

Defining and Measuring Educational Quality: A Mexican Experience

Robert G. Myers¹

Introduction

Mexico is a diverse nation. Although a Spanish cultural heritage is dominant, more than 60 major indigenous groups are recognized. At least 40% of the population lives in poverty and the distribution of wealth is one of the most unequal in the world. The country's 115 million people are distributed among 32 states. Three-fourths of the inhabitants live in cities or towns of 2,500 or more residents; however, nearly 100,000 settlements have less than 500 people, many of which are in remote, sometimes mountainous areas. Although the central government is the main funder and exerts considerable control over public educational, health and welfare services these are run by states and municipalities which sometimes introduce their own programs. To add to the diversity, services and programs are operated by several different ministries (Secretariats), departments within ministries and semi-autonomous organizations within the government as well as by organizations within the social and private sectors.

As might be expected in these circumstances, services and programs for young children vary widely (and sometimes wildly) in their: size; the populations served; sources of financing; administrative responsibility; locations in home or schools or elsewhere; infrastructure (degrees of sophistication and maintenance); teacher or caregiver qualifications and experience; supervision; involvement of parents and community; models taken as the base for action (home-based/center-based/community-based, instructive/constructive, imported/locally-developed, etc.); time of attention; and content (focused on health, education, care, or development).

Diversity creates a challenge for those who wish to evaluate the quality of early childhood education and care even when emphasis is placed on the quality of preschool education which limits attention to children between the ages of 3 to 5 or 6. How to deal with this diversity is a main theme of this chapter in which a process of defining and operationalizing educational quality in Mexico will be described and analyzed. Among the main points that emerge from this chapter, the following deserve to be underlined:

1. Educational quality should reflect ideas about the ideal world or society in which we would like to live. If an educational environment is not consistent with and does not promote to an important degree that world, it cannot be characterized as of good quality, regardless of how well children from that environment perform on tests. Equating quality only to outcome measures provides, at best, a partial view of educational quality which must also include evaluation of educational conditions and

¹ Although the author takes responsibility for what is presented here, he has worked as part of a Mexican team. More specifically, thanks must be given to my colleague, José Francisco Martínez, who has been a co-contributor during all phases of this on-going adventure.

processes, not only because they influence outcomes (which are a product of learning in multiple environments, not just schools) but also, and primarily, because the way in which an educational environment is organized and run constitutes a hidden curriculum that may or may not reflect and promote a desirable world.

2. Because views of an ideal world are varied, there cannot be one "true" definition of educational quality. Although it presents a challenge, leaving behind the idea of a universal definition of educational quality to seek and apply multiple, contextualized and overlapping definitions in a diverse national context is feasible and rewarding as the evaluation results are applied to the task of improving quality.

The quest for educational quality in preschools: A Mexican experience

The motivation

In 2000, an election in Mexico voted out the one-party government that had been in power for over 70 years. The new government brought with it a strong emphasis on educational quality and equity, at least at the level of discourse. It also emphasized the importance of transparency, public accounting and monitoring and evaluation. However, a look at reporting systems then in use revealed that the only indicators used to monitor and report nationally on early education were of coverage. Indicators of quality were virtually absent; equity was defined using relative enrolment figures.²

The obvious distance between proposed goals of the new government and inherited practice motivated an inter-sectoral and inter-disciplinary group to mount a project, in 2001, to define early childhood indicators. As part of that project a working group was formed to consider the quality and equity of early education and care. Its task included establishing a set of indicators and an instrument for measuring preschool quality. The hope was that the results of this exercise might be incorporated into the national educational monitoring system.

Identifying key dimensions of quality

The relatively diverse working group³ began by examining "the literature" to determine what should be included in a definition of the quality of early education. That search involved

² There were no recognized national indicators of child development. In several states a format was used by teachers to rate the cognitive, social, emotional and physical developmental status of their children three times a year but this exercise was seen as an administrative task and did not enter into local programming, state statistics or policy formulation and rarely served as an input into teachers' planning. The only indicator of preschool quality at a national level, cited occasionally, was the average number of children per teacher, calculated by dividing the total number of children enrolled by the number of teachers in the system. Using an average made little sense in a system as diverse as the Mexican one. Indeed, it would turn out that children-per-teacher was not correlated with most other indicators of quality primarily because rural and indigenous centers of low quality also had few children per teacher whereas urban centers presented a high ratio.

