

## **IDENTITY AND PLURALITY WITHIN THE SCHOOL COEXISTENCE IN THE COLOMBIAN RURAL SCHOOL**

### **LA IDENTIDAD Y LA PLURALIDAD DENTRO DE LA CONVIVENCIA ESCOLAR EN LA ESCUELA RURAL EN CUNDINAMARCA**

**Jeimy Del Pilar Pulga<sup>1</sup>**

International Iberoamerican University, Mexico

([jeimy.pulga2015@gmail.com](mailto:jeimy.pulga2015@gmail.com)) (<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-3076-885X>)

**María de los Ángeles Díaz Linares**

Department of Education, Spain

([m.angeles.diaz.linares@gmail.com](mailto:m.angeles.diaz.linares@gmail.com)) (<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3635-9528>)

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#### **ABSTRACT**

**Keywords:**

identity, plurality, rural school, coexistence, students.

This research identifies the variables that influence the construction of identity and the recognition of plurality in the framework of Colombian rural school coexistence, from the implementation of the toolkit for the promotion of school coexistence and the prevention of abuse presented by the Ministry of Education of Colombia for the educational community of the country's public institutions. Based on a pedagogical and ethnographic experience carried out in the rural schools El Tablón and La Ramada, in Cundinamarca, during the year 2022 and the first semester of 2023, from the use of tools such as: observation, semi-structured interview and pre and post questionnaire, recognizing the impact of how some situations of violation of rights are strongly related to problems that affect the construction of identity, plurality in students from 5 to 11 years old. This research process highlights the importance of recognizing the self and the other as a fragile social bond that requires a free educational context for interaction and acceptance of difference, which is hopeful for all its members as far as possible from positive coexistence orientations and the use of inclusion tools within the school.

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#### **RESUMEN**

**Palabras clave:**

identidad, pluralidad, escuela rural, convivencia, estudiantes.

Esta investigación identifica las variables que inciden en la construcción de la identidad y el reconocimiento de la pluralidad en el marco de la convivencia escolar rural colombiana, desde la puesta en práctica del kit de herramientas para la promoción de la convivencia escolar y la prevención del maltrato presentado por el ministerio de educación de Colombia para la comunidad educativa de las instituciones públicas del país. Con base en una experiencia

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<sup>1</sup> Corresponding author.

pedagógica y etnográfica realizada en las escuelas rurales El Tablón y La Ramada, en Cundinamarca, durante el año 2022 y el primer semestre de 2023, a partir del uso de herramientas como: la observación, la entrevista semiestructurada y el cuestionario pre y post, reconociendo el impacto de cómo algunas situaciones de vulneración de derechos se relacionan contundentemente con problemas que afectan la construcción de la identidad, la pluralidad en estudiantes de 5 a 11 años. Este proceso investigativo destaca la importancia del reconocimiento del yo y del otro como un frágil vínculo social que requiere de un contexto educativo libre ante la interacción y aceptación de la diferencia, que sea esperanzador para todos sus integrantes en la medida de lo posible desde orientaciones convivenciales positiva y el uso de herramientas de inclusión dentro la escuela.

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## **Introduction**

Education, together with the exercise of human rights, are instruments that guarantee the rational organization of society in which a game of mirrors is played between it and the individual, with the aim of establishing a social order based on equality, freedom and inclusion. In Colombia, the armed conflict and gender violence have substantially affected the construction of society, subject and individual, generating failures in the meaning of plurality and the identity of the community in general, which historically have forged emotional forms of the social bond, mediated by fear, indifference and rejection towards the other classified as different.

Under this scenario, the social bond has been altered, one of the Colombian contexts that evidence these damages are the rural schools of the department of Cundinamarca, as educational institutions forming citizens who respect and recognize their rights, where students belonging to floating communities are enrolled who are families from different parts of the country who live mobilizing for various reasons, among them, fleeing from local violence, recruitment of minors by armed groups, the need to work and the protection of their family members, therefore, Cundinamarca's educational centers receive visitors and locals without any previous convivial orientation, who in their interaction build and deconstruct the community, the association and the local tradition, therefore their identity and the very recognition of plurality are fractured.

This is why the rural school in Cundinamarca participates in the fragmentation of identity and the recognition of plurality among its community, becoming a wall of absorption of phenomena such as: harassment, inequality, physical and verbal aggression, mockery and discrimination towards minorities. A study conducted by the International NGO Bullying Without Borders for the biennium between 2022 and the first half of 2023, Colombia ranks ninth in bullying cases in the world with approximately 41,500 complaints and within the country, Cundinamarca - department where the municipality of Cucunubá is located where the focus group is located - ranks first, as the department at the national level with more cases of this type. Its director Dr. Javier Miglino says "children are not artificial intelligence, we must listen to them, accompany them and defend them... bullying is nourished by three poisons: loneliness, sadness and fear" Miglino (2023, p. 2) because when comparing this statistic with the immediately previous one of the biennium 2020 and 2021, the cases in Colombia were 8,981, that is, there was an increase of 500%.981, that is, there was an increase of 500%, shocking and worrying to the extent that the damage to school coexistence has become a daily torture for students from the early years of their schooling.

In these circumstances, plurality and identity in the child population are at risk, since the social conditions that allow reciprocity between these two elements are mediated by fear, insecurity and discrimination, now any reason is an excuse to damage coexistence, having child victims within the rural school who suffer blows, threats, mockery, harassment and negative forms of communication that hurt their self-definition, affecting the construction of identity and self, because "this process is surrounded by huge abysses that unleash in battles to leave or remain" Bauman (2006, p. 109). 109), hence the need for this research, to inquire about these problems and the effects produced by the application of the proposal of the Ministry of National Education in association with CISP (Comitato Internazionale, Pero Lo Sviluppo Dei Popoli) created in 2020, called: toolkit for the promotion of school coexistence and prevention of abuse, within a rural educational context, determined its effects around the construction of identity and

recognition of plurality in the framework of school coexistence in children between 5 and 11 years old belonging to the rural school in Cundinamarca-Colombia.

Initially, an ethnographic immersion is carried out based on the principles of Geertz's description, which consists in emphasizing "the meaning of the actions of individuals in a comprehensive way", (Geertz, 1973, p. 20) to understand how students fill their aggressive actions on their classmates. 20) to understand how students fill with meanings their aggressive actions on their classmates, on the other hand, the role that the school and teachers play in the formation of the subject is questioned, understanding the way in which ties and roles take different meanings around a constructed social identity, in turn, taking them as formers of meanings, symbols and imaginaries, a route is traced to understand how the student community is recognized within the framework of a plural society, starting from the representations and symbols that emerge in the daily life of the school: the classroom, classes and recess, to then apply the protocols, booklet and musical pieces proposed by the coexistence kit and to make a parallel of the before and after of this exercise from the application of an individual questionnaire.

To carry out this immersion and this route, a methodological distinction is made between the curriculum and the values that the pedagogical culture teaches about identity and plurality within the rural school, starting from "the educational heritage that Colombia adopts with respect to the population and its cultural, economic, political and social level" (Sáenz, 2007, p. 131), interpreting its meaning within the school coexistence context, needs and meanings that students find from the physical, psychological and behavioral characteristics that they assume within the conflict before and after the application of different strategies for the improvement of coexistence proposed by the Ministry of National Education.

Basic primary education in the rural context of Cundinamarca is a life experience that has a great impact on the future life of the students, hence the research question that guides this document: What are the variables that provide the construction of identity and recognition of plurality in children between 5 and 11 years of age who belong to the Rural School of Cundinamarca? Since the country is advancing in the necessary debates to put an end to the different forms of violence that transcend the educational process in the free formation of identity and subsequently of plurality within the framework of school coexistence, which has been affected by the increase in cases of school violence between students of the same or different grades, age or gender. These situations gained relevance in the MEN (Ministry of National Education of Colombia), to the point of launching the toolkit for the promotion of school coexistence and the prevention of mistreatment in 2020, from which an investigative work begins from its implementation, identifying the level of impact on the imaginary of coexistence, respect for difference and self-recognition in school life, to start possible proposals that significantly impact the training process in rural classrooms and thus achieve contributions that benefit and highlight the future of rural education, improve the behavioral and academic performance of those who rely on this type of training and therefore the care of the integral development from the first years of school life.

