

# MENDIVE

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Translated from the original in Spanish

## Methodology for the evaluation of the integral development in the educational process of the preschool child

### Metodología para la evaluación del desarrollo integral en el proceso educativo del niño preescolar

### Metodologia para a avaliação do desenvolvimento integral no processo educativo da criança pré-escolar

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#### ABSTRACT

The evaluation in the educational process is fundamental to direct the development of the preschool child in an integral way. This research aims to present the results of the implementation of a methodology for the evaluation of comprehensive development in the educational process of preschool children. For the implementation of the methodology, the "Twenty Primaveras" nursery school of the Cienfuegos municipality was selected in the 2018 - 2019 academic year. The research sample was made up of 93 students according to selection criteria: (1) children between the 4th and 6th year of life (between 3 and 6 years), (2) stay e" 6 months in the institution. To carry out the research, theoretical (historical-logical, analytical-synthetic and modeling) and empirical (observation, interview, document analysis and discussion group) methods were used. The application of the methodology in the educational practice allowed the educators to express a positive opinion about the proposal: (1) the methodology offers ordered actions to direct the evaluation of the integral development during the educational process, (2) the proposal offers actions that allow exchange educator - family to carry out the evaluation, and (3) allows the use of various pedagogical situations to assess the physical, cognitive and affective development of the child and make decisions regarding their education and development.

**Keywords:** assessment; education; evaluation methods; methodology; preschool.

## RESUMEN

La evaluación en el proceso educativo es fundamental para dirigir el desarrollo del niño preescolar de manera integral. La presente investigación tiene como objetivo presentar los resultados de la implementación de una metodología para la evaluación del desarrollo integral en el proceso educativo de la infancia preescolar. Para la puesta en práctica de la metodología se seleccionó el Círculo Infantil "Veinte Primaveras" del municipio Cienfuegos, en el curso 2018-2019. La muestra de la investigación quedó conformada por 93 educandos, según criterios de selección: niños entre el 4<sup>to</sup> y 6<sup>to</sup> año de vida (entre 3 y 6 años), permanencia e" 6 meses en la institución. Para realizar la investigación se emplearon métodos teóricos (el histórico-lógico, el analítico-sintético y la modelación) y empíricos (observación, entrevista, análisis de documentos y grupo de discusión). La aplicación de la metodología en la práctica educativa permitió que las educadoras emitieran un criterio positivo sobre la propuesta: la metodología ofrece acciones ordenadas para dirigir la evaluación del desarrollo integral durante el proceso educativo, la propuesta ofrece acciones que permiten el intercambio educadora-familia para realizar la evaluación, y permite emplear varias situaciones pedagógicas para valorar el desarrollo físico, cognitivo y afectivo del niño y tomar decisiones respecto a su educación y desarrollo.

**Palabras claves:** evaluación; educación; métodos evaluativos; metodología preescolar.

## RESUMO

A avaliação no processo educativo é fundamental para direcionar o desenvolvimento da criança pré-escolar de forma integral. Esta pesquisa tem como objetivo apresentar os resultados da implementação de uma metodologia de

avaliação do desenvolvimento integral no processo educativo de crianças pré-escolares. Para a implementação da metodologia, foi selecionado o Círculo Infantil "Veinte Primaveras" do município de Cienfuegos, no ano letivo 2018-2019. A amostra da pesquisa foi composta por 93 alunos, segundo critérios de seleção: crianças entre o 4<sup>o</sup> e o 6<sup>o</sup> ano de vida (entre 3 e 6 anos), permanência de 6 meses na instituição. Foram utilizados métodos teóricos para a realização da pesquisa. (histórico-lógico, analítico-sintético e modelagem) e empírico (observação, entrevista, análise documental e grupo de discussão) A aplicação da metodologia na prática educativa permitiu aos educadores expressar uma opinião positiva sobre a proposta: a metodologia oferece ações ordenadas para direcionar a avaliação do desenvolvimento integral durante o processo educativo, a proposta oferece ações que permitem a troca educador-família para realizar a avaliação, e permite o uso de diversas situações pedagógicas para avaliar o desenvolvimento físico, cognitivo e afetivo da criança e tomar decisões sobre sua educação e desenvolvimento.

