

The voice in the eyes: Photovoice as a methodology to explore inclusion-exclusion processes from the students' perspective

La voz en la mirada: Fotovoz como una metodología para explorar los procesos de inclusión-exclusión desde la perspectiva del estudiantado

Cristopher Yañez-Urbina, Ignacio Figueroa Céspedes, Jorge Soto Cárcamo & Bruna Sciolla Happke

Centro de Desarrollo Cognitivo, Facultad de Educación, Universidad Diego Portales, Chile

Abstract

This article analyzes the narrative-visual methodology known as “Photovoice” from its implementation and use in two cases, in the context of an inclusive school development plan based on the approaches of the Index for Inclusion. This plan seeks to promote, through the participation of the school community itself and the lifting of the voice of students, the production of a plan to address the barriers to inclusion detected by the collective. Methodologically we proceed through two cases, the production of information is carried out through field notes of each of the sessions by the team of collaborative advisors, being supplemented by the material produced by the students themselves and a final interview to the team. By means of a qualitative analysis, three central categories are identified, namely: Design, Implementation, Contributions and barriers in the self-exploration process. Each of these categories is associated with problems and strategies adopted for their solution, as well as potentialities for addressing diversity. The results allow to account for an approach that facilitates both the participation and the construction of a knowledge of the school in a plane of sensitive experience that breaks into the school space problematizing a series of elements that escape the use of questionnaires as a privileged strategy.

Keywords: Inclusive Development, Index for Inclusion, Students' Voice, Photovoice.

Post to:

Cristopher Yañez-Urbina
cristopher.yanezu@mail.udp.cl

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Resumen

Este artículo analiza la metodología narrativo-visual conocida como “Fotovoz” a partir de su implementación y uso en dos casos, en el contexto de un plan de desarrollo escolar inclusivo basado en los planteamientos de la Guía para la Inclusión Educativa. Este plan busca propiciar, mediante la participación de la propia comunidad escolar y el levantamiento de la voz del estudiantado, la producción de un plan para abordar las barreras para la inclusión detectadas por el colectivo. Metodológicamente se procede través de dos casos, la producción de información se lleva a cabo por medio de notas de campo de cada una de las sesiones por parte del equipo de asesores colaborativos, siendo complementada por el material producido por los propios estudiantes y una entrevista final al equipo. Por medio de un análisis cualitativo se identifican tres categorías centrales, a saber: Diseño, Implementación, Aportes y barreras en el proceso de autoexploración. Cada una de estas categorías está asociada a problemáticas y estrategias adoptadas para su solución, así como también a potencialidades para el abordaje de la diversidad. Los resultados permiten dar cuenta de un enfoque que facilita tanto la participación como la construcción de un conocimiento de la escuela en un plano de la experiencia sensible que irrumpe en el espacio escolar problematizando una serie de elementos que escapan al uso de cuestionarios como estrategia privilegiada.

Palabras clave: Desarrollo Inclusivo, Guía para la Inclusión Educativa, Voz del Estudiantado, Fotovoz.

Since the beginnings of the education system in Latin America and up until the present, the presence of a *school grammar* has been maintained, the bases of which are rooted in the enlightened idea of introducing the most vulnerable and dissonant sectors into the hegemonic culture with the logic of society (Jorquera, 2015). However, in recent times a series of reflections and practical experiences have begun to emerge that place the reconsideration of the school at the center of the debate in terms of its objectives in the current transformation of society toward the diversification of cultural expressions (Azorin & Ainscow, 2018; Dussel, 2004; Escobedo, Sales, & Traver, 2017; Fielding, 2011; Martín-Barbero, 2009).

In this regard, in accordance with Booth and Ainscow (2012), within this framework we can see efforts made concerning the concept of inclusion, which we understand more as a process than a goal to be achieved. In other words, *inclusive school development* in which the educational institution is kept in constant change in order to respond to the children’s diversity of origins, experiences, knowledge, and levels, enabling the participation of all members of the school.

However, Chilean public policy is a long way from this model. The Inclusion Law, which includes principles such as the absence of arbitrary discrimination, the abolition of co-payment for education by families, and the end of profit-making in public education (Ley de Inclusión Escolar 20,845, 2015); with the exception of initiatives addressing the obligatory nature of having school councils in schools that receive subsidies from the state, seems to be more focused on regulation of the private education provision system, involving adjustments to eliminate the excesses of the system and maintaining and strengthening the market mechanisms that govern it (Observatorio Chileno de Políticas Públicas Educativas, 2015).

