

## Education to transform the current reality in Mexico. The role of the psychologist in educational intervention

### La educación como medio para transformar la realidad actual en México El papel del psicólogo en intervención educativa

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#### Abstract

Objective: to identify the conditions of the New Mexican School (NMS) from the approach of educational intervention in order to sensitize its agents on the demands that it requires. Methodology: for this inquiry, the hermeneutic approach was identified for the research, for which the reading of several texts was carried out, among them the "Plan de estudios de educación básica 2022", "La Nueva Escuela Mexicana: los principios y orientaciones pedagógicas" and the "Aportes de la psicología a la educación. On its Denomination, History and Development", a personal interpretation was made to understand the current needs of education and in turn, from the perspective of educational intervention, to translate the importance of education for the elaboration of proposals in this field. Contribution: a series of reflections on the multiplicity of functions that the psychologist specialized in educational intervention can perform to improve the current reality of education in Mexico.

**New Mexican School, Educational intervention, Psychologist**

#### Resumen

Objetivo: identificar las condiciones de la Nueva Escuela Mexicana (NEM) desde el enfoque de la intervención educativa con la finalidad de sensibilizar a sus agentes sobre las exigencias que ésta demanda. Metodología: para esta indagatoria se identificó el enfoque hermenéutico para la investigación, por lo cual se llevó a cabo la lectura de diversos textos, entre ellos el "Plan de estudios de educación básica 2022", "La Nueva Escuela Mexicana: los principios y orientaciones pedagógicas" y los "Aportes de la psicología a la educación. Sobre su Denominación, Historia y Desarrollo"; se hizo una interpretación personal para comprender las necesidades actuales de la educación y a su vez, desde la perspectiva de la intervención educativa, traducir la importancia de la educación para la elaboración de propuestas en este ámbito. Contribución: se aporta una serie de reflexiones sobre la multi Facultad of Psychology and Human Communication Therapy, Mexico. plicidad de funciones que el psicólogo especialista en intervención educativa puede realizar para mejorar la realidad actual de la educación en México.

**Nueva Escuela Mexicana, Intervención educativa, Psicólogo**

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**Introduction**

The historical moment in which our country finds itself today makes an urgent call to reflect and analyse the current needs of people, society and all the areas in which we are immersed.

Education is one of the most important areas in which we must reorient our actions to respond to the problems that are arising. Schools reflect the ideas that a society has, its interests, values and perspectives. With this in mind, we must consider having a curriculum that is adapted and viable in order to offer what students in schools need to learn.

The New Mexican School (NMS) bases its proposals mainly on Article 3 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, which states that "education shall be based on unrestricted respect for the dignity of persons, with a focus on human rights and substantive equality" (SEP, 2022).

In this article we will review the proposals of the Basic Education Curriculum 2022 and the NMS that it proposes and, from the perspective of educational intervention, raise awareness about the importance of generating proposals in the educational field to improve the current situations of the reality that our country is living.

**Justification**

The New Mexican School is the commitment to provide quality in teaching, due to the fact that there has been a historical lag in improving knowledge and developing skills and abilities in students. Therefore, it has been proposed to guarantee the right to education by implementing four necessary conditions: affordability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability of educational services.

In the NMS, individuals are postulated as the central axis of the educational model, students are seen in an integral way, with personalities in constant change and development; it urges that all learners be capable of actively participating in the diverse contexts in which they are immersed in order to collectively confront the problems they experience.

It is important to consider what are the challenges that this demands in order to improve the problems that arise, therefore, the NMS is a growing field of action with a multiplicity of functions that the educational psychologist can perform to promote the improvement of the current reality of education in Mexico.

**Problem**

Prior to the proposal of the NMS, measurement instruments were applied to students in basic and upper secondary education that showed a historical lag in improving the knowledge, skills and abilities of students, mainly in areas such as communication, mathematics and science (SEP, 2019).

As students progressed through the different levels of education, it was possible to observe that they dropped out for multiple reasons, socioeconomic and family reasons, but above all because the school did not satisfy or offer life expectations for all students.

