An Overview of Peraj Mexico Program and its Impact Evaluation

International Mentoring Conference, Cancun
December 2015
Differences between Perach in Israel and in Mexico

• We call it Peraj (not Perach), with the “surname” “adopta un amig@”.

• Children and mentors get together at the universities twice a week, 2 hours each day (or on Saturdays, 4 hours).

• It is done within the context of Social Service, which is a requisite for all university degrees.

• Mentors have the possibility of getting a scholarship of approximately $60 us dlls per month during 10 months (they must qualify through GPA, etc).

• Mentees are chosen by their teachers.
Differences between Perach in Israel and in Mexico

- Mentees belong to public schools, in areas of low socio-economic lever, preferably close to the universities.
- Activities are 50% one-on-one and 50% group activities (but always every child with his mentor).
- All mentors and mentees get together as a group on every session.
- Mentors get together once a week for an additional 2 hour session to discuss problems and plan following weeks activities.
Differences between Perach in Israel and in Mexico

• There is always a “graduation” ceremony.
• Children participate only one year in Peraj.
• Mentors may participate (as mentors or coordinators) more than 1 school year but w/o scholarship as from 2nd year.
• Structured as a “social franchise”
• Very “thin” central administration (too thin!!)
• Yearly national meetings
Peraj en México

Peraj- México adopta un amig@

Peraj- adopta un Amig@ takes the original philosophy of Perach and adapts it to the Mexican context
Group activities

Human Development
• Values
• Self-esteem
• Integration
• Persona safety

Introduction to the University
• An overview of different university degrees
• Visits to laboratories, computer labs, libraries

Academic Support
• Help with homework
• Study habits
• Love of reading
• Written and verbal expression
• Team work

Festivities
• Mexican Haloween
• Posadas
• Children’s day

Health and Sports
• Sports activities
• Workshops on health, nutrition, human body

Workshops
• Science
• Artistic activities
• Manual activities

Cultural Activities
• Visits to historic sites
• Visits to museums
• Attending movies, theatre and music events
Growth of Peraj Mexico

More than 30,000 children and 30,000 mentors have participated in Peraj
Activities in the following areas:

- Affective
- Social
- Cultural
- Academic
- Motivational
- Communication
Hypothesis

There should be a reduction in:

- school drop-out rate
- delinquent behaviour
- self-destructive behaviour: drugs, violence, etc
School drop-out rates in Mexico

- **Ingresan a primaria**: 100%
- **Graduados primaria**: 80.4%
- **Graduados secundaria**: 60.1%
- **Graduados preparatoria**: 36.1%
- **Egresados universidad**: 21.0%
- **Titulados**: 13.0%
Does Peraj work?
Design of a strategy to evaluate its impact
Evaluation of the Peraj program

• From the start of the program we have obtained testimonials from the different participants (mentors, mentees, parents, teachers, coordinators, etc.).

• The great majority of them tell us that the program is very positive and that its objectives are achieved.

• Beggining in 2011 trying to find or develop tools to quantitatively evaluate the impact and performance of Peraj.
First proposal (2011-2012)

Using an instrument developed for evaluating mentoring programs in the USA
The “Hemingway” test
Measuring “connectedness” in pre-adolescents (Karcher, 2005)

• “Hemingway” was developed as a way of measuring a mentoring program in the USA (similar to Perach).

• It measures the “connectedness” of children to their family, school, friends, etc. It comprises several “dimensions” which have been found to contribute to good performance at school.

• It has been used to evaluate mentoring programs in the USA. It has even been validated with local latino population in the USA.
The Hemingway questionnaire was applied for 2011-2012 to the Peraj group and to a control group, at the beginning and end of the school year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>No es cierto</th>
<th>Es más o menos cierto</th>
<th>Es cierto</th>
<th>Es muy cierto</th>
<th>No clara?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Hay mucho que hacer por donde yo vivo.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Me llevo bien con mis papás.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Trabajo muy duro en mi escuela.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Casi todos los niños y niñas de mi clase me caen bien.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Soy bueno para leer.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Mis amigos pasan mucho tiempo juntos.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Me gusta estar con mis papás.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Trato de sacar buenas calificaciones.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Me divierto ponerme a leer yo solo.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Hemingway test did not work adequately for Peraj

- Low reliability on most of the variables we intended to evaluate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Vecindario</th>
<th>Padres</th>
<th>Escuela</th>
<th>Iguales</th>
<th>Lectura</th>
<th>Amigos</th>
<th>Yo mismo</th>
<th>Autocontrol</th>
<th>Maestros</th>
<th>Hermanos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reportado</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtenido</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Very high initial values for the target population
  This was probably due to the fact that there is high connectedness in Mexican social networks specially those of low socio/economic levels. Therefore “connectedness” is not an adequate construct for measuring Peraj’s impact.
Second proposal (2012-2013)

Developing our own impact measurement instrument

(For a detailed presentation please attend David Moreno’s session, Friday at 4pm, Peninsula 4)
To develop our own scale we considered the following:

• Do not take the 6 impact areas as a starting point.

• Do not try to evaluate a construct foreign to the Mexican reality (i.e. “connectedness”).