Finally, the application of the Kit within the rural educational context pursues the following hypothesis: *positive school coexistence has a decisive influence on the construction of identity and the recognition of plurality within rural school coexistence based on the implementation of a Colombian ministerial proposal*, which is being worked on through the results presented below and defines the cultural and social enrichment of the rural community that is part of the educational process in search of the development of its full potential.

## **Method**

This research assumes a qualitative ethnographic approach, with a qualitative character, in which three instruments are used to collect information: the model of classroom observations, rest and teacher observations, semi-structured interviews and the questionnaire, which were fundamental tools to answer the question that guides this research work. *What are the variables that provide the construction of identity and recognition of plurality within the framework of school coexistence in boys and girls between 5 and 11 years of age who belong to rural schools?* This produced "descriptive data: from elements such as: people's own words, spoken or written, and observable behavior" (Taylor and Bogdán, 1984, p. 20).

By relying on ethnography, the design of this research makes it possible to observe the practice, to reach the rural school of Cundinamarca from the role of researcher, in order to recognize its specific qualities in terms of the stated objective, when observing, it is possible to reflect on the knowledge and pedagogical actions within the educational process that takes place in the rural context of Colombia where 94% of the territory is rural, but the quality of life in the rural sector is lower than in the urban sector, this can be understood in terms of access to public services, social security, education and housing conditions that within the country have been relevant to define this area as the epicenter of the armed conflict and the struggle for land in the country, an example of this are the power relations that circulate in school, public and private spaces strictly rural and its effect on the configuration of identity and the recognition of plurality in the framework of coexistence. From this reading Clifford Geertz is quoted, with:

What he actually faces (except when engaged in the more automatic routine of data collection) is a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of which are overlapping or interlocking, structures that are at once strange, irregular, non-explicit, and which the ethnographer must somehow manage to grasp first and then to explain (Geertz, 1973, p. 35).

During this process, different conflict situations and other ways of facing reality are addressed, where different "reliable solutions to the problems posed are analyzed through the planned and systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of data" (Munarriz, 1992, p. 102). Thus, this qualitative research allows the construction of knowledge from those who live and participate in the reality of rural education in Cundinamarca. So much so that "they produced descriptive data: from elements such as: people's own words, spoken or written, and observable behavior" (Bogdán, 1984, p. 20). that are influenced by the scenario of violence, poverty and failed or unfinished reforms of which the rural community in Colombia, more specifically in Cundinamarca, has been victim throughout the last years.

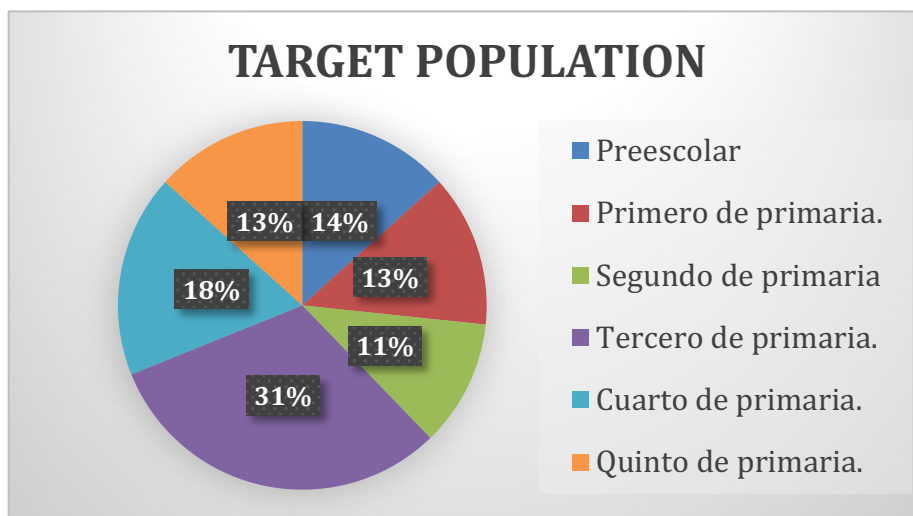
In turn, this type of approach is transcendental in the Colombian educational task, especially in times when the confinement and the return to normal school life due to the pandemic caused by COVID-19 left negative sequels that increased the problems, confrontations and aggressions related to coexistence in rural schools. Incorporating what students say, do and express verbally and non-verbally, allows me as a teacher-researcher to reflect on the teaching work and students on their actions in the educational experience.

The population participating in this study is exclusively from the rural community of the department of Cundinamarca in Colombia, where rurality is estimated at 24%, with

a tendency to increase given the conditions of mobility and job opportunities in the department. The target population is 116 students enrolled in preschool and elementary school at the Divino Salvador Departmental Educational Institution in the municipality of Cucunubá in the department of Cundinamarca. The focus group was composed of 57 students from different academic levels of elementary school and preschool, from two rural sites: La Ramada and El Tablón sites, as shown in Graph 1. These sites were chosen because: they have a high number of students enrolled, they are geographically separated from each other giving greater coverage in the population served and covering the total number of students in the same site allows observing behaviors, attitudes and verbal and non-verbal responses within the implementation of the strategies proposed by the coexistence kit.

**Figure 1**

*Rate of participating students by primary school grade*



### ***Instruments***

The information collected comes from "people's own spoken or written words, the development of the phenomena collected through detailed descriptions of the events observed" (Munarriz, 1992, p. 110), from the following information collection instruments:

#### ***Observation***

Three observation instruments are created that are applicable in three moments of the school day during the execution of the strategies proposed by the coexistence kit; during classes, at break time and on the relationship that students establish with their regular teacher, each instrument has 30 items and two response options 1: it is fulfilled and 2: it is not fulfilled: not met, it should be clarified that recognizing the divergent realities among students, their influence on the physical characterization, the interpersonal traits that refer to their relationship with the family, school and social environment and the emotional traits that describe feelings within the pluralistic interactions and that are applicable in the decisions and attitudes they assume in the coexistence at school from the significance of their personal and cultural identity all this when a conflict occurs, under the themes proposed in the protocols of the kit.

The analysis is performed with the digitalization of the information collected, in a grid designed in Microsoft Excel, which allows the systematization of everything observed during the classes, the break and the teacher-student relationship, each of them is divided into moments within the observation, among which are: beginning and organization of class, development of the kit activity, evaluation of activity and verbal and nonverbal behaviors of the students, based on the analysis provided by the variables that guide the research. The analysis starts from the two possible answers, since the observation is used to recognize whether an item is fulfilled or not, thus extracting precise information for the achievement of the objective.

#### *Semi-structured interview*

The second data collection instrument is the semi-structured interview, which is "a limited and specialized interaction, conducted for a specific purpose and focused on a particular topic" (Deslauriers, 2005, p. 34). It is executed within the process of implementation of the activities designed in the coexistence kit. Within this conversation 11 basic questions are posed, sharing with the students several impressions and attitudes in relation to how they live the concept of community, self-definition and how these two influence within the process of coexistence in the rural school, in their educational formation focused on the construction of identity and the recognition of plurality. Another element that stands out in this dialogue is the impression that students from an early age have about the historical situation that the country is going through due to the armed conflict, violence and poverty, with the need to seek real solutions that prevent rural communities from moving to other places due to the lack of economic, labor and security opportunities that they lost in their place of origin.

The analysis of the information in this phase is carried out with the systematic transcription of the content of the interviews in a grid designed in Microsoft Word that is divided according to the variables of analysis of the objective of the research, the task of transcribing hours and hours of conversations of the students is arduous, but essential in order to have important information that contrasts and complements the data obtained in the other instruments applied.

