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*La evaluación de la calidad educativa en la mejora del  
proceso formativo en la enseñanza preuniversitaria*

*The evaluation of educational quality as a way of  
improving the training process in pre-university education*

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**Resumen:** En la actualidad cualquier intento de proponer una fundamentación desde el punto de vista metodológico para realizar una evaluación que responda a un enfoque integral, tanto cuantitativo como cualitativo, que incluya no solo los aspectos cognitivos sino además los formativos, resulta un tema polémico y complejo. Atendiendo a ello se ofrece una propuesta para la evaluación de la calidad educativa a partir de las dimensiones por las que transcurre la formación del estudiante de la enseñanza preuniversitaria como vía para la mejora del proceso pedagógico que se desarrolla en este nivel educacional.

**Palabras clave:** Evaluación; Evaluación educativa; Formación integral; Evaluación de la calidad; Estudiantes de la enseñanza preuniversitaria

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**Abstract:** Currently, any attempt to propose a foundation- from the methodological point of view- to perform an evaluation that responds to an integral approach, both quantitative and qualitative, which includes not only the cognitive aspects but also the training tasks, is a controversial and complex issue. Taking into account that fact, this paper recommends a way for evaluating educational quality based on the dimensions of the pre-university education student's training as a way to improve the pedagogical process that takes place at this educational level.

**Key words:** Evaluation; Educational evaluation; Integral training; Quality evaluation; Students of pre-university education

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## **Introduction**

A common problem for psychology and pedagogy as related sciences is the integral formation of the personality of the subject. Although psychology has offered contributions related to the structure of the personality with acceptable practical results, it has not reached consensus regarding how to carry out its evaluation. The search for a definitive solution for many psychologists lies in reaching a stage of superior development in the integration of

reliable evaluation procedures that allow verifiability of their conceptions. On the other hand, pedagogy, in spite of recognizing the process of formation and development of the personality as one of the central categories and principles of its investigative, teaching-methodological and guiding-educational tasks, has not yet been able to present a defining solution, and a consequence of this is the proliferation of existing methods, criteria and techniques in relation to evaluation.

Therefore, the relevance of research in the field of quality assessment in the student training process in Cuba has gone through limitations ranging from the predominance of descriptive evaluative research focused mainly on quantitative aspects of cognitive performance of schoolchildren, to an accurate pedagogical approach on how to carry out its integral evaluation, which limits its scope.

Research on educational evaluation in Cuba in recent times has been systematized through the scientific community of educational evaluators in a national scientific event known as CALIDED, on topics such as:

Descriptive evaluative research aimed specifically at the cognitive performance of schoolchildren.

- The articulation of a System of Evaluation of the Quality of Education (SECE), particularizing the role of the National Operatives of the Evaluation of the Quality of Education in academic degrees and curricular areas.
- Involvement in school improvement processes, giving particular importance to studies of deepening cognitive performance in basic subjects, and proposals for methodology for its evaluation.
- Monitoring of the quality of teaching in the learning and formation of values in students, as well as in the elaboration of methodological and educational proposals for their attention.

All of the above shows the need to deepen the relationships established between evaluation, the objectives stated in the study plan and the preparation of teachers and managers to evaluate the quality of the student's training process in the pre-university schools.

This paper offers a general idea of the progress that has been made in this aspect. What is still missing is a broad framework of ideas within which all the different approaches can be interpreted coherently. The drawback is that the idea of an integral evaluation does not come to be formulated with precision, then, how should a general theory about the evaluation of quality in the process of student training be elaborated?

There are three major restrictive guidelines. The first is of a theoretical nature since there is a great diversity of criteria around the evaluation of quality, its scope, methods and procedures to carry it out. The second is the one that psychology and pedagogy impose as sciences because there is no full agreement on the personality category. The third limitation is of a practical nature and is imposed by the level of preparation and pedagogical culture of the teachers, in particular on how to evaluate the different dimensions in which the process of forming the student's personality takes place. The process of analyzing these points to more significant features, sources for future work.

Taking into account all these fundamentals, the objective of the present research is the elaboration of a proposal for the evaluation of quality in the process of student training that contributes to improving the evaluative culture of teachers and executives of pre-university education.

