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# Ciencia y Deporte



## *University citizen training in the Physical Culture career*

*[La formación ciudadana universitaria en la carrera Cultura Física]*

*[Formação do cidadão universitário na carreira de Cultura Física]*

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### **Abstract**

**Introduction:** Citizenship education is one of the challenges facing humanity, and especially in Cuba, it is one of society's priorities. It constitutes a requirement for the Third Improvement of the National Education System and for the draft law of the Cuban Sports System 2024.

**Objective:** To characterize the current state of citizenship education among second-year Physical Education students from the Physical Education program at the University of Holguín.

**Materials and methods:** Theoretical, empirical, and mathematical-statistical methods were used from a dialectical-materialist perspective. Results: The procedures and strategies that allowed for the scientific and methodological structure of citizenship education among second-year Physical Education students were identified.

**Conclusions:** This research allowed for the development of actions aimed at contributing to citizenship education among second-year Physical Education students from the Physical Education program.

**Keywords:** citizenship education; Physical Education; Physical Education; professional.

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## Resumen

**Introducción:** la formación ciudadana es uno de los retos que enfrenta la humanidad y en especial en Cuba. Es una de las prioridades de la sociedad, constituye una exigencia del III perfeccionamiento del sistema nacional de educación y del anteproyecto de ley del sistema deportivo cubano 2024.

Objetivo: caracterizar el estado actual de la formación ciudadana de los estudiantes de segundo año de Cultura Física desde la asignatura Educación Física de la Universidad de Holguín.

**Materiales y métodos:** se emplearon métodos teóricos, empíricos y matemáticos estadísticos desde un enfoque dialéctico-materialista.

**Resultados:** Se identificaron los procedimientos y estrategias que le permitieron estructurar científica y metodológicamente la formación ciudadana en los estudiantes de 2.º año de la carrera de Cultura Física.

**Conclusiones:** La realización de esta investigación permitió trazar acciones encaminadas a contribuir a la formación ciudadana en estudiantes de 2do año de la carrera de Cultura Física desde la asignatura Educación Física.

**Palabras clave:** formación ciudadana; Cultura Física; Educación Física; profesional.

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## Resumo

**Introdução:** a educação cidadã é um dos desafios que a humanidade enfrenta e especialmente em Cuba é uma das prioridades da sociedade, constitui uma exigência da III melhoria do sistema educativo nacional e do projecto de lei do sistema desportivo cubano 2024.

**Objetivo:** caracterizar o estado atual da formação cidadã dos alunos do segundo ano de Cultura Física da disciplina de Educação Física da Universidade de Holguín.

**Materiais e métodos:** foram utilizados métodos estatísticos teóricos, empíricos e matemáticos a partir de uma abordagem dialético-materialista.

**Resultados:** Foram identificados os procedimentos e estratégias que permitiram a estruturação científica e metodológica da formação cidadã nos alunos do 2.º ano do curso de Cultura Física.

**Conclusões:** A realização desta pesquisa permitiu delinear ações que visam contribuir para a formação cidadã dos alunos do 2º ano do curso de Cultura Física da disciplina de Educação Física.

**Palavras-chave:** formação cidadã; Cultura Física; Educação física; profissional.

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## *Introduction*

Educating new generations is a major challenge in a complex context characterized by a crisis affecting almost all of humanity. Today's society is immersed in dizzying changes, and the crisis we are experiencing is shaking the foundations of the Welfare State. Its survival depends, to a large extent, on educating citizens who can respond to current problems. Discourses in this area are increasingly affected by practices inherent to a neoliberal market that also influence university education (Giroux, 2020).

Since the approval of the new Constitution of the Republic of Cuba in 2019, a new phase of social transformation has begun on the island. The education system has committed to promoting learning opportunities for all and ensuring inclusive, equitable, and high-

quality education in different contexts, leveraging science, technology, and innovation in all areas of knowledge.

The third improvement of the national education system in Cuba has faced the challenge of updating pedagogical approaches for the new digital era, providing solutions to the social needs necessary in the 21st century, and contextualizing state policies with the objectives set forth in the UNESCO 2030 Agenda. In addition, the National Institute of Sport and Recreation (Inder) has begun approving the preliminary draft of the Cuban Sports System Law 2024. Its objectives include strengthening the design and implementation of Physical Education and Sport for all and promoting the full inclusion of people with disabilities.