³ The group was coordinated by the Department of Planning, Programming and Budgets of the Secretariat of Education (SEP) and included participants from other divisions of the SEP, from the Family Welfare organization,

reviewing research results linking characteristics of structure and process to the learning and development of young children. In addition, a wide range of instruments to measure preschool quality were examined that had been developed and used in other settings. This exercise helped the group to identify many indicators then in use, the frequency with which certain indicators appeared and how these were defined operationally (Myers 2004). These preschool characteristics, grouped here in 3 main categories, included:

1. The quality of what is brought to the task (the inputs/resources):

- The physical environment and infrastructure (e.g., adequate space -- indoor and outdoor -- for children and teachers, lighting, ventilation, heating, functioning toilets, washing and cooking facilities, safety precautions, sufficient and appropriate equipment in good repair);
- Sufficient toys, books and other materials;
- The quality of the staff (teachers with a good level of education, well-trained in ECCE, with good motivation, and with low turnover);
- A curriculum or programme approach with clear goals, that is proven, covers diverse areas or dimensions of development and is integral; and
- Small numbers of children per class and per teacher or caregiver;

2. The quality of how ECCE is organized and managed:

- Continuous planning, present and future, both at the centre and classroom level;
- Continuous evaluation and monitoring, of program and children;
- Frequent supervision;
- Opportunities for continuous training and professional growth;
- Leadership that fosters communication, teamwork, information sharing, respect; and
- Efficient administrative procedures.

3. The quality of what happens in the educational process:

- Frequent, warm and responsive interactions between caregivers/teachers and children;
- Good communication that includes listening;
- Activities that cover multiple dimensions of learning and development and encourage reasoning and problem solving;
- Activities that are pertinent and culturally appropriate;
- Opportunities to be in larger or smaller groups or alone;
- Opportunities for children to participate in and initiate activities;
- Consistency in discipline and responsiveness;
- Variation in the forms of communication used; and
- Good time management.

the Secretariat of Health, universities, non-governmental organizations, international organizations (UNICEF and UNESCO) and, from time to time, other organizations such as the National Census Institute and the Population Council. The indicators project was called, "Indicadores del Bienestar de la Primera Infancia."

The literature search also helped to identify principles or general attributes that should be kept in mind when trying to define and operationalize quality. One useful set presented by Peralta (2000) consists of: active and integral learning, cultural pertinence, relevance, flexibility and participation. In México, Muñoz Izquierdo (1997, p. 22) suggested a definition built around five attributes: relevance (desirable values of different sectors are reflected and promoted in the curriculum); efficacy (the organization and functioning of the system are directed toward meeting the goals proposed in the curriculum), pertinence (contents and methods are appropriate to different social groupings), effectiveness (defined by whether or not education actually meets social needs and demands); and efficiency in the use of resources (resources are utilized so that benefits are optimized in relation to costs).

A first approximation

Drawing on the literature review as well as on the extensive personal experience of participants in the working group, the first result of deliberations was to agree upon an operational definition of educational quality organized around four main "dimensions". These were: 1) the availability and use of resources, 2) educational management, 3) the educational (teaching/learning) process and 4) the relation of preschools to families and communities (an additional dimension added by the working group to the three specified above). Several indicators were defined for each dimension. A first approximation of a scale of preschool quality was created with 50 indicators. The distribution by dimension was: resources/inputs: 13; management, 12; educational process, 21; and relation to family and community, 4. There was no theoretical base for this distribution. However, it reflected the view of the group that the educational process should be at the core of quality. This represented a major shift from ongoing supervisory and monitoring practices in Mexico which focussed on inputs and administrative variables that were relatively easy to quantify and for which information was easy to obtain.

In creating the initial scale of educational quality for preschools, several decisions (in addition to deciding on the four dimensions) were taken that influenced its form and content.

- Rather than use a "yes-no" check list of items that might subsequently be combined in indexes for each of the four dimensions or for school quality in general, the group decided to set each indicator out along a five-point continuum. As an aid to observation and assigning a category, a descriptive phrase was attached to each of the five points that tried to capture its essence and to serve as a guide to observers.⁴ (A sample item is presented at the end of this chapter.)
- An attempt was made (based on participants knowledge and experience) to set the mid-point of the five-point continuum as the minimum one might hope to encounter for each indicator in all educational settings.

⁴ Various of the scales reviewed used 3 or 5 or 7-point continua. The use of a continuum and of guiding phrases is not original and follows the practice established in the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) practice (Harms, Clifford and Cryer 1998 and 2005).