### **Development**

The integral formation of the personality implies the development of the individual capacities and the active participation of the subject from the interaction with others.

This process of formation takes place from the relation that takes place between the internal processes (properties and psychological formations of his personality) with the external processes (sociocultural environment). Therefore, the training process takes place during the entire evolutionary development of the human being and has as its maximum pretension the progress of the individual potentialities of the subject and is achieved through the process of education.

Teaching must have a structure and a quality such that in its management the students are increasingly demanding and constantly seeking solutions, assistance, advice. The development in the student is achieved when articulated a teaching and an education that

allows and promotes a personal growth adjusted to their characteristics and personal needs where, from the achieved progress, represent their immediate possibilities and consequently constitute the necessary impulse to reach a higher level.

To face the challenge of the integral formation of the personality in the current improvement of pre-university education, a change in the management styles of the training process is necessary, since the practices that until now were being implemented demand the search for new alternatives that guarantee a more efficient attention to the unit that exists between the instructive, the educational and the developer. In this sense, it is important to continue promoting the idea of the student as the center of the pedagogical process.

From the logic of this reasoning, then the formation of the personality of the student in the pre-university is possible provided that it is carried out through a personalized educational process that channels the student protagonism and its self-regulatory potential, which enhances both the development of cognitive processes and learning that allows them to know and understand reality, such as the capabilities for detection, confrontation and solution of the professional problems of reality.

Seen from this perspective, the integral formation of the personality implies, above all, that changes and transformations take place in the personality of the subject as a whole, making the individual reach higher levels in his formation, expressed in the performance in the different contexts and scenarios.

This issue indicates the need to develop the logical processes of thought that stimulate independence and creativity. The integral formation, seen from the personality, implies, first of all, that changes and transformations take place in the personal point of view making the individual reach higher levels in the formation of his personality.

Therefore, evaluating the quality of the comprehensive education of the pre-university student as the main product (result and variable explained) of the educational process of this level means not only the evaluation of their level of learning, their knowledge, compliance or not of the proposed instructional objectives, but also of their qualities, feelings, attitudes and school and social behavior.

In this sense, integral formation is conceived "as a dialectical unit between: the degree of development that it reaches in cognitive processes; the system of habits, knowledge and skills; the political preparation; their social behavior and level of motivation to face the activities "(López, 2012, p.37).

Therefore, the process of formation of the pre-university student is defined as the process of changes and transformations that take place in the psychological configurations of the individual that allows to reach of higher levels in their development, from the integration of cognitive, motivational and moral politics that self-regulate the social and contextual behavior of the individual in their interaction with their environment and other subjects (López, 2013).

However, the analysis of the process of systematization of the general theoretical foundations on which the evaluation of quality is based corroborates that there are practical limitations in terms of the integrality of the evaluation process, since not all the dimensions in which the education of the student in the pre-university school reveal the need for changes in the evaluation process based on assessing the student's capacity, attitudes, behaviors and performance.

The main contributions are those of López (2004); Torres (2007, 2011, 2012, 2013); War (2010); León (2010); Acosta (2011), García (2011); Valdéz (2005, 2007); Díaz (2012); López (2012); Acosta (2013); González (2014); Pérez (2011, 2014) and others, who offer important scientific-practical arguments that justify the need to introduce new reforms in the evaluative praxis of the pedagogical process in schools.

Its results, without a doubt, have contributed to the articulation of the System for the Evaluation of the Quality of Education (SECE in Spanish), which aims to evaluate the variables of context, input, processes and products of educational quality in Cuba.

Among the universe of researchers we wish to highlight by the depth of the analysis and what is assumed as the epistemological basis of quality education, the thesis advocated by Valdéz (2005) to refer that this should include the characteristics of context, inputs, processes and the results of the education of man, historically and socially conditioned; that

take a concrete expression from the philosophical, pedagogical, sociological and psychological ideology prevailing in a given society.

Another important criterion from the point of view of its scope, is the one offered by Torres, (2009), by granting the educational evaluation the character of "discipline" and identifying it as a particular form of "pedagogical research", aimed at monitoring the progress of the essential aspects of the operation of the National Educational System, from which judgments and recommendations are issued to promote processes of improvement.