**Palavras-chave:** avaliação; Educação; métodos avaliativos; metodologia pré-escolar.

## INTRODUCTION

Evaluation is a didactic component of the educational process and has a dynamic relationship with the other elements of the process. The educator uses it to fulfill three didactic functions: assessment, diagnosis and decision making. In this way, evaluation is usually a complex component to apply in educational practice, due to its system nature; the educator must have mastery of the other didactic components to carry it out

with quality: its objectives, contents to be evaluated, methods to carry it out, its procedures and means to use it.

From this complexity, the evaluation has its particularities and its application depends on the type of education. It is not the same to carry out the evaluation in school education as in secondary education; each one has its objectives, contents, methods and procedures, even when their functions are the same.

In early childhood, evaluation has its own characteristics and is consistent with what is proposed in the Latin American region: it is a process, it is comprehensive and systematic, it does not measure or classify the child, rather decisions are made about their development (Förster, 2017; Vallejo & Torres, 2020; Sánchez and Jara, 2022).

Förster (2017) states that the evaluation shows a historical progress that can be classified in three temporary moments. Before the 1990s, an evaluation strongly influenced by behavioral theories prevailed; therefore, the emphasis of the evaluation was centered on the quantitative. Between the 1990s and the early 2000s, evaluation was influenced by theoretical foundations from constructivism, although more psychological (centered on the child) than educational (centered on the child and the group). From 2000 to date, reference is made to evaluation of learning and for learning; the formative function and the effective feedback are relieved.

Vallejo & Torres (2020) state that scientific research on the quality of teaching-learning in the educational field of preschool children is scarce in recent years and, therefore, it could be interpreted as stagnation in the quality of this type of education. Likewise, they point out that 60% of the teachers analyzed recognized the importance of evaluation to direct the educational process,

while 54% of the teachers' state that it is very important that various instruments are used for collecting information such as: diaries, field notes, anecdotal records, audiovisuals, etc. Finally, the authors close the topic: "for evaluation processes to be of quality, it is considered necessary to carry out evaluations at different times and using different techniques (...) This finding evidences a teaching conception that understands evaluation as a continuous and formative process" (p. 12).

The aforementioned reflections recognize that there are still limitations in how to do evaluation in the educational process of preschool children, either with old tendencies to focus more on the child than on the group, more on the result than on the process, or that exclude important influences such as family. In this sense, Sánchez and Jara (2022) declare: "the practice of evaluation is focused on elucidating the knowledge of the student body, and not necessarily on accompanying their learning" (p. 4), "it is possible to recognize that the evaluation moves between two logics (...) at the service of selection, according to which students are compared, and then classified, by virtue of a standard of excellence (...) or at the service of learning and, therefore, a privileged instrument for a continuous regulation of interventions and didactic situations (...) that is, an evaluation capable of recognizing and valuing the diversity present in school contexts" (p. 6).

Latin American trends are not far from the Cuban reality: insufficient published studies on evaluation in early childhood, poor preparation of educators to carry out comprehensive, systematic and formative evaluation. However, the Cuban educational system has taken its precautions, such as: the increase in the academic level of early childhood educators, most of whom are graduates of the upper middle level pedagogical school or are pursuing a bachelor's degree; and the use of the

educational plan in several educational institutions, as an expression of the III Improvement carried out by Early Childhood Education in Cuba.

From the vision of the educational plan, the evaluation is carried out through five dimensions of education and development (personal social, communication, relationship with the environment, aesthetics and motor skills) (what to evaluate) to assess, diagnose and make decisions regarding development and the child's education (what for), and considering the methodological requirements established in Res. 238/2014. However, in the investigations carried out in recent years, limitations can be seen in how to carry out the evaluation in the educational process.

Marcaida *et al.* (2017) propose to carry out the evaluation of the activities in the educational process with a playful approach from five parameters: sensitivity, independence, flexibility, initiative and motivation. Parameters are an alternative; They respond to the playful approach that identifies the educational process in early childhood and allows evaluation of the contents of the process in the different activities framed in each dimension, leaving a limitation to proceed when carrying out the comprehensive evaluation from all dimensions in a single result in the partial cut.