Various authors have carried out studies on the training of professionals, including researchers Gómez et al (2022) who refer to its meaning and importance in the 21st century, based on the mastery that this professional has of scientific-technological knowledge and the management of information both in Cuba and in the world, in addition to their behavior in complex situations, with the university being the institution responsible for this.

The training of highly qualified professionals is essential in society; it must provide continuity to the different processes, according to historical stages, to guarantee their integrity and integration into social objectives. The university must act as a critical space for building active citizenship "as an antidote" to an increasingly neoliberal scenario (País and Costa, 2020). As these authors express, the university's mission is to train competent professionals, capable of providing solutions to the new and future demands of society in a context of global crisis.

Socioeconomic transformations in Cuba from 2020 to the present have marked an increase in information and communications technologies (ICTs), educational platforms, and social platforms; appropriate behavior regarding their correct use will depend on the educational level achieved. Advances in technology have enabled the emergence of a new education system. The use of artificial intelligence and the digitalization of

teaching-learning processes in higher education have expanded the Cuban education system, a requirement demanded by society itself.

In this context, one of the greatest challenges is to ensure that these professionals are adequately trained as citizens, capable of facing these changes with intelligence, professionalism, and appropriate behavior in accordance with social rules and norms. Addressing the training of physical culture professionals also means addressing their citizenship training. Based on these changes, with a strong commitment to the demands of Cuban education, in their work within educational institutions and sports centers, the university's mission is to train competent professionals capable of providing solutions to the new and future demands of society in a context of global crisis.

Citizenship education has been studied by many researchers, from the pedagogical, psychological, and sociological sciences; in which methodologies, pedagogical approaches, pedagogical alternatives, and educational strategies have emerged; in recent years, there has been a greater demand to contribute to its formation. Alvarado and Carreño (2007), cited by Andrey and Consuelo (2023), define that "being a citizen means, first of all, possessing a sense of belonging to a political community and, secondly, obtaining recognition from that political community to which one belongs" (p. 528).

Negret (2016) specifies that a citizen is the individual, the subject who acts in society, who builds and modifies his or her culture, who transforms space and his or her links with other subjects, according to the specific historical context and the referential value systems, whether institutionalized or not. It is tempered by the contradictory development of the conditions of the material and spiritual life of society, as well as its interests, motivations, needs, means, ends, and so on. (p. 4), it is agreed upon the importance of taking into account the specific historical context and tempering these conditions.

The criteria issued by Venet (2019) are very interesting and timely when he states that civic education is a continuous and systematic process of individual appropriation of a system of knowledge and values that determine the subject's active and creative vital position in public life and is expressed in the relationships established in social spaces of coexistence. It involves the promotion and defense of a way of daily living and of growing as people, which implies:

- Personal autonomy and the individual's capabilities, which enable him or her to resist external pressures and prevent the alienation of his or her behavior, defending his or her rule of law.
- The cultivation of cultural and national identity.
- Active and critical tolerance based on decorum, spirituality, decency, and the ability to resolve conflicts encountered in the course of development.
- Solidarity in social participation, based on dignity, equity, acceptance and respect for diversity, tolerance, and social justice. (p. 435)

González (2019) refers to how the university must achieve a commitment to citizen training, being a commitment of both teachers and students, to build a world of well-being for human beings, in this it must promote social transformations and stop with reflection, intelligence and moral values the great evils that afflict humanity.

In the field of Physical Culture, Negret (2016), Machín (2022); Casero (2022), Beltrán (2022), Barroso (2022), Valdivié (2023) delve deeper into this topic; these researchers provide diverse approaches based on the professional's mode of action, disciplines, and subjects. They offer models, methodologies, actions, and tasks that favor the training of Physical Culture professionals with an emphasis on methodological work.

Gómez (2022) relies on the axiological foundations necessary for the formation of patriotism and civic spirit in the Bachelor's degree in Physical Culture. Civic citizen values of vital necessity, which must be expressed in the ways of acting of the Cuban citizen, taking into account the duties and rights possessed at each specific historical moment. Betancourt (2020), Bernate (2020), Rodríguez (2021), Casero (2022), Fuentes

(2024) among other authors, expose the discipline of Physical Education as a useful tool for citizen training in all teachings, due to its pedagogical component.