In this context, the promotion of inclusive school development projects has focused on particular initiatives of the various *sostenedores*¹ (including Municipal Education Departments [DEM], local services, or foundations) or specific educational institutions. Along these lines, between 2014 and 2016 a consultancy was conducted in a district in the north of the city of Santiago based on the Index for Inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2012), within the framework of an accompaniment program developed by the Cognitive Development Center (CDC) of Universidad Diego Portales (UDP) with the support of the Index for Inclusion Network. Part of this accompaniment program, based on an action research approach, was systematized by Figueroa, Soto, and Sciolla (2016), who observed a series of obstacles to the development of the project, including tolerance for participation in a formal and timely manner, the predominance of closed information gathering techniques (questionnaires), and the silencing of dissent.

1 A *sostenedor* is the party to whom the state transfers the funds to administer a subsidized school.

In the same vein, Molina and St-Vincent (2004) emphasize that both dealing with the possible discomfort of management teams in view of the type of information collected and promoting the participation of all actors are ethical dilemmas on which it is necessary to work in action research processes. Similarly, these dilemmas have been identified as necessary processes for the construction of an inclusive school culture (Figuerola et al., 2016; Messiou, 2013). It is thus important to adopt innovative information production and participation mechanisms that are open to points of view that have been silenced, which prioritize their intensive nature and are focused on the experience of the subjects, rather than using an extensive mechanism that is based on the logic of representation of the data and their statistical validity.

For these reasons, in this article we propose to analyze the narrative visual methodology known as Photovoice (Doval, Martinez-Figueira, & Raposo, 2013; Melleiro & Gualda, 2005; Wang, 2006; Wang & Burris, 1997) based on the reflections of the team of collaborative advisors that participated in its application in two different educational contexts. This is intended to provide both theoretical and empirical elements that allow us to stress the ethical dilemmas of participatory action research (Messiou, 2013), as well as to corroborate their consistency in conjunction with the approach proposed by the Index for Inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2012).

Conceptual Framework

The voice of the students

In recent times, some authors have suggested that concern about the participation of students in diagnosis and decision making for their educational spaces is a relatively new phenomenon, whose origins can be traced back to the 1990s and the emergence of a series of participatory methodologies in management and research in this area (Argos, Ezquerro, & Zubizarreta, 2011; Zubizarreta, Ezquerro, & Argos, 2011). Notwithstanding this, based on the Chilean context, historian Jorge Rojas (2010) states that in the mid-20th century, student participation was already a recurring theme and even more so after the declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959.

Coincidentally regarding the above, Nieto and Portela (2008) argue that discussions about the active participation of students grew rapidly in the 1960s and 1970s before losing prominence until 1990 when it returned to the public debate. Once again, looking at local history allows the clarification of this point, because since the so-called Radical Governments, incipient concern about the promotion of democratic and participative management in schools began to proliferate; however, these initiatives become fruitless due to the prohibition of all types of political organization during the last civil-military dictatorship in the country, only re-emerging to a limited degree in 1985 and becoming more accepted with the return to democracy (Muñoz, 2011).

During the 1990s, with the emergence of pro-human rights movements, children began being considered as having economic, social, political, and cultural rights, giving them the same status as the rest of the population. Thus, a global transformation of cultural patterns is proposed in the approach to childhood and democratic forms of social coexistence are claimed that allow children to be recognized as rights-holders (Farías, 2003).

In spite of the above, where the theme is placed on a macro-social axis based on a series of governmental regulations, it is impossible to ignore the inherent connection between participation and relationships between children and young people in their role as “dissidents” and the other members of the educational community (adults), and how the latter can hinder these processes. This has stimulated various research projects regarding the day-to-day management of the school itself (Argos et al., 2011; Calvo, Haya, & Susinos, 2012; Escobedo et al., 2017; Rojas, Haya, & Lázaro-Visa, 2011). As such, as Gascón and Godoy (2015) point out, it is essential to analyze the interaction between communication, culture, education, and politics as mechanisms of *adult-centric* colonization of childhood in the contemporary world.

As the first aspect, communication responds to the problem of the positioning between “us” and the “other”, that is, it is not reducible to the mere transmission of information, but surrounds the types of relationships and the debate over the meaning and significance of the world (Stange, 2007). This leaves us with the inherent link between communication and the second aspect: politics (Salinas & Stange, 2006, 2009), regarding the reflection of the distribution of those individuals/bodies who have been able to raise their voices and who have been silenced and excluded from the public arena (Butler, 2006; Richard, 2009; Spivak, 1998).