Cruz *et al.* (2018) and Suarez *et al.* (2018) propose to prepare educators from the basic nuclei of the dimensions (theoretical-methodological foundations, skills and knowledge contained in each of them, and the basic activities where evaluation methods can be analyzed and used). However, they have been insufficient: not all dimensions have been worked on, and there are few proposals that analyze the result, in an integral manner, of the five dimensions.

Cáceres and Benavides (2019) suggest evaluating the comprehensive development of early childhood children from the personal social dimension, and emphasize the need to address categories such as the social situation of development to assess the child's development; however, his effort has remained in a theoretical analysis without addressing a specific proposal of how to do it in the educational process with an integral, formative character and that includes the contents of the dimensions of education and development.

Rojas (2021) proposes to carry out the how of evaluation in the educational process through indicators, which has generated little acceptance in improvement researchers.

The theoretical systematization carried out through the analysis of the normative documents of the evaluation (Resolution 238/2014), the methodological guidelines of the Ministry of Education of Cuba (Annex II of Resolution 238/2014), the improvement documents and the results of the The latest research carried out in preschool children related to evaluation (Cruz *et al.* , 2018; Suárez *et al.* , 2018; Cáceres and Benavides, 2019; Rojas, 2021) made it possible to summarize the following theoretical deficiency: insufficient steps and procedures that demonstrate how to carry out the evaluation in the educational process, which contemplates the contents of the dimensions of education and development.

The modeling of the results obtained in the investigations of recent years on the evaluation in the educational process of preschool childhood and the documents of improvement in early childhood education has allowed us to recognize three requirements to carry it out: its integral character (the physical , cognitive, affective and volitional), its formative character (to direct the educational influence of educators together with the family) and the evaluation as a process-as a result relationship.

To carry out the evaluation in the educational process of preschool children, according to these requirements, it is necessary to consult the conception of methodological procedures, because it recognizes methods and procedures to be followed in the educational process. According to Matos and Sánchez (2016) they define it: "it is an operation aimed at achieving a methodological task" (p. 57).

The methodological procedures have been used in the science of education by several Cuban authors (Pozo and Henríquez, 2021; Lorenzo-Roman *et al.*, 2021), and insufficiently in preschool children. In early childhood, Franco (2016) uses a term conceptually close to methodological procedures, uses procedural content and defines it as "actions ordered sequentially aimed at achieving a skill". However, an analysis of both concepts allowed the author of the thesis to identify that the procedural contents address the child's procedures to solve a given task or situation, while the methodological procedures encompass the actions that teachers must carry out to achieve a target.

Considering this reflection, the authors of the article define the methodological procedures as actions and operations ordered sequentially and aimed at achieving an objective set by the educator, considering the performance of the student. With this argument, the mode of action of the two active members of the educational process is recognized: the educator and the student, to carry out the evaluation of integral development.

Seen this way, the identification of the methodological procedures groups two fundamental elements: first, how to make the evaluation of the integral development through actions, steps and procedures coming from the theoretical and methodological foundations of early childhood, the requirements of the

improvement, the methodological indications in annex II of resolution 238/2014 and the experience accumulated by early childhood teachers and researchers; second, the way in which the students carry out the activities and solve the pedagogical situations raised, the experiences of the child when they are subject to evaluation, whether in an institutional, family or community context. Understand how the child groups objects, identifies them, classifies them, which hand he prefers to use to grab, touch, throw or draw, how he expresses himself when he expresses a message, how he describes, how he relates to the other student, his courtesy, the knowledge of national symbols. These modes of action of the child are identified through observation and deepened in pedagogical situations, both in the educational institution and at home.

During the 2015-2018 stage, in the Provincial Balance of Early Childhood, limitations are identified when evaluating comprehensive development in the educational process of preschool children:

- insufficient use of observation to assess the comprehensive development of the child, the educators focus their gaze on a single skill.
- little educator-family communication in the evaluation process, since the family's interest is focused on the child's nutrition and health.

