




The enculturation process in early childhood education and care: a mixed methods study

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this exploratory sequential mixed methods study was to examine the beliefs of Early Childhood Education teachers regarding the enculturation process of children. Eleven 2-year-old classroom teachers (Mage = 40.64; DT = 7.43; 81.81% female) participated in the qualitative phase, and 256 teachers (Mage = 42.25; DT = 9.78; 90.3% female) participated in the quantitative one. Based on interviews, four main themes were identified: Routines and habits, Values, Models of behavior, and Knowledge. Based on the qualitative results, an instrument was created to measure the teachers' beliefs regarding enculturation in Early Childhood Education and Care. High convergence was obtained between the qualitative and quantitative results, supporting the idea that teachers are active agents of enculturation and social role models for children. We conclude that enculturation should be a curricular objective and that it deserves a greater presence in professional development programs for Early Childhood Education teachers.

KEYWORDS:

Enculturation; early childhood education and care; mixed methods; teacher; beliefs

Introduction

The European Education Area, through the Council of the European Union, has set itself the goal that by the year 2030, at least 96% of children between 3 years of age and the age of entering compulsory primary education participate in Early Education and Care (ECEC) (European Commission 2023). Previously, the 2002 Barcelona European Council had also agreed on a target of 33% of children under three participating in Early Childhood Education (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice 2019). These initiatives have been identified as a priority area for cooperation within the framework of the European Education Area for the period from 2021 to 2030.

Data from the past decade (Eurostat 2023) suggest that almost all countries in the European Union have experienced an increase in access to Early Childhood Education. The European Education Area therefore recognizes the necessary role of Early Childhood Education and Care in laying a solid foundation for school learning, socialization, and enculturation, as well as for lifelong learning. The purpose of the present exploratory sequential mixed methods study was to examine the beliefs of ECEC teachers regarding the enculturation process.

Early childhood education and care: a privileged place for enculturation

Culture is defined as a set of shared understandings and expectations organized into cultural communities that share values, meanings, beliefs, goals, norms, activities, routines, traditions and histories (Reid, Kagan, and Scott-Little 2019). Culture helps the child to perceive, feel or organize their behavior (Bayanova and Mustafin 2016). Thus, an action is considered a cultural action if it complies with the cultural norms and standards that are mandatory for any person in that particular situation (Veraksa, Veresov, and Sukhikh 2023). From the sociocultural perspective, human learning is inseparable from the context in which it takes place (Vygotsky 1978). Thus, enculturation refers to a multifaceted process through which an established culture teaches an individual or group of individuals its accepted norms, rules and values (Alamilla et al. 2020; Kim and Alamilla 2017).

In early childhood, the process of enculturation is an element that is essential in order for children to construct their cultural identity and adopt a set of spiritual, material and affective traits that characterize the society to which they belong (Dunham, Chen, and Banaji 2013; Grusec and Hastings 2015). This process of enculturation is associated with the unique, exclusive and singular relationship that each child develops with the social

reality that surrounds him or her and that Vygotsky (1996) calls the social situation of development.

Early Childhood Education is the ideal scenario for the construction of the psycho-social foundations that lead the person to a higher level of skills development and school performance (European Commission 2018). It also represents a place to promote child health and well-being (Choi et al. 2019). ECEC at present is characterized by being a setting for social and cultural production where children construct their identities and their understanding of the physical and social world (Larrea et al. 2019; Tomasello 2016). Therefore, school, and especially ECEC, offers a privileged context not only of development and education, but also of social learning and enculturation (Hod and Sagy 2022). However, as van Oers (2019) states, the processes of enculturation begin and develop through interactions with other people in the context of cultural practices; therefore, the Early Childhood Education teacher plays a decisive role in this process.

The early childhood education teacher: an active agent of enculturation

In ECEC, the teacher's role is associated with the processes of enculturation and the construction of the child's personality through their participation in experiences in which affective relationships, care and protection are frequent (Ailwood et al. 2022; Yang, Tesar, and Li 2022). Thus, in their interactions with the teacher, children in the early childhood stage internalize the world in which they live within the school environment, and adapt to and integrate into the life of the group, adopting and building the habits, values, attitudes, norms and patterns of behavior of the group or community to which they belong (Ailwood et al. 2022; Zhang and Nurmi 2012).

