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Articles

Educating in the northern border of Chile: Cultural heritage challenging social exclusion

Educando en la frontera norte de Chile: El patrimonio cultural desafiando la exclusión social

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Abstract

The objective of this article is to understand the context of social exclusion faced by children of migrant families residing in Chile, as well as the use of intangible cultural heritage that they use in school spaces to advance towards social inclusion. From a qualitative methodology, the sample was integrated by professors and psychosocial team who work in a public school. The technique used for the collection of information was focus group. Content analysis was used to analyze the data. The results reveal a geography of social exclusion expressed in the neighborhood, work and school context. However, valuation of intangible cultural heritage is also identified as a tool to move towards social inclusion.

Keywords: migration, school, social exclusion, intangible cultural heritage.

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo es comprender el contexto de exclusión social que enfrentan los niños y niñas de las familias migrantes que residen en Chile, así como el uso del patrimonio cultural inmaterial que utilizan en los espacios escolares para avanzar hacia la inclusión social. Desde una metodología cualitativa, la muestra fue integrada por profesores y un equipo psicosocial, quienes trabajan en una escuela pública. La técnica empleada para la recolección de información fue el grupo focal y para el análisis de los datos se utilizó el análisis de contenido. Los resultados revelan una geografía de la exclusión social que se expresa en el contexto barrial, laboral y escolar. Sin embargo, se identifica también la valoración del patrimonio cultural inmaterial como herramienta para avanzar hacia la inclusión social.

Palabras clave: migración, escuela, exclusión social, patrimonio cultural inmaterial.

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Introduction¹

In Chile, the development of the National Policy for Children and Adolescents 2015–2025 corresponds to the result of a participatory process with the collaboration of the State, civil society, children, and adolescents in the country. In this line, five approaches support this National Policy: Rights, Human Development, Life Course, Gender, and Intercultural. The latter approach recognizes that people of indigenous origin and migrants need special measures to fulfill their individual and collective rights without discrimination and on an equal footing with the rest of the population (Consejo Nacional de la Infancia, 2015, p. 60).

This recognition of cultural diversity has a close relationship with official statistics, which indicated that there were approximately 411 000 foreigners residing in the country in 2014, mainly from South American countries such as Peru, Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, and Ecuador (Departamento de Extranjería y Migración del Ministerio del Interior y Seguridad Pública, 2016). This process is classified as intraregional migration, which considers the displacements among all Latin American countries, looking beyond the border and regional character (Durand, 2013).

At the beginning of the 1990s, the process of intraregional migration intensified thanks to the liberalization of transport, commerce, and tourism. The economic integration processes have facilitated the management of immigration procedures to the point that, currently, South Americans can travel through the region without a visa and, in some cases, without the need for a passport because they are only required to present a national document of identity (Durand, 2013, p. 62).

In this context, the positioning of Chile as a destination for intraregional migration is explained by the positive image of its economic and institutional stability, which has developed the idea of the so-called “Chilean dream” among migrants entering the country. In addition, we must consider the effect of the increased income barriers established after the last global economic crisis on the borders of conventional destinations such as the United States and European countries (Tapia, 2014, p. 37).

Next to the capital, the cities located in the northern border of the country have a significant concentration of the migrant population. Thanks to the development of the mining industry and international trade stimulated by its status as a port, the northern border city of Iquique is one of the main urban centers receiving migrants. The city’s multicultural character is also the result of the cultural heritage of the Aymara people, whose influence extends to Peru, Bolivia, and northern Chile.

However, the insertion of migrant families in Chilean society is evidence of situations of social exclusion and discrimination. These situations are related to the informal labor market, the degradation of neighborhoods as a result of overcrowded housing, and the general shortcomings of the health and education system.