On the other hand, as we have already stated, this problem also refers to education, as since the historical evolution of the school institution as a device for implementing the enlightened values for the creation of nations (Anderson, 2006), its participants have become “subordinate subjects, whose voice and subjectivity is replaced by the voice that the governing elites need to hear to nurture the national project” (Jorquera, 2015, p. 42). Here the student body is the main focus of interest (Messiou, 2013), since it is usually silenced by a professional culture on the part of teachers and managers (Escobar et al., 2017) that invalidates them as autonomous individuals with rights (Gascón & Godoy, 2015). In this regard it should be pointed out that the main objective of educational inclusion is not simply to congregate a diversity of students in the classroom, but rather it implies the need to reflect on to what extent diversity transforms dominant assumptions about learning, skills, and the ultimate goal of education (Molina & Christou, 2009).

Considering this perspective, the student body has constituted a group that has historically been subjugated by adult-centric logic that excludes from the public arena anything that is not inherently adult. Thus, the students’ voice is not heard and the meanings and significances put into circulation by the students are silenced by economic and political dynamics, restricting the scope of action permitted to obedience and submission (Duarte, 2012).

This thus creates the *voice of the students* as a concept that brings together a heterogeneous set of contributions that give relevance to the active role played by students in the educational and organizational activities of their own schools (Nieto & Portela, 2008). Also, following Susinos (2012), we can define this as each and every one of the initiatives whose implementation is intended to increase the protagonism of students in making decisions about the design, management, and assessment of any aspect of school life. However, within these definitions it is possible to find multiple approaches and variations, the particularities of which are more focused on the way in which actions are carried out and how appropriate they are in their various dimensions than on the choice of a particular type of action over another (Susinos & Ceballos, 2012).

For these reasons, the focus of the students’ voice should be studied in terms of the beliefs and conceptions that adults have about the students and their participation, from which a series of articulations can be drawn between the scopes and objectives contemplated, as well as in terms of territory and the choice of participants (Susinos & Ceballos, 2012). There, it is essential to put a perspective on the field of the study of *social barriers to participation and the development of potentialities*, which involves looking at the processes of both exclusion and inclusion (Susinos & Parrilla, 2008). This should be done in order to avoid the *neoliberal market perspective* in education and move closer to a *model centered on the student as an individual*.

According to Fielding (2011), in the first perspective—the *neoliberal market model*—the participation and voice of students are taken as instruments that are oriented toward results and control from an adult-centric perspective that makes a distinction between disruptive students and ideal students. On the other hand, the second perspective proposes a community view of participation, where the students are active agents in decision-making and the shared management of the school. In other words, here we find perspectives that emerge from the debate about the power granted to students and their recognition as agents of change (Susinos & Rodríguez-Hoyos, 2011).

In order to address the necessary aspects in an approach centered on the student as an individual, it is necessary to deepen both the focus of the *Index for Inclusion* and the *photovoice* device, as well as their implications and perspectives.

The proposal of the Index for Inclusion

The Index for Inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2012) is a set of materials to support the self-assessment of the school, including what takes place in classrooms, schoolyards, and the communities and environments of the whole school. The text is based on the idea that both adults and children have detailed knowledge about the improvements needed in their schools. It uses concepts such as “barriers to learning and participation” and “support for diversity”, as a way of conducting an open and shared exploration of this knowledge and suggesting ideas for future research into the school itself.

The Index outlines an approach to inclusion based on a concept of the development of education and society, closely related to the value of democratic participation. Based on this approach, inclusion implies providing coherence to the improvements that are made in the school under a variety of labels (education in rights, coexistence, environmental education, etc.) so that they are oriented toward the promotion of learning and participation of everyone: the children and their families, the staff, the management team, and other members of the community (Booth & Ainscow, 2012).

The Index offers support through a process of self-evaluation and development based on a participatory approach, different from that based on supervision, competence, and fear of failure (Booth & Ainscow, 2012). The material facilitates the opportunity to develop schools within a collaborative framework, in accordance with their own principles. It is designed to help consider individual and collective actions to organize the school, bearing in mind the development of the entire educational community. The aim is to take advantage of the wealth of knowledge and experiences that teachers, children, young people, and their families have about the nature of their environment and how it can be improved.