Several studies (Barandiaran et al. 2015; Cobanoglu, Capa-Aydin, and Yildirim 2019; Phillips, Johnson, and Iruka 2022; Yang, Tesar, and Li 2022) point out the importance of including professional skills for the creation of quality pedagogical contexts and curriculum development in initial training and professional development. This is particularly important in order for enculturation to be an enriching process that favors the integration of children into their cultural community of reference. In this regard, one of the variables that has been suggested to affect appropriate teacher performance is the belief system of teachers regarding the teaching practice (Clayback, Williford, and Vitiello 2023; Sinha 2023). Therefore, it is important to examine in detail the knowledge of the set of opinions and belief systems of Early Childhood Education teachers in relation to the objects of the social context, since they allow us to ascertain their relation-

ship with children. In addition, this set of opinions makes it possible to understand teachers' decisions regarding the promotion of certain activities, pedagogical contexts and lines of professional action (Clayback, Williford, and Vitiello 2023; Huijbregts et al. 2009).

The present study

Several authors (Barandiaran et al. 2015; Phillips, Johnson, and Iruka 2022; Yang, Tesar, and Li 2022) have emphasized the importance of including in the training certain pro-fessional skills for quality teaching practice. Nevertheless, we do not know of any studies that have tried to identify the belief system regarding the process of enculturation held by Early Childhood Education teachers in the 2-year-old classroom. This may be because, among other reasons, there are no reliable evaluation instruments.

The objectives of our study were the following: (1) to determine the beliefs and meaning of the process of enculturation of teachers in the first stage of Early Childhood Education and Care; and (2) to develop and apply a quantitative evaluation instrument to measure teachers' beliefs regarding the process of enculturation in early childhood.

The results of this study can contribute to expanding our knowledge and evaluation of teaching practice associated with the dynamics of enculturation in the early years of education. This can promote improvements in how to support the process of integration of young children into their respective cultural communities, which ultimately also has an impact on how children act and interact at an early age.

Materials and methods

Study design

In order to examine the beliefs and meaning of the process of enculturation of teachers in the first stage of ECEC, a sequential exploratory design of mixed methods was employed. This design was chosen since it allows the qualitative results to contribute to the development of the quantitative method, allows the generalization of the qualitative results, and allows for the in-depth analysis of a phenomenon, as well as the measurement of the prevalence of its dimensions (Creswell and Plano Clark 2018). In the first phase (Figure 1), a qualitative study was carried out to explore the beliefs and meaning of the teachers' enculturation process.