#### *The pre- and post-questionnaire*

The last instrument was the questionnaire composed of two parts; in the first, all the sociodemographic information is collected and the second is composed of 14 questions designed from the systematic rigidity of the variables as shown in the results, with four Likert-type response options, its applicability is developed in two moments, the first of them was before starting the protocols proposed by the school coexistence kit, and the second at the end of its application. These are used to collect specific and comparative information on relationships, gestures, attitudes and other forms of behavior within the coexistence processes in rural schools, taking into account the Colombian ministerial proposal applied here.

After applying these techniques and analyzing the information collected, it is concluded that in the Colombian rural school there are a series of situations that affect the construction of identity and subsequent recognition of plurality affected to a great extent within the coexistence practices that are developed within the rural school in Cundinamarca.

### ***Instrument validation and reliability process***

The pre and post questionnaire was subjected to an analysis of internal consistency method as named (Bisquerra, 1987; Fox, 1987; Calvo, 1990) where one of the most used coefficients is Cronbach's Alpha which is applied in items with two or more values in the particular case this questionnaire has Likert-type polytomous answers, for this purpose the computer statistical analysis system IBM SPSS Statistics version 2 was used, obtaining a value of 0.905 showing that the internal consistency of the instrument is good with an acceptable reliability, which allowed its application before and after the execution of the coexistence kit.

The observation and the semi-structured interview went through a process of analysis by five expert judges in the area of rural basic education, showing them the instruments and asking them to rate them on a scale of two favorable or unfavorable options, leaving in the same all those who obtained a favorable rating and eliminating those whose merit was unfavorable.

## **Results**

### ***The construction of identity and the recognition of plurality within the rural school in Cundinamarca.***

Colombia has been a Latin American country hit hard by armed violence and social discrepancies, the UN (United Nations Organization) in Colombia in response to this participates in the 2030 Agenda as "a new ethical and programmatic agreement between nations and people to face the challenges of contemporary society" (United Nations Organization [UN], 2018) as a response to the concerns caused by social inequalities, environmental damage and the yearnings for peace in all its dimensions, which is why within this agreement work on the 17 SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) is presented as "a historic opportunity, in which with the termination of the armed conflict can move decisively towards closing the development gaps" (UN, 2018).

Within the framework of this agenda there are 17 objectives, two of which fit perfectly with the research intention of this work, number 4 focused on quality education, where it proposes that Colombia should guarantee an inclusive, equitable and quality education by promoting learning opportunities throughout school life for all, proposing that "at the rural level and even at the departmental level, full coverage and quality education should be achieved, demanding more exhaustive efforts, particularly in peripheral areas, where emphasis should also be placed on a local educational agenda that fosters diversity and the integration of cultural heritage... within the teaching process..." (UN, UNODC) within the teaching process" (UN, 2018). The second objective is number 5, which talks about gender equality, where gender equality is achieved throughout the Colombian territory and empowers all women and girls, from the creation and promotion of safer environments for women who are the population most at risk of suffering violence, in view of this problem we propose strengthening institutional and community capacities in the field with real implementation strategies to mitigate this problem.

Hence the need to apply strategies proposed by the Colombian governmental entities aimed at the fulfillment of the SDGs in Colombia, in the particular case of the School Coexistence Kit designed by the MEN, in response to the need to ensure an inclusive and egalitarian quality education for all Colombians, from where protocols that benefit school coexistence are applied but that will probably manage to transcend to other spheres of socialization, the family and the community.



The rural school in the department of Cundinamarca, Colombia, is the space in which students, through socialization processes, give meaning and resignify their self, from the construction of the other and the us. Sigmund Bauman in his book entitled *Identity* (2006) states that this can be defined as a project, a whole that must be invented instead of discovered, as an identifying element of a series of characteristics that account for what the person is and wants for his or her life.

Sadly, the rural reality in Colombia is being affected by situations of increasing poverty, land destitution and high rates of violence, poverty in the countryside has been increasing to the point of finding indigence in the same, a study conducted by *Semana Magazine* in 2018, says that in the countryside the poor are 65% and the indigent 33%, as a result of decades of neglect and government neglect, the shortage in access to basic needs shows the state of the rural population, reasons why they are forced en masse to leave their places of origin in search of better opportunities.

Thanks to this, the department of Cundinamarca is considered a recipient of the country's migrant population also identified as a floating population, being according to DANE (National Administrative Department of Statistics) one of the 4 departments of the country with the highest levels of migration, sheltering in its territories intercultural processes that enrich political, social, cultural and economic aspects of the communities, but which in turn are affected by the development of power relations, legitimization of violence and poorly resolved conflict, triggering forms of violence that are seen in the school because it is in this place where families converge around the educational process of minors.

The construction of identity is a surrounding process in which interaction, self-determination and empathy with the other, make it seek its definition based on the particular characteristics of its community, so much so that "*to survive, they need to appeal to their own members (...) guarantee their survival through individual choices and individual responsibility for that survival*" (Bauman, 2002, p. 23). This is a cooperative work between the individual and the subjects with whom he/she shares the same context, in this particular case the students of the local rural school, who manage intercultural educational and management processes towards the acceptance of diversity.

Taking into account all of the above, the following are the results of the analysis of the observation, the semi-structured interviews and the pre- and post-questionnaire, all detailed in five variables that account for the objective of this research, in each one three or four guiding questions that are reflected in the three data collection instruments are exposed, only the response graphs of the questionnaires applied are shown, evidencing the veracity of the results.

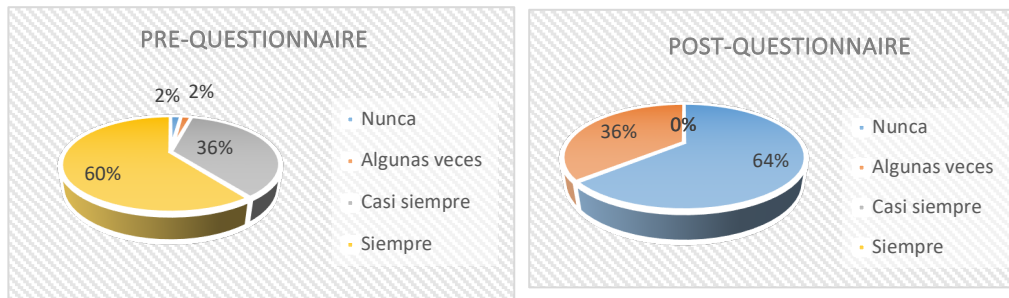
#### *VARIABLE 1: The subject*

Humanity has the need to define its personality from the qualities, defects and characteristics that differentiate it, defining the life plan from the consolidation of the self, there are situations of change between generations that hinder the definition of subject as new technologies, autonomous learning and virtual sociability, which make the experimentation to define it has a number of difficulties in its definition by generational changes we are all experiencing an increasing difficulty to define it, since in the course of sociability in different contexts assume various roles that contravene the definition itself.

Therefore, in rural schools in Cundinamarca, spaces and environments should be created that promote freedom of choice, avoiding from all economic, political, social and educational fronts, manipulating the subjects and imposing identity traits that differ from their own decision.

The first item, have you felt rejected by your schoolmates, reinforces the need to expose how within the socializing processes students conceptualize discrimination and respect for the difference of: race, gender, family, social class as basic elements for the recognition of plurality.

**Figure 2**  
*Comparison of peer rejection*

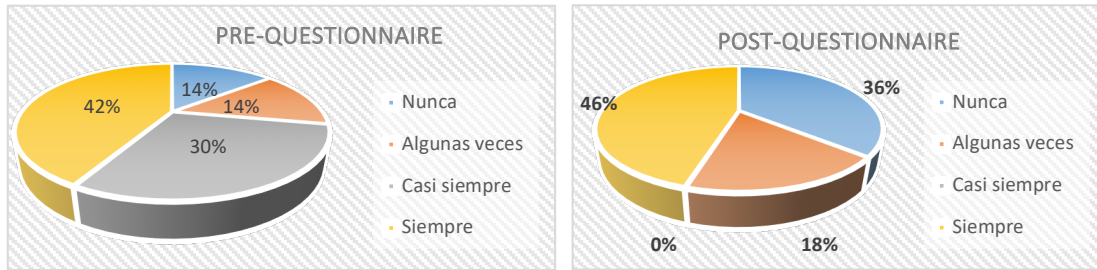


A comparison of the graphs shows an abrupt change between the options chosen. In the pre-questionnaire, 60% of the respondents stated that they were always rejected by their peers, supported by 36% for almost always, leaving 2% for never and sometimes, respectively. In the second one, we can see how the always option was nullified with 0% and never rose substantially with 64%, supported by sometimes with 36%. Thus, it is understood that the application of the kit has a positive effect insofar as it significantly nullifies the perception of rejection among students and allows "identity to be built from acceptance and its particular importance depends on the social context in which it is found and illustrates the need to see the role of choice in a way specifically associated with the context" (Sen, 2007, p. 43).