Self-assessment is carried out through three dimensions: cultural, political, and practical (Booth & Ainscow, 2012). The policies relate to how the school is managed and the plans to change it, while practices are based on what is taught and how it is taught and learned, and the culture reflects deep-rooted relationships, values, and beliefs. Changing the culture is essential to sustain the development of the school.

A set of indicators and questions is derived for each of these sections, which shape a more detailed assessment of the establishment, inviting reflection on the implication of inclusive values in all aspects of the school, its environment, and its communities. Together with the questionnaires, these materials provide a means by which to build on what is already known, structuring a detailed analysis of the barriers and resources of the school, in order to create an inclusive development plan.

The new version of the Index, published in 2011, is significantly different from previous ones. As the author says (Booth, 2012), the Index for Inclusion is aimed at promoting respect for biodiversity and the planet; helps promote communication, non-violent relationships, and the creation of participatory democracies; and the understanding of global citizenship. Similarly, the new Index includes a framework of values and the author considers that the greatest impact comes from the proposal of a curriculum for all, since it argues that the traditional curriculum is the greatest barrier to the learning and participation of all.

As regards experiences with the Index, it has been pointed out that changing the school from an inclusive perspective is unique and complex, although the material is “sensitive”, since it facilitates debate and sometimes conflict, which, however, can be overcome depending on the approach of the schools (Durán et al., 2005). The same author highlights the importance of the school appropriating the materials and not simply mechanically replicating the technical proposal.

On the other hand, a study on the use of the Index in 10 European countries (Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency, 2012)—Hungary, the Netherlands, Finland, Germany, Belgium, Austria, Ireland, Portugal, France and Slovenia—concluded that the materials contributed to the establishment of priorities in the schools, structuring their debates based on the knowledge of how the inclusion/exclusion processes are developed in their community. It was also observed that the guide helped shape a clear and relevant view of the goals and objectives, enabling possibilities to be sought through collaboration with other bodies in the community.

Meanwhile, in the national context, a case study based on work with the Index for Inclusion in seven municipal schools in a district of the Metropolitan Region of Santiago indicates that for the appropriation of both the inclusive approach and the methodologies proposed in that material, five interrelated aspects are key, these being: inclusive leadership, a comprehensive view of the school, collaborative cultures, an action research approach, and collaborative advice based on the figure of the *critical friend* (Figueroa et al., 2016).
Photovoice

In today's societies it is possible to see the *omnipresence of the image* in different areas of people's lives (Banks, 2010). Thus, in the literature there is evidence of a nascent interest in this scheme of communication

and interaction, revealing the role played by images as a channel of mediation in the political and social fields, which is currently known as *visual studies* (García, 2012; Moxey, 2009).

Visual studies have traditionally focused on two non-exclusive perspectives. On the one hand is the creation of images by the researcher to record the daily interaction of groups and people, that is, use of the image to study the social aspect; while on the other is the collection of pre-existing images—either because they were produced or consumed by the participants—in a sociological study of images (Banks, 2010).

However, in recent years a third approach has emerged that transcends these previous ones. It consists of collaborative production of visual material between the participants and researchers (Banks, 2010). This is where we see the proposal developed by Wang and Burris (1997) with respect to photovoice, which is described by the participants as a process by which people can identify, represent, and improve their community through the use of photography, which is produced by the participants as a tool to promote participation based on the experience and knowledge of the community in which they are inserted.

Photovoice is described as a participatory action research technique (Wang, 2006) that facilitates critical reflection on tangible reality on the part of a given population, with the ultimate aim of becoming collectively aware and acting so that significant changes take place (Doval, Martínez-Figueira, Raposo, 2013). It is thus recognized as having three main objectives: (1) to allow people to represent the strengths and weaknesses of their community, (2) to promote critical dialogue in discussion groups, and (3) to impact policymakers (Wang & Burris, 1997).

Although this technique can be used in a wide range of fields, it takes on special relevance when applied with a young population, allowing the promotion of social commitment, improvement in intergenerational relationships (Wang, 2006), and, above all, in the school context, where it demonstrates the ability of children to contribute to inclusion and the improvement of school environments through the inclusion of their voice in self-assessment processes (Doval, et al., 2013). In particular, by constituting a testimony generated by the children themselves—by taking an image you choose a theme, you tell a story, and you build a meaning—you reveal new perspectives of how they conceptualize, interpret, and see their own reality, allowing their social world to be represented in a creative way (Rabadán & Contreras, 2014).