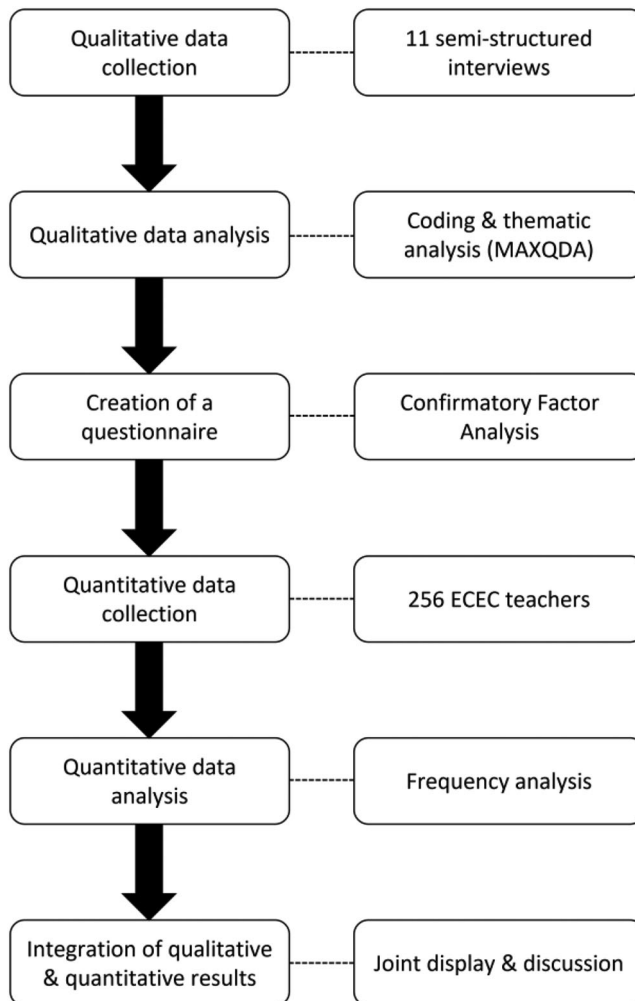


Figure 1. Visual display of the exploratory sequential study design procedure.

These findings contributed to the development of an instrument that was used in the second phase to collect quantitative data. The present study was cross-sectional. Lastly, the results obtained in the two phases were integrated.

Recruitment and study participants

After receiving the mandatory approval of the Ethics Committee of the University of [masked for review], the intentional sampling method was used to recruit participants from various ECEC centres in the Basque Country (Spain).

On the qualitative side, the participants contacted the principal investigator (PI) to arrange an interview and then gave their informed

consent before proceeding with the interview. Participants were informed of the purpose of the research, and of its risks and benefits, noting that the risks associated with participation in the study were minimal. We confirmed that people had understood this information and were able to make voluntary decisions regarding their participation in the research. All participants were informed that they could withdraw from the research activity at any time, without consequences of any sort. They were also advised that their participation by donating their data was altruistic in nature and that they would therefore receive no remuneration for it.

For their part, teachers interested in the anonymous survey completed the consent form for the study before accessing the survey.

A total of 11 2-year-old classroom teachers between 34 and 56 years of age ($M_{\text{age}} = 40.64$; $DT = 7.43$; 81.81% female) participated in the qualitative study.

In the quantitative study, on the other hand, the sample consisted of 256 teachers ($M_{\text{age}} = 42.25$; $DT = 9.78$; 90.3% female). [Table 1](#) shows the sociodemographic characteristics of the participants.

Instruments

Qualitative phase

The participants were interviewed using a semi-structured protocol. This guide provides a global perspective on aspects related to early childhood enculturation, such as routines, norms and boundaries, values, and models of behavior (Reid, Kagan, and Scott-Little 2019).

Quantitative phase

Questionnaire on enculturation in early childhood education and care. Beliefs regarding the process of enculturation in the first stage of Early Childhood Education were obtained through a questionnaire that was created in this study. The instrument consists of 16 items grouped into 3 factors: Routines (3 items; e.g. '2-year-olds feel better if they do the same thing every day'), What to transmit (7 items; e.g. 'As a teacher, I help 2-year-olds acquire knowledge of the culture of the society in which we live') and How to transmit (6 items; e.g. 'I almost always keep it in mind that my behaviors must serve as a model for children.') The items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 = 'Fully disagree' to 7 = 'Fully agree'. Regarding internal consistency, in this sample, the McDonald's ω values were .81 for the Routines factor, .79 for the What to transmit factor, and .85 for the How to transmit factor.

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of the qualitative and quantitative study samples.

Variable	Qu aL		Qua N	
	<i>N</i> (<i>n</i> = 11)	% or <i>M</i> (DT)	<i>N</i> (<i>n</i> = 256)	% or <i>M</i> (DT)
Gender				
Female	9	81.8	243	94.9
Male	2	18.2	13	5.1
Age	40.64 (7.43)		42.25 (9.78)	
22–39 years	5	45.5	111	44
40–64 years	6	54.5	141	56
Education				
University degree in ECEC	8	72.7	196	78.1
Professional training in ECEC	3	27.3	55	21.9
Experience in Early Childhood Education	10.09 (4.59)		16.71 (9.73)	
1–11 years	6	54.5	80	31.9
>11 years	5	45.5	171	68.1

Data analysis

Analysis of qualitative data

To determine beliefs regarding the enculturation process, 4 phases of analysis were applied to the qualitative data. In the first phase, the PI reviewed the transcribed inter-views and field notes. In the second phase, the PI encoded and categorized the data using the MAXQDA 2022 software. In the third phase, the PI identified patterns and categories. Finally, all members of the research team identified themes and examined the results. Although the analysis of the qualitative data consisted of four phases, the collection and the analysis were performed simultaneously. The PI kept a record of what decisions were made and why throughout the study.