Interviews with nursery school educators in the province of Cienfuegos, observation of how evaluation is carried out in the educational process of the "Veinte Primaveras" Nursery School in the municipality of Cienfuegos, as well as interviews with leading researchers in Early Childhood Education. Childhood, made it possible to summarize the following limitations:

- Insufficiencies in the evaluation as a process, since the effort is oriented towards the objective in a certain activity, which responds to a dimension.

- Inaccuracies in the integration of the contents of the dimensions of education and development, since the analysis of integral development is done by fragmenting the child by dimensions.

Taking into account these theoretical and empirical shortcomings, the authors propose to develop and implement a methodology for evaluation in the educational process of preschool children, and thus respond to the demands of the III Improvement in Early Childhood Education: a comprehensive evaluation, systematic, qualitative, personal and formative. The methodology offers how to do the evaluation in the educational process; In addition, it provides evaluative methods and the procedures to carry it out throughout the process and in their respective evaluative cuts (partial and final).

Considering these points, the research aims to present the results of the implementation of the methodology for the evaluation of comprehensive development in the educational process of preschool children.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The universe of the investigation is made up of all the children's circles of the province of Cienfuegos. The population includes the children's circles of the municipality of Cienfuegos; of these, the institution "Veinte Primaveras" was selected with an intentional non-probabilistic sampling, as it is an experimentation center, in which 20 educators work. In the institution, three educators were selected, who constitute 15% of the population, with whom we worked directly to implement the proposed

methodology, and a total of 93 children, 33 from the 4th year of life, 39 from the 5th year, and 21 of the 6<sup>th</sup> year. The research arises as part of the project "The stimulation of neurodevelopment in early childhood children", developed in Cienfuegos and approved by the Scientific Council of the Faculty of Education of the University of Cienfuegos, Cuba, and with prior authorization from the Ministry of Education in the province, for its implementation in the educational institution involved.

Given the nature of the research, the following scientific methods were used: theoretical and historical-logical methods, to organize the relevant information from Cuban and Latin American authors on evaluation in the educational process of preschool children; analytical-synthetic, to establish the theoretical and methodological foundations of the research, as well as the documents of the III Improvement of Early Childhood Education regarding the dimensions of education and development; modeling, for the theoretical systematization of the object and the field of research.

Empirical methods: observation, to identify how the evaluation is carried out in the educational process in the different organizational forms, as well as the use of evaluative methods in practice; interview, to identify the evaluation methods used in the educational process, as well as to gather criteria and suggestions on the theoretical and methodological foundations of the evaluation; document analysis, to review preschool documents (Resolution 238/2014, Early Childhood Education Plan, Early Childhood Provisional Program), Provincial Annual Balance documents for the evaluation of objectives and indicators of Early Childhood Education, as well as documents on the evaluation of the child (files and records of evaluations); discussion group, to delimit strengths and weaknesses of evaluation in the educational process of preschool children, as well as collection of

suggestions during the application of the methodology.

## RESULTS

### Stage I. Organization

Using observation, it was found that the educators carried out an adequate initial characterization of the child. The educators relied on the results of the file, verified the information with the family through the Parent Questionnaire test and observation in the different organizational forms of the educational process. Finally, the interview with the educator allowed verifying the above information and confirming the composition of the notebook of each student, to record evidence during the systematic evaluation.

Through observation, the researchers verified the motivational affective climate to initiate and maintain the different organizational forms, which had their objectives in correspondence with the educational process. However, it is appreciated that what is recorded in the file expresses a look at the child's development, which does not detail the specific characteristics of each student, they outline a similar diagnosis for all preschool children.

### Stage II. Planning

The observation of the researchers allowed verifying that the educators carried out an adequate planning of the systematic evaluation, the partial and final cut during the educational process. In each one of them, the educators used the initial diagnosis and the annotations of the notebook, in addition to communication with the family in the morning or in the afternoon when saying goodbye to the child, although the dialogue was about how the child spent the day in

relation to food and behavior; Very rarely is the topic related to the stimulation of its development addressed.

