

## Incidence of School Discrimination in the Coexistence of the Students of the Educational Institution

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### Abstract

School discrimination is an issue that affects the integral development of students, in this sense, a research will be conducted to identify discriminatory practices that occur in the students of the I.E. Cisneros of the municipality of Cisneros (Antioquia), through a contextual analysis to determine their causes, their factors and thereby design an intervention strategy to reduce cases of school discrimination and thus improve coexistence in the institution. Action research as a method, has had to gain space in the academic and scientific community, a space that has been winning over the strict scientific method and the positivist paradigm. This research is qualitative in nature and the type of study is action research. The qualitative approach and action research were selected because they allow us to approach the school reality in a way that facilitates understanding the context and describing the real processes from the participants' perspectives; also because it is more appropriate to have access to the world of other people's lives in a short time.

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Interviews were conducted with two focus groups (students and teachers) from which the emerging categories are extracted.

**Keyword:** Discrimination, social skills, social inclusion, educational inclusion, school coexistence, participatory action research.

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## Incidencia de la Discriminación Escolar en la Convivencia de los Estudiantes de la Institución Educativa

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### Resumen

La discriminación escolar es un tema que afecta el desarrollo integral de los estudiantes, en este sentido, se realizará una investigación para identificar las prácticas discriminatorias que se presentan en los estudiantes de la I.E. Cisneros del municipio de Cisneros (Antioquia), por medio de un análisis contextual que permita determinar sus causas, sus factores y con ello diseñar una estrategia de intervención para disminuir los casos de discriminación escolar y así mejorar la convivencia en la institución. La investigación acción cómo método, ha tenido que irse ganando espacio en la comunidad académica y científica espacio que ha venido ganándole al método científico estricto y el paradigma positivista. Esta investigación es de carácter cualitativo y el tipo de estudio es investigación acción. Se selecciono el enfoque cualitativo y la investigación acción, pues nos permiten aproximarnos a la realidad escolar, de un modo tal que facilita comprender el contexto y describir los procesos reales desde las perspectivas de los participantes; también porque resulta más apropiado para tener acceso al mundo de la vida de otras personas en breve tiempo. Se realizaron entrevistas a dos grupos focales (estudiantes y docentes) de las cuales se extraen las categorías emergentes.

**Palabra clave:** Discriminación, habilidades sociales, inclusión social, inclusión educativa, convivencia escolar, investigación acción participativa

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## INTRODUCTION

The school is a space of coexistence that is not exempt from the phenomenon of discrimination, where a diversity of individuals that make up the educational community coexist, who establish among them a network of relationships that in addition to knowledge and skills also promote norms, values, attitudes and practices, many of which are shaped by prejudices and stereotypes that favor discriminatory attitudes. According to Milicic, Alcalay, Berger and Alamos, (2013). Cited by Arias, Rengifo and Lizcano (2022). From the national level and according to studies conducted, it could be deduced that students with weak social skills present greater difficulty in socializing with peers and teachers, so they find it difficult to behave and have poor academic performance.

In this sense, the dynamics of school coexistence presents several challenges, mainly because in the context of secondary education, adolescence, as a stage of development, is associated with difficulties in physical, social and psychological development that generate tensions in aspects related to self-esteem, independence, limit management, communication, aggressiveness, sexuality, among others (García, Pérez, & Hernández, 2013), which generates tensions that have a significant influence on school coexistence, with discrimination as one of the main problems.

In the educational context, discrimination has been known to intrude, from racial segregation for several decades with exclusive schools for whites and blacks, as well as with the different forms of

restriction in access to education for women, people with disabilities and other population groups.

The phenomenon of discrimination is also linked to pedagogical policies and practices that prioritize other aspects of training, leaving aside the holistic construction of the human being, as expressed by Cruz, Zapata, Ruiz and Morales (2021) "...occurs due to the decontextualization of contents to which their educational curricula are linked, since it leaves aside an integrality between a globalized world, which requires the learning of a foreign language and ICT".

In a much more specific context, in the Cisneros educational institution, through the review of cases of school aggression among peers, disciplinary processes and school guidance, observation of the usual dynamics at break times, among other sources, different manifestations of discrimination that permeate the harmonious coexistence among the different members of the educational community are perceived; Machismo as a model of upbringing associated with toxic masculinities where violence and the imposition of the strongest prevail, as well as homophobic, racist and xenophobic attitudes externalized through jokes and insults, are some of them.

As a contribution to the solution of this problem, this project aims to carry out a process of identification of the types of discrimination, the causes and factors that generate discrimination practices in the Cisneros Educational Institution of the Municipality of Cisneros, based on the above, to design tools to mitigate the cases of discrimination that occur in the institution.