Analysis of quantitative data

Regarding the study of the evidence of validity of the internal structure of the instrument, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out. Taking it into account that the assumption of normality was not plausible, we used maximum likelihood estimation with robust standard errors (MLR). The following goodness-of-fit indicators were used: (1) the comparative fit index (CFI); (2) the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI); (3) the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR); and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). TLI values greater than 0.90 were considered to indicate a good fit (Schumacker and Lomax 1996), and CFI reference values greater than 0.90 and 0.95 were taken to indicate an acceptable fit

and an excellent fit, respectively (Hu and Bentler 1999). In the case of the SRMR, values under 0.08 denote a good fit (Hu and Bentler 1999), while for the RMSEA, values under 0.05 and 0.08 indicate a good fit and an acceptable fit, respectively.

In order to examine how frequencies were distributed among the different categories of the variables of the obtained factors, the comparison was carried out on a proportion (binomial test).

Data analyses were carried out using the MPLUS version 8.10 software and the SPSS (V.28.0.) software.

Results

Qualitative results

Interview data led to the identification of 4 categories based on the teachers' perceptions of the enculturation process in early childhood.

Routines and habits

The interviewees believe that routines and habits contribute to the enculturation process of 2-year-old children. Standing out among school routines and habits are work pertaining to regional festivals and traditions (mentioned by 10 of the interviewees), hellos and goodbyes ($n = 9$), the stories that are told daily ($n = 9$), and songs ($n = 7$). In the words of the interviewees, the work they do pertaining to specific festivities is useful for the process of enculturation: 'For example, when we do traditional dances, that's cultural' (3:435); or 'the school always tries to familiarize them with our culture, our language, our festivals

... At Christmas with Olentzero or in the autumn with all the festivals we do' (5:36). In addition to this more seasonal work, the interviewees value daily routine: 'the children feel much more secure, they know what we're going to do (...). The daily routine gives them knowledge and that knowledge gives them security' (10:28).

Values

Within the process of enculturation, the interviewees consider the acquisition of values to be relevant. Among the values to be worked on, all of the participants cited respect, solidarity and cooperation were mentioned by 6 of the interviewees, equality by 5, and coexistence by 5. 'I think it's imperative that everyone respect those around them, that they respect others and be respected at all times' (11:226). They are aware of their role in this regard, although they believe that there is room for improvement: 'Before, a girl would come in and I'd say 'you look so beautiful today' but to the boys it would be 'what have you brought?' Now I treat everyone

equally. I've changed. I did a course on coeducation and they talked about these kinds of topics, and then you realize. Before, we didn't realize because we grew up like that. It's difficult.' (3:409).

Models of behavior

Educators consider themselves role models for children. Ten of the interviewees believe that as teachers, they present attitudes and ways of behaving that can be useful for children. However, 9 teachers think that they also sometimes provide inappropriate models. One teacher says, 'I think you achieve more with your behavior than just with words. And I believe that children learn more from our actions' (8:166). Sometimes they are aware of the circumstances: 'When I don't sleep well and I'm tired, it's difficult for me to be happy and I do notice that they notice it' (7:90). Another teacher says that 'information is transmitted to them better if you're happy and in a good mood' (11:119).