The generic procedure to carry out an action research experience based on the photovoice technique is described by Wang, Cash, and Powers (2000) in the following steps:

- 1) Seek authorities on whom one wants to have an impact.
- 2) Formation of the work group.
- 3) Initial framework regarding the subjects to be photographed.
- 4) Meet to discuss the photographs (select the most significant, build a narrative in relation to them, participatory coding, discussion of possible solutions, etc.).
- 5) Plan a presentation to the authorities in a participatory manner.

Photovoice has been applied to a wide range of fields and topics, such as immigration and intercultural relations (García-Vera, Mendizábal, De la Raisilla, & García, 2016), domestic violence (Moya, Chávez, & Martínez, 2014), rural areas (Prado-Meza, Carter, 2017), the health field (Sandoval-Barrientos, 2017), and inclusive education (Parrilla, Rapaso-Rivas, Martínez-Figueira, & Doval, 2017; Parrilla, Martínez-Figueira, & Rapaso-Rivas, 2015; Rabadán & Contreras, 2014). There is special interest in the latter field, because, as Mena (2014) states, photography not only provides objective information based on its formal structure, but it is a collective mediator of the sensitive experience that allows its use by means of reduction (Benjamin, 2015). This is how it breaks into the educational space, allowing the questioning of the various agents based on a type of record that has been relegated to the margins by the forms of knowledge and approach to the 19th century experience (Martín-Barbero, 2009).

The context of the consultancy

The general project comes about at the request of the municipal *sostenedor* and in accordance with the pillars of communal education policy. Seven municipally-managed schools took part, all of which are located in the north of the metropolitan region, in Santiago Province. The first phase of the project took place in the

second semester of 2014 and had educational purposes related to the use of the material proposed in the Index for Inclusion. The second stage was implemented in 2015, involving the formation of the coordination teams in each school, which, with the help of a collaborative advisor, had to plan and organize a self-exploration process. The third phase, conducted during the same year, consisted of self-exploration and definition of barriers to learning and participation by each school. Finally, during the second semester of 2016, accompaniment days were held for the implementation of the inclusive development plan with those schools that wanted to continue the process. During this period we worked with one of the schools to redefine the pillars of intervention for its projects.

The first case analyzed here took place in the third stage of the process carried out during 2015, while the second case was conducted throughout the accompaniment process in the second semester of 2016.

Methodology

The research has a qualitative methodological approach and a descriptive scope. It is a case study in which the aim is to find out about a phenomenon in a holistic and contextual manner; in this case a practice associated with the experience of implementing a visual narrative methodology (Kazez, 2009, Stake, 2007). The case studies involve the development of two self-exploration experiences by means of photovoice on the part of students in the first and second stages of basic education in two schools participating in the general project and coordinated by two external advisors, along with members of the teams of each school.

The selection criteria in both cases are related to the interest that the schools had in the development of methodologies that went beyond the conventional survey format, as well as the process of internal reflection experienced by both, in which they identified a marked lack of representation of the opinion of students during the self-exploration and the need to go into greater depth in these aspects. The details of each of the cases can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1.

Information on Case Studies

	Dependency	Total of enrollments	Total of teachers	Year of implementation	Cycles worked
Case 1	Municipal	324	35	2015	First and second
Case 2	Municipal	613	54	2016	Second

Source: Prepared by the authors

The production of information was carried out through the methodological proposals created by the two teams (two documents), field notes made by the collaborative advisors on the experience studied, an interview with both of the external advisors, and the photographic-narrative material produced by the students. The content of this material was analyzed in order to produce an account of a) the design of the methodological proposal and b) the implementation of that proposal, acknowledging the main common and differentiating characteristics. This was done with the purpose of assessing the contributions and difficulties resulting from the introduction of the photovoice device as a participatory action research methodology focused on the exploration of barriers to inclusion in the school on the part of the students, and within the framework of the design of an inclusive development plan.

Prior to both cases, an informed consent form was given to the parents/guardians of the students, an approval to the students, and an informed consent to the managers and teachers who worked directly on the project, in accordance with the standards of the ethics committee of the Faculty of Education of Universidad Diego Portales.

Results

The main results obtained in the analysis of the aspects that make up the two case studies with photovoice are described below. First we addressed the aspects related to the budgeted design and then we focused on the difficulties that led to the modification of the initial plan, before finally detailing the contributions to the process

of self-exploration and the tensions that emerge from the adoption of the narrative visual device.