With the above, they also realised the difficulty that the students who were graduating from higher education had, since they were not prepared for the problems that real life presented to them. In response, resources were allocated to improve students' socio-emotional skills.

This was not the imminent solution, given the reality and the failure to apply a model that did not fully respond to the needs of its students and that did not reflect the diverse scenarios that students would face in their daily lives. The consultation was carried out in open forums in which teachers, students, management staff, family members and specialists from all over Mexico presented ideas that would form the basis for a new curriculum that was better adapted and viable for the historical context in which our country finds itself.

**Objective**

To identify the conditions of the New Mexican School (NMS) from the approach of educational intervention in order to sensitise its agents to the demands that it requires.

**Theoretical framework**

The theoretical references related to the 2022 basic education curriculum from the perspective of educational intervention, as well as the field of action of the psychologist specialising in educational intervention, are presented below.

*The New Mexican School*

The NMS is the educational and pedagogical project of the Ministry of Public Education (SEP) and the government in force to provide quality in education. In it, the SEP develops a 23-year plan to strengthen the education offered to all students at all levels in our country.

It prioritises attention to disadvantaged populations, with the aim of offering the same opportunities for all Mexicans; it also guarantees conditions of excellence in the educational services provided at each level; it is committed to students acquiring skills that allow them to develop personally and collectively.

For the NMS, students are integrated individuals, with a constantly changing and developing personality, immersed in an interpersonal context. It considers students to be autonomous moral, political, social and economic subjects, with personality, dignity and rights; it expects them to continue their education based on values, honesty, respect for others, a culture of peace and the pursuit of the common good (SEP, 2019).

It is also committed to all students being able to participate actively in the different contexts in which they develop, bringing them closer to everyday reality in order to face the different problems that arise in groups. From its educational model, it envisions a quality education, which implies guaranteeing that all students have the right to education and that this education forms them as critical, reflective individuals who can face any adversity that may arise in their daily context. Citizens who work for the common good, collectively and in collaboration with others to improve our current life situations (SEP, 2019).

This model aims to better respond to the needs of today's Mexican society, to propose a school that is attractive to students and that provides life options for all. Education is the most democratic mechanism of social ascent that we have in our country, transforming and improving it so that it fulfils its main objective is what the NMS symbolises (SEP, 2022).

*The psychologist in educational intervention*

Currently in Mexico, not much is known about the work carried out by psychologists in educational intervention, however, there are many of these professionals working daily to improve the educational system in our country.

This professional works in different scenarios and interacts with all the agents involved in the educational process; his or her training has led him or her to develop knowledge and skills that allow him or her to develop beyond the educational field.

Similarly, he has theoretical and practical assumptions that allow him to participate in the resolution of problems in any aspect of education, from teachers to students, because he has knowledge that allows him to understand the cognitive, moral, social, affective, emotional and psychological development that students go through (Cabrera et al., 2015).

Its function can range from individuals to groups of people; in the educational space it aims to contribute to improving learning processes; from its perspective it analyses, evaluates, guides and develops actions that respond to the situations to be resolved in the different contexts in which it is found.

In this educational proposal put forward by the NMS, their main role is to attend to and promote psychological development in all its components. From this perspective, the work of the educational psychologist has two objectives: 1) to provide an analysis or research from the psychological point of view of different situations (diagnosis); 2) to propose action plans that respond to the research obtained (intervention) (Villamizar, 2020).

**Background**

The Basic Education Curriculum has as its antecedent the New Educational Model that emerged in 2016. Since 2012, the main political forces set in motion a change in the educational process: the Educational Reform, which obliged the state to improve the quality and equity of education in Mexico.

The main objective of this reform was for all students to be educated with integrity and to achieve the necessary learning for the 21st century. In July 2016, the SEP presented the proposal for the update of the new educational model, which consisted of three documents:

Letters on the aims of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: it briefly explained what Mexicans were to be educated with the new educational model.

The New Education Model 2016: explained the five axes of which it was composed and the idea of the model derived from the Education Reform, i.e. the way in which the system was organised to achieve maximum learning achievement in students.