Consequently, evaluation as a process fulfills three fundamental functions: diagnostic (seeks to provide specific information on the results achieved in educational practice), assessment (facilitates the interpretation of quantitative results validity by clearly and precisely identifying the regularities of current educational practice), and improvement (guarantees feedback and future guidance in order to transform and improve educational practice)

In this way the differences between the academic evaluation and the educational evaluation are clarified in a very particular way, in essence on the aspects related to the what, how, when and why of the evaluation.

However, the main author of this research based on the experience acquired (2001-2017), because of participation in national research and research projects such as Comprehensive Apprenticeship Assessment (2001-2003); Improvement of Pre-university Education in Guantánamo (2004-2006); Evaluation, accreditation and improvement of Educational Quality in Santiago de Cuba (2012-2014); Improving the curriculum of pre-university education for raising the quality of baccalaureate education (2014-2017), has been able to identify that in the pre-university educational practice the following insufficiencies:

- Theoretical-methodological deficiencies in teachers regarding the evaluation of quality in the pre-university student training process.
- Technical weaknesses in the processes of elaboration, validation and application of the different instruments of quality measurement.
- Predominance in the evaluation of school performance of cognitive aspects in the student, leaving the training as an isolated element.

- Little clarity in the accuracy of the functions and categories of the educational evaluation.

These insufficiencies have influenced in particular the behavior of students, teachers and managers, expressed in the former by the preference for objective tests that assess the cognitive focused on the development of the skills declared in the subject programs, which affects their poor cognitive development, and the assumption of a passive and little reflexive position in the learning process; in the teachers for carrying out an evaluation process focused on the instructive aspects through the normative evaluation (systematic, partial and final), which tends to confuse the terms evaluation, control and qualification, which, at its turn, limits the possibility of the student to become active agent, communicator and reflection maker within the pedagogical process; and in the management to attend only to what is regulated in the evaluation policy, which prevents them from an integral vision of the training process, and to be able to detect in time the insufficiencies that are generated in the student's education and therefore to project improvement actions for the quality of the pedagogical process.

These weaknesses in the evaluation process essentially reveal the lack of a sufficiently coherent model for quality assessment that can be implemented in the pre-university study plan, and that responds to the needs of teachers and managers for decision-making improvement over the quality of the student training process. It shows the need to deepen the relationships established between evaluations, the objectives stated in the curriculum, and the preparation of teachers and managers to assess the quality of the process of student training in the pre-university school.

The proposal presented is a process that has allowed to contextualize the object on the basis of four dimensions of human development for the evaluation of quality in the integral formation of the personality of the pre-university student: dimension of cognitive development, political-moral dimension, motivational-significant dimension, contextual-social dimension, taking into account the dialectical relationship between each one in the integral formation of the personality of the individual. The four declared dimensions are mutually influenced because in human beings the social life, the intelligence and the own psychological individuality constitute the main source of stimulus for their integral development. These dimensions form a system, in such a way that in order to study how

the integral formation of the personality of the student has taken place, it is important to keep in mind the way in which they are integrated.

In this proposal, comprehensive training is contextualized to the requirements of the pre-university model, thus achieving training professionals with a solid preparation to face the reality of social life.

**a) Dimension of cognitive development:** includes the degree of progress achieved by the logical processes of thought to produce and achieve the development of the skills of analysis, synthesis, comparison, abstraction and generalization.

To determine the indicators of this dimension it is necessary to consider the actions that the student must deploy for the development of the skills. From a dialectical-materialist approach it is known that the level of knowledge of man is determined not only by their natural or intellectual peculiarities but above all by social conditions and possibilities.

It is important to recognize that the cognitive is a presupposition of internalization, but it cannot be left there, because the emotional, sentimental aspects reinforce knowledge and continue to work in this way through feeling. Emotion, when it is rooted in knowledge, awakens feelings, and establishes a link between feeling and knowledge, which is the basis of value.

Therefore, it is required that the teacher, through the content of their subject, direct the development of the intellectual potential of the students so that, necessarily, they have to use basic operations such as observing, analyzing, relating, comparing, generalizing to appropriate the knowledge. The more the student exercises and consolidates these operations, the more solid the result, the essentials will remain longer and will serve as a systematic basis for new knowledge, and the creative and active cognitive independence will be greater.