Design of the methodological proposal

In this sub-section we detail the aspects that took place before the implementation of the device. In other words, they involve both the initial motivations for the preparation of a work proposal with photographs, as well as the elements that comprise the design of the advisory project, its stages, activities, and the goals that were sought with each of them.

As regards the initial motivations, in both cases there was an acknowledgement of the need to implement more entertaining strategies to carry out self-exploration with students, since the use of questionnaires and the Likert-scale test silences the voices and provides little room for other views and interpretations of what may be taking place in the schools, notwithstanding the sporadic and late attendance of the students at work meetings. Likewise, this strategy is favored due to the ease of articulation with the material with which they were working in the schools—the Index for Inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2012).

With respect to the budgeted design of each of the cases, different procedures were chosen to complement the photovoice proposal. In order to simplify this information, we express the similarities and differences in the following comparative table produced from the two working proposals:

Table 2.

Comparison of Case Designs

	Case 1	Case 2
Previous work	Dynamic "world café": seeks to facilitate a space for dialogue in which children have the opportunity to share, contribute, and be part of the analysis and decision making of the group.	Dynamic "win as much as you can": seeks to raise awareness about the importance of collaborative work through a dynamic of skills in which no one can win if they do not cooperate with others.
Photovoice	<p>Construction of the school map: collective work strategy on the recognition of school spaces by areas, the layout of a route, and the identification of places and daily experiences associated with these spaces.</p> <p>Photographing the school: process of exploration and photographic production of school spaces, in which students take photographs both of those places and situations that evoke positive daily experiences, and those that evoke negative feelings and they would like to improve.</p> <p>Exhibition of photographs: presentation of photographs, explanation of the reasons for which they were taken, and preparation of improvement proposals for each situation. In this process, it is expected that the images taken stimulate the emergence of ideas, themes, and daily experiences in the school.</p> <p>Focus group: group discussion aimed at going into more depth on emerging elements.</p>	<p>Discussion about ethics in photography: group construction of ethical guidelines which should be used to guide the taking of photographs.</p> <p>Photographing the school: process of photographic exploration and production of school spaces, in which students take photographs of the places where they can participate and those where they cannot participate.</p> <p>Exhibition of photographs: presentation of photographs, explanation of the reasons for which they were taken, and preparation of improvement proposals for each situation. In this process, it is expected that the images taken stimulate the emergence of ideas, themes, and daily experiences in the school.</p> <p>Group coding and preparation of material: work with the students to find similarities and differences in the photographs, as well as in the preparation of materials to present and discuss with the work teams.</p>
Presentation of results	Coding by the inclusion team: the proposal considers that the data will be reviewed in the meetings of the inclusion team as a summation of the rest of the inputs produced.	Presentation and discussion with work team: the aim is to produce feedback to management and the inclusion team with the results obtained by the students themselves.

Source: Prepared by the authors

As we see in Table 2, the design involved three sequential stages: previous work, photovoice, and presentation of the results. In the first stage, the aim was to build a sense of group with a view to facilitating the work, marking an initial milestone. In the second stage the goal was to carry out the various activities focused on eliciting the voice of the students. Case 1 is relevant here, as it considered the use of complementary strategies to the work with photovoice, such as the creation of a map of the school and a focus group to complement the information. In the same way, it is possible to highlight the group coding that was expected to be carried out in Case 2 as a strategy to involve the students and generate collective learning.

On the other hand, in terms of presentation of the results, Case 1 does not consider a proposal for the presentation of the results in addition to the review of the rest of the inputs produced in the self-exploration process. Consequently, it is proposed that only the inclusion team should conduct the analysis. Meanwhile, Case 2 involves an exhibition of the material produced for both the management team and the inclusion team, with the expectation that it will become a space for dialogue.

Another design aspect not presented in the table above consists of the strategies to be carried out to select students to participate. Although both cases considered diversity to be one of the priority criteria, Case 2 only considered working with students in the second stage of basic education, while Case 1 was expected to work with students from both the first and the second stages of basic education.

Implementation of the cases

Besides the design aspects, it should be noted that there were situations that both cases had to address in order to implement the proposals. In this sub-section we outline these situations, providing an account of the strategies adopted to deal with them.

A first point that should be emphasized involves the consistency of the students' participation. Case 1 had a high turnover of students throughout all of the sessions, so activities continuously had to be restarted from the introduction to the topic to the management of the work. In contrast, Case 2 managed to maintain a stable working group over time. However, throughout the sessions there was recurrent insistence by a member of the school's management team to change the group of students who were participating, arguing that they were very disorganized or did not comply with some standard to be "good" representatives. Faced with this posture on the part of the school, the process was reframed several times, clarifying that the main selection criterion was diversity rather than a certain standard of student.