- Because some indicators pertained to the preschool center as a whole (for example, functioning, clean bathrooms or the policy with respect to continuous teacher development) and others pertained to a particular classroom and teacher (e.g., the child/teacher ratio or the degree to which exploration and experimentation are allowed and fostered), it was decided to divide the scale in two parts with some indicators pertaining to the center as a whole and some to classrooms/teachers.
- The information needed to judge indicators was to be gathered through a combination of direct observation and conversations with teachers and the school director.
- Recognizing that, despite guidance from descriptive phrases, an element of subjectivity inevitably enters into observations, a set of notes explaining key concepts was included for each indicator. In addition, each indicator included a space for comments by the observer where lack of clarity or special circumstances affecting the judgement might be noted.

Once agreement was reached by the group on this first approximation of a scale, a research project was set up to pilot, adjust and apply the scale as a central part of measuring quality, first in a sample of preschools,⁵ and then, with an adjusted scale incorporating learning from the first research efforts, in a three-year evaluation of the preschool component of a national program called "Schools of Quality."⁶

Broadening the definition

Up to this point the process of defining quality and developing a scale had not been particularly innovative. It had taken place within a restrictive "modern" view of the world in which "experts" are charged with discovering or defining the truth as set forth by research which is then set out in a scale to be used to evaluate all schools, regardless of their context. However, influenced by the work of Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (1999) and Tiana (2006), among others, and confronted by the diversity of Mexican contexts and conditions, the researchers decided to seek a more contextualized view of quality allowing for multiple truths and definitions of quality.⁷

Two additional ways of approaching quality were brought into play. The first was to interview stakeholders who had not been represented in the initial formulation by people located,

⁵ A purposeful sample of 40 preschools of different kinds located in urban and rural settings and in four states was chosen, the quality scale was applied and results were related to a measure of early childhood development called the TEPSI that had been created and normed for Chile. Descriptions of this research and results can be found in Martinez, Linares and Myers, 2003.

⁶ The sample to be evaluated was of six schools in each of 27 states. Perhaps the most interesting feature of this study was the organization and training in each state of a team consisting of one person from the program, one from the preschool department and one from a normal school; the team collected data, analyzed it, wrote a report for each school, fed the information back to the school as a basis for reflection and planning. This process of accompaniment had an important positive effect on the quality of the schools studied. These results are presented in: Martinez y Myers 2006.

⁷ The tension between working with "modern" and "post-modern" views and some thoughts on how this gap might be reduced are presented in Myers 2005.

for the most part, within the government agencies or academia. Instead of approaching quality directly by asking the new group of stakeholders to give us their definition of quality⁸, we asked what each thought needed to be done to improve the functioning and outcomes of preschools. Interviews were carried out with parents, teachers, supervisors and high-level educational authorities. As might be expected, the groups differed in their emphasis on the importance to be assigned to providing more resources, improving management, bettering teaching and learning or greater involvement of parents and community. Although it was interesting to see where those interviewed seemed to place the blame for lagging improvement within the system, the exercise did not provide much by way of a new perspective on quality or suggest important new indicators.

The second additional way of approaching quality turned out to be more creative and revealing. It started with the assumption that to be of quality, the content and functioning of an educational setting (whether school or home or elsewhere) should represent a microcosm of that world in which, ideally, one would like to live, both reflecting and promoting the knowledge, values and characteristics of that world. Describing such a world leads to a definition of the kind of citizens desired and needed as well to ideas about the content and methods of the education required to form such citizens. In effect, this approach to defining quality represents an attempt to put some meat on the bones of the disembodied principles of "relevance" and "pertinence" that frequently appear in definitions of quality but do not provide much guidance in particular contexts.

Moreover, this approach to quality was linked to the idea that it is important to look beyond teaching/learning conditions and practices directed toward successfully imparting the knowledge required as part of the formal curriculum, to learning that occurs as a "hidden curriculum" linked to the ways in which a school is organized and how teachers teach. For instance, if one seeks a world free from violence, a school in which a teacher uses physical or psychological abuse to motivate learning cannot be qualified as of quality even if it means children were so motivated to perform well on standard tests of reading and mathematics or other areas.