The educators carry out the integration of each result obtained with insufficiencies, to use them as a starting point in the planning of their next activities in the educational process, which guides the attention to diversity (according to the development of the child) and the preparation of the family in its educational function, which shows that how to do the evaluation is mechanized according to guidelines, but it does not proceed as a tool for the effectiveness of management in the educational process.

The exchange and feedback group between the educators and the researchers made it possible to guide the educators in the constant use of evaluation in all organizational forms of the educational process and with the family: observing motor, intellectual and communication skills. The observation made it possible to verify this way of working (assessment as a process), which at the beginning was exhausting, but when it came time to write it in the notebook, it was comfortable for him to characterize the child, the family and his environment.

In the discussion group, the researchers were able to verify the use of the methodological steps offered by the proposal to modify or elaborate evaluation methods according to the educator's intentions. For example, it was observed that the educators used story compression, as recommended in the methodology: a short story, with an educational message, with an image for the understanding of some children with educational needs and with more complex exercises for the advantaged, which include the development of communication, and their motor and intellectual skills. In other words, the methodological steps included in the proposal allowed the educator to select a story and modify it according to the

suggestions: make it short, based on an educational message for the child and with control questions to assess various skills. However, it was observed that educators work slowly when using the pedagogical situations contained in the methodology.

### **Stage III. Execution**

The observation of the educators when applying the systematic evaluation, the partial and final cut allowed to verify the use of varied pedagogical situations to carry out the evaluation in the educational process, which is an achievement, since before they used more frequently the observation method.

The observation and the discussion group made it possible to verify the use of executions (motivated, motor, intellectual, communicative and spatial), included in the methodological procedures to specify the educator's observation. Faced with a pedagogical situation, the educators observed and valued several skills at the same time; however, sometimes his observation was imprecise and the executions arose to specify where to direct his gaze: skills, knowledge, habits and values. The executions were not only used by the educators, they were also shared with the family so that there was educator-family feedback regarding the evaluation of the children. This point is important, prior to the implementation of the methodology, the educators greeted the family, but took insufficient advantage of the interview and observation to assess the child's comprehensive development. However, the observation of the researchers allowed to verify insufficiencies in the application of the observation method by the educators in the systematic evaluation, where they were expected to address the contents of all the dimensions.

### **Stage IV. Evaluation and control**

In order to control the proposed methodology and verify its effectiveness in the educational process, it was necessary to implement a discussion group with educators who participated in the implementation of the methodology and the direction of the institution. The intention was to examine the proposal through the following three indicators: use of the components of the educational process to carry out the evaluation, relationship between the forms of evaluation contained in the methodology and the five dimensions of education and development, and link between the methodology proposal and the particularities of each year of life.

### **Use of the components of the educational process**

Regarding the objectives of the educational process in preschool childhood, and its relationship with the proposed methodology, the debate led to three positive criteria. The methodology allows:

- valuing the cognitive and the affective, but also gives space to analyze the physical and the volitional; In this way, it responds to the integral and formative nature of the evaluation and to the objectives of the educational process: directing the integral development of the child to its maximum expression.
- apply pedagogical situations for each year of life (4th, 5th and 6th) which allowed responding to the methods, procedures and means of the educational process of preschool children, established in Res. 238/2014.
- analyze the integral development of the child from all the influences of this, the family and the educational institution.



Seen in this way, the objective of the proposed methodology corresponds to the objectives of the educational process of preschool children, to assess the development of the child (comprehensive nature of the evaluation) and direct their education and development to its maximum expression (formative nature of the evaluation).

Another point that was addressed was that of the evaluation methods included in the methodology, and the following question was raised: are the evaluation methods used capable of assessing the contents of the educational process? The debate ended with two positive criteria: the pedagogical situations used in the methodology allow observing and assessing the skills, knowledge and habits of the child, as an expression of the contents of the dimensions of education and development, and the pedagogical situations can be used in any way. organization of the educational process. The latter makes it possible to address several skills in one activity and analyze the child in an integral way: the preference of the hand to grasp, touch, pull, its strength and hand-eye-space coordination; the way of pronouncing and expressing the verbal and gestural message; the identification and classification of objects by their shape, size and color; the child's evaluations regarding aesthetic categories such as the beautiful and the ugly; as well as the habits of the student, courtesy, the way of communicating with another child.