These assertions are reinforced by the answers obtained during the interview, where the students affirm that rejection has always existed, but that this is given to their weaker classmates, who find it difficult to defend themselves on their own, to which they believe that it is important to defend the weakest from respect and good treatment towards others. Likewise, classroom observations and during breaks showed the behavioral changes that students had during the application of the kit protocols, as evidenced by the fact that their behavior on their own initiative was more resilient towards those who had difficulties in the development of classroom activities or games.

Second item: they use nicknames or nicknames to greet their peers, since, in the semi-structured interview some of the respondents see that this type of words are negative and are used to systematically offend the other, being these words that reinforce the rejection of the existence of the other and damage the recognition of plurality.

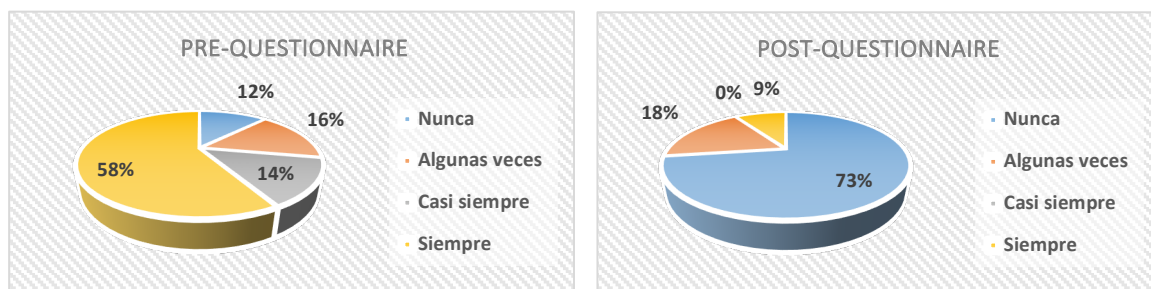
**Figure 3**  
*Use of nicknames or nicknames*



In sum, Figure 2 shows that the identification of each subject in relation to the vision that their peers construct about them, is seen in the use of nicknames or nicknames associated with negative qualifying adjectives or similarities with animals, which hurt the definition of their identity, from the damage to the cultural significance that they bring from their places of origin, feeling rejected by the color of their skin, the shape of their hair, cultural customs, behavior and dialect that they bring learned from their places of origin. In the pre-questionnaire it can be seen that the options always and almost always account for 72% of the total, while in the post-questionnaire graph the always, even though it increased by 46%, the almost always was eliminated, this shows that the students affirm that the offensive and discriminatory nicknames decreased satisfactorily being highly beneficial the kit to delegitimize the use of verbal offenses, the use of the musical pieces that this one proposes is considered as a pedagogical strategy of high applicability, beneficial for the use of positive communicative bonds within the solution of conflicts.

Third item: For fear of being made fun of, you have stopped doing what you like, one of the repetitive results of the class observations were the behaviors of students who showed shame for acting or giving an opinion on a specific topic when the teacher develops the class, in turn, were an incentive to talk about the mockery in the interview, where the answers revolved around the importance given by students to the verbal and nonverbal gestures expressed by their classmates when giving an opinion or exposing a topic in public, leading this research to define how mockery builds a repressed and introverted identity by the decision of another.

**Figure 4**  
*Fear of ridicule*



In relation to free choice and the influence exerted by peers, families, neighbors, Sen (2007) was emphatic in saying that influences are necessary and important in the

construction of a subject's identity, given that they are the line of choice within the subject. In the pre-questionnaire 58% said that they always stopped doing or expressing what they liked for fear of being rejected, 14% almost always, 16% sometimes and only 12% never, the reality of the rural school is highly violent, stigmatizing and excluding, reflecting the identity problems that exist in this context around self-identification.

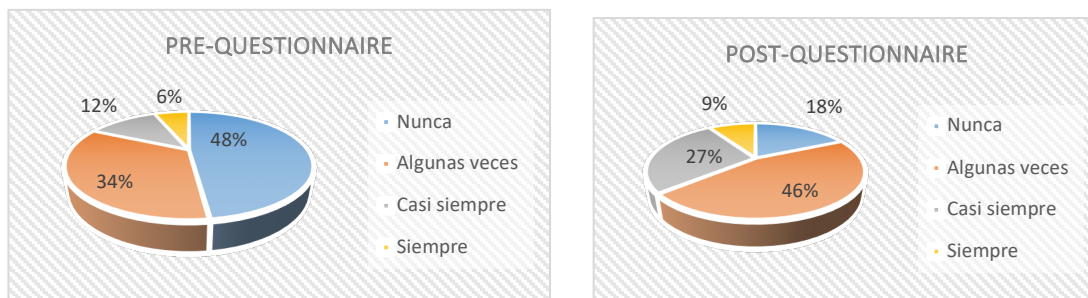
When applying the activities, the discussions and the kit infographics, the situation changed, this is supported by the post-questionnaire, where 73% chose that they never stopped doing the things they liked for fear, 18% sometimes, 9% always and almost always with 0%, it is evident that talking about the issue of the right to identity and plurality, gives them another perspective on the ways of self-definition under their own freedom of decision. Demonstrating with facts that the rural school in Cundinamarca that houses a floating population contributes to the construction of a solid identity to the extent that it uses within its educational process strategies that encourage respect and acceptance of difference without distinction of gender, race or economic condition.

*VARIABLE 2: construction of values*

Within the process of identity construction and in turn the recognition of plurality it is necessary to appeal to the collective and individual conscience of the subjects who live together in a given context, in this particular case; the rural school environment of Cundinamarca, given that there are a number of fundamental elements involved in this process and are called "values that are the behaviors that respond to social changes" (Sen 2007, p.151), because in order to live together, coexist and establish relationships between subjects it is necessary to "respect a code of good conduct... the rules of the social game... respecting personal freedoms" (Touraine, 2012, p.15) which are ultimately the values that are acquired, respected and complied with to recognize the difference, in school contexts are defined as classroom pacts, defined and approved collectively.

Consequently, within the results of the research, three items were defined that clarify this variable, the first one is; classmates listen and respect the opinion of others, defining two fundamental values for the practice of an assertive educational process in the rural school; respect and active listening. Figure 4 shows the abysmal changes in the application of the "adventures to know and take care of myself" primer proposed in the coexistence kit.

**Figure 5**  
*Listening and respect*



Within the process of defining the values required by the subject to participate in positive coexistence processes is respect and active listening. In the pre-questionnaire, 48% never listen, 34% sometimes, 12% sometimes and 6% always, the coexistence problems start from here, generating tense situations where the negative dialogue does not allow a beneficial solution for those involved, massifying the conflict in the school.

When applying the kit, especially the booklet, which talks about values and the importance of loving and valuing oneself for a healthy coexistence, the results were satisfactory, as shown in the graph, where the almost always increased by 27%, the always with 9%, the sometimes 46% and the most gratifying was the never, which decreased by 30%, to 18%. These are encouraging figures, but they require further reinforcement and inclusion in the academic and social processes of rural schools in Cundinamarca Cundinamarca.

This demonstrates that one of the activities proposed by the kit responds truthfully to the need expressed by the students in the interview, where when asked about how they perceive listening within the coexistence, they stated that it demands more attention in the way they talk among students because the problems are generated because those involved do not listen to each other but attack each other with words that offend and hurt those involved. In addition to the above, there are the results of the observations, which highlight the raised tone of voice that those who participate in conflict situations should have, which evidences the lack of listening within the socialization among students.