Linking educational quality to the world in which we would like to live creates a problem because different people will have different ideas about the world in which they would like to live. This raises again the question of whether there should be multiple definitions of quality with corresponding multiple instruments and measures; it challenges the idea that there can be one true definition. At the same time, it seemed reasonable to believe that some characteristics of an ideal world might be agreed upon widely or negotiated and that these could provide a common base for defining quality indicators, in general or in more restricted settings.

At this point the project might have tried to carry out a large survey or organize focus groups to try and arrive at generally agreed-upon characteristics of an ideal world. However, we turned instead to an examination of public discourse⁹ indicating what goals education is

⁸ In part this was because the term "quality" was not one that many parents could relate to or talk about.

⁹ The documents examined included the Mexican Constitution, the General Educational law, the National Educational Plan and other pertinent documents (including the Convention on the Rights of the Child to which Mexico is a signatory).

supposed to serve. From these documents it was clear that education should contribute to creating and maintaining a nation whose citizens are productive, democratic and multi-cultural. This means that education must do much more than teach children how to read, write, cipher and reason scientifically. A democratic society, for instance requires citizens who are not only informed but also critical and participatory, with a sense of equity, respect for others and a capacity not only to tolerate differences but also to resolve conflicts peacefully. Accordingly, an operational definition of quality should include indicators of organization and practice that reflect and promote these ends.

The results of these additional exercises led to yet another revision of the quality scale incorporating, for instance, indicators such as: equal treatment in the classroom of boys and girls as well as students from different economic and cultural backgrounds and an indicator dealing with conflict resolution in the classroom. It also strengthened the emphasis that had been placed on active and critical participation by children in their own learning as well as such features as teamwork among staff and among children. This fifth version of the scale (a rapid overview of the indicators included in that fifth version is annexed) was used in a follow-up study of quality in the 40 preschools studied originally. Results of that follow-up can be found in: Myers y Martínez 2008).

More explicit attention to diversity

In spite of the various changes over time in the general scale of preschool quality, it continued to be seen as a uniform instrument to be applied to evaluating quality in all Mexican preschools. Diversity had not really been confronted. To do so, it seemed necessary to accompany people in charge of preschools in particular contexts in a process of creating their own definitions of quality and measurement instruments, beginning with a discussion of their ideal world. Arrangements were made to work with personnel from the Department of Indigenous Education in two states (Yucatán and Michoacán).¹⁰

The ideal world described by the indigenous education teams includes respect for and maintenance of local cultures. Including this previously excluded dimension in a definition of quality education was critical. Accordingly, indicators were created which picked up a preschools attention to local culture including a teacher's language proficiency in the local language, use of that language in the classroom and incorporation of local customs in the educational content and teaching practices. In the process of creating their own indigenous educational quality scales, some indicators from the general scale were discarded as less important and changes in wording for others were made. A decision was taken to reduce the continuum from 5 to 3 categories. Dimensions were created that reflected more different components of a world view than the technical categories of the earlier scales. These changes notwithstanding, considerable overlap remained between the indicators of the new scales and the general scale, making comparisons possible for the overlapping elements. The locally-created scales have been pilot-tested in the two states and adjustments made. During 2012 and 2013

¹⁰ Another exercise, not discussed in the text, was carried out with the National Council for Fostering Education (CONAFE) which is charged with operating preschools in communities with less than 500 people using secondary school graduates receiving training on the job rather than certified professional teachers.

these scales will be used to evaluate a sample of preschools in each state as part of a project to examine the effect of evidence-based supervisory accompaniment of the indigenous preschools.

Counterpoint

During the years that the quality scales described above were being created, applied and adapted, another operational vision of preschool quality evolved nationally within Mexico's officialdom. The National Institute for Educational Evaluation (INEE) created scales to measure language and communication and mathematical thinking of children age 5 (INEE 2008). These scales were applied in 2007 to selected children in a national sample of preschools.¹¹ The application did not include observations of classroom practices or interactions. Quality, in effect, has been associated directly with a limited set of child outcomes, leaving out process. Costs and the current tendency to think of quality in terms of child indicators have limited the definition in practice.¹²