All this seeks to translate into the implementation of an intervention strategy to reduce cases of school discrimination and thus improve coexistence in the institution and that can be used as a reference to

other similar contexts in which realities such as the one described are present. Recalling that the implementation of these strategies is a team work formed by various members of the educational community and led by the rector.

or director, with the definition of responsibilities, as well as the organization of tasks and the establishment of times and deadlines for carrying them out (MEN, 2008, p. 32). Cited by Sánchez (2022).

Designing educational proposals through perspective studies allows educational entities seen as engines of social transformation to respond to the needs of a changing world having the possibility to diversify and choose the most relevant and appropriate format according to the trends around the world of learning, interacting with this information and making the processes more accessible and usable, constantly interacting with the world and not only with the local context provides the possibility to deepen concepts and claims of the world around us. Guaqueta (2021).

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research is qualitative in nature and the type of study is action research. The qualitative approach and action research were selected because they allow approaching the school reality in a way that facilitates understanding the context and describing the real processes from the participants' perspectives; also because it is more appropriate to have access to the world of other people's lives in a short time.

In order to define qualitative research, the contributions of different authors are presented below:

Ruiz (2012) defines it as the "set of interpretative practices, used by social researchers, where the use of words, descriptions and stories

is privileged, becoming a first level resource for approaching a reality". Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2014) indicate that "it focuses on understanding phenomena, exploring them from the perspective of the participants in a natural environment and in relation to their context" (p. 358).

The design of a qualitative research is characterized by being flexible, interactive, dialectical and reflexive. A qualitative scientific work: takes care of the ways of approaching reality; is capable of distinguishing these ways of approaching and explaining them; obtains information and exposes it in a systematized, clear, coherent and argued way, then we speak of a work of greater complexity and that possesses, due to its features, scientific character (Guerrero and Guerrero, 2014, p. 48).

It can be concluded, that qualitative research is oriented to the in-depth study of social realities, "it is interested in accessing experiences, interactions and documents in their natural context and in a way that leaves room for the particularities of those experiences, interactions and documents and of the materials in which they are studied" (Gibbs, 2012, p. 14).

The term action research comes from the author Kurt Lewis and was first used in 1944. It described a form of research that could combine the experimental approach of social science with social action programs that responded to the major social problems of the day. Through action research, Lewis argued that theoretical advances and social change could be achieved simultaneously.

According to Chávez and Trias (2016), the essential purpose of action research is to analyze the information about the events that occur around, so that the members that are part of the group can examine the planned activities, and thus reflect on these, in order to find solutions to the problems and establish transformations that

contribute to the common welfare. In other words, people are the main agent, an active and intellectual part of the knowledge production process, searching for their reality in order to transform it. This collaborative work requires that the community under study participates in the decisions of the research process, being able to review different aspects of the project as many times as necessary as it progresses.

Therefore, action research is a methodology that, rather than focusing on generating knowledge about a reality, opens up questions, constitutes a reflective, systematic, controlled and critical approach, which is developed in a cyclical manner, and has an expressly practical purpose. In such a way that it not only allows the expansion of knowledge, but also provides concrete answers to the problem situations posed by the research participants, who in turn are co-researchers who actively participate in each stage of the research process.

The methodology oriented by Hernández, R., Fernández, C. and Baptista, P. (2014) will be taken into account, the object of study and research design, of non-experimental - transectional - descriptive type, which aims to investigate the incidence of the modalities or levels of one or more variables in a population. The procedure consists of locating a group of people or other living beings, objects, situations, contexts, phenomena, communities, etc., in one or several variables and providing their description" (p 155).

Non-experimental design-Transectional-Descriptive. That is to say, it will describe how they have occurred in the context without any type of manipulation since they are facts that already exist, specifying their specific features and characteristics to be analyzed later.

According to information from the National Information System of Basic and High School Education (SINEB), there are 1280 students at the Cisneros Educational Institution, distributed in 3 urban sites at the elementary and middle school levels, with a teaching staff of 67 educators at the levels described above. Each student has a registered guardian who may be his or her father, mother or a relative of legal age, who in some way influences and supports his or her academic development; in some particular cases, older students may be their own guardians.

It should be noted that most of these students and their families depend heavily on the agricultural sector, being directly or indirectly related to agricultural production and on the informal economy, with low income and unsatisfied basic needs, in addition to those social determinants (educational, social, economic and cultural) that influence the context in which they live and their lifestyles.