The second item is; the second item is: **“among peers obedience is demanded”**, as a sign of the legitimization of vertical power of which students are victims from an early age, being evidence of the feeling of acting under stimuli of manipulation among students, when analyzing the information in the observation within the break it is seen how from the free play the students identified as leaders manage the rules as they wish and the others accept them as true, many times without objecting to them, in the same way, when asking the question in the interview, answers were found that reaffirm the existence of these behaviors that destroy the freedom of choice within the identity processes.

**Figure 6**  
*Freedom*

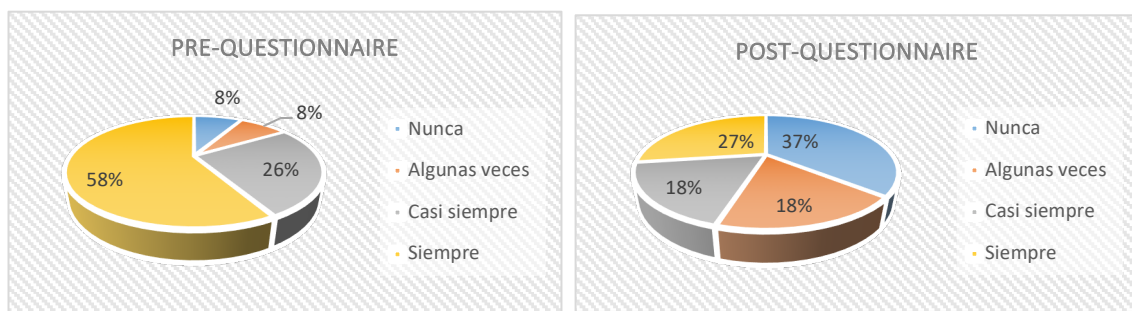


Figure 5 shows how another of the values prioritized in this process is freedom Appiah (2007) says that a person possesses a reasonable amount of common sense and experience, which allows him/her to choose freely in the exercise of autonomy.

When observing the graphs of the application of the kit, it can be inferred that the obligatory nature of school behavior is highly marked by the imposition of power; students recognize that socializing is difficult when the majority groups are not listened to; this is supported by the fact that 58% of respondents say that obedience is always demanded and 26% almost always. The second graph shows a change, given that the options always decreased by 31%, almost always by 8%, sometimes by 19% and never by 29%, these last two are comforting figures, insofar as they refer to the exercise of autonomy of decision within the students' behaviors, which strengthens the values of self and others within their capacity for observation, reasoning and social justice, because as

Sen (2007) clarifies that each subject has the capacity to think clearly about the identity options he/she has.

The third and last item of this variable is; have you helped or defended who your peers have bothered. It was essential to create a statement that analyzes positive attitudes and decisions in the face of situations of rejection, mockery or discrimination at school.

**Figure 7**  
*Solidarity and empathy*

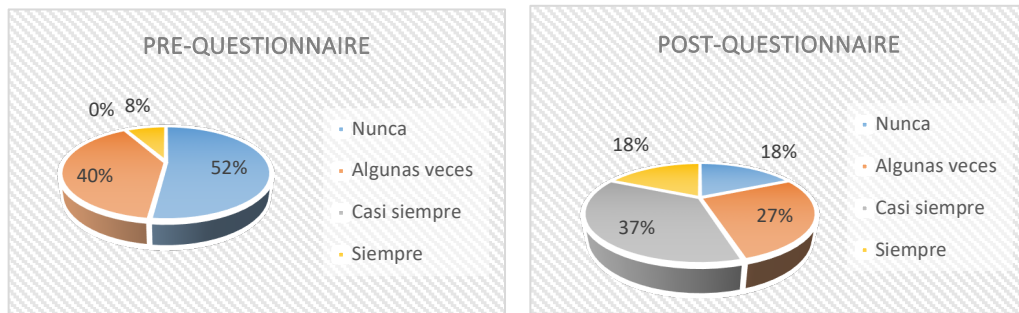


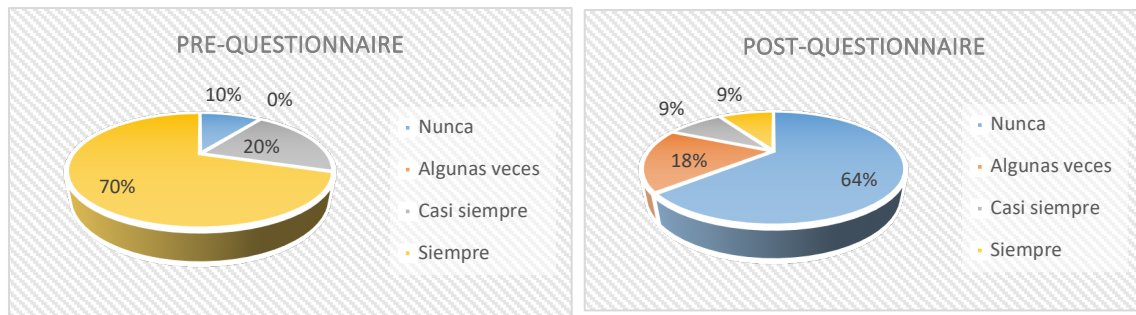
Figure 6 is evidence of the lack of solidarity and empathy - as reinforcement values in the construction of identity - among students, 52% have never defended or helped a classmate, 40% sometimes and 8% always, these last two percentages are the hope for coexistence, because it is required to intensify this action so that it can transcend to other spheres of life. The second graph shows that the activities applied and socialized with the student community had a positive effect, encouraging to continue working on strategies to improve school coexistence that mitigate situations of discrimination, given its condition as a center of diverse cultures and in the process of building their identities, because never obtained 18%, sometimes 27%, almost always 37% and always 18%, as a whole show that the group solidarity improved notoriously, the decisions and ways of acting of the students have respect for the other, the search for justice and good treatment among classmates.

*VARIABLE 3: language.*

Language is a fundamental element for the construction of identity, given its importance as a universal instrument in the establishment of social relations, therefore, that identities must allow to fit their narrative links, expanding their coverage and allowing the entry to those who so decide and respecting those who do not share it. In a rural school context, language is a fully social instrument from which positive and negative social relations are generated at the same time, with the use of verbal and nonverbal communicative tools, students have a high capacity to establish or break bonds through looks, gestural movements and the use of colloquial words, which strengthen or weaken their relationships with others. Anthony Appiah (2007), who in his book: *The ethics of identity* sought to recognize the importance of tradition within the discourse that arises around identity, he says that: this tradition more than a doctrinal body is a set of debates that ultimately form one and legitimize a form of political, social and cultural life, which in the end help the subject to define and retake what forms of life are good or bad.

From this, three items of analysis were chosen within the research, the first of which is: Your peers use foul language to address peers, where Figure 7 shows the change between the use of these words, from the application of the protocols and the musical pieces in the kit.

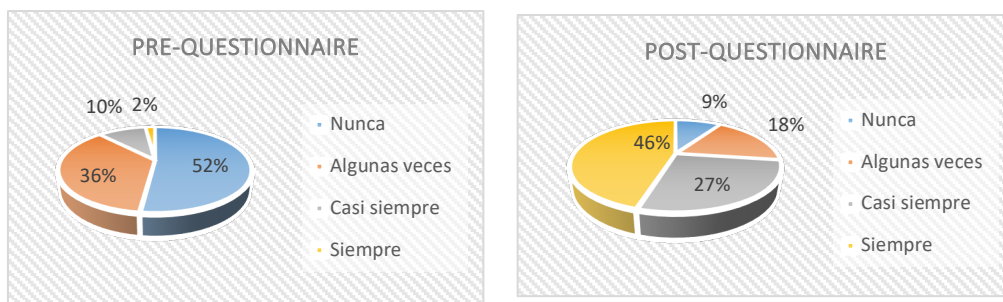
**Figure 8**  
*Profanity*



The communicative processes at school are affected by the use of negative, foul or insulting words towards others, especially towards women. Appiah (2007) affirms that within the construction of identity an important role is given to the cultural discourse that is transmitted from past generations. In the first graph, it can be seen how communication among students is permeated by the continuous use of foul language, 70% have always seen how their classmates use these words, and 20% almost always, but 10% have never seen them used at school, opinions that are ratified with the results obtained in the classroom and break observations and the testimonies of the interviews to the extent that they become forms of response within conflicts or even more worrying, they are words legitimized as signs of affection from the greeting. Applying the kit and using the audiobooks, which are literary works that aim to promote the proper use of language, reinforcing the importance of using positive words, had beneficial effects as shown in the post graph, where never increased to 64%, sometimes 18% and decreased notoriously the almost always and always with 9% respectively, showing that the student community has reflected on the use and effects.