Researchers Beltrán, Zaldívar and Naranjo (2022) express that the Physical Culture career is an eminently pedagogical career, which allows the training of a professional with a way of acting to enter different contexts and work with human beings who go through the different stages of life, who leads the activities of Physical Culture and Sport, must possess the knowledge, skills, abilities and values that guarantee their professional competencies and a commitment to their performance. The authors agree with the aforementioned criterion, comprehensive training of the Physical Culture professional with a high level of moral values and professional competencies is necessary.

Garrido (2024) also expresses that for the physical education teacher, Citizenship is a necessary component in the school curriculum throughout the entire schooling process, highlighting its presence from the preschool stage; being a priority in their future work from the earliest teachings, which is why the training of a Physical Culture professional with a high level of training in moral and ethical values is essential.

Achieving committed and real civic training means intrinsically linking it to university training itself, so that citizenship learning is based on participation in democratic experiences and, therefore, has a short- and long-term impact (Biesta, 2016), a postulate that is a premise for educational work in universities.

The objective of this research is to characterize the current state of civic education among second-year Physical Education students from the Physical Education course at the University of Holguín.

### *Materials and methods*

The research was carried out at the University of Holguín, with 2nd year students of the Bachelor's Degree in Physical Culture, in the 2023 academic year as part of the diagnosis of a population of 63 students distributed into two groups, 30 students were



intentionally selected as a sample, which represents (48%) of the population, in addition to 8 teachers and three directors, having as a selection criterion that they have more than ten years of experience in higher education, Physical Culture specialists, who work in the 2nd year group of the Physical Culture career.

The following methods, techniques and procedures were used in the research:

Inductive – deductive: allowed for inferences and generalizations to be made regarding civic education in university students of Physical Education.

Interviews with teachers and administrators allowed the authors to gather relevant information from specialists and actors involved in the process investigated.

Assessment scale for second-year university students of Physical Education at the University of Holguín in the following dimensions: curricular, extension, and sociopolitical, using five indicators to evaluate the state of civic education.

Mathematical and statistical methods allowed for the processing of information obtained through empirical methods and techniques. The most frequently used methods were descriptive statistics (the preparation of tables, the calculation of absolute and relative frequencies), which allowed for the verification of the current state of citizenship education among second-year students. *Cronbach's* alpha was used to verify the validity and reliability of the instrument used.

## ***Results and discussion***

The main result of the research was the diagnosis of the current state of civic education in 2nd year students of the Physical Culture degree, conceived as a process of obtaining, analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating the information that provided criteria to characterize the initial state of civic education of 2nd year students of the Bachelor's degree in Physical Culture at the University of Holguín.

1. Determining the general objective of the diagnosis.

General objective:

To determine the initial state of the civic education of second-year students of the Physical Culture degree at the University of Holguín

For the initial diagnosis, the following methodological steps were taken into account:

- Determining indicators to assess the initial state of civic education.
- Selection of instruments, techniques and methods that allow for relevant information on the state of educational values, problems and needs.
- Development or adaptation of instruments, techniques and methods in accordance with the particularities of the students, the teacher's knowledge and the space-time conditions.
- Application of the initial diagnosis.
- Processing of the information obtained.
- Integration and interpretation of the results obtained.
- Individual and collective characterization of students, diagnosis of the current state of the training process, educational problems and needs.

The indicators correspond to the curricular, extension, and sociopolitical dimensions, and are evaluated at high, medium, and low levels. Students mark each indicator with a cross based on their personal criteria. This is done anonymously, in the sole presence of the authors, to clarify any doubts and prevent external factors from affecting the results.

The indicators are set out below:

1. Knowledge, skills, abilities and values of Culture in general, characteristic of the way of acting of Physical Culture
2. Communication, dialogue, debate, and reflection through experiential, participatory learning and teamwork.
3. Responsible, supportive, thoughtful, and respectful behavior toward diversity, the environment, and humanity.