Curricular proposal for compulsory education 2016: It contained the curricular approach for basic and upper secondary education and covered the structure of the contents and components of the curriculum and study programmes.

This educational model, which was approved and articulated by the Official Journal of the Federation (DOF) in June 2017, was intended to be implemented in classrooms gradually, starting with the first cycle and later with the rest of the school grades, a situation that was not clearly determined and failed in the attempt to be applied in all grades of basic and upper secondary education.

In May 2019, a legal reform was consolidated in Articles 3, 31 and 73 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, from which three secondary laws were approved, one of them very important, which began to lay the foundations for a new study plan and programmes that would respond to the current reality of our country, as well as to the needs of Mexicans (SEP, 2022).

An international curriculum review, consultation with teachers and principals, interdisciplinary team work sessions, dialogues with teachers, educational agents and community education leaders were carried out in order to build a new basic education plan and study programmes that would respect the essence of previous plans, while retaining the fundamentals of each one of them.

In June 2021 it became possible to begin the process of structuring the curriculum framework, the plan and the study programmes. The DOF decrees the agreement 19/08/2022 establishing the study plan for preschool, primary and secondary education.

**Foundations**

The approach of previous curricula and even that of the current plan, has been based on a constructivist model, its principle is based on the construction of knowledge, person-centred, focuses on learning rather than teaching, students as responsible for their own learning process, suggests that learners create their own knowledge and develop understanding through meaningful tasks (Aparicio and Ostos, 2018).

From this learning theory, the teacher and the student interact constantly, through the dialogue they establish as a means for the learner to construct their knowledge; learning involves the total development of the student's skills and abilities, it is a process in which they incorporate what they have previously learned with the new competences, content and information they are provided with (Ortiz, 2015).

In addition, the 2022 curriculum is developed from a humanistic vision that allows it to propose an education for students based on a culture of peace, values and the pursuit of the common good. This humanistic vision focuses on helping students to decide what they are and what they want to become; it maximises their abilities and skills; teaching is based on the personal needs of each student; the teacher is a facilitator who is interested in them as moral, autonomous, emotional and social persons; he/she is open to new ways of teaching, always trying to achieve meaningful learning in them and promotes a learning of respect, understanding and collective collaboration (Munguía, 2014).

Based on these approaches to learning, SEP (2022) bases the NMS on eight principles necessary to achieve its objectives in education:

- A. Fostering identity with Mexico. Promoting love of country, appreciation of its culture and teaching in the values embodied in the Political Constitution. It emphasises the importance of this principle to make students specifically human, rational, critical and ethically committed beings.
- B. Civic responsibility. It implies the acceptance of personal and common rights and duties. NMS students respect essential civic values: honesty, respect, justice, solidarity, reciprocity, loyalty, freedom, equity and gratitude, among others. They are trained to be responsible and support the fulfilment of human rights; they promote a culture of peace to strengthen society.
- C. Honesty is the fundamental behaviour for the fulfilment of social responsibility, which allows society to develop on the basis of trust and the underpinning of the truth of all actions to enable a healthy relationship between citizens.
- D. Participation in the transformation of society. Self-improvement is the basis of this principle in the NMS. Educating citizens implies educating critical people, who actively participate in improving the quality of life and well-being of all. The necessary knowledge is provided to contribute to the transformation of society.
- E. Respect for human dignity. It favours the integral development of students in order to fully and responsibly exercise their capacities. It assumes a humanistic approach to education, placing the students at the centre of the educational model, and it strengthens the approach of teaching to their daily reality so that they can confront the problems that they face.
- F. Promotion of interculturality. The NMS fosters understanding and appreciation of cultural and linguistic diversity, seeks to form an in-depth knowledge of the diverse cultures that exist in our country, generating relations with all of them, projecting equity and mutual dialogue between them all.
- G. Promotion of the culture of peace. It trains students in a culture of peace that favours dialogue, solidarity and the search for non-conflictual solutions that are more appropriate for Mexicans. This culture of peace is made up of a series of values and attitudes that completely reject violence, allowing for a better option for solving problems.
- H. Respect for nature and care for the environment. It promotes environmental education to favour the protection and conservation of our surroundings; it provides the development of critical thinking to generate new ideas for sustainable development, as well as to reflect on the current conditions of the environment.