Figure 8 explains the results obtained in item 2: Messages on TV, radio or cell phones have taught you words that disrespect others.

**Figure 8**  
*Media and communications*



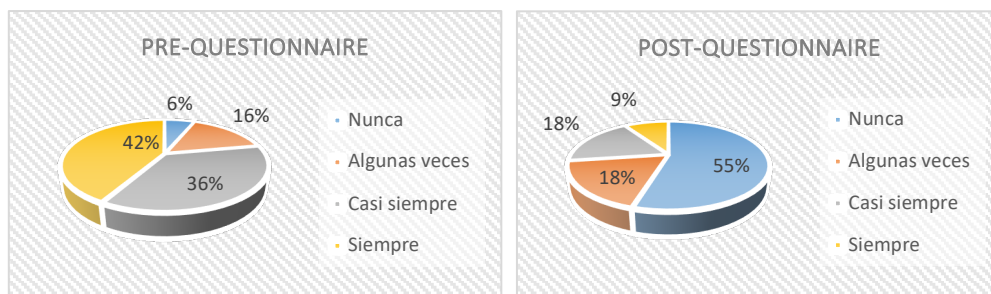
For Tourine (2012) opinion movements are massified through radio, tv and cell phones, he says that the media exert a high influence on the opinion, decision and action of subjects. In the pre-questionnaire 52% consider that the messages given by the media to which they have access never teach messages about mockery towards the other and 36% say that sometimes, these figures are ratified by the opinion of the interviewees.

By applying the kit's infographics, which are a series of protocols whose purpose was to guide against the pedagogical approach and management of situations in which some rights of children and young people are violated in various environments in which they develop their lives, with the aim of providing guidelines for action against different situations that affect coexistence, it was possible to identify various types of violence that can occur within the school, around issues such as prevention of PAS consumption, suicide prevention, prevention of gender-based violence, prevention of xenophobia, prevention of racism and cyberbullying and crimes in digital media.

The impact, concreteness and clarity of the protocols of the infographic, allowed to change the way of identifying the messages that the media give to their public, discovering that definitely if they emit information that sometimes propitiates the mockery to others, in the second graph 42% say always and 27% almost always, being the majority that observes and listens to the messages with greater criticism and analysis, discovering information that does not benefit self-esteem and damages coexistence in the rural school, because students as subjects must survive or fight against this affirmation that says that "we no longer know who we are... given the repressive weight exerted on us by prohibitions, the law... those mass cultures or authoritarian communities" (Tourine, 2012, p. 64).

The last item of this variable is: You have rejected or mocked anyone who speaks differently from you. When observing Figure 9, there is a drastic change between one and the other, in some options there are significant variations, as in the case of the never option, which goes from 6% to 55% in the other, the always option, which in the first one is at 42% and in the second one is at 9%, and the almost always option, which started with 36% and was reduced to 18%. When examining the results as a whole, there is an important change of choice, given the reflection that has arisen from the application of the kit, where the damage caused by mockery and discrimination against differences within the framework of school coexistence has become visible. In turn, in the classroom observations and the teacher-student relationship it can be seen that the execution of the kit achieves a "positive and constructive significance, where people tend to ascribe to a shared history a collective meaning ...thanks to language and interaction with an equal other" (Sen, 2007, p. 43).

**Figure 9**  
*Teasing for the forms of communication*



**VARIABLE 4: social relations**

The community and culture determine the social relations established within a collective, under patterns of thought and behavior viable for the survival of the subjects that coexist, it is necessary and urgent to recognize that "it is not possible to invoke any



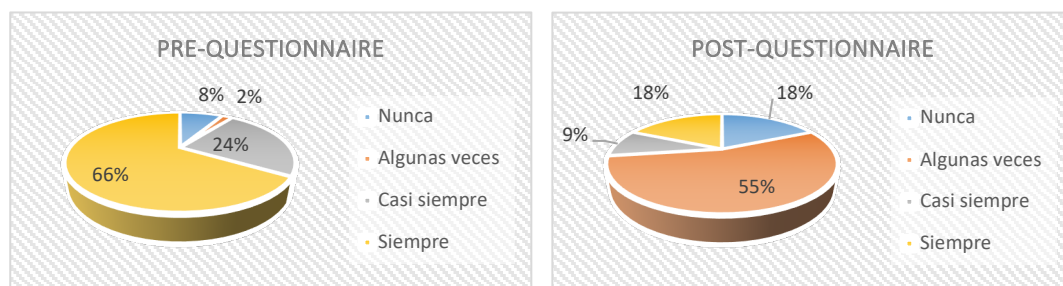
criterion of rational conduct different from those prevailing in the community to which the person involved belongs" (Sen, 2007, p. 62) and these are given from the possibility of exchange of actions and understanding between cultures, for the consolidation of identity.

This leads us to think that the de-socialization of mass culture gives priority to values over technique, to innovation over tradition, to I over we, which is reflected in the way of assuming conflictive situations where individualization and the non-acceptance of different decisions detonates in violence and aggressive behaviors harmful to the members, based on this, three items of analysis are defined and explained below.

The first of these is: When work groups are imposed, the participation of a classmate is rejected, exemplified in Figure 10, shows that the rural school in Cundinamarca is an educational context conducive to the consolidation of social relations, where the student is a particular subject with the need to interact with the world around him. Tourine (2012) said that a regular order is not only the general imposition, but it is a principle of non-social equality, referring to the respect for difference within a social context with particularities that account for the importance of relating to others in order to survive in the world. This equality referred to by the author is seen at school when students are grouped together to perform a specific task. Looking at graph one, 66% accept that when working groups are imposed, i.e., chosen at random or by the head teacher, there are rejections in the integration of others, also supported by the testimonies of the interviewees who express dissatisfaction for not working as a team with their closest friends or colleagues, 24% say that almost always, 2% sometimes and 8% never. Demonstrating that rejection in school marks relationships, so that even the assignment of a homework does not establish a healthy coexistence.

When executing the school coexistence kit, three infographics were found that are related to social interaction: prevention of xenophobia, prevention of racism and prevention of gender-based violence, three situations that are established to sensitize the community about these naturalized phenomena and their impact within the school. By executing their action routes, positive results were obtained, such as the 48% reduction in the option of always rejecting colleagues in the imposed conformation of work groups, while the observation made after the execution of these infographics reveals that the behavioral changes for working without distinction of affinity were positive, permissible and executable for teamwork.