Pavez (2012) focused on childhood and addressed the experience of Peruvian children in Santiago, Chile by highlighting the violation of children’s rights. Tijoux

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(2013) delved into racism in the school context and proposed antiracist educational programs. Riedemann and Stefoni (2015) identified the denial of racism and its consequences for an antiracist education in a secondary education. Joiko and Vásquez (2016, p. 167) argued that school contexts sensitive to migration issues are in a state of integration rather than inclusion and insisted on the need for further reflection on the concept of inclusion and its link to interculturality. Finally, in the specific context of the northern border of Chile, some authors explored the difficult living conditions faced by migrant families (Marín, 2014) as well as the general characteristics that distinguish the admission process of migrant students in Chilean border schools (Mondaca, Gajardo, Muñoz, Sánchez & Robledo, 2015). This background gives support and urgency to the National Policy on Children and Adolescents 2015–2025 because its intercultural approach seeks to establish the conditions for the construction of a more inclusive and egalitarian society (Consejo Nacional de Infancia, 2015). In reviewing the international literature, Marxen (2011, p. 155) also rescued the value of cultural exchange in education and noted that artwork can help integrate bicultural elements that facilitate greater inclusion among children. Faced with this scenario, an intangible cultural heritage appears as a tool to recognize the contribution of migrant cultures.

Therefore, the objective of this article is to understand the geography of the social exclusion resisted by students belonging to migrant families who have settled on the northern border of Chile as well as the use of intangible cultural heritage used in schools to achieve social inclusion. First, a brief review is presented of two theoretical concepts that guide the study: the geography of social exclusion and intangible cultural heritage. Then, the methodology used and the findings reached are described. Finally, the conclusions are presented to advance toward a greater understanding of this process in Chilean schools.

Theoretical Framework

Geography of Social Exclusion

Jiménez (2008, p. 178) defined social exclusion as a multidimensional process, which often tends to accumulate, combine, and separate—for both individual and groups—social rights, such as work, education, health, culture, economics, and politics. These rights are those to which other groups have access, thus nullifying the concept of citizenship. Arias and Campos (2011, p. 2) argued that, under whatever definition used, a territorial dimension exists that conditions and deepens the definition. Thus, they analyze urban poverty based on the description of a geography of “disadvantages,” taking as reference two key spaces for socialization within the city: the neighborhood and the school. In this way, they attempt to define a “geography of sociospatial exclusion,” which works on the one hand as a structural condition of the territory and on the other hand as a constant recreation of social exclusion practices.

Focusing on migrants, social exclusion is precisely expressed in economic crises, wars, or political persecutions (Tijoux, 2011, p. 38), forcing them to leave their countries. However, migration does not guarantee achieving the desired social inclusion. In contrast, from the beginning, migration imposes multiple barriers to achieve social inclusion.

Although migration implies mobility from one space to another, international borders represent an immobilizing point that filters what can leave or enter, operating then a system of legality/illegality (Benedetti & Salizzi, 2011, p. 61). If they manage to circumvent the procedures in the border precincts, the migrants settle in the destination cities. However, cities have territorial configurations that construct spaces of exclusion where social dynamics limit equal access to opportunities (Arias & Campos, 2011, p. 4). Some denominations such as ethnic neighborhood and ghetto (Torres, 2011), migrant neighborhoods (Sassone & Mera, 2007), or transition zones (Guizardi, 2013) attempt to account for the segregation that distinguishes urban concentrations where migrants are located.

In this scenario, schools also emerge as essential territories for understanding the geography of social exclusion because school segregation concentrates students in vulnerable conditions in schools in particular territorial units (Arias & Campos, 2011, p. 6), which reflects the account of Marín (2014) in his study on migrant families on the northern border of Chile.

Similarly, for work, migrants face a segmentation that limits their alternatives, stimulating the creation of negative stereotypes (Stefoni, 2002). These negative stereotypes are influenced by the capitalist economic transformations, the subjectivities caused by neoliberalism, and the political construction of fear of the other transmitted through the media. As precarious workers, migrants compete for the most exploitative conditions and the lowest wages (Tijoux, 2011, p. 38). Rojas and Vicuña (2014) explored these aspects in depth in their study and proposal for the social and labor inclusion of migrants in the border city of Arica.

In these territories of exclusion, social discrimination emerges that is defined as any distinction that causes harm, humiliation, or damage to the dignity of a person and that has no rationally justifiable cause. These distinctions are based, among others, in conditions such as ethnic or national origin, gender, disability, age, religion, health status, sexual orientation, and economic or social situation (Soberanes, 2010, p. 263).