Taken from Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2014) who point out that the sample can be constituted as a group of people, events, occurrences or communities from which data will be collected, without them necessarily representing the universe or population to be studied. Since the purpose of the research is not generalization, the type of sampling is non-probabilistic by convenience, "In non-probabilistic samples, the choice of the elements does not depend on probability, but on causes related to the characteristics of the research or the researcher's purposes (Johnson, 2014, Hernández-Sampieri et al., 2014 and Battaglia, 2008b) and by convenience, it allows selecting those accessible cases that accept to be included. This, based on the convenient accessibility and proximity of the subjects for the researcher (Tamara and Manterola, 2017).



In the case of the students, a sample of 15 male and female students has been randomly selected, consisting of 5 elementary school students, 5 high school students and 5 middle school students, ranging from 10 to 18 years old, considering that within this age range they can handle the virtual instruments that will be used for the collection of information. Regarding teachers, it is important to consider their role within the processes of construction of imaginaries within the school, since they are referents of authority and knowledge in most of the cases, their presence as participants in this research process is more than justifiable; therefore, out of the total of 67 teachers, a sample of 5 teachers between elementary and middle school has been chosen.

Finally, as already explained, the role of parents, guardians and caregivers is based on their role as influencers in the students' thinking structures from home, the sample size in this case remains the same as the number of students considering the application of the data collection instruments to one guardian per student.

Type of interview: In-depth interview, this technique will serve within the process, since it will induce a qualitative analysis, not segmented or structured, on the contrary, flexible. "It consists of an informal conversation between the researcher and the informant. Even though there should be a guide of questions or topics to be discussed, the dialogue is not restricted and often the course of the interview depends on the informant's answers. In order to carry out an investigation with this type of technique, it is necessary to make a careful selection of the people to be interviewed, focusing on key informants who may be formal or informal representatives of social groups and whose opinions reflect to a certain extent the thinking of the group to which they belong. This type of interview is generally carried out with a small sample, since the time required to carry it out makes a survey of the population in general

impossible, in addition to the fact that due to the amount of information and the limited capacity to codify it, its systematization in large volumes is almost impossible". (De la Peña, Ricardo and Toledo Guardia, Rosario, 1997, p 100 - 101).

The interview is included, like the survey, within the group of techniques known as conversational. The qualitative interview can be defined as a conversation:

- -Interviewer-initiated
- -Performed on subjects selected on the basis of a research plan.
- -In a considerable number
- -that it has a cognitive purpose
- -Guided by the interviewer

With a flexible and non-standardized questioning scheme (Corbetta, 2007, p 344).

In the questionnaire made by the researcher, the questions asked were semi-structured, open-ended, informative, flexible, without restrictive dialogue, spontaneous according to the development of the interviewee's answers.

The variables to be taken into account are based around the Categories:

- -School Discrimination
- -Social Inclusion
- -School Coexistence
- -Educational Inclusion

In the case of the students, a sample of 5 male and female students randomly selected from grades 10 and 11 has been selected, considering that among these grades and because of their age, they can handle the virtual instruments that may be used in some

cases for the collection of information. Regarding teachers, it is important to consider their role within the processes of construction of imaginaries within the school, since they are referents of authority and knowledge in most of the cases, their presence as participants in this research process is more than justifiable; therefore, from the total of 67 teachers, a sample of 5 teachers working in grades 10 and 11 has been chosen.

## RESULTS

Taken from Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2010) who point out that the sample can be constituted as a group of people, events, occurrences or communities from which data will be collected, without them necessarily representing the universe or population to be studied. Since the purpose of the research is not generalization, the type of sample is non-probabilistic by convenience, "In non-probabilistic samples, the choice of the elements does not depend on probability, but on causes related to the characteristics of the research or the researcher's purposes (Johnson, 2014, Hernández-Sampieri et al., 2013 and Battaglia, 2008b) and by convenience, it allows selecting those accessible cases that accept to be included. This, based on the convenient accessibility and proximity of the subjects for the researcher (Tamara Otzen & Carlos Manterola 2017).

### **Semi-structured interview:**

The interview is included, like the survey, within the group of techniques known as conversational. The qualitative interview can be defined as a conversation:

- -Interviewer-initiated
- -Performed on subjects selected on the basis of a research plan.

- -In a considerable number
- -That it has a cognitive purpose
- -Guided by the interviewer

With a flexible and non-standardized questioning scheme (Corbetta, 2007, p 344).

"The research interview is therefore a conversation between two people, an interviewer and an informant, directed and recorded by the interviewer with the purpose of favoring the production of a conversational discourse, continuous and with a certain line of argument - not fragmented, segmented, pre-coded and closed by a previous questionnaire - of the interviewee on a topic defined within the framework of an investigation.