"Then he talks to me about the group of students who are taking part; he asks me again if the members are going to be changed, based on the argument that they are very disorganized and that could be counterproductive for the activity. I said that this didn't seem appropriate, firstly because there were no major difficulties in conducting the first session and because I don't think it's very consistent with the logic of inclusion" (Field note 3, Case 2).

Under the same logic, Case 2 was confronted by the performance of implicit selection mechanisms by the school team, which highlighted the coincident resignation of some students who were already part of the working group with the proposal of new members that did fit in with the standard of being "good" representatives of the school. This revealed certain tendencies of the school to try and control the possible versions of the school that began to emerge in a process of participatory self-exploration, in addition to resistance to change.

A second and final point that must be highlighted is a phenomenon that was common to both cases, which was the stigmatization of the students. Here we refer to a situation in which participation was questioned, either by being considered as individuals not displaying logical thought or as "bad children", among other ways of excluding their voices and experiences.

"I ask you, how can you give confidence to the school authorities to trust you? I didn't receive any response, except from one student who said that they wouldn't because they were bad children. I asked her if she believed that and she said yes. At that time I considered the need to work on that aspect as well, I told them that I could bring a video to the next session to start off in a more enjoyable way" (Field note 4, Case 2).

Although this type of situation had not been considered to be worked on in the original case design, during implementation it was necessary to be flexible and begin to emphasize how the students perceive themselves as

well, in addition to conceptions of them that the other actors have of them, as well as the possibility that their actions could generate significant changes in their educational environment.

Contributions to the self-exploration process and tensions

Finally, we looked into the role of the students during the process, how the cases were received by the teams, and how the information produced was used and how these cases combined with the self-exploration process which the schools were undergoing.

Both collaborative advisors recognize the ability of this device to produce conditions that allow the students’ voices to be expressed, heard, and valued by the rest of the community. By constituting an action with high implications and meaning for the students themselves, this technique enables them to be acknowledged as bearers of valid discourses and as autonomous individuals with the capacity make decisions regarding the situations that affect them. This process, although necessary for development of an inclusive school, is not easy to achieve, because these “other voices” expose issues that have been ignored or silenced by the teams, which often produces resistance.

The voice of the student body is characterized by having the ability to alter the status quo of the schools and to expose practices that have been naturalized within the work teams and in the cultures of each of the institutions in general. However, it also has the capacity to create alternative versions regarding the destabilized points. For this reason, it becomes necessary to mediate the interaction of these emerging voices with those that form the hegemony in the school. Thus, the collaborative advisors highlight the use of images—particularly photographs in this case—as a catalyst for this potential in a product easily accessible in today’s society and whose potential is not merely reducible to the empirical data that can be observed within it.

We reinforced this point by means of the example of the analysis of Image 1, which was produced by the students in Case 2. In this photograph we can see a bench beside a notice board, which the students say is the only bench in the schoolyard; however, the participants do not merely stop at the objective fact that the photograph reveals, but they accompany it with an account in which they state that it is the only place in the school where they can relax and are able to “talk about life”.



Image 1. The only bench in the school. Source: photographed by the students in Case 2

This idea is picked up again during the session of analysis and preparation of the final material, where they reuse Image 1 together with another photograph and label them “Tranquility” (see Image 2) to refer to a need to transform the school into a space in which they can feel comfortable and stable, that is, the school as a safe space in a social context full of instability, dangers, and stressors.



Image 2. Material presented by the students. Source: Photograph taken by the collaborative advisor in Case 2.

On the other hand, in Case 1 we highlight Image 3, which shows the playing field and the hill that is adjacent to the school, where there is a large quantity of debris and garbage. What the students highlight in this photograph, besides the objective data and its possible sanitary consequences, is their affection for the hill and their desire to have a school with better-maintained recreational and leisure areas, which are the spaces where their participation and capacity for expression have been reduced.



Image 3. Photograph of debris. Source: Photographed by participants in Case 1.

However, in spite of how accessible the information is in the image, it does not lose its destabilizing and constructive potential. Because of this, the development of the case and its reception by the schools is not free from resistance, as well as facilitating factors for its implementation. First, we highlight the barriers that were experienced during Case 1, which revolved around the refusal to consider data that were not recorded in statistical language, while the methodologies used in the process did not respond to the characteristics of validity, reliability, and representation that such logic requires.