Knowledge

All of the teachers who participated in the study point out the contents and knowledge that the children acquire during their enculturation process. In fact, 9 of the 11 interviewees make explicit reference to the learning that children do. They believe that 'in school they learn a lot. Before, school for ages 0–3 was seen as something more like assistance, changing diapers and little else ... Now it's changing. Children learn' (6:550). Along these lines, another teacher points out that 'thanks to their teachers, they learn to share with others, to take turns; they learn values' (3:30), to 'not scream, especially because you rob others of the option to listen' (9:170). However, teachers believe that this knowledge is transmitted in different ways: 'each teacher has her own way of acting and uses her own methods. We should keep in mind that we are role models for children' (4:35).

Based on the results of the qualitative element, an instrument was created to measure teachers' beliefs regarding enculturation in Early Childhood Education. It consists of 30 items divided into three factors: Routines, What to transmit, and How to transmit.

Quantitative results

Internal structure of the questionnaire on enculturation in early childhood education

Because the model proposed in the CFA did not yield adequate adjustment indicators (χ^2 [402, $n = 256$] = 1112.015, $p = .0001$; CFI = .721; TLI = .698; RMSEA [90% confidence interval (CI90%)] = .083 [.077; .089]; SRMR = 0.091), we respecified the model. First, all items with a factorial load of less than .40 were eliminated. However, in order to obtain the most efficient model, one that makes conceptual sense and shows optimal goodness-of-fit, inappropriate items were successively deleted based on the values of the modification indices provided by the MPLUS software. We ultimately arrived at a set of 16 items grouped into three factors: Routines, What to transmit, and How to transmit (χ^2 [101, $n = 256$] = 164.895, $p = .0001$; CFI = .934; TLI = .922; RMSEA [CI90%] = .050 [.036; .063]; SRMR = 0.048).

Frequency analysis

In order to examine how the frequencies were distributed among the different categories of factor variables, a comparison was performed on a proportion (binomial test). To do this, the quantitative variables that make up the questionnaire were dichotomized as 'Dis-agree' (scores 1–4) and 'Agree' (Scores 5–7). [Table 2](#) presents the results of the binomial test.

As can be seen, most of the teachers believe that children should participate in class routines every day, and that teachers in the same school should carry out routines in a similar way. In addition, although most agreed that children feel better if similar actions are performed every day, a significant percentage (38%) disagreed.

The results also demonstrate that teachers have the perception that they are active agents of enculturation and that the children themselves also perceive this role. It should also be noted that teachers believe that sensitivity and positive affect are two important variables in carrying out the tasks of enculturation that are beneficial for the development of the child in Early Childhood Education.

The teachers also believe that it is necessary for them to reflect on their teaching practice in the 2-year classroom for their professional competence in the practice of enculturation.

Mixed methods data analysis

Finally, the results of each line of study were compared and the data were integrated ([Table 3](#)).

Discussion

The main objective of this study was to examine the beliefs of Early Childhood Education teachers regarding the process of enculturation of children. First, based on the interviews carried out, four themes were identified: Routines and habits, Values, Models of behavior, and Knowledge.

Based on the obtained data, we conclude that, for two-year-old classroom teachers, in the process of enculturation, it is essential to work on generally structured routines that are usually supervised by educators, who guide and direct children in large groups and in transitions, as well as in routine tasks, such as reading stories or singing songs. In addition, the teachers believe that a structured daily routine gives children a sense of security, especially care routines associated with hellos and goodbyes. This result emphasizes the need to go beyond the simple transmission of knowledge and to make the school routine an enjoyable and meaningful activity, facilitating enriching and predictable experiences, but at the same time allowing for spontaneous play and interactions among children.

Table 2. Binomial test.

