains that society advanced through processes such as feudalism, pre-industry and industrialization, being currently in the transition from the information society to the knowledge society, both complement each other but the latter has certain peculiarities due to the fact that further, it seeks to produce, share and apply knowledge in solving the problems of our society which is constantly changing, while the information society only aims to produce and work with data. To achieve a true transformation of the information society to the knowledge society, information and communication technologies must play a transcendental role in the training processes through continuous education, skills development and knowledge management [10].

However, it is important to note that the concept of the knowledge society has been used and deepened by several authors since the late 1960 [11]. According to [12], this new society gives more value to knowledge and recognizes it as an economic good, from which problems are solved with a collaborative, systemic and ethical approach, pursuing the growth of each of the people as they contribute to social development in general, being its basis the capacity to use or generate knowledge to innovate human processes.

In accordance with the knowledge society, organizations need to renew themselves in order to become part of globalization and to face the increasingly strict and competitive international market. To achieve this, the challenge is to create knowledge and its diffusion, the first of which requires technologies and information systems that keep pace with daily activities, as for the second, it is essential to increase their competencies in improving skills and information literacy for society in general, in order to take advantage of the resources available to them to obtain information and thus generate and transmit new knowledge [13]. In the same vein, various authors stress the importance of open access to information in education as an opportunity to optimise the transfer of knowledge and improve the production of goods and services [14].
The knowledge society has a series of characteristics that can be summarized in the fact that citizens through their communities work collaboratively to manage, co-construct and apply knowledge to solve local problems with a global vision, with a critical sense and ethical commitment, based on information and communication technologies (ICT) [9].

Fig. 1: Characteristics of the knowledge society

| Working collaboratively | Manage, co-construct and apply knowledge | Solving local problems with a global vision | Critical Sense | Ethical commitment | ICT |

Source: based on [9]

Taking education into account in order to encourage the competitiveness of the knowledge society, according to [15] public libraries, whether digital or physical, play a fundamental role and have two basic services: supporting society with digital services such as electronic resources, reference services and communication with their clients through the media, and providing physical spaces for meetings, learning and work.

At present, globally, we are heading towards building and consolidating the knowledge society with the support of information and communication technologies, in order to overcome the problems that put humanity at risk, such as violence, environmental pollution, among others [16]; according to the research carried out by [17] to face the challenges of the knowledge society, an alternative approach called socio-training has been built, which consists of training integral people for the knowledge society with a solid base of the characteristics addressed in figure 1.

It is necessary to mention that the monopoly of educational learning in some cases is developed beyond the mechanisms of citizenship and is aimed at developing scientific skills, commitments and faculties within society, however, the transfer of information must face globalization, which is why those who form part of the knowledge society must assume the same commitment to socialization in the immediate environment or not, which is why citizen competencies in education take on greater force [18]. Finally, to return to the subject of ICTs, it is essential to point out that they currently represent a regular channel for the improvement of many processes, and competency-based education is one of these processes, and thus an outline of the contribution they make to education is presented [19].
Table 1: Importance of ICT in citizenship training

<table>
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<th>Importance of ICT in citizenship training</th>
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<tr>
<td>How to become an informed citizen?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to develop research and communication activities?</td>
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<td>How can I develop my skills responsibly?</td>
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4 Results

The diagnostic activity was carried out with a group of twenty-four (24) transition grade students from the Nelson Mandela Educational Institution of Valledupar, which were permanently observed and recorded by the research group and later, their development was evaluated by means of a qualitative value scale and a numerical approximation in which the levels of development of these basic social skills and those related to citizen competencies differed significantly.