4. Innovative and independent performance manifested in the way they act and work in a team.
5. Level of perceptions and satisfaction with the physical and sports activities required by their social mission.
6. Student self-governance, understanding, behavior, commitment, and sense of belonging.
7. Confrontation with manifestations of crime, corruption, disrespectful behavior and vices.
8. Integration into activities that promote aesthetic taste, healthy lifestyles, coexistence, connection with the environment, and collective work.
9. Knowledge, skills and attitudes related to historical sports culture.

To carry out the survey, the authors took into account the inclusion criteria: Students who receive Physical Education and are in their 2nd year of the Physical Culture degree, and the exclusion criteria were those who are not in their 2nd year of the Physical Culture degree and do not receive Physical Education.

Students, teachers, and administrators participated in the diagnosis. It was conducted in two stages. In the 2023 academic year, the second year, the self-assessment scale was applied to students with 9 indicators. However, the application of *Cronbach's alpha* showed that there were several correlations between the items, making it necessary to refine the instrument and return in October-November 2024 to administer the self-assessment survey to these same students who are in their third year of Physical Culture, but with five indicators.

An interview was conducted with the directors of the Manuel Fajardo Rivero Faculty of Physical Education and Sports at the University of Holguín. Interviews were also conducted with faculty members, the head teacher of the year, and the teaching staff for that year. This allowed the authors to assess the current state of civic education for university students of Physical Education in the Physical Education subject at the University of Holguín, based on social needs, the curriculum, the professional model, and the program of the aforementioned subject.

The self-assessment scale was completed by 30 students representing the entire enrollment of the second-year Physical Education program. Of these, 23 were male and 7 were female. 45% were from municipalities such as Freyre, Moa, Báguanos, Mayarí, Cacocum, Banes, and Gibara. The remainder were from the main municipality of Holguín.

When applying the survey to the students, it was found that:

Negative aspects:

- Students rate themselves at a high average level on most indicators.
- They do not consider the work experience necessary to acquire knowledge and values for their future performance.
- There are negative criteria regarding social diversity.
- Insufficient motivation for dialogue and group debates in teaching and outreach activities on the Cuban reality.

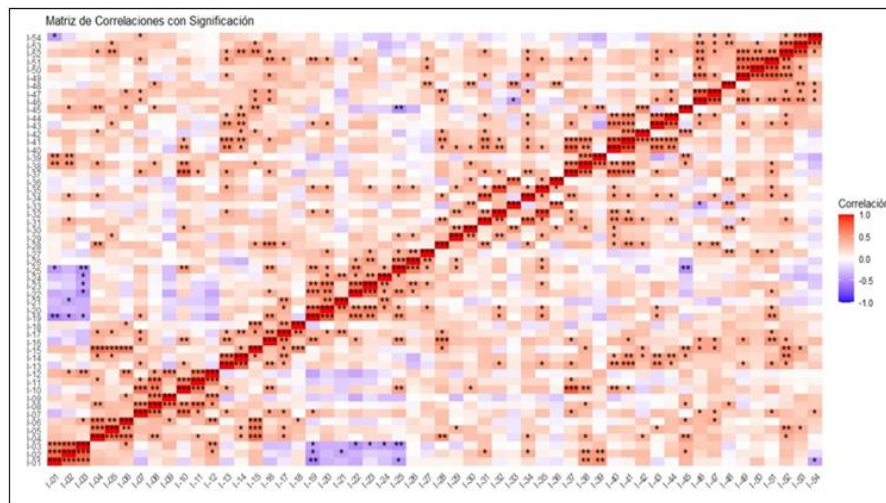
Positive aspects:

- They are satisfied with their social role as future graduates of Physical Education.
- Integration into activities that promote aesthetic taste, healthy lifestyles, coexistence, connection with the environment, and collective work.

Empirical measurement is as necessary as the theoretical concepts addressed in qualitative research. Therefore, it is important to know the level of reliability of the test or survey used in scientific research. Barrios and Cosculluela (2013); Viladrich, Angulo, and Doval (2017); Rodríguez and Reguant (2020) point out that it is pertinent to perform reliability calculations since this can vary depending on the population studied. Reliability tells us about the precision and consistency of the information collected, which is essential for conducting research with an acceptable level of rigor, allowing for a result closer to reality.