Variable	Response	Number	Proportion (%)	<i>p</i>
Factor: Routines				
For two-year-olds, it is necessary to carry out all routines daily.	Disagree	72	28	.0001
	Agree	184	72	
Two-year-olds feel better if they do the same things every day.	Disagree	97	38	.0001
	Agree	159	62	
Teachers in the same school should try to carry out routines in the same way.	Disagree	89	35	.0001
	Agree	167	65	
Factor: What to transmit				
When we do activities related to celebrating festivals/traditions, I help two-year-olds learn about the customs of the society in which we live	Disagree	5	2	.0001
	Agree	251	98	
As a teacher, I educate two-year-olds in values.	Disagree	4	2	.0001
	Agree	252	98	
The educational training of teachers supports educating two-year-olds in values	Disagree	31	12	.0001
	Agree	225	88	
Teachers promote values at school, including unintentionally.	Disagree	15	6	.0001
	Agree	241	94	
I keep it in mind at all times that I am working on the values of two-year-olds	Disagree	19	7	.0001
	Agree	257	93	
As a teacher of two-year-olds, I am a role model of exemplary behaviors.	Disagree	10	4	.0001
	Agree	246	96	
As a teacher, I help two-year-olds acquire knowledge of the culture of the society in which we live.	Disagree	13	5	.0001
	Agree	243	95	
Factor: How to transmit				
My behaviors directly influence children's attitudes and behaviors.	Disagree	9	4	.0001
	Agree	247	96	
Two-year-olds are aware of the educator's behaviors.	Disagree	5	2	.0001
	Agree	251	98	
I almost always keep it in mind that my behaviors must serve as a model for children	Disagree	11	4	.0001
	Agree	245	96	
With two-year-olds, we as educators must pay attention to our behaviors.	Disagree	2	1	.0001
	Agree	254	99	
Teachers should show a sensitive attitude toward two-year-olds.	Disagree	8	3	.0001
	Agree	248	97	
The good mood of the teacher transmits positivity to the children.	Disagree	8	3	.0001
	Agree	248	97	

The teachers expressed the belief that, in order for an appropriate process of enculturation to take place, it is necessary to promote the acquisition of values, that is, desirable principles that guide the actions of the child. They especially highlight the values of solidarity and cooperation, equality and

coexistence. In relation to this, the teachers believe that they assume the role of valid models that support the enculturation of the child using multiple communication strategies. Although more studies are needed, it has been postulated that it is common for values to be conveyed more implicitly than explicitly (Sigurdardottir, Williams, and Einarsdottir 2019). Thus, it could be interesting to study the reflective practice of teachers regarding how to optimize these transmission processes.

Finally, teachers believe school learning to be a natural event in the 2-year-old classroom that plays a central role in the process of child enculturation. This conception is consistent with the perspective championed by the European Education Area, in which the importance of school learning and socialization during Early Childhood Education is upheld (European Commission 2023).

Table 3. Integrated results matrix.

Qualitative category	Qualitative results	Sample questionnaire item	Quantitative results		Quantitative factor
			Numbers (%)	<i>p</i>	
Routines and habits	‘The school always tries to familiarize them with our culture, our language, our festivals ... At Christmas with Olenzero or in the autumn with all the festivals we do’ (5:36)	When we do activities related to celebrating festivals/traditions, I help two-year-olds learn about the customs of the society in which we live.	Agree: 251 (98%) Disagree: 5 (2%)	.0001	What to transmit
	‘The children feel much more secure, they know what we’re going to do (...). The daily routine gives them knowledge and that knowledge gives them security’ (10:28).	Two-year-olds feel better if they do the same things every day.	Agree: 159 (62%) Disagree: 97 (38%)	.0001	Routines
Values	‘I think it’s imperative that everyone respect those around them, that they respect others and be respected at all times’ (11:226).	I keep it in mind at all times that I am working on the values of two-year-olds.	Agree: 237 (93%) Disagree: 19 (7%)	.0001	What to transmit
	‘Before, a girl would come in and I’d say ‘you look so beautiful today’ but to the boys it would be ‘what have you brought?’ Now I treat everyone equally. I’ve changed. I did a course on coeducation and they talked about these kinds of topics, and then you realize. Before, we didn’t realize because we grew up like that. It’s difficult.’ (3:409).	The educational training of teachers supports educating two-year-olds in values.	Agree: 225 (88%) Disagree: 31 (12%)	.0001	What to transmit
Models	‘I think you achieve	My behaviors	Agree:	.000	How to

of behavio r	more with your behavior than just with words. And I believe that children learn more from our actions' (8:166).	directly influence children's attitudes and behaviors.	247 (96%) Disagre e: 9 (4%)	1	transmi t
Knowled ge	'Thanks to their teachers, they learn to share with others, to take turns; they learn values' (3:30).	As a teacher, I educate two- year-olds in values.	Agree: 252 (98%) Disagre e: 4 (2%)	.000 1	What to transmi t
	'Each teacher has her own way of acting and uses her own methods. We should keep in mind that we are role models for children' (4:35).	I almost always keep it in mind that my behaviors must serve as a model for children.	Agree: 245 (96%) Disagre e: 11 (4%)	.000 1	How to transmi t