From these statements, it was possible to corroborate that the objectives and contents of the educational process have a way out through the proposed methodology, even the procedures and actions were not a "strait jacket" for the educators, since they were able to make decisions, according to their experience. , to evaluate the most important contents in the child or the group, that is, they can decide how to evaluate them

through the different organizational forms of the educational process.

### **Forms of evaluation and the dimensions of education and development**

For the analysis of this indicator, it was necessary to rely on four elements of analysis: Res. 238/2014, where the three forms of evaluation are described, the documents issued for improvement, some doctoral theses and research where the concept and the evaluation of the contents of the dimensions of education and development (Suárez *et al.*, 2018; Cruz *et al.*, 2018), and the evaluative methods included in the methodology and used in the three forms of evaluation.

As a result of the analysis, two positive criteria were reached:

- The three forms of evaluation are sufficient to assess the comprehensive development of students in the educational process; however, the double function of the final evaluation was recognized: as an expression of the culmination of the educational process (development achieved by the child) and as a starting point for the next course (pedagogical delivery).

- The proposal offers methodological procedures with an integral and formative character to analyze the integral development of students, since it offers actions aimed at assessing all the influences of their development and making decisions regarding their education.

Finally, this point ended with an assessment of the educators when applying the methodology: what did the methodology lack? what did it facilitate? potentialities. The educators recognized that the proposed methodology required them to work with actions ordered sequentially, to assess all the influences of the child at home, in the

educational institution and from other educational agents. In the same way, an improvement was recognized in educator-family communication, to carry out the evaluation and direct the child's education.

Weaknesses: slowness in applying the pedagogical situations in the different organizational forms and limited analysis of the integral development of the child from the observation method; There are still elements to be analyzed when the observation of the child is carried out.

### **Proposed methodology and particularities of each year of life**

For the discussion of this indicator, the participants focused on three points: weaknesses and potentialities in each group; compliance with the objectives of the program, translated into skills, knowledge and values in each year of life; and developmental difficulties, their explanation and differentiated care.

In the first point, the potentialities of each group at the end of the educational process were discussed; In particular, it was recognized that 60% (55 children) of students between 4 and 6 years of life had acquired most of the skills and knowledge, while 35% (32 children) are in the process of acquiring them (requires of greater stimulation) and 5% (six children) require differentiated attention.

Regarding the weaknesses, the children presented difficulties in motor skills (fine movement of the hands and fingers, visual-motor coordination), communication (pronunciation of phonemes of late acquisition, classification and identification of objects, understanding of stories, sentences or short phrases), intellectual (maintaining attention on an activity, retention of relevant information to answer questions, interpret stories, analyze and solve reasoning tasks,

count and compare quantities) and expression of their behavior in a striking way in the stage: hyperactivity, aggressiveness, high levels of anxiety and sleep difficulties.

These results highlight the need to address the educational process with a systematic character (educational influence with permanence), objectivity (evaluation methods that respond to the objectives of the evaluation) and comprehensiveness (all areas of child development) but, at the same time, with a formative vision (assess to stimulate and direct the education and development of the child).

In the second point, what remained to be done? The educators recognized that at the beginning of the educational process there was little stimulation of skills related to elementary notions of mathematics in the 4th and 5th years of life. However, observing that a group of learners could carry out the tests of counting quantities (they identified quantities between four and eight elements), and that others did little (identified quantities between two and four elements), they made the decision to stimulate these abilities with more frequently (reorganize the actions and activities of the educational process in favor of stimulating that skill: counting, grouping and classifying by quantities).

In the focus group it became clear that the intention is not to teach arithmetic (addition, subtraction, multiplication); rather it is about stimulating before acquiring them or receiving their instruction. This last point is what several researchers have called basic numerical skills in early childhood (Chan & Scalise, 2022), which are the starting point for acquiring arithmetic in the early school years.