• Take a very “concrete” problem on which we intend to impact. The decision was to evaluate the risk of:
  – dropping-out of school.
About Dropping-out from School

• School desertion or drop-out is not a sudden event in the school path of a student. It is the result of a process that starts developing from the first experiences of the student with school.

• It is a multi-causal phenomenon and, it cannot be blamed on the student.
Development of impact evaluation measurement for Peraj

Detection of risk factors for dropping-out of school in elementary school students
A team from UASLP – PERAJ did a revision of the academic literature on the factors that impact school drop/out rates and found the following:

- Commitment to school
- Agression
- Absentism
- Lack of interest
- Connectedness to school
- Autonomy
- Control locus
- School expectations
- Self image
- Bad conduct
- Academic failure history
- Lack of effort
- People with whom the child lives
- Academic achievement
- After-school activities
- Drop-out family history
- Parent’s education level
- Socio-economic level
Can anything be done?

Factors that impact school drop-out

- 72 Alterables
- 28 No alterables

Given the 6 developmental areas as the ones on which to work, Peraj impacts:

- Commitment to school
  - Lack of interest
  - Autonomy
  - Self-image
  - Lack of effort
  - Academic achievement

- Connectedness to school
  - Control locus
  - Bad conduct

- Agression
  - School expectations

- Absentism
  - People with whom the child lives

- Academic failure history
- After-school activities
- Drop-out family history
- Socio-economic level

Parent’s education level
In the 2012-2013 school year we applied the questionnaire developed to assess risk factors of dropping-out of school

• It was applied at the beginning (pre-test) and at the end of the school year (post-test)

• A total of 2996 children participated in the evaluation.
  – 1937 from the Peraj target population.
  – 1059 control group.

• The children were in Peraj programs from 45 universities and belonged to 193 elementary schools all over the country.
# The questionnaire

**Queremos conocerte mejor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nombre:</th>
<th>Edad:</th>
<th>Fecha:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Escuela:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Género**  ○ Masculino  ○ Femenino  
**Grado**:  ○ 4°  ○ 5°  ○ 6°  
**Grupo**:  ○ A  ○ B  ○ C  ○ D  
**Turno**:  ○ Matutino  ○ Vespertino

**¿Con quién vives?**  ○ Mamá  ○ Papá  ○ Ambos  ○ Otros:  

**Si conoces tu promedio ponlo aquí**  

**En un mes, ¿cuántas veces faltas a la escuela?**  ○ Ninguna  ○ Entre 1 y 2  ○ Entre 3 y 4  ○ Entre 5 y 6  ○ Más de 7

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Lee cada frase con cuidado y marca con una X la respuesta que mejor describa qué tan cierto es para ti lo que ahí dice. Si no entiendes bien la frase, por favor píde que te la expliquen.

**Ejemplo:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Siempre</th>
<th>Casi siempre</th>
<th>Algunas veces</th>
<th>Casi nunca</th>
<th>Nunca</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hago todas mis tareas.</strong></td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

La frase dice “Hago todas mis tareas”, la persona que contestó, nos está diciendo que sólo “algunas veces” hace todas sus tareas.

**Por favor se lo más honesto que puedas, recuerda que la intención es conocerte mejor, no calificarte.**
Results
• In contrast to *Hemingway*, *the* Peraj questionnaire has much higher reliability levels.

• This means it measures with high precisión.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Confiabilidad *</th>
<th>Agresión 0.8103</th>
<th>Autoconcepto 0.6942</th>
<th>Autonomía 0.6445</th>
<th>Esfuerzo 0.6984</th>
<th>Expectativas 0.8336</th>
<th>Locus de Control 0.7086</th>
<th>Valoración 0.8404</th>
<th>Vinculación 0.6812</th>
<th>Riesgo 0.916</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*(Medida como α de Cronbach)*
More detailed findings

• Considering only the children to whom both PRE and POST questionnaires were applied (1085 Peraj, 492 control).
  
  How many of them diminished their risk?

  - 54.29% Peraj mentees (589/1085).
  - 45.73% Control Group (225/492).

  How many of those on high risk (≥2.5) lowered it?

  - 80.88% Peraj (203/251).
  - 52.72% Control (97/184).

  How many of those on high risk (≥2.5) became low risk (≤2.5)?

  - 55.38% Peraj (138/251).
  - 15.22% Control (28/184).
Diminished risk of dropping – out of school

50% of the children who would have finished the school year with a high risk of dropping – out of school end up with a low risk due to their participation in Peraj.
Among the children who, at the end of the school year would be in high risk in the different dimensions which have an impact on school dropout rate, those participating in Peraj diminish their risk as follows:

- 42% diminish their aggressiveness
- 41% increase their self-image
- 17% increase their autonomy
- 30% give higher value to personal effort
- 60% have higher expectations from school
- 34% take more responsibility for their actions
- 42% increase the importance of school for their future
- 39% have better connectedness with their school

Producing as a global result a 50% reduction of those in a high risk of dropping out of school.
Survey of Mentor – Mentee relationship quality
(Rhodes et al, 2001)