

J.M. Gutiérrez-Vázquez
*Adult education: skills for
life or vocational skills?*

The author illustrates the complexity and richness of the notion of competencies (skills) in education considering that it should not be viewed as limited to vocational qualifications, but rather, considered in terms of three distinct orders of skills: cultural, vocational and professional. The article develops the notions of complex cultural skills for communication, critical thinking, participation and problem solving, considering basic and intermediate competencies as part of these, and illustrates these ideas through numerous examples. The author proposes a comprehensive notion of what should be understood as competencies or skills in education and closes by listing a series of nine groups of general or complex skills that the adult educator should have a command of in order to carry out his or her work.

Laura Frade Rubio
*New paradigms in
education: the competency
approach in education*

The presence of mass media and the development of neurosciences present new challenges in education that have resulted in a new educational paradigm. The article briefly reviews the present day context and the meaning of this shift in paradigm, and reviews historically the inclusion of the competency or skills approach in education beginning with its precedents in the confines of law and labor. The author proposes definitions of the term “competency” and analyzes the implications of this approach for work in the classroom in which the teacher is a facilitator for the construction of knowledge on the part of the learners, designing learning situations that allow the students to autonomously construct explanations through the gathering and analysis of the information that allows them to develop their own learning; the student is the one who speaks, argues, proposes and discusses while the teacher questions. The evaluation is not done by the teacher, but rather the students identify when they are right or mistaken. The teacher no longer corrects what is done wrong; rather the student does this in collaboration with the teacher.

Jorge Jeria
*Determining the
 competencies of the adult
 educator in the context of
 daily practice*

This article discusses the competencies (skills) of youth and adult educators from the perspective of the notion of competency. Although the concept has been associated with techniques that offer efficient service, the idea has evolved to establish norms with regards to desirable performance in general, allowing for the gathering of information on the management tasks of educators. Numerous international documents on adult education show how a referential framework has been established in these regards. The article concludes with a proposal in which daily practice allows the educator to determine the development of his or her competencies beyond an instrumental rationality set up outside of his or her work environment.

Benito Fernández
*Competencies in adult
 educators from the
 perspective of social
 demand in intercultural
 contexts*

The education of youth and adults is only possible through competent educators who, efficiently and with commitment, respond to constantly changing social requirements. When these changes occur in a country with great cultural wealth and diversity, such as Bolivia, these competencies must be, above all, intercultural. The author examines social demands with regards to adult education in terms of the necessary competencies, but points out that there is much to be done since youth and adult education are not priorities for the governments and there is the lack of a clear professional profile and social and economic recognition that values the educational worker.

Francisco Scarfó
*The role of the adult
 educator in prisons*

An understanding of the practice of teaching in prisons should be based on a professional pedagogical role that takes into consideration the point of view of the person who learns (the youth or adult deprived of freedom) and the characteristics of the context (the jail or “total institution”). This article deals with the complexity of the role of the educator working in a prison. It presents a short description of the multiple tasks, the diverse contexts, the complexity of pedagogical intervention and the implications of all of these for the educator as a person. It points to a series of competencies that include knowledge of the prison context, the constant re-examination of the prejudices of the educator, a “non-curative” pedagogical intervention and an intervention as socio-cultural motivator, among others. The author emphasizes the importance of taking into consideration the complexity of the teaching task and the development of the intervention competencies necessary in order to attend to educational work with subjects in a vulnerable social situation while at the same time attempting to promote the potentiality of the person’s resources that will permit his or her full, active, critical, and responsible future social inclusion. This requires actions articulated by the State that guarantee human rights.

Wilfredo Limachi
*Competencies of the adult
 educator for educational
 change*

This article reviews the lessons learned through the experience of curricular transformation in Adult Elementary Education in Bolivia. It deals with the need to re-signify the focus in the construction and implementation of policies of educational change so that educators not be simply those who apply the policies, but rather participants in the process of design and implementation. The article proposes the development of socio-pedagogical competencies in adult educators that would facilitate continued study, the solution of daily problems and learning within the context of their own needs.

Claudia Lemos Vóvio
*Profiles, practice and
 reading resources in adult
 educators*

This article presents partial results from a research project in process in the field of language studies. The data was obtained from a group of literacy workers that participate in a program called *Educar para Mudar* (Education for Change) in the Education, Culture and Social Action Council of Itaquaquecetuba in São Paulo, Brazil. The purpose was to get to know those who propose to teach reading and writing to youth and adults: their socio-economic profile (sex, age, socio-economic level, educational level of both the literacy workers and their families, participation in different social activities), their access to and consumption of cultural goods related to reading (early reading experiences, reading habits, materials most frequently read currently) and the type of written materials they produce (reports, plans, messages, chronograms, agendas, posters, notices, notes, letters and official correspondence). The project also gathers information that will serve as a basis for processes of training that would be culturally sensitive as well as in synch with the learning and professional needs of the adult educators, considered as social agents.



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J.M. Gutiérrez-Vázquez y
 Daría García
*The competencies of the
 adult educators in their
 own eyes*

Usually, educators are not taken into consideration when their professional competencies are designed. The authors of this article carried out several workshops in five urban and rural communities in the state of Aguascalientes in Mexico, in which the adult educators identified the competencies they considered to be necessary for their work. The large number of competencies proposed by the educators was grouped into four general categories including competencies that aimed at: knowledge of the educational model and materials, organization of work in a study circle, the use of educational materials and planning and leadership in learning sessions. The specific competencies that form part of each general category are listed and other general competencies are identified including: the use of informational and communication technologies, administration and leadership, the establishment of links between the social and natural context and knowledge of the development of adult education on the regional, national and global levels.

Carmen Campero y María
 de Lourdes Valenzuela
*Curricular design using the
 competency approach in a
 bachelor's degree program
 for adult educators*

This article deals with the specific focus in the formation of teachers for youth and adult education in the Bachelor's Degree Program in Educational Intervention that 34 of the 76 academic units of the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional offer in 20 different states in Mexico. In particular, the article deals with key aspects in curricular design and their results: competencies, guiding principles and current challenges.

Nina Meza Oaxaca
*Profile of basic integral
 competencies for the
 grass-roots educator*

This research contributes, from the sphere of the university, to making grass-roots education more professional and attempts to integrate grass-roots education and a competency based approach to education. The article analyzes the work of the educator from the perspective of real practice and the theory that supports it in order to design a profile of the basic competencies required for performance of functions. Documental and empirical data were gathered on the real and ideal characteristics of the grass-roots educator; these were analyzed and categorized, resulting in the formulation of seven general basic competencies. These competencies include knowledge, skills, attitudes and essential values for the practice of the grass-roots educator, who transfers them to the different situation in which he or she works. This profile can be used as a guide in the development of programs for the formation of adult educators.