

NEW HORIZONS FOR THE VISUAL DISABLED
Extension Learning - New Horizons
LIMA - PERU

Focus of Area: **Human Resource Development**

Topic: **Personnel Preparation - teacher education/other professionals**

Mary Valera Tello

cargo : coordinadora

C.E.B.E. " 09 San Francisco de Asís"

Marquez de Guadalcazar 161

La Virreyña – Surco

Lima – Perú

Email : maryvalera@hotmail.com

Abstract:

One of the big deficiencies that the Peruvian Education had was the lack of qualified teachers for blind students. This was stated by a survey in which six regions out of the existing 24 in Peru were very concerned with the training and adequate education of the blind children. And of course, the teachers required proper training too.

The Extension Education Program of "San Francisco de Asis" - Lima sprang into action with the support of the CBM to try to overcome this lack of qualified teachers. Our program provides conditions and ways of work through training for teachers in basic but fundamental areas of work.

It started in 1990 with the training of eight teachers, and at the moment there are 212.

Also the programme recognizes that the blind student can't stay in a special school all the time, that's why it gets involved in an integrative current assuming the responsibility of taking the students to common schools. It established adequate strategies for teachers as well for students, as it is stated in the document. We started with five students, and now there are 418 students and 384 trained teachers.

I. PRESENTATION

We are glad to present the subject with the purpose of sharing our experiences concerning the form we approach our educational work with visual disabled children:

"New Horizons for the Visual Disabled", which is a synthesis of what is being done in our country through the Educational Extension Program of the C.E.B.E. San Francisco de Asís, which is a state institution dedicated since it was founded to the education of blind and low vision children and youngsters.

II. PROBLEMATIC OF BLINDNESS IN PERÚ IN REAL TIME

According to the figures obtained in the last census done by the National Statistics Institute, the visual disabled population is 110,000. Among whom, 90% are in poverty situation. Of this global figure, nationwide, 1791 is being attended

- Specials and regulars
- Initial level 124
- Primary 1023

- Secondary 587
- Superior 57

III. THE SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTER “SAN FRANCISCO DE ASIS” AND THE EDUCATION EXTENSION PROGRAM

3.1 EXTENSION PROGRAM

It is a Technical Training program for Special Education teachers, Basic Regular Education teachers, and parents. It is promoted by the Basic Special Education Center (CEBE) “San Francisco de Asís”, situated in Surco District, Lima, Perú, sponsored by Christoffel Blindenmission, having as characteristic the initiative and motivation that gets to the schools from its base center. The basic idea of this program is to benefit children and young people with visual problems, training their teachers in order they can take care directly of this children, in their own geographic media.

It is worthwhile mentioning that when this Extension Program began, it was only in six of the twenty four Departments that Perú has, that took care of the education of the visual disabled with a limited attention. Up to date we work with fourteen Departments giving an integral education with the development of courses in Lima and other Provinces.

3.2 OBJECTIVES

- Improve the quality of the educational service
- Extend the attention
- Promote and consolidate integration of the visual disabled pupils in regular schools

3.3 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES OF THE EXTENSION PROGRAM

3.3.1 Technical Training of Teachers

1. Requirement Diagnosis

It implies finding schools that have blind or low vision children and the application of a poll in order to find the cognitive and technical requirements of the area, besides knowing the studying population with whom they work.

2. Contents' Definition

It is done based on the results of the diagnosis and the necessities found through control.

According to our experience, the themes taken and which are reinforced are the following:

- Basic notions on Oftalmology
- Orientation on low vision
- Habilitation or Rehabilitation Techniques
 - Orientation and Mobility
 - Every day life activities
- Communication: Braille system
- Abacus Handling

- School Integration
- Multi-disabled

3. Social Discrimination

Peruvian society, as other countries in the area, does not give opportunities easily because they think they will not be able to develop as people with vision. Because of this, frequently it promotes pity.

4. Parents' Level of Acceptance

Parents have a low level of acceptance of their children which is shown in overprotection or rejection, giving no importance to their advances, efforts, success or weakness and frustrations. They have very little hope.

5. Training Action

It is done based on an annual working plan which is given the previous year defining the courses, seminars, workshops to be given in Lima and other provinces based on the established program. The chronogram is fulfilled and the courses are free.

The exponents are professionals that work at "San Francisco de Asís" school, and foreign professionals who get deep and develop specific courses as O & M, HVD, visual stimulation, among others.

Most of these courses are for being attended and some are at distance.