Based on the results of the qualitative dimension, an instrument was created to measure teacher beliefs regarding enculturation in Early Childhood Education. The instrument consists of 16 items grouped into three factors: Routines, What to transmit, and How to transmit. The Questionnaire on Enculturation in Early Childhood Education is a valuable original result of this study, since it is the first instrument to measure enculturation in the 2-year-old classroom that was designed from the perspective of teachers. We believe that the application of this instrument can complement other data obtained from other sources (observation, in-depth interviews, focus groups, etc.) and can be useful to promote improvements in the Early Childhood Education classroom that aim to obtain quality enculturation processes beginning in early childhood. Through the application of this instrument, the teacher is able to self-evaluate his or her own practice of enculturation and identify new training actions that improve his or her teaching practice.

With regard to the quantitative data obtained by applying the instrument, the data collected by qualitative sources were generalized in the study sample. Although most teachers believe that children must have structured routines every day and that there must be homogeneity among teachers, there was also a significant percentage of teachers who indicated their disagreement with this view, though believing routines to be a central theme of enculturation. In our opinion, this result reflects the perception of a type of teacher who is more inclined to combine structured routines with free-flowing routines that allow children to move independently within and between environments throughout the day (Collins, Jones, and Tonge 2023).

The establishment of a secure bond between child and adult is a central feature of enculturation that has also been confirmed by quantitative data; for two-year-old teachers, it is crucial to promote secure bonds through sensitivity and positive affect. This result corroborates the results of other relevant authors in the field (Gialamas et al. 2014; Goble, Sandilos, and Pianta 2019; Harkoma et al. 2021), who confirm that the continuous experience of sensitivity on the part of caregivers, over time and in different contexts, provides the child with a secure foundation, a fundamental need for appropriate socio-emotional and cognitive development.

Likewise, a convergence with the qualitative results was also found in the perception of teachers as role models and active agents of enculturation. It should be noted that in the quantitative study, a result was found that adds value to this view since, according to the teachers, the children themselves perceive and expect this active exercise by teachers. Therefore, this result alludes to the active participation of the child and the need to reflect on practice from the perspective of participatory pedagogical strategies

(Muela et al. 2019). This perception is linked to the figure of the teacher who promotes the agency and independence of the child, which are fundamental factors for learning and optimal development (Houen et al. 2016). This is an important nuance since it adapts to the individuation of the child and his or her particular process of enculturation.

We do not wish to end this work without pointing out some of its limitations and future prospects. First, it must be recognized that this study is limited to teachers in the two-year-old classroom. In subsequent studies, it would be advisable to include teachers from all years of Early Childhood Education. Second, this study does not include an evaluation of the interaction between teachers and children. In future studies, it would be advisable to carry out studies that measure the effect of the dimensions associated with the enculturation process on variables related to the child's well-being and school learning through both qualitative and quantitative measures. Another objective for the future is to expand the Questionnaire on Enculturation in Early Childhood Education to make it more sensitive in its detection of teachers' different levels of competency in the practice of enculturation. Finally, taking into account the cultural diversity that is present in Early Childhood Education classrooms due to the large migratory flows experienced by many European countries, it would be interesting not only to carry out additional studies on enculturation, but also to add studies on acculturation.

Despite these limitations, the results obtained in the present study confirm that teachers define the process of enculturation as a multifaceted process that must be developed in a conscious and deliberate way. Therefore, we suggest that enculturation be a curricular objective and that it take on greater importance in the professional development programs of Early Childhood Education teachers.

Disclosure statement


No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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