In the third point, the analysis focused on the explanation of the difficulties of the students, are they biological or educational? The discussion focused on three statements, and

made it possible to address the comprehensive and transformative nature of evaluation:

- There are skills in development that require more time to acquire, even when they are stimulated with intensity and frequency, such as: concentration, planning, modeling, analysis. It is also difficult to reduce behaviors of hyperactivity, aggressiveness and anxiety in children. The first can be observed when two children of the stage are analyzed, one of 4<sup>th</sup> and another of 6<sup>th</sup> year of life, but also when two children of the same year of life are analyzed. While the latter can be analyzed considering the characteristics of preschool childhood, where strong emotions predominate and gain direction and organization as the child receives a systematic education.

- There are difficulties that are explained by biological and other educational causes. The educational ones are related to the erroneous idea that "the stimulation has to be in the educational institution"; this is inappropriate for the child's development, since the family must direct the stimulation with frequency and intensity. The biological ones are related to children with special educational needs, since their pace of learning is slower than the others, and sometimes accompanying their development are certain diseases of neurological or endocrine origin. This last group receives intense and frequent stimulation in all spaces, including the support of other professionals.

- Education is necessary to direct the integral development of the child, even when warning signs or a slower rate of development appear. Education modifies development, even in children with warning signs.

## DISCUSSION

The results obtained reveal the importance of evaluation in the educational process of preschool children. Specifically, the relevance of carrying out the evaluation as a process was verified: systematic, continuous, comprehensive, objective and formative. Rojas *et al.* (2021) showed that preschool educators had two limitations in the evaluation of the educational process: insufficiencies in the evaluation as a process and deficiencies in carrying it out with a comprehensive approach.

In the investigation, these insufficiencies were detected at the beginning of the educational process, although the methodology required three elements from the educators that allowed them to apply the evaluation as a process: first, the concept of evaluation, second, to apply the evaluation in all the organizational forms of the educational process, either through observation or using pedagogical situations, and third, using methodological procedures with an integral and formative character as a guide to carry out the evaluation of the integral development of the child, in educational institutions and with the family.

Regarding the concept, the educators considered the evaluation as an assessment; however, the methodology allowed them to use two other components that are derived from each other: as a diagnosis and for decision making.

From this requirement, the educators understood that evaluation in the educational process of preschool children has three functions, applicable to all organizational forms of the educational process: assessment (the results achieved and the process through which this development takes place), the diagnosis (potentialities and weaknesses of the integral development of the child) and decision making (to direct

the stimulation and the different organizational forms). All this is pertinent with what has been plating the improvement in Early Childhood in Cuba.

The three functions of the evaluation are fulfilled using the methodological procedures proposed by the methodology. The use of methodological procedures required educators to make an effort in their pedagogical work, although this effort enabled them to identify what to observe in an activity and what decisions to make to direct the education and development of the child and the group. More than the type of activity, or the areas of knowledge, the ability is fundamental, since it allows analyzing the integral development of the child in any organizational form and at home.

A work method similar to the research was proposed by Marcaida *et al.* (2017), when he proposed parameters to carry out the evaluation in the early childhood educational process: sensitivity, independence, flexibility, initiative and motivation. However, these parameters guide the educator on how to assess the playful approach to the activity, while the research offers how to assess the child's comprehensive development.

In conclusion, the results obtained in the implementation of the proposed methodology evidenced the importance of the evaluation of the integral development of the child. These results showed a positive change in the educators when carrying out the evaluation from the methodological procedures and the importance of assessing the different influences that the child receives at home and in the educational institution.

It is recommended in future research to review and consider three limitations of the methodology: it is exclusively designed to be applied to children between three and six

years of age, therefore a future study should be oriented towards early childhood; it is limited to use in educational institutions and not for use in non-institutionalized educational programs, such as the Educate your child program; and it does not verify the use of methodological procedures in other educational institutions of preschool children.

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**Conflict of interest:**

The authors declare not to have any conflicts of interest.

**Authors' Contribution:**

The authors have participated in the writing of the work and analysis of the documents.



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