When it comes to evaluating objectively the levels of development reached in the cognitive dimension of students, it is necessary to take into account several closely related aspects: the level of achievements in the logical processes of thought, the correspondence with the instructional and educational objectives, the characteristics of the context in which learning takes place and the criteria of complexity with which this cognitive performance is to be

measured.

The evaluation of the dimension of cognitive development, as has been expressed, will focus on the achievement carried out in the logical processes of thought; for this the predominant way of assessing will be the oral questions with a systematic character on the part of the teacher, but not any questions but those that motivate, induce, stimulate and force the student to think about the content addressed; the teacher can also use tasks, seminars, practical work, with an integrating character of knowledge and skills as often as he determines.

The teacher can rely on the current valuation system prevailing in the pre-university stage, but should not be limited to the quantitative mark reached by the students, but in the analysis of inferences of the indicators proposed for this dimension, with the application of personalized techniques of educational research as the observation of teaching activities, the performance of pedagogical tests, among others.

**b) Political-moral dimension:** covers everything related to political preparation and the manifestation of the feelings, values and attitudes of the student. When it comes to objectively and accurately assess the levels of development achieved in the political-moral dimension of the students it is necessary to take into account several aspects, among them: the learning objectives declared in the pre-university model, the characteristics of the context in which it finds itself (school and / or social) and the criteria of complexity with which this dimension is to be measured.

To evaluate in this dimension the attitudes, the behavior, the manifestations of commitment, fairness, respect and tolerance of the students, the teacher can rely on techniques such as the observation of the level of participation of the students in the political activities carried out at school, the interview, the survey, the application of political questionnaires and pedagogical tests.

**c) Context-social dimension:** manifests the empathic qualities of the subject, the ability to know and understand others. It covers the social behavior of the student in the school and in his social group (classroom), from his social action as a member of the group and the degree of empathy he achieves.

When it comes to objectively and fairly assessing the levels of development achieved in this dimension, it is necessary to take into account the following aspects: in addition to the level of achievements in learning, the training objectives declared in the pre-university model, the characteristics of the context in which it finds (school and / or social), the communicative competence of the subject to achieve its social empathy from the act of being able to transmit and socialize information, and the criteria of complexity with which it is wanted to measure this dimension.

In this dimension, when covering everything related to the process of social interaction of the student, the rules of behavior and social coexistence are evaluated, so it is recommended to use the observation, the list of interactions, the anecdotal record, the interview, the workshops, and techniques such as brainstorming.

**d) Motivational-meaningful dimension:** it includes everything related to the way of acting and safety towards the different activities, including their self-knowledge, confidence and self-acceptance to fulfill the activities.

