

Early Childhood Education in Mexico

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Educational statistics of a country remains a major concern as of today. One reason why education is different for many countries is the educational system that they follow. Although almost 95% of territories and nations have adapted with the K-12 educational system, they are diverse and have developed both positive and negative results. In my paper I will discuss not only the K-12 school system between Mexico and the United States, but also beliefs, birthing process and intervention strategies.

Customs, Beliefs and Values

Mexico is a North American country neighboring the United States, Guatemala and Belize. The traditions and customs of the Mexican people are mixed and diverse. They are proud of their native heritage and each area has its own cultural traditions and celebrations. Many of the ancient traditions of their ancestors have been protected. (Evason, 2018) “Many Mexicans feel their country has great cultural depth and wealth in comparison to others. There is a saying “como México no hay dos” (There is none other like Mexico), which reflects how people believe Mexico has a uniqueness.”

Early Childhood Education Goals and Outcomes

Like the United States children in Mexico have basic education a total 12 years. The U.S. divides it by a 5-3-4 system and in Mexico is it divided into three levels on a 6-3-3 system. Primary school (1st through 6th grade), junior high school (7th to 9th grade), and high school (10th to 12th grade). Because of poverty problems in Mexico, only a small percentage of the annual financial plan is reserved for education. Families are obligated to buy their own textbooks after the initial 6 years of school. This is a problem that is said to have contributed to the higher dropout rates and absenteeism. America has almost all the educational problems covered by

budget. Free 12 years of education is available in every state, and families have a choice in whether to go to a non-funded private grade school, middle school or senior high school and pay tuition fees. Teaching is not a very respected career and many teachers currently in the education system are currently not certified. There are challenges associated with the lack of parental involvement to support education reforms and many parents may not have an understanding on how to support the learning and development in preschool programs. In the United States, parent involvement is a necessary factor in child development because of the fears of poorly educated youths, dropouts, teenage pregnancy, and poverty. These issues underline that school-home collaboration is essential in the United States in order to have an educated population.

Birthing Process

Delivery of a baby in Mexico usually takes place in a maternity hospital, which can either be public or private. For a birth with no complications, mother and baby may be discharged in less than 24 hours, just as in the United States. In the United States many women stay home after a baby for about 6-8 weeks, and in Mexico many believe that mothers should stay at home during the post-partum period (cuarentena) for a period of at least 5 weeks. People are surprised to see new mothers out and about with their newborn if it is before the 5-week period in Mexico. Mexicans also love children and babies and it is not uncommon for strangers to touch babies when they're out and about, in the U.S. parents are a bit suspicious of germs. Newborns in Mexico are vaccinated against only hepatitis B and tuberculosis, in the U.S. children have nearly 7 vaccines: RV, DTaP, Hib and HepB just to name a few. After a child is born in Mexico, parents are advised that children in their first year have monthly check-ups. The Mexican government provides a vaccination calendar detailing age and dosage information for all

vaccinations. work of doulas, midwives and obstetricians aiming to make natural births more common.

Intervention Strategies

In the United States and Mexico programs for early intervention depend on a range of state and local governments. They encourage partnerships in order to ensure that families and children receive the early care and education services they need. According to UNICEF's research there are four main sources of educational public services for children with disabilities: the SEP, the Office of the President's specific section on disabilities and education, state governments, and NGO's. Students with special needs (with disabilities and gifted students) attend mainstream basic schools or receive their education from Multi-Service Centres (Centros de Atención Múltiple, CAMs). CAMs exist from pre-primary to upper secondary education, and cover training for the labor market of students up to 22 years of age. The General Education Law in Mexico requires the inclusion of children with special needs into regular classrooms, as the idea of a "natural learning environment" in the United States. However, information about the definite inclusion of these children is scarce.

Reflection

My research suggests that it is crucial for early childhood educators to understand culture and types of programs used to serve students and families from another country. I can use the ideas presented in my research as a starting point to initiate connections between families from Mexico and to expand their knowledge of the similarities and differences between the two educational systems. With an understanding that school systems are different, fellow educators and I will be best prepared to make appropriate instructional decisions.

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