

Review of: "Generic Competences in University Students from Barranquilla, Colombia"

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The paper raises important points about the role of generic competences in preparing students for the Knowledge Society. Its focus on Barranquilla offers valuable localized insights, but the lack of empirical evidence, limited scope of competences, and absence of concrete solutions weaken its impact. By incorporating data-driven analysis, a broader competence framework, and actionable recommendations, the paper could make a stronger contribution to the discourse on higher education reform in Latin America and beyond. The paper investigates the perceived importance and development of generic competences among undergraduate students in Barranquilla, Colombia, focusing on their preparedness to navigate the modern Knowledge Society. Using frameworks like the Alfa Tuning Latin America Project and Colombia's Ministry of Education guidelines, it highlights the gap between students' recognition of the value of generic competences (e.g., mathematical thinking, communication in a second language, environmental commitment) and their struggles to develop them. The study underscores the need for universities to adapt pedagogical approaches to produce flexible, competent graduates aligned with labor market demands and societal transformations.

Strengths:

1. The paper addresses a pressing issue in higher education: the development of generic competences critical for adapting to a rapidly evolving knowledge-driven society.
2. By focusing on students' perceptions, it offers insights into the challenges and expectations from higher education institutions (HEIs).
3. The study aligns with international frameworks like UNESCO's 1998 declaration and Delors' pillars of education (*learning to know, to do, to be, and to live together*), situating its findings within a broader, global educational context.
4. By centering on Barranquilla, the paper provides a localized view of higher education challenges in Colombia and Latin America, a region often underrepresented in global educational research.
5. The paper calls for HEIs to adopt student-centered, inclusive, and dynamic teaching approaches to meet societal and labor market demands. This proactive stance is a strong contribution to ongoing debates about higher education reform.

Suggestions for Improvement:

1. Incorporate surveys, focus groups, or interviews with students to validate perceptions about the importance and

development of generic competences. Statistical analysis could enhance the credibility of conclusions.

2. Expand the scope to include competences like critical thinking, teamwork, leadership, ethical reasoning, and digital literacy to provide a holistic picture.
3. Compare findings from Barranquilla with other cities or regions in Colombia and Latin America to account for socio-economic and cultural diversity.
4. Conduct a detailed analysis of why students struggle to develop competences. Consider factors such as faculty training, curriculum design, resource availability, and socio-economic challenges.
5. Propose specific strategies for HEIs, such as curriculum redesign, faculty development programs, industry partnerships, and integration of ICT tools to enhance competence development.