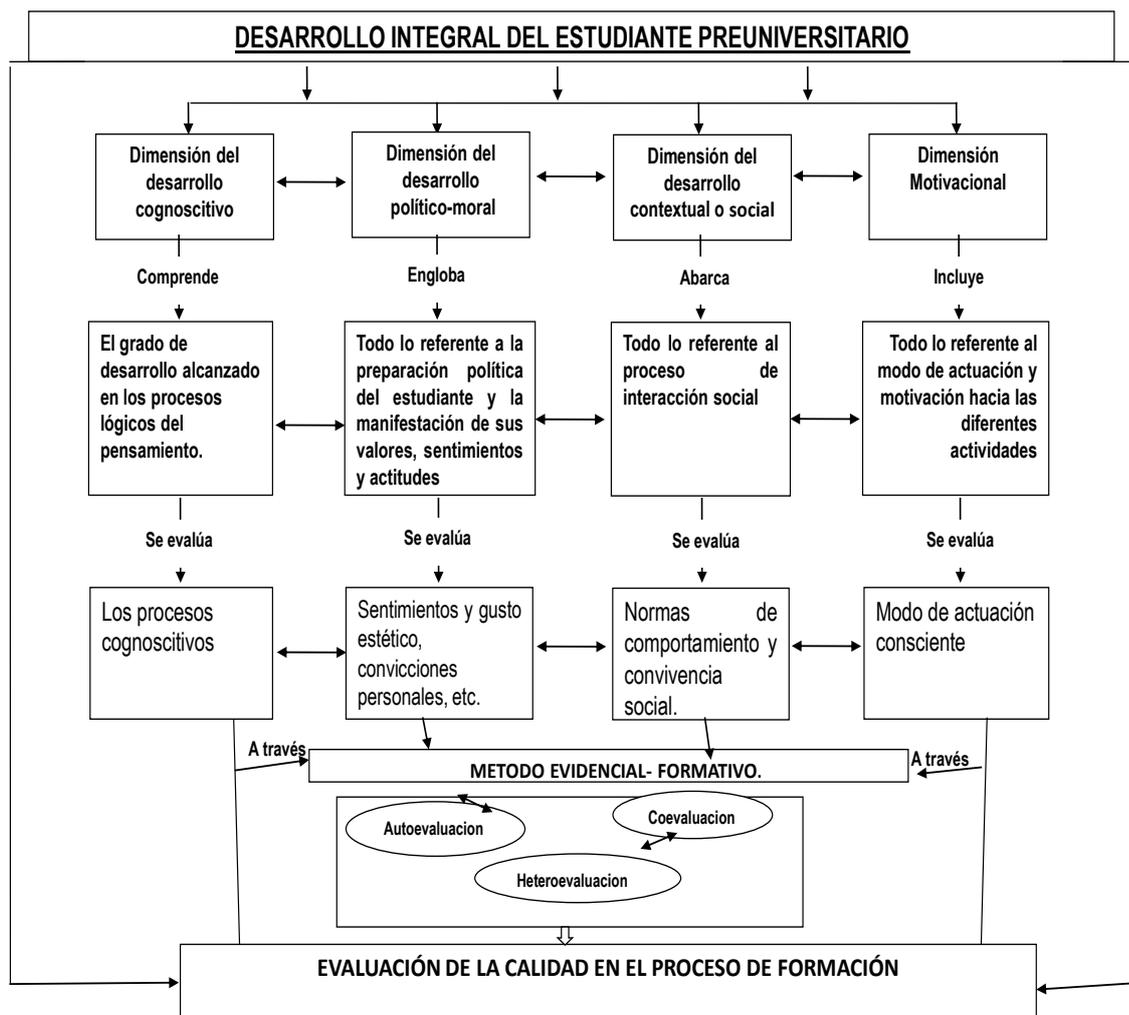
When it comes to objectively and accurately assessing the levels achieved in this dimension, it is necessary to take into account the following aspects: in addition to the level of achievements in learning, the end of pre-university education declared in the pre-university model the characteristics of the context in which it finds (school and / or social) for the development of the activities, the social empathy reached between the school community, and the criteria of complexity with which this dimension is to be measured.

In the motivational-meaningful dimension, by having everything related to the mode of action and motivation towards the different activities, the way of conscious action of the student and the level of motivation that presents towards the realization of the activities is evaluated, so as to recommend the application of techniques such as observation, completion of sentences, anecdotal record, composition, among others. The teacher will take into account: responsibility to fulfill the tasks, the setting of own goals and ways to achieve them, self-acceptance and assumption of their decisions and consequences, sense of satisfaction, the ability to instill in others the confidence in the achievement of goals.

Therefore, the evaluation should be seen as a systematic and permanent process that not only aims to obtain a higher quantitative result, but as an activity inherent to the teacher's own performance that allows him to obtain information about the quality of the process he directs, should serve as a measure of the achievement reached, of the successes and failures of the student. It must also serve as a diagnostic and projective vision in accordance with the objectives and goals proposed.

The proposed dimensions form a system, in such a way that in order to study how the integral formation of the student has taken place, it is important to bear in mind the way in which these are integrated into the student's personality. The proposal offered is summarized in the following scheme:

**Fig. 1.** Conception of the evaluation of the educational quality of the pre-university school training



## Conclusions

The education and development of an integral personality in young people is undoubtedly the object of attention of pedagogy and psychology as related disciplines, where the evaluation of quality in the training process, the determination of its characteristics and the clarification of indicators should be a planned work in order to obtain as much information as possible.

The contribution of this research paper is the proposal of the dimensions for the evaluation of the formation of the pre-university student from the logic of their integration.

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