Reflections on the process of defining quality

1. If quality derives from visions of the world in which we want to live and if those visions vary, influenced by differences in context, cosmovision and life experiences, it is difficult to believe that any one definition is "correct" or should be universally applicable.
2. This implies that dialogue and negotiation are required to arrive at a general definition of educational quality, even at local levels and within contexts and populations that are relatively homogeneous. Without that dialogue and negotiation it is difficult to connect educational indicators to the concept of the quality of education (Tiana 2006). That dialogue can be informed by: discussions of the value positions of different "stakeholders", by statements of national or sub-national goals and policies, and by reviewing knowledge (from research, from program experience and from accumulated traditional wisdom) about how children develop and learn as well as about how to organize to achieve desired results.
3. From discussions of the kind of world in which we want to live, areas of minimum agreement can be sought which serve to define the kind of citizens needed to work toward achieving that world. This in turn should suggest the nature of the children desired and the kind of formation they should receive, with implications for the content, process and organisation of programmes and with implications for their evaluation.
4. The minimum areas of agreement can be taken as starting points for identifying major dimensions or categories and for constructing indicators of quality. From this core agreement, one can build outward by including in any operational definition and instrument, categories and indicators which may be important to some but not all

¹¹ The sample did not include, however, indigenous preschools because the INEE thought it would not be possible to adapt the test to the language and contexts of even the major indigenous cultures.

¹² Moreover, although some information about home backgrounds and about preschool characteristics was gathered, results have been reported (INEE 2008) without taking home and community conditions into account.

stakeholders, allowing different groups to identify elements of their own definition of quality within a broader view. Doing so will expand horizons of all participants and foster new reflection and dialogue. It will also begin to create a common language and common referents for different groups.

5. Definitions of quality should be flexible and any instrument to measure quality cannot be taken as final.
6. It is wise to allow (even promote) local additions to an operational definition of quality and to the instruments when these are created for use at a national level.
7. One must be careful when school (or program) quality is defined only (or mainly) in terms of individual student (or participant) outcomes (in the school/program, or subsequently). Multiple learning environments, not only the school, influence these outcomes. Self-selection to programs occurs. The ease of measuring certain outcomes biases the content of evaluations. A “complete” definition of educational quality should include as its referents not only desired educational or program outcomes (which should be related to desired social outcomes) but also the nature of educational processes (which should reflect and promote the world in which we would like to live). These educational processes are not only important as “predictors” of certain educational outcomes but because they themselves represent a hidden curriculum and the quality of life as experienced within educational institutions.

References

- Dahlberg, D. P. Moss and A. Pence (1999) *Beyond Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care*. London: Falmer Press.
- Hacia Una Cultura Democrática, A.C. (ACUDE) (Enero de 2005) “Evaluación y Acompañamiento del Programa Escuelas de Calidad- Nivel Preescolar”. México, D. F. ACUDE. Mimeo.
- Harms, T, R. Clifford and D. Cryer (1998 and 2005). *Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Instituto Nacional para la Evaluación del Educación (INEE). (2008). *El Aprendizaje en Tercero de Preescolar en México. Lenguaje y Comunicación y Pensamiento Matemático*. Ciudad México, D.F.: INEE.
- Martínez, F, M. Linares y R. Myers. (Diciembre de 2003) “Todos los Pollos son Amarillos? En Búsqueda de la Calidad Educativa en Centros Preescolares.” Un Informe presentado a La Dirección General de Investigación. México, D.F., Hacia Una Cultura Democrática, A.C. Mimeo.
- Martínez, F. y R. Myers (2006) “Informe Final del Proyecto Evaluación y Acompañamiento del Programa Escuelas de Calidad – Nivel Preescolar”, México, Hacia una Cultura Democrática, A.C., en www.sep.gob.mx
- Muñoz Izquierdo, C., L. Villa Lever y A. Márquez Jiménez (1997). *Calidad de la Educación. Políticas instrumentales en diversos países para mejorarla*. México, Distrito Federal: Instituto de Fomento a la Investigación Educativa, A.C.

Myers, R. (2004) "In Search of Quality in Programmes of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), a paper prepared for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005." Available at the UNESCO web site:
www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/backgroundpapers/2005

Myers, R. (2005) "Moderating tensions between Modern and Post-modern views of educational quality: Notes on indicators of pre-school quality in México" A paper prepared for presentation at the 49th Annual Conference of the Comparative and International Education Society, Stanford University, March 22-26, 2005. Mimeo.

Myers, R y F. Martínez, F. (2008). "La educación preescolar en México": La política de calidad y equidad en perspectiva." en Villa Lever, L (Coordinadora), *La educación preescolar: ¿hacia dónde debería dirigirse la política educativa?* México, Distrito Federal: Editorial Santillana, pp. 165-190.