Within the data collected in the development of the activities, an initial evaluation of the development levels of the ten skills selected in the scales established could be made in the following manner:

- optimal (Op-5.0)
- outstanding (So-4.5)
- satisfactory (SA-4.0)
- acceptable (AC-3.0)
- insufficient (IN-2.0)

These skills in their respective order are: listening, thanking, asking for help, following instructions, greeting others, waiting for the turn, sharing, offering help, solving a problem and accepting the consequences, as evidenced by a tabulation of data by number of matches by skill and rating scale. As evidenced in the records of the data collected, there are notable differences in the results obtained between skills and it has been considered that these are influenced by factors such as age, evolutionary moment, culture, among others; it is important to add that the research group considers it important to avoid evaluating these skills on an unacceptable value scale because of the fact that the existence of these skills was evidenced.
As for the activities carried out, which aim to develop social skills as a whole, in their application it was possible to establish in each of them outstanding common behaviours in the childhood stage. In activity number one, called Building stories, it was possible to perceive that the students attend in an average of eight to ten minutes and that they enjoy the guided readings, it is important to emphasize that the reading of stories is an activity that contributes to the development of language and creativity in children, likewise, the dynamization that the facilitator of this exercise contributes determines its success and the strengthening of the integral development of the children.

Activity number two Art and creation showed the artistic potential and creativity of the students, the great interest in the children for work and the dynamism in it, as well as the anxiety and restlessness typical of the age for the novelty of the activities proposed. Subsequently, activity number three, known as Powers of solidarity, as well as Collective construction of values, showed some difficulties in working in groups and in a cooperative way, which is a characteristic of age and which will be overcome to the extent that children are given exercises to strengthen coexistence and group work.

The Collective construction of values, activity number four, showed great interest in the execution of games and motor activities, in the development of the activity, it was possible to register that they have not yet managed to put themselves in the place of the other to look for possible solutions to situations presented, they show solidarity and kindness with peers and teachers, an important strength for the development of social skills related to the activity and which are linked to the research proposal. The data collected through interaction with Transition grade students and application of the diagnostic instrument allow us to establish that there are low levels of development in social skills, six of them in acceptable performance, three more in satisfactory performance (with the lowest records) and only one in outstanding performance. These indices show that within the skills assessed, the more complex they are, the more developmental indices persist.

In this sense, the ten skills evaluated have been classified into three groups according to some common characteristics, which, averaged within their group, showed the following development averages, which confirms the trend discovered in the results obtained after the application of the diagnostic instrument, which has allowed us to establish that the greater the complexity, the lower the levels of performance obtained:

- Behavior and good manners: 3.0
- Cognitive development: 2.9
- Promotion of sociability and citizenship: 2.8

It is believed that these results are influenced by students' own existential characteristics such as, stage of development, age, development, environments, culture, among others. The results obtained after the application of the diagnostic instrument and the processing of this information allow us to see the prevailing need in schools for the implementation of pedagogical actions that will strengthen the quality of education.
5 Conclusions

Citizen competencies are an important part of education, since they address intellectual capacities in order to fully train people who are subject to the study of competency-based education, and thus the social development of people in terms of their socio-affective capacities is beneficial. However, this is linked to the evolution of society, since the appearance of globalization requires a direct interaction between people, thus creating a plurality of thoughts that must be interrelated, generating behaviors that must be regulated beforehand to allow the socialization of human beings, thus promoting development, teamwork and skills such as participation and negotiation, which finally give way to the recognition of the evident transition from the information society to the knowledge society, in which continuous education is indispensable, encouraging citizens through competitiveness to implement the characteristics of this new social order that the world is building.

Colombia has been a country quite affected by social, political and economic conflicts, which is why the promotion of education based on citizen competencies is a priority in order to create people committed to a participatory and harmonious coexistence, thus creating the need to create new mechanisms of control, education and management of social relations. This is why it is necessary to make progress in the knowledge society in order to manage and disseminate it in order to become part of the globalization process and, instead of being an exclusionary process, to generate more access to information and communication, so that it is oriented towards the collaboration of the world society and the use of the resources at its disposal to obtain information, as well as the creation and transmission of new knowledge.

References


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