3.3.2 Execution of Pasantías

In order to practice and obtain a better specialized knowledge, this type of work is offered to psychology teachers and other professionals that ask for it. The observation period is three days, one week or a month; it is done with the following strategy:

- Presentation of the Institution
- Execution of an activities' program
- Report from the class teacher
- Report from the Pasante

3.3.3 Follow Up

It is a process of temporary accompaniment (2 of 3 years) to the qualified teachers in order to observe in situ the application of the knowledge and techniques given in this workshops, clarify doubts, correct and motivate them to continue with the work already started.

Follow Up Actions:

- Visit to the different regions or departments' schools to enforce and/or develop different aspects not mentioned on the workshops, and are needed at the moment. They are done yearly and throughout a week; the work is done joined with the teachers.

- Learn and evaluate the necessities of the teachers for a better knowledge and information that permits us the execution of new workshops.
- Coordinate with local education authorities from each place in order that they get interested with this school population, and also to control the teachers in their educational work.
- As well as the workshops and seminars, the follow up is important and demands equal effort in hours in the different places of our territory, approaching an average of 160 hours per year.

3.3.4 Support with Tiphlotechnic Material

We do not have the specific material for blind people or for people with low vision fabricated in our country, hence, to cover this lack of material we consider important that the incapacitated students receive the material needed in the different regions where help is given: so the three important parts of the extensive educative work will be complemented:

Training, Follow-up and Conveyance of material

- Technical Didactic Material: such as guide lines, type writers, abacus, walking cane, magnifying glasses, etc.
- Bibliographic material with related issues of the specialty.

These materials are permanently given by CBM and occasionally by ONCE (Spanish Organization for the Blind) and Hilton Perkins.

3.3.5 Integration/Inclusion in “San Francisco de Asis”

The Extensive Educative Program, recognizes that the educating with visual impairment, cannot remain in a special school, with all the kindness that they could receive there, that is why they involve in the integrative current, assuming the responsibility to take the educating with visual impairment to a regular school, it started in the city of Lima and then moved on later towards the provinces.

In this segment we will only account to the integrative experience done in Lima, which is copied in other provinces with some variations.

Objectives of the Integration/Inclusion Program

1. Promote and impulse the process of educative integration/inclusion opportunely according to the boys, girls, youngsters with visual discapacity.
2. Promote the access, facilitate permanency and obtain school exit of blind and low vision pupils, in common schools.
3. Capacitate the integrator/inclusive teachers with teaching strategies and the use of new and own resources for the learning of visual deficit pupils.
4. Succeed on active participation and commit the parents in the learning process of their children.
5. Develop habilitation techniques of pupils being integrated/included that need to complement their education.

Previous Activities

- Psychological preparation of the pupils in order to change from a special school to a regular school.
- Parents choose two or three schools to integrate their children.
- The members of the integration team visit the chosen schools to ask for the vacant space. The acceptance is consolidated with a record.
- Delivery of the pupils' different evaluations to the parents.
- Matriculation in the common school chosen previously, done by the parents.
- Previous acknowledgement of the school's environment by the integrated student.

Activities in the Integration/Inclusion Process

- Training of personnel of the educational institutions that integrate in their own place and in the special school as feedback.
- Follow up and technical orientation on the schools
- Orientation and help in the elaboration of teaching material (for example maps, lectures, models, etc.)
- Complementation on habilitation techniques: O & M (Orientation and Mobility), HVD, visual stimulation.
- Teaching facilitation on the center base to children with low income.
- Psychological help to students that need it, especially on schools that don't have one.
- Integrator experience with children who will be integrated.
- Individual and group reunions with parents.
- Recreation and socialization activities.

Included Services

1. **Psychological Help.**- If the child presents problems of conduct, adaptation, relationship, etc., the Psychology Department will proceed to make an evaluation and treatment the student with the corresponding advise of the class' teacher and the eventual teacher. If the integration institution has a psychology he will be in charge of the coordination and advisement of the student.
The Psychology Department foresees the attention to integrated students once a week.
2. **Pedagogical Help.**- It is done on Saturdays on the visits to the integrated centers, with children of preschool and primary school, and with the secondary school students in the center base. It is a personalized attention.
3. **Social Help.**- A full or half scholarship in granted to students of very low income. If it is required, they get also assistance.

4. Complimentary Education.-

- a. **Orientation and Mobility.**- Blind students of primary continue their training on these techniques at the integrator school and where they live, until they finish it so they can move with independence and security.
- b. **Visual Stimulation.**- In order they get to use their visual residue at its maximum, low vision department teacher will do this service once a week besides helping regular schools in training.
- c. **Stenography.**- In order to write rapidly and competitively this activity is done in the regular school, in the special school and at the children's homes.
- d. **Use of the Abacus.**- In Mathematics classes it is important the knowledge of all the operations' techniques taught according to what grade the student is in.
- e. **Transcriptions.**- Important subjects are transcribed from ink to Braille system, or letters in macro types of the different subjects.
- f. **Didactic Material.**- Especially prepared for the blind student, this material is in raised work to facilitate comprehension of the subjects, and low vision students with the enlargement of images using visible colors for their deficiency.