The International Test Commission (2024) refers to the development or application of measurement instruments in socio-educational research, it must be verified that the questionnaires or tests used have the standards of reliability and validity that the scientific community considers acceptable both for research and in practice. *Cronbach's* alpha is taken according to what is proposed as one of the types of internal consistency coefficient, which expresses this internal consistency from the covariation between the items of the questionnaire or test, so that the greater the covariation, the higher the alpha score (Barrios and Cosculluela, 2013).

*Cronbach's* alpha was applied to the survey (Figure 1). The results are presented below (Figure 1) and (Table 1).



*Fig. 1. - The following graph illustrates the correlations*

**Table 1.** - Highest correlations

Var1	Var2	Value of r	Significance
I-02	I-01	0.7151679	***
I-03	I-02	0.7691633	***
I-15	I-04	0.7082141	***
I-10	I-07	0.7293227	***
I-11	I-08	0.7370937	***
I-37	I-10	0.8075380	***
I-12	I-11	0.7065409	***
I-14	I-13	0.7566279	***
I-20	I-19	0.7896336	***
I-23	I-22	0.7331288	***
I-34	I-31	0.7754817	***
I-35	I-32	0.9126743	***
I-36	I-33	0.7546402	***
I-40	I-37	0.7654904	***
I-39	I-38	0.7062312	***
I-41	I-40	0.8361773	***
I-44	I-43	0.7449742	***
I-47	I-46	0.7972973	***
I-50	I-49	0.7107075	***
*** p < 0.001			

The aforementioned indicators are reflected in the integration of activities that promote aesthetic taste, healthy lifestyles, coexistence, connection with the environment, and collective work. According to López and Fachelli (2015), cited by Rodríguez and Reguant (2020), to increase reliability, errors must be reduced. In an instrument such as a questionnaire or test, this is achieved by:

- Increase the number of items or questions.
- Eliminate items that elicit different responses due to wording that can be interpreted in different ways.
- Control the conditions under which the test is administered so that the context does not interfere with people's responses.
- Propose a wording that facilitates the understanding of the items.
- Reduce extraneous variables that may interfere with item responses.
- Present the same instructions to all participants.
- Have a procedure for grading and scoring responses in line with the items in the questionnaire or test.
- Conduct longitudinal studies from different research teams.

In line with the above, a second phase was initiated based on the results obtained for the validity of the test administered. The authors adjusted and adapted the indicators, taking into account the correlations existing in the instrument used. Of the nine indicators included in the survey, five indicators with 18 items were reduced. These indicators are not excluded from the study and are included in the indicators presented below.

1. Responsible, supportive, thoughtful, and respectful behavior toward diversity, the environment, and humanity.
2. Innovative and independent performance manifested in the way they act and work in a team.
3. Student self-governance, understanding, behavior, commitment, and sense of belonging.
4. Confrontation with manifestations of crime, corruption, disrespectful behavior and vices.
5. Knowledge, skills and attitudes related to historical sports culture.

The results of applying *Cronbach's* alpha coefficient to the instrument are presented below.

### Analysis of instrument consistency (second application)

Three individuals were excluded from the calculation, for whom missing values were present (response = NA). *Cronbach's* alpha was equal to  $\alpha = 0.867$ , which is moderate. Even after applying the Guttman Split-Half technique, alpha values remained above 0.75, with a Gottman Split-Half coefficient of 0.833, which allows us to affirm that the test is reliable (Figure 2) and (Table 2).

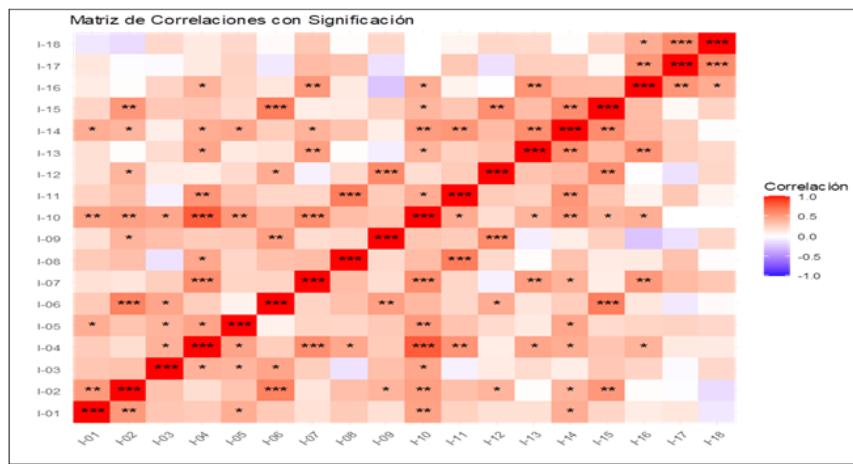


Fig. 2. - The following graph illustrates the correlations

Table 2. - Highest correlations ( $r > 0.5$ )