Other elements that are considered fundamental in this proposal are the notion of learning and community, as two pillars that support the curricular content embodied in this curriculum.

The community is positioned as the social, cultural, political, productive and symbolic space in which the school is considered the centre in which students carry out their learning processes in order to develop all their potentialities to the maximum (SEP, 2022).

The first is that the school is not considered to be isolated from the community; they are related to each other by knowing the lives of the students who attend an educational institution. The school acts as a meeting point.

The second reason he describes is that all the knowledge, skills, values and relationships that students form are determined by a curriculum and can only be used in their daily lives within the general framework of the community in which they find themselves, including the school. The aim is to bring all learning to the current reality in which the students live.

The third reason is that educational institutions must consider the knowledge and skills learned in the socio-cultural context in which students are immersed, thus situating learning and relating it to the experiences they face on a daily basis.

In addition, a curriculum is set out in which the contents addressed are linked to articulating axes that relate knowledge and know-how to situations of their immediate reality, all of this organised in four training fields.

These approaches refer to the way in which children and adolescents (NNA) should be viewed, as they are individuals in constant interaction with other people and in different contexts to which they are given a unique and personal meaning; this allows them to be given a meaning, which forms in them a personality and their own perception of the world.

Similarly, priority has been given to a model of learning assessment that can be represented quantitatively. This idea is based on the fragmentation of knowledge grouped in concepts, theories and methods into learning objectives and/or competences which are used to establish an order and serve as objective evidence, allowing the fulfilment of a task or criterion which in turn is expressed in a numerical grade (SEP, 2022).

### **Research methodology**

The hermeneutic method was used for this inquiry; it offers an alternative for research focused on the interpretation of texts; it involves a dialectical process in which researchers navigate between the parts and the whole of the text to achieve an adequate understanding of it (Hermida and Quintana, 2019).

The reading of various texts was carried out, including the "2022 basic education curriculum" and "The New Mexican School: pedagogical principles and guidelines", which contribute to the approaches that these proposals have, the principles on which they are based, in addition to the perspective with which they are intended to influence the improvement of the reality facing our country.

A personal interpretation was made to understand the current needs of education and in turn, from the perspective of educational intervention, to translate the importance of education for the development of proposals in this area. Here the role of the educational psychologist was defined, bringing together the diversity of functions that this specialist can perform in the field of education and in various other related fields.

This method also involved a translation process, as a new text was produced that respects the essence of the original texts. The latter represents the particularity of this method or approach which was the basis for the realisation of this research.