Peralta, María Victoria. (1992). "Criterios de Calidad Curricular para una Educación Inicial Latinoamericana". Santiago, Chile: Junta Nacional de Jardines Infantiles. Mimeo.

Tiana, A. (2006) "La Evaluación de la Calidad de la Educación: Conceptos, Modelos e Instrumentos." *Transatlántica de Educación*. Vol. 1, pp. 19-29.

Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP), et. al. (2002) "Foro sobre indicadores de bienestar en la primera infancia en México," México, DF: UNICEF y UNESCO.

Annex 1. A rapid overview of indicators used in the “Escala de Evaluación de Calidad de Centros Preescolares” (Evaluation Scale of Preschool Center Quality)

DIMENSIONS	INDICADORES AT THE CENTER LEVEL	Point average
INPUTS	1.1.1 A clean, maintained and esthetically pleasing locale free from risks	
	1.1.2 Condition of exterior spaces and play spaces	
	1.1.3 Adequate space	
	1.1.4 Functioning, clean bathroom facilities	
	1.1.5 Equipment and procedures for accident prevention	
	1.1.6 Adjustments for disabled children	
	1.1.7 Formación and experience of the director (or responsible person)	
MANAGEMENT	1.2.1 Leadership style of responsible person	
	1.2.2 On-going teacher development	
	1.2.3 Procedures for identifying health problems	
	1.2.4 Detection, referral and follow-up of special cases	
	1.2.5 Seeking help for the center	
	1.2.6 Organized and complete documentation	
	1.2.7 External accompaniment	
	2.3.1 Atmosphere of trust	
	2.3.2 Recognition of teachers as individuals and professionals	
	2.3.3 Positive perception of center tasks	
2.3.4 Promotion of experimentation and putting in practice new ideas		
ED PROCESS	1.3.1 Mission and vision of the center	
	1.3.2 Process of diagnosing educational aspects	
	1.3.3 Work plans	
	1.3.4 Evaluation of work plans	
	1.3.5 Food provided in the center	
ENVIRONMENT (FAMILY AND COMMUNITY)	1.4.1 Exchanges of information between center and family	
	1.4.2 Actividades dirigidas a familias	
	1.4.3 Participación activa y organizada de las familias	
	1.4.4 Actividades periódicas con la comunidad	
INDICADORES AT THE CLASSROOM LEVEL		
INPUTS	2.1.1 Security, maintenance, light and ventilation	
	2.1.2 Mobility within the classroom	
	2.1.3 Furniture, teaching materials and organization	
	2.1.4 Sufficient, varied and organized materials	
	2.1.5 Proportion: teacher/children	
	2.1.6 Formation and experience of the teacher	
ED PROCESS	2.2.1 Identifies interests of children	
	2.2.2 Plans activities in the classroom	
	2.2.3 Registers childrens' learning advances and difficulties	
	2.2.4 Daily routine	
	2.2.5 Structuring of activities	
	2.2.6 Balance among individual, small group and large group activities	
	2.2.7 Participation of children in choice of topics, activities and materials	
	2.2.8 Exploration and experimentation by the children	
	2.2.9 Attentive listening to children	
	2.2.10 Use of questions to foster learning	
	2.2.11 Role play and representation	
	2.2.12 Peer interaction	
	2.2.13 Solution of interpersonal conflicts	
	2.2.14 Affective and respectful relationships	
	2.2.15 Activities that promote equito	
	2.2.16 Health habits	
MANAGEMENT	2.3.5 Accompaniment and advice	

Example of an Indicator

A. Classroom: Educational process

2.2.8. Children are encouraged and allowed to explore, examine and experiment freely with materials, with different results expected.				
Inadecuate	Incipient	Basic	Good	Excelent
1	2	3	4	5
1. Materials are used only when the educator gives permission.	1. Occasionally, the free use of materials is permitted.	1. Normally, within planned activities, children are allowed to explore, examine and experiment with materials. 2. The educator expects diverse results.	1. The previous aspects are present. 2. Frequently, the educator fosters greater exploration and innovation with the materials.	1. The previous aspects are present. 2. The children are constantly exploring, examining and experimenting freely with the materials.
<p>Note:</p> <p>1. One can verify that the children are exploring, examining and experimenting when the touch, observe, smell, bite or hear the sounds of materials. For example, a child may be encouraged to handle books, leaf through them and even smell them or, if there are blocks in the center, the child should have the liberty to use them and be encouraged to create different forms rather than of his own choosing.</p>				
Observaciones:				