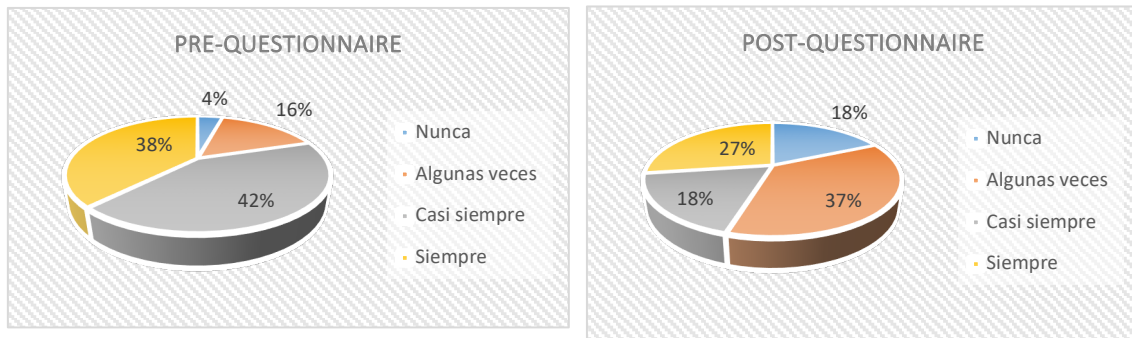
**Figure 10**  
*Rejection within the group work*



The second item is that there are conflicts between boys and girls, which is explained from the observations of rest and development of the class, from where it is seen that gender relations have taken as an example that there is a visible and real female

empowerment within the rural school, girls want from their behaviors to claim their role in the educational process, allowing greater participation, legitimization of power and leadership in group activities, in Figure 11, significant and positive changes are seen in this situation.

**Figure 11**  
*Gender relations*



At this point, the situation of gender relations in the rural school in Cundinamarca, takes power and shows the impact of the kit, where in the pre-questionnaire 38% of respondents say that there are always conflicts between boys and girls and 42% almost always, 16% sometimes and only 4% never, in the classroom there is damage to the imaginary of gender equality, girls are being victims of aggression, mockery and damage to their identity, figures that are corroborated by classroom observations and impressions gathered in the interviews.

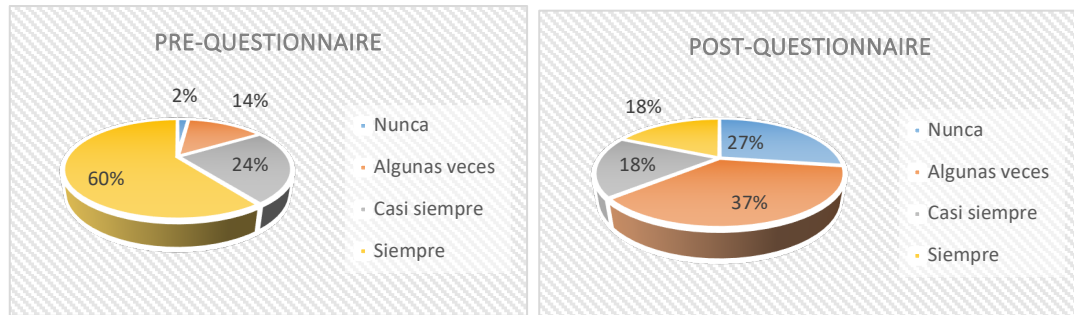
When the coexistence kit, the infographic on the topic and the booklet Adventures to know and take care of myself were applied, the situation changed, not drastically but the figures did vary, the conflict rates dropped in the options always with 27% and almost always 18%, and increased the option sometimes with 37% and 18% with never, which concludes that even when the topic of gender inequity and violence was worked on, the spectrum of the situation is still very broad, violence exists, and so do negative behaviors and forms of communication towards women. Therefore, it is recommended to continue working, reinforcing and enriching respect for women and their inclusion in all decisions in the school sphere, creating in them the power to define themselves, and from the male and female behavior, allowing them to open the field to the need for equal and respectful treatment for both genders.

The third and last item of this variable is: have been threatened by some situation that occurs at school, when analyzing Figure 12, it is ratified what was said before about the damages and affectations to minorities within the educational context, 60% have always seen how they are threatened at school, 24% almost always, 14% sometimes and 2% never, descriptive and justifiable figures on the high indexes of violence in the rural school given its condition of intercultural focus where migrant families from all over the country circulate, during the process of rest observation, in situations where the immediate presence of the authority figure was not present, forms of rejection of students with different traits were identified, such as new students in the school and girls who wish to play with the boys.

What gives hope for change in this situation is the application of pedagogical strategies that have a direct impact on coexistence in the school, an example of this is the school kit, because, as can be seen after its real and conscious implementation, the results changed, the options of always and almost always dropped to 18%, sometimes increased

to 37% and never to 27%, comforting figures for the teaching profession, because it is possible to reduce the inequality gaps in Colombia.

**Figure 12**  
*Threats within gender relations*



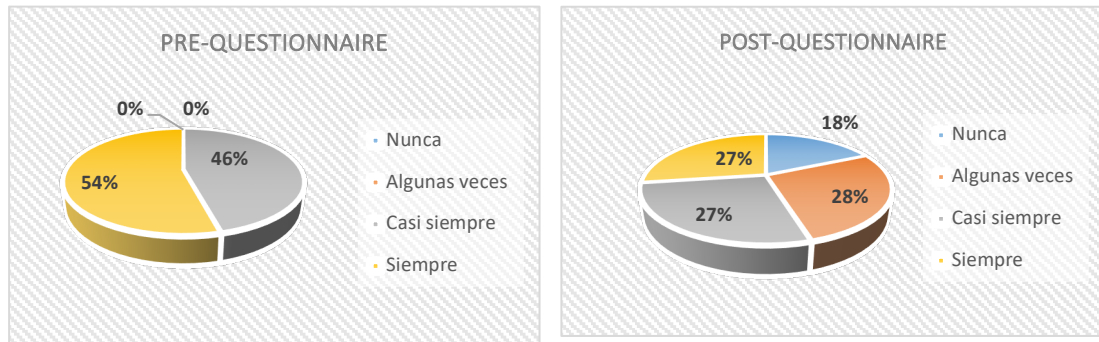
**VARIABLE 5: culture and diversity**

Culture in today's world has undergone a drastic change, where "it makes us live together to the extent that we make the same gestures and use the same objects, but without being able to communicate with each other beyond the exchange of modern signs" (Tourine, 2012, p.9)) that is to say, that the cultural identity that today is gestated among humanity is mediatic, changeable and fickle, that is to say, it depends on the place, the need and the people with whom the adopted meaning is related, the role of the state, religion, ethnicity, of those sovereignties legitimized through the transfer from generation to generation is lost, now the identity affinities depend on the behavioral accelerations of the subjects.

The first item is: in class they are forced to perform prayers or songs they do not agree with. culture and its meanings are nourished by inheritances that appeal to traditions transmitted from generation to generation, which mark decisions, characteristics and behaviors according to self-identification and how it is articulated with differentiation. But within this process of homogenization in the cultural tradition, religion no longer plays a decisive role in the educational process, but particular situations of imposition of beliefs in the school can still be seen.

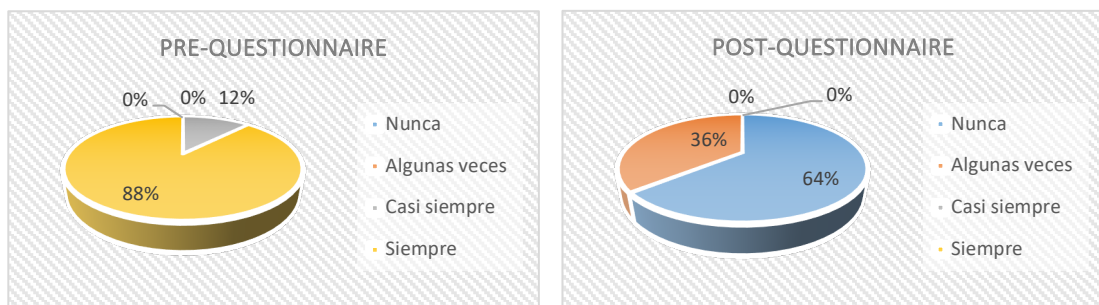
Talking about the acceptance of difference, freedom of expression, self-acceptance, and recognition of one's own and the other, from the practical strategies proposed by the kit generated highly positive effects for the student community, this is ratified in Figure 13, because going from 54% of students who see that religious songs and prayers are always being imposed in the first graph to 27% in the second graph, this is not because they have been eliminated from the school, but because it gives freedom to each student to choose whether to take part in these practices or not, leaving without execution time impositions that do not nurture the recognition of plurality from a healthy construction of identity. Another result that supports the success of the kit in terms of respect for difference were the classroom observations and the teacher-student relationship, which show the freedom of choice that began to take hold in the classroom.