The interview is thus a conversational narrative, created jointly by the interviewer and the interviewee, which contains an interrelated set of structures that define it as an object of study (Grele, 1990: 112)" (Delgado and Gutiérrez, 1999, p 228). According to Corbetta (2007), interviews can be classified according to their degree of standardization, that is, the degree of freedom or restriction granted to the two actors, the interviewer and the interviewee.

Delgado and Gutiérrez (1999) consider four fields in which the in-depth interview can be used: 1. Reconstruction of past actions (biographical approaches). 2. Study of personalized social representations (norms, stereotypes). 3. Study of interaction between personal psychological constitutions and specific social behaviors (aggressiveness, violence, deviant behaviors). 4. Prospecting of semantic fields, vocabulary and archetypical discourses of groups and collectives.

We focus the analysis of the results obtained after applying the selected instrument (interview). The data have been transcribed because, as Gibbs says, "it is a simple form of recording that is

possible to handle using administrative techniques" (2013). As a method of analysis, a synthesis of the answers offered by the interviewees has been made in search of emerging categories that were then crossed with the literature investigated in the analysis phase of the research, resulting in some cases in the search for new literature, which broadens our theoretical framework and enriches the research. Finally, we define the categories from the interviewees' point of view in order to have an approach to the reality of the study.

To analyze the results obtained from the interviewed population, we start from the emerging categories detected in the previous exercise of synthesis, a documentary review is made from the literature of each of these emerging categories to finally perform a cross analysis and identify the findings of the research. This deductive procedure allows us to go from macro categories and general concepts to define more specific features that contribute to the research process. The findings for each macro category analyzed are shown below. A particular situation is explained by deduction from a general assertion about the circumstances. Gibbs (2013).

In this phase of the research it is found that several emerging categories are repeated in different macro categories, this can be interpreted as coherence, since the feeling of the population is directed in the same direction, the advantage of qualitative research is that when two strategies yield very similar results, this corroborates the findings; but when, on the contrary, these results are not, triangulation offers an opportunity to develop a broader perspective regarding the interpretation of the phenomenon in question, because it points out its complexity and this, in turn, enriches the study and provides the opportunity for new approaches to be made. Urbano (2016).

The findings of the analysis will allow the design of recreational strategies to mitigate the cases of discrimination that occur in the educational institution, which in turn will facilitate the design of a didactic resource to improve the problem of school discrimination and its impact on school coexistence.

### **Categories of analysis for primer design**

After analyzing the results, it is possible to detect some vital categories to be included in the design of the educational resource (primer) that will have an impact on the community and achieve a process of social transformation.

#### **Discrimination in the institution**

Understanding the concept of discrimination, we seek to answer the following questions: What is discrimination? How can we detect cases of discrimination in the classroom? What attitude can we adopt in the face of these situations? What route can we activate to correctly deal with them?

#### **The effects of discrimination**

Seeks to raise awareness about the consequences of discrimination in the school environment, such as depression, isolation, introversion, anxiety that can lead to psychological problems or in more extreme cases to personal abuse and suicidal behavior. Discrimination not only affects the victim, but also generates a social change in all members of the community that encourages the continuity of the discriminatory phenomenon through normalization.

#### **Those responsible for promoting inclusion**

This category seeks to specify the role of each of the members of society in the task of reducing discrimination and improving

coexistence, since the responsibility of generating inclusion falls on everyone, victims, perpetrators and spectators, we all have a role to play in the search for an inclusive society that accepts and promotes diversity as a social wealth.

### **Strategies to reduce discrimination**

The objective of this category is to present a series of activities proposed by the members of the community themselves that will lead to achieving the general objective of the research, to reduce discrimination and improve coexistence; these spaces for participation should be adequately described to facilitate their execution.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Qualitative research in the participatory action research model allows us to observe the phenomenon under investigation from the point of view of the protagonists, and although objectivity is sacrificed for the human component, we gain impact and transformation in society by understanding the problem from the inside.

School discrimination not only affects the victims, but also causes deterioration in the community in general to the extent that exclusion and rejection of differences are normalized, diversity is made invisible and empathy is lost.

The relevance of research such as this is clear, as expressed by Sandoval and Vásquez (2021). "most students have difficulties in the development of social skills. Therefore, it is important to implement programs in educational institutions that facilitate the formation of social skills and the solution of coexistence problems to improve the quality of life of the members of the educational

community". The responsibility to stop the discriminatory phenomenon is not exclusive to those who reject or exclude, but it is a commitment of all parties involved in the conflict, society in general as a guarantor of the dialogue process and a visibilizing agent, and the victims to avoid falling into a circle of discrimination.

The analysis of the results produces the emergence of new categories to be studied, framed within the macro categories initially proposed in a process that, although it seems to go from the general to the particular, actually adds more content as it is carried out, which is in line with the inductive profile of qualitative research.

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