Turning our attention to the migratory processes, discrimination based on the color of the skin stands out. The “body” then appears and reveals its origin and, thus, an ethnic group, a country, and a skin color (Tijoux, 2011, p. 33). It is the body that moves through the geography of social exclusion, constituting itself as a permanent mark or stamp:

A body-problem for the present existence, built around the cult of the individual that triumphs to the rhythm of canons fixed by a triumphant neoliberalism that strips it of the individuality that makes it unique and that demands a body forged in universal ideals armed around the origin and acceptable characteristics of the body.

The body is “felt” as something identified and made public, it is the opposite of “we”, and it is precisely this “otherness” that helps to build processes of racial formation. Moreover, when racism, which we have seen can be understood as appreciation of differences, ends up legitimizing acts or violent speeches against these immigrants that are exposed by the entire mark “that is” their own body (Tijoux, 2011, p. 33).

Therefore, migrants must resist in the geography of social exclusion that is full of borders. The neighborhood, work, or school assume complex spaces to inhabit in which the corporal characteristics define the location within the social system. The body as a “border” thus represents an “otherness” that is difficult to include.

Intangible Cultural Heritage

The term World Heritage was born in 1972 in the “Convention for the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage” of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco). At a general level, the integral heritage of a territory is understood to be made up of natural objects and cultural material objects but is also composed of the behavior, knowledge, and values of those who inhabit it. The latter corresponds to the intangible cultural heritage that includes traditions inherited from the ancestors and transmitted to new generations, including oral traditions, the arts of entertainment, social customs, rituals, parties, knowledge, and techniques associated with artisanal handicraft (Olivera, 2011, p. 664).

During the 1990s, Unesco initiated the Intangible Cultural Heritage program, whose principles were the revitalization and transmission of cultural practices as strategies for their protection. In the same vein, in 2002, the organization held the Meeting of Experts in Terminology, with the aim of creating a glossary of terms for the international normative instrument. The term cultural carriers emerged to designate the members of a community that actively reproduce, transmit, transform, create, and form culture. In addition, the term stressed that members of practicing communities are responsible for deciding on cultural practices that must be safeguarded to prevent outsiders from appropriating the cultural resources of communities (Villaseñor & Zolla, 2012, p. 78). Finally, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of 2003 has been of particular importance because it established a definition that until now generates a certain level of consensus:

The intangible cultural heritage means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills—as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith—that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity (Unesco cited in Olivera 2011, p. 664).

Regarding migration, Olivera (2011, p. 674) emphasized its historical character and argued that the understanding of the intangible cultural heritage of various communities encourages dialogue between cultures and promotes respect for other ways of life. Thus, respect for others necessarily requires the consideration and tolerance of their customs and intangible cultural expressions. However, at the school level, Jiménez and Fardella (2015, p. 433) argued that attention to inspiring inclusive diversity can also end up becoming a scenario that forces the renunciation of heritage and the cultural heritage of migrant students. This can happen when schools

are founded on a unilateral adaptation as their form of integration. Therefore, it is important to address the relationship between migrations and intangible cultural heritage as a strategy to favor social inclusion.

In a study with the Peruvian community living in Santiago de Chile, Caba and Rojas (2014) reported on a strategy of symbolic appropriation and use of identity signs in public spaces. These manifestations stimulate the reterritorialization of cultural practices and have allowed the Peruvian community to achieve greater visibility and social inclusion:

The feeling of belonging to a community, the vindication of shared values and the reproduction of a social group, make this experience a central issue for the symbolic reappropriation after displacement. At the same time, collective reconstruction has to do with a complex process of staging the resources of collective memory as well as the effective use of certain referents that allow generating social inclusion and projecting a common future. It is in this sense that migration, identity, and cultural practices, agglutinated and made visible through the intangible cultural heritage, have been the central axis of this approach (Caba & Rojas, 2014, p. 111).

Therefore, cultural heritage practices do not seek to reaffirm the national practice but instead to foster a context of reciprocal integration, breaking nationalist imaginaries. Gastronomy, dances, and religion are mobilized transnationally, inviting diversity in dialogue and encounters, thus creating the conditions necessary for sociocultural equality (Caba & Rojas, 2014, p. 112).

In the field of artistic education, Huerta and Domínguez (2013, p. 11) articulated the concept of migrant heritage, highlighting the geographical dislocation of heritage as a value that contributes to the transition of knowledge and the exchange of ideas and approaches between the educators and the students.