Var1	Var2	Spearman's r value	Significance  p
I-02	I-01	0.5232607	**
I-06	I-02	0.6347947	***
I-15	I-02	0.5270159	**
I-07	I-04	0.5795784	***
I-10	I-04	0.7981080	***
I-11	I-04	0.5476401	**
I-10	I-05	0.5217679	**



I-15	I-06	0.6509446	***
I-10	I-07	0.5789474	***
I-13	I-07	0.5009950	**
I-16	I-07	0.5272416	**
I-11	I-08	0.6570716	***
I-12	I-09	0.5927602	***
I-14	I-10	0.5091751	**
I-14	I-11	0.5390947	**
I-15	I-12	0.5725606	**
I-14	I-13	0.5790233	**
I-16	I-13	0.5537849	**
I-15	I-14	0.5845964	**
I-17	I-16	0.5392073	**
I-18	I-17	0.5980051	***
* p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001			

The final result of applying *Cronbach 's alpha*, which yielded a value of 0.714, confirms that the instrument has a high level of reliability and validity. Therefore, it is necessary to continue using this survey at the different stages of the research to verify the progress of the civic education of university students of Physical Education (Figure 3).

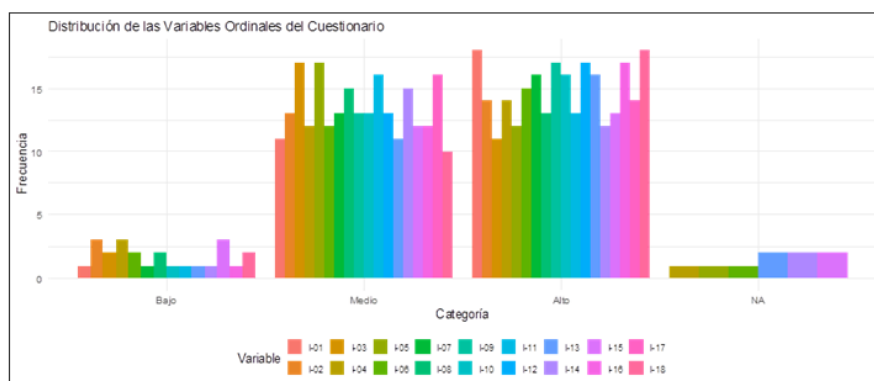


Fig. 3. - This graph summarizes the previous data:

The interviews were conducted with the aim of determining the fundamental criteria held by teachers and administrators regarding citizenship education for university students of Physical Education. The interviews included seven questions aimed at assessing limitations of citizenship education, group preparation, methodological work, postgraduate completion, program adaptations, and educational work. The following elements were identified, as reflected below:

- Teachers express theoretical deficiencies regarding the foundations that support citizenship training in university students of Physical Education.
- Teachers do not recognize, from a theoretical and didactic perspective, the formation of citizenship as a result of the educational strategy in their disciplines.
- Deficiencies in the selection of methods, means and organizational forms used for citizen training through the educational strategy in the disciplines.
- Students display inappropriate behavior that reflects limited formal education and poor social habits, especially in the student residence

### *Conclusions*

The theoretical and methodological shortcomings demonstrate the existence of limitations in the conception and implementation of the teaching-educational process of the Bachelor's Degree in Physical Culture to contribute to the civic education of these students, from a comprehensive and contextualized educational perspective.

This research provided insight into the current state of civic education among these students in the Physical Education and Sports program at the University of Holguín. The greatest difficulties are reflected in inadequate formal education habits and residential living habits.

There is potential in students and teachers to achieve good results in citizenship training, based on student leadership, sense of belonging, and social commitment of those involved.

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The authors declare having competing interests.

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The authors have participated in the redaction of the manuscript and the documentary review.



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