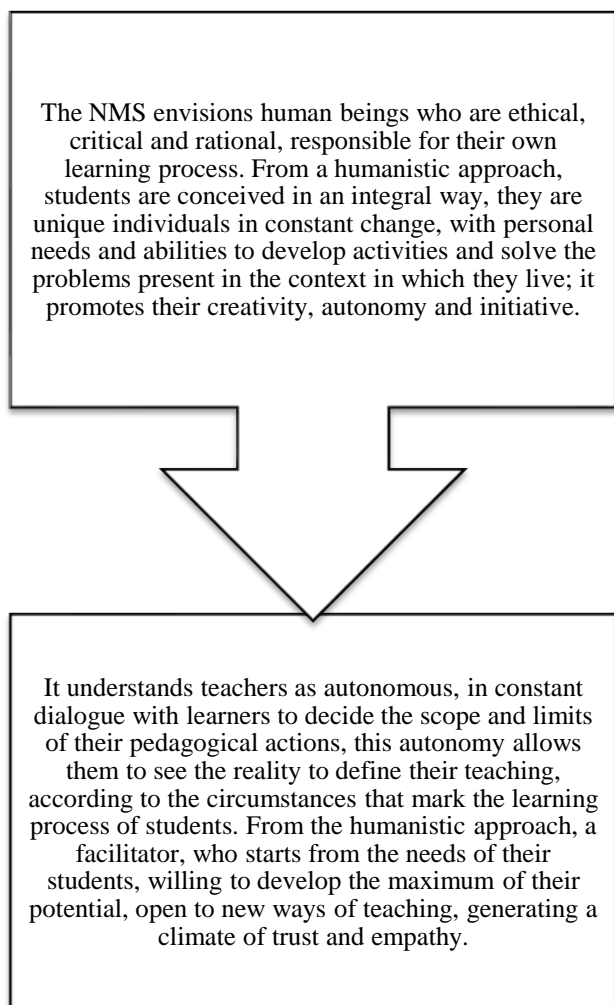
### **Procedure**

Curricula are the basis for any educational project. For this article, it was necessary to analyse the 2022 basic education curriculum, its background, rationale, approaches and the objectives it mentions for students. In addition, the pedagogical guidelines that provide key principles and foundations for education were reviewed. For this process it was essential to inspect the information obtained, interpret and choose the information that complemented the ideas that were to be developed, it was a dialectical process in which the researcher inquired between the parts and the whole of the text in order to achieve a proper understanding of it.

Similarly, the review of other articles and texts added relevant information that complemented the reflection of this section, both of the essential ideas of the plan and of the role of the psychologist specialising in educational intervention. Once they had been analysed, an interpretation was carried out in order to take the necessary ideas and from this, structure a new text that would reflect the final reflections abstracted from the contents read.

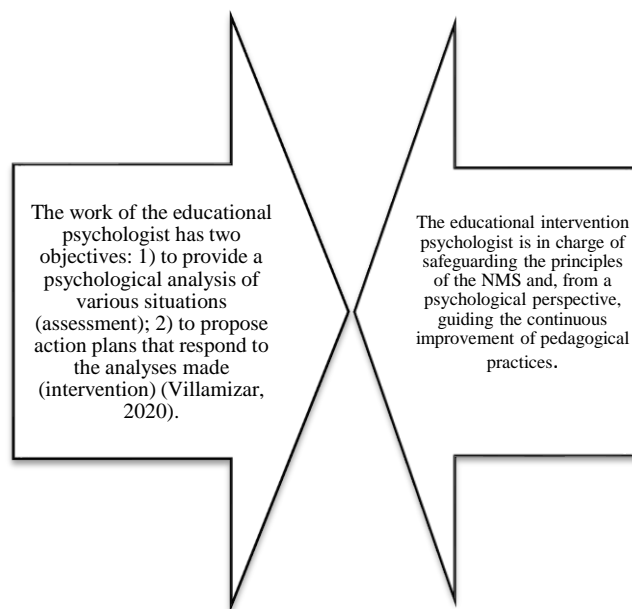
## Results

From the analysis obtained from the SEP texts consulted and from the articles that gave us a broad overview of the functionalities of the psychologist specialising in educational intervention, the following results were obtained:



**Figure 1**

The psychologist in educational intervention carries out various activities with all the agents of the educational system. In this context mentioned in the NMS, their main role is to attend to and promote psychological development in all its components, cognitive, emotional, affective, motor, among others.



**Figure 2**

Working together with all the people involved in the learning process, students, teachers, directors and the community and thinking about responding to the problems that these agents face within the educational process; contributing with concrete strategies and actions that contribute to optimising student learning. Educational psychologists are faced with the need to rethink their frames of reference, knowledge, skills and changes in the perspective of psychoeducational intervention.

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## Analysis and conclusion

The NMS's educational model envisions a quality education, which implies guaranteeing that all students have the right to education and that the education they receive is aimed at forming critical, reflective individuals who can face any adversity that may arise in their daily context. Citizens who work for the common good, collectively and in collaboration with others to improve our current life situations.

For this to be possible, teachers and managers must be constantly reflecting on and improving the pedagogical practices they offer in the classroom, being aware of the emotional, social, economic, cultural and cognitive processes that their students are undergoing. This is where the psychologist in educational intervention comes in, who, from a psychological perspective, analyses, evaluates, guides and develops actions that respond to the problems that they have.