3.4 Schedule

On the three levels, the schedule is according to the regular schools' schedule. Itinerant teachers cover 5 hours chronologically daily, reaching space for two schools.

Actual Situation of Attention Covering

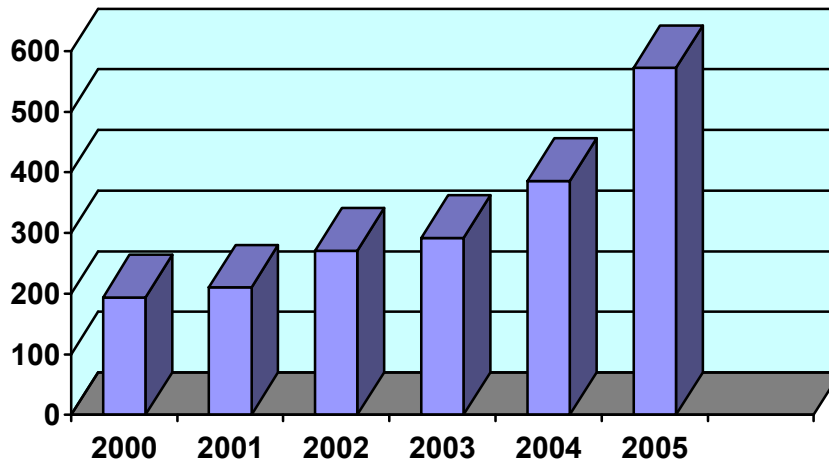
The CEBE "San Francisco de Asis", with its professional staff each year enlarges its coerture and impulses the right of children with visual discapacity to study in a regular school near their homes; it began with six pupils for more over 20 years when nobody bet for this students.

Each year we have an average of 50 integrated students, but in 2006 we have 70 students being attended with the participation of four itinerant teachers and an instructor in orientation and mobility.

IV. RESULTS SYNTHESIS

Teaching population qualified from Lima and Provinces

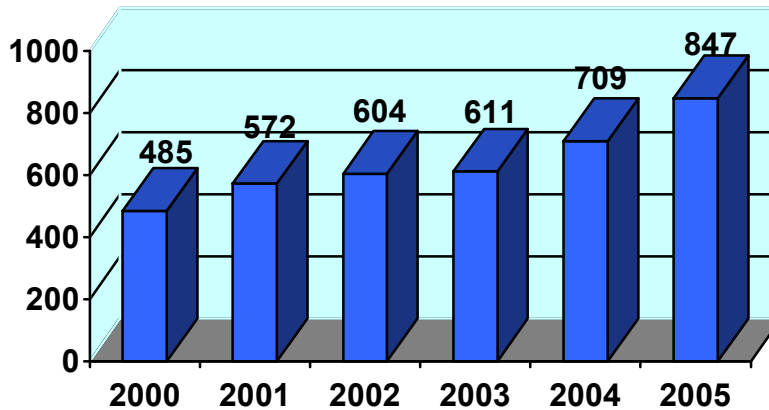
1989-1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
380	194	210	271	292	386	584



Favored Students of Special and Regular Schools

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
467	485	572	604	604	709	847

Students



V. DIFFICULTIES

Due to the complexity of the educative Peruvian system, the Extension Educative Program has met with the following difficulties on advancing and continuing with the specialty:

- Rotation of capacitated teachers to other schools because of different reasons (changes, contracts, etc.)
- Centralism that comes when prepared teachers prefer to go to the capital looking for better social, cultural and work expectations.
- Parents frequently decide not to take their children to school and start the education and rehabilitation process due to lack of economic means and their few expectations in relation to their disabled children.
- Nowadays the Ministry of Education does not value or recognize the certificates of training courses, thus teachers cannot obtain easily permission to assist this events with the risk of having their salary deducted.

CONCLUSIONS

- Though there have been some capacitated teachers that have abandoned, a high percentage of them continue their efficient labor.
- As a result of this process of sharing their knowledge, the prepared teachers on this specialty do a multiplying effect with teachers of their zones.
- In order to correct, enforce and support the teachers in relation to the learned techniques, there are more trainings and follow ups.
- In summary, one way to get that visual disabled be attended, in a reality as ours, is through previous sensitize, motivation and technique instrumentation of teachers.
- We are convinced that the day will come to materialize our wish that the visual disable be included naturally in its social and working environment, opening for them new horizons in their personal development.