I see there is a risk that all the information collected during the year won't be properly considered, in the sense that the opinions of certain groups tend to be discarded. There's still resistance, which is now much more explicit, for work in a plan that incorporates more profound issues that question the management of the school (and the conceptions rooted in those who are in charge of it), and topics that have been collected using "alternative" methodologies (everything that is not a questionnaire) (Field Note 8, Case 1).

On the other hand, in Case 2, the greatest difficulties were due to a **lack of involvement** in the process on the part of the school team. This was observed in a tendency not to participate in the sessions, limiting themselves to attending in a *role to monitor the students or merely to gather the participants at the beginning of each session*. This led to the collaborative adviser taking protagonism in the implementation, as well as a perception of the case more as a symbolic act on the part of the school rather than as a device used for its self-exploration.

In spite of this, in both cases the quality and weight of the data produced by the participants generates such an impact on the work team that they become difficult to ignore. This is evident, as after the presentation of the results, the projects tended to change their core aspects, incorporating the voice of the students.

In summary, it is possible to show that these cases allowed the identification of foci of change in schools from the analytical structure proposed by the Index for Inclusion, thus favoring the development of inclusive practices. In Case 1, the values of Sustainability and Beauty stand out, while in Case 2 it was the values associated with Community and Joy. Likewise, together both cases share as values Respect for Diversity and Participation, understood as an exercise that is not expressed when responding to an instrument, but instead implying processes of dialogue, learning, and joint deliberation, which is why it requires the active involvement of the whole community.

Discussion and Conclusion.

The cases described above introduce us to a field in which it is possible to rethink the processes of self-exploration of schools based on the challenges posed by the inclusive approach. In this regard, it becomes necessary not only to capture the voices and experiences of those members of the communities who are generally silenced by not being recognized as valid agents, but also to adopt an ethical-political posture that rejects *epistemic extractivism* (Grosfoguel, 2016), where participation is disproportionate and reduced to the mere act of providing information, making it impossible for it to have an impact on the way in which the school is considered. It also implies addressing the logic of *accountability* that has permeated the Chilean educational system, because according to this rationale, schools are forced to provide responses based on fulfillment of achievement indicators and quality standards, thus displacing any initiative that explores and strengthens other areas.

It is in this sense that there emerges the need to address students' experience itself when taking part in projects of this kind in future research; collecting their experiences and views from a perspective that is aimed at the transformation of educational contexts and not merely as a form of assessment and feedback for educational practices.

On the other hand, we see how the pillars of education, communication, politics, and culture are articulated in the preparation of material that, not merely being limited to problematizing the hierarchical relations that have been institutionalized in schools, can go beyond its use as a didactic resource and can be implemented as a way to build a type of knowledge from certain margins that evade empirical data and objectivity to reveal aesthetic experience and emotionality (Mena, 2014). This can take place in such a way that, faced with the hegemony of quantitative instruments for the study of the perceptions of students, teachers, and families from an inclusive perspective (Azorín, Arnaiz, & Maquilón, 2017), photovoice leads to questions about what the valid forms of knowledge for the school actually are. Is it, as Martin-Barbero (2009) states, that it is time to put aside the illustrated dualism between reason and emotion at the school in order to make way for the hybridization of experiences, processes, and learning? Does an inclusive approach imply openness to diversity in ways of knowledge and approaching the educational space?

Notwithstanding this, at no time can photovoice guarantee the success of a process of self-exploration. As we were able to observe, there are a number of cultural conditions that are specific to each educational context

that can act as barriers to successfully conducting an experience of this kind. Likewise, it is impossible for us to ignore the material factor in its realization, since schools do not always have sufficient resources to have a camera. However, there is the possibility of mixing the proposed approach with other types of visual techniques, such as drawing, collage, or “social cartography”, with keywords that can vary according to the requirements of its application. In short, it is necessary to explain that, far from being a recipe of steps and procedures to be strictly followed, photovoice is instead more a proposal for an approach to identify the voice of those who are excluded from spaces of participation.

Lastly, it is these characteristics that make it an approach that is compatible with and easily adapted to work with the Index for Inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2012) or similar tools in the process of self-exploration and the problematization of barriers to participation and learning under development in schools, allowing an intensive approach to aspects that are difficult to perceive using instruments based on closed questions (questionnaires) and the logic of statistical representation.

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