The multiple actions that the psychologist specialising in educational intervention can carry out to improve the current reality of education and Mexican society are numerous, ranging from modifying the curriculum, improving teaching practices, treatment of learning difficulties, among others. In short, developing actions to optimise educational processes.

### Proposal

In this research process, a series of reflections were generated on the proposals derived from the NMS that have an important transcendence to optimise the living conditions in Mexico today, through these changes to the education provided, but, above all, of the occupations that one has as a specialist in educational intervention in this field and the importance of their participation in it.

Linked to the conclusions obtained, new possibilities emerge for research on the psychologist in educational intervention, as well as an attentive call to be included within educational institutions, in which he/she can contribute by making multiple interventions according to Tirado et. al (2010) in the following areas:

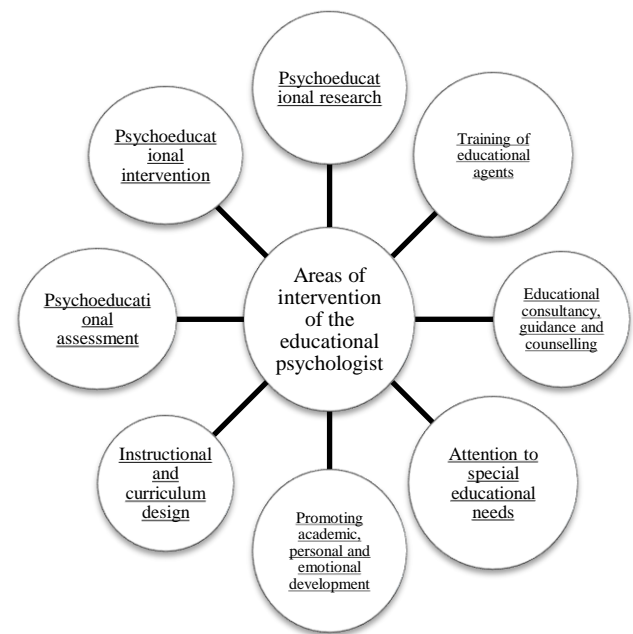


Figure 3

- Psycho-educational research: The educational psychologist possesses knowledge and skills that allow him/her to venture into psycho-educational research and the generation of new knowledge. This research is the basis for any intervention that this professional intends to carry out.
- Training of educational agents: The educational psychologist is a competent professional in the training of trainers; he/she can conduct an analysis of needs and of the school context that allows him/her to make decisions regarding the areas to be developed through training, coaching or qualification processes. A central task of the educational psychologist is to be a trainer of trainers.
- Consultancy, guidance and educational advice: contributes in different scenarios as a consultant or advisor, providing opinions and qualified proposals according to their knowledge and experience, which enable them to prevent and solve problems or generate innovative educational programmes and environments.



- Attention to special educational needs: considers important the attention to people with special educational needs or with different abilities, students with different situations of vulnerability such as indigenous people, abused minors or groups at risk or who suffer exclusion from educational opportunities.
- Promotion of academic, personal and emotional development: this area offers ample opportunities for the psychologist specialising in educational intervention, not only in the academic or intellectual area, but also involves comprehensive training or strengthening, covering all areas of human development and including inclusion and interaction in society.
- Instructional and curricular design: among the different topics that can be researched or intervened in are curricular conceptualisation or theorisation, the development of curricular models and innovations, professional training, curricular evaluation and the analysis of educational processes and practices that are carried out in the classroom related to the curriculum.
- Psychoeducational intervention: refers to action aimed at the prevention and solution of psychological problems, or the achievement of certain objectives in working with the persons or groups to whom the intervention is directed.
- Psychoeducational evaluation: this evaluation refers to the understanding and improvement of educational processes. It involves obtaining essential information, observation of educational agents and processes, the construction and relevant use of certain instruments, conducting interviews and studies, analysis of the educational context and the difficulties encountered, among others. Interpret and understand the psychological aspects of a specific situation and context and use the information obtained to support decision-making with regard to the direction of the intervention of this specialist.

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