**Figure 13**  
*Imposition of customs*



the second item is: there is rejection for those who have learning problems or difficulties with class tasks or activities, as a form of rejection of the difference to the annulment of minorities, around the recognition of plurality.

**Figure 14**  
*Rejection of the difference*

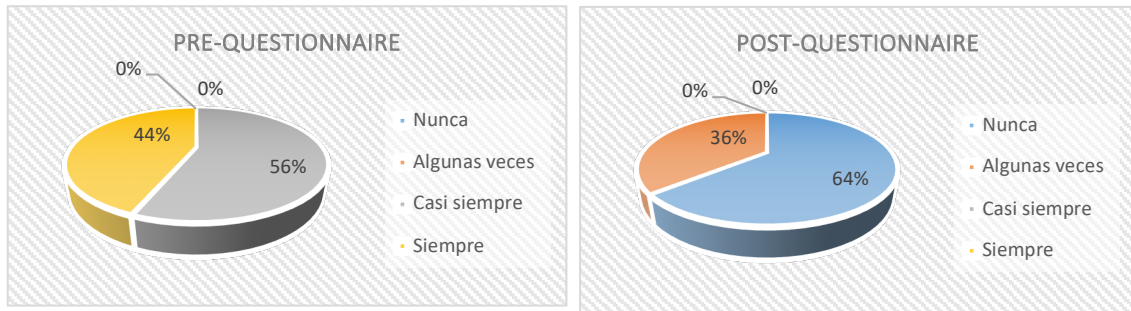


Tourine (2012) says that there is a cultural change when the system and the subjects are de-modernized, weakening codifying norms that standardize the community of those who are part of it, doing this in the reality of a rural educational community, allows to see if the acceptance of the difference is executed or on the contrary those who do not meet the established standards are excluded.

Rejection is seen from several fronts, one of them is the differentiation of intellectual abilities, in the first graph 88% have seen how students reject each other because of intellectual differences, their academic abilities determine whether they are accepted or not, the lower the ability the lower the acceptance and conversely the higher the ability the more accepted, a situation that again leaves minorities at a disadvantage within the circle of relationship building. But looking at graph two, we can see the effectiveness of the coexistence kit, because 64% never saw rejection towards those who present learning problems, building the first bonds of empathy and sorority within the rural community, and it is evident in the testimonies collected, where when asked about these situations the students reflected and showed ideas of empathy towards their peers.

The last item of analysis is peers mocking or isolating those who have different accents or cultural expressions. Lapresta (2004) asserts that in the social world there is a type of identity construction where the traditional axes are characterized by defending at all costs their cultural, religious, political, or economic traits called community values.

**Figure 15**  
*Cultural rejection*



Within the world of diversity it is healthy to have pluralistic attitudes, where no paradigm or cultural thought pretends to be unique and homogenizing. Figure 15, reinforced by the testimonies and observations, shows that it is permissible to think that it is possible within an educational context to accept the difference of cultures, from the work of recognizing them, the forms of communication can become cumbersome due to the use of particular terms and expressions, but learning from them, allows their recognition and value.

When comparing the figures, it can be seen how the kit is beneficial to achieve this objective, because in the first graph 44% always see how students make fun of each other for their linguistic expressions and 56% almost always, but when looking at the second graph the situation of respect changed, 64% never saw this type of rejection again and 36% sometimes, notoriously reducing the rates of mockery and non-acceptance towards the difference.

Undoubtedly, the coexistence kit proposed by the Ministry of National Education is a pedagogical strategy that has a positive impact on school coexistence in rural schools in Cundinamarca. The process of identity building and subsequent recognition of plurality must be based on the consolidation of forms of communication with a diversely accepted language and the formation of social values that solidify respect for difference.

## **Discussion and conclusions**

Social groups -communities- transmit values, customs, worldviews and ways of relating that shape the way students are building their identity according to the context in which they develop, known as their cultural identity "the rules, norms, forms of behavior and ways of being, as well as the relationships that arise in this interaction both with others and with their environment, are inherited by the culture in which a subject develops" (Arrona, 2012, p. 39), this is done through socialization processes that are given from the family and executed in other social spheres, which lead to the rural school and is manifested through behaviors, gestures and forms of communication marked by the difference between their peers.

In the rural school in Cundinamarca, socialization processes based on aggression, gender violence, mockery and the naturalized use of negative words were developed among minors, directly affecting the process of building their identity and the recognition of plurality, generating spaces that affected the academic and behavioral educational processes and increasing inequality among students, to the point of requiring a

pedagogical intervention to mitigate these problems and allow them to reflect on negative behaviors and broaden the spectrum of their actions.

The Ministry of National Education launched the toolkit for the promotion of school coexistence and prevention of abuse, as a strategy that intervenes themes from gender relations, language, community ties and respect for cultural difference, to put it into practice in the rural school cundinamarqués, beneficial results were obtained for the improvement of coexistence, academic and behavioral performance of students, therefore, from the results of this research, it is proposed its application in other institutions of rural or urban character not only of the department of Cundinamarca but of the country in general, the activities, protocols, the booklet "adventures to know and take care of myself" and the musical pieces are designed for the different political, cultural and economic contexts that exist in the country, since Colombia has a conflictive history, in which to promote the construction of the solid and conscious identity will allow not only the cultural independence but also the construction of a community for peace.

It is necessary to generate spaces for the construction of identity, free and decisive, because as demonstrated by the results of the application of the coexistence kit, class observations and student testimonies, in Cundinamarca there are diverse communities with unique identities, migrants from other parts of the country, who require monitoring and coexistence guidelines that allow them to promote respect and appreciation of the culture from their self-definition and recognition of the other as different. The rural school of Cundinamarca, a place of agglomeration of students with particular characteristics, should guide educational processes from the assertive use of language, the practice of values, the establishment of positive social relations and assertive gender relations, being agents of empowerment, inclusion and equity.

Socialization among peers is mediated by the respect of doing and being of each subject, the freedoms of expression and the forms of recognition of the other are permeated by social values where the subjects are recognized as different, but with equal treatment, this ideal is achieved to the extent that a joint work is executed among the members of an educational community, nothing is achieved with individual work, it requires a collective work where the rural educational institution has greater recognition before the governmental entities, where, from the field, bases are laid for the achievement of the peace community that the country is looking for.

In the rural school of Cundinamarca, a curricular intervention is required in the short term to focus the educational process towards the prioritization of school coexistence, with educational models of academic impact focused on the socialization of students, reinforcing emotional intelligence and its projection to today's world, where an environment of freedom is generated for the construction of their identity and the recognition of plurality.

The toolkit for the promotion of school coexistence and prevention of mistreatment, if it meets its objective, has a positive effect by "implementing pedagogical and social mobilization strategies to strengthen school coexistence..." Vargas (2020, p. 2) for being a dynamic intervention tool that provides general guidelines of greater clarity to act and prevent situations of violence that damage sociability in rural schools, allowing an effective intervention within the process of identity building and subsequent recognition of plurality, but it requires further work, where other members of the educational community of public education are involved so that its effects have greater coverage.

The fact that the community is a floating one is considered a limitation insofar as students are arriving to the rural sites throughout the school periods, which disorganizes

the line of work, because a contextualization of the activities to be carried out is required, delaying the execution time, another limitation is the lack of previous research on the specific topic of the relationship between the construction of identity, the recognition of plurality developed within the coexistence process in a rural educational context, leaving as a recommendation that in Colombia spaces are generated for the recognition of culture and the construction of community within rural schools.

Finally, the hypothesis raised in this research process is fulfilled since positive school coexistence has a decisive influence on the construction of identity and recognition of plurality within the rural school coexistence in Cundinamarca, because the results of the analysis of the information showed changes in behavior, attitude and forms of communication among students, demonstrating that it is possible to educate from the conscience of self-recognition and respect to the difference, which will allow thinking that the kit has an impact not only in school but also in the family because the students can ratify or exemplify what they have learned at school in their homes, it is worth mentioning that this is an assertion that opens the doors to future investigations.

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