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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Curriculum analysis and comparison between strategies or programs for early childhood development in Mexico[☆]

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KEYWORDS

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Abstract

Background: Most of the strategies or programs that support early childhood development in Mexico are independent efforts that vary in scale, services offered and means to providing them. For the evaluation of the quality of these programs, an important aspect is the curriculum content. The aim of this study was to analyze and compare the curriculum content of the different strategies or programs focused on the promotion and intervention of early childhood development, which are offered by the Federal Government in Health and Education sectors in Mexico. **Methods:** We conducted a review of the curriculum content of the strategies and programs. The qualitative phase consisted of a comparative analysis where 75 indicators proposed by the Inter-American Development Bank were identified. The quantitative phase consisted of a descriptive analysis of the indicators. Finally, the analyses were compared to establish the performance of each one.

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PALABRAS CLAVE

Desarrollo infantil;
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programas;
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Results: Six strategies or programs were identified. In the analysis of the presence of indicators, the Oportunidades de Aprendizaje (Learning Opportunities, LO) strategy showed a larger number of indicators. In the amplitude analysis, both PEI-CONAFE and LO were the best balanced. Finally, in-depth analysis of the indicators LO and Skills for life were the best balanced while PEI-CONAFE was the best balanced in the social-emotional area, CeNSIA program for language and LO for cognitive development area.

Conclusions: LO strategy showed the closest level of contents established by the Inter-American Development Bank.

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Análisis y comparación curricular de las estrategias o programas para el desarrollo infantil temprano en México

Resumen

Introducción. La mayoría de las estrategias o programas que apoyan el desarrollo de la primera infancia en México son esfuerzos independientes que varían en escala, servicios que ofrecen y modo de proporcionarlos. Para la evaluación de la calidad de estos programas, un aspecto de suma importancia es el contenido curricular. El objetivo de este estudio fue realizar un análisis y comparación curricular de las distintas estrategias o programas enfocados en la promoción e intervención del desarrollo infantil temprano que ofrece el Gobierno Federal en los sectores Salud y Educación en México.

Método. Se realizó una revisión de la información de los contenidos curriculares de las estrategias o programas. La fase cualitativa consistió en un análisis documental comparativo con un ejercicio hermenéutico donde se identificaron los 75 indicadores propuestos por el Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo. La fase cuantitativa consistió en el análisis descriptivo de los indicadores. Finalmente, se hizo la comparación de los análisis para establecer el desempeño de cada uno.

Resultados. Se identificaron seis estrategias o programas. En el análisis de la presencia de indicadores, la estrategia Oportunidades de Aprendizaje (OA) fue la que presentó un mayor número de indicadores. En el análisis de amplitud, tanto PEI-CONAFE como OA fueron los mejor balanceados. Por último, en el análisis de profundidad de los indicadores, OA y Habilidades para la Vida fueron los mejor balanceados, mientras que PEI-CONAFE resultó el mejor balanceado para el área socio-emocional, CeNSIA para lenguaje y OA para el área cognitiva.

Conclusiones. La estrategia OA fue la que garantizó un mayor acercamiento a los contenidos establecidos por el Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.

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1. Introduction

Without any doubt, the first years of life are the most critical in terms of development of children as human beings. This is a short but unique period of life, during which it is possible to stimulate the potential of individuals in cognitive and non-cognitive areas since the basic formative processes of human beings are closely linked to early experiences of life. Therefore, it turns out to be the most significant period in the formation of the individual and it is key for the development of human capital¹.

Stimulated children tend to show a greater development in the physical area and sensory systems (vision and hearing); on the other hand, they tend to show a greater ability for learning at later ages. The importance of investing in the development of children during their first

years of life has been widely documented by specialized literature².

It is estimated that more than 200 million children < 5 years of age who live in developing countries will not be able to achieve their maximum potential of development due to poverty and precarious conditions in their health and nutrition. These children are likely to have a poor school performance and limited economic opportunities in adulthood, perpetuating poverty and social inequality which will have serious implications for the growth and development of those countries³.

In Mexico, as in the whole world, significant changes that involve redefinition of roles of institutions aimed to support families—care centers, schools and health centers—have occurred, assuming a greater responsibility for the development and well-being of children. This responsibility was

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