Learning about heritage through education is intensified thanks to this innovative contribution because migrant heritage introduces the geographic dislocation of an ingrained heritage as a valid element for reflection. Key issues such as transhumance, inheritance, human migrations, the transfer of knowledge between teachers and students, the trade of goods, or changes in heritage value are valid aspects to actively link heritage with education. All of these issues are from a place of flexibility, which is intensified by varying the locations. In a society that flows between the physical and the virtual, we must be prepared to activate a wealth rich in migrations (Huerta & Domínguez, 2013, p. 10).

In summary, the intangible cultural heritage stands out for its ability to generate encounters between cultures, weakening borders and stimulating social inclusion in the transnational contexts that arise from intraregional migration. Therefore, the opportunities for social inclusion presented from the promotion of heritage can be extended to the entire social ecology and particularly to schools, which is where the fate of the communities plays out.

Methodology

The study was conducted in a public school in the city of Iquique, which has implemented a welcoming plan for migrant families. It should be noted that this educational establishment is one with the highest migrant enrollment in the northern border of Chile because it is located in the commercial sector of the city with many migrant families. The school is distinguished by its commitment to families and educational practices aimed at the inclusion of all of its students. The investigation is based on a qualitative methodology that seeks to explain and understand the interactions and subjective meanings of individuals and groups (Álvarez-Gayou, 2003, p. 41).

For the sample, four focus groups were formed by the educational agents: the teachers and the psychosocial team. These professionals have been working for years with migrant families. The choice to use the focus group methodology is based on the fact that it is a social research technique that prioritizes speech and encourages interaction through conversation on a topic or research object in a given time and whose interest consists of capturing the manner in which individuals who make up the group think, feel, and experience (Álvarez-Gayou, 2003, p. 132). The script of the questions that guided the focus groups was reviewed by a pair of experts on the topic that the research addresses, using expert validation. The topics addressed in the focus group's script were the geography of social exclusion in which the students of the migrant families who attend the school resist as well as the use of intangible cultural heritage that they use to favor social inclusion.

Content analysis was used to analyze the data given its approach to the questions posed and the qualitative procedures and their objectives. The data saturation criterion was also used to define the categories. Finally, to safeguard participants' confidentiality, an informed consent was drafted regarding the objectives and scope of the investigation and the protection of privacy through the elimination of personal data.

Results

To present the results, three categories have been considered: family aspects, geography of social exclusion, and valuation of intangible cultural heritage.

Family Aspects

This category plays a fundamental role because the family is presented as the lynchpin of the migratory process, and migration is "by" and "with" the family. Now, adults and particularly women are the ones who first leave to search for better job opportunities. Often, the children remain in their countries of origin, waiting for their parents to prepare the conditions for the arrival of the rest of the family. This situation directly affects children, who, in some cases, are exposed to situations of vulnerability.

We are struck by the fact that the woman is the one who is coming. They come with the idea of being here for a while and getting job stability and a place to live and then bringing the children. However, sometimes, the couples' bond has broken, and they come here and have not signed the separation papers. They come and say, "how do I do it? I don't have any documents, and the father denies me permission to take the children." I have also seen them coming with one or two children, thinking that here in this economy, they will do well and also fend for themselves (social worker, 2017).

The main reason for migrating that I've gathered from students' stories is work—work to save money. Here, they realize that the cost of living is high because renting a room is also expensive. But they work with that mentality—that they will save money for a few years and then return to their country. There they sometimes have land or share houses with large families, so they save and send money to the children they've left in charge of other relatives. I have also heard stories of abuse in their countries. Sometimes the mothers are here, the relatives are there, and situations of abuse have occurred among their own relatives. When the mother finds out because sometimes the daughter tells her, the mother goes out looking for her (psychologist, 2017).

When the family finally reunites in Chile, they face new challenges associated with coexistence and role redistribution. The family dynamic established in the countries of origin are challenged by the pressures of the new sociocultural context, the years of separation, the incorporation of new members, and the emotional blunting.

They also sometimes meet someone here and start a new story. They begin coordinating with that person, and the children have to accommodate this new life where the new siblings are. But they are like the newcomers, so a new family structure is shaped, where sometimes new changes occur such as the separations that I mentioned (social worker, 2017).

We have seen that affectivity is not as developed in them—mothers are more detached, and that makes their children more independent. Some families are very strict in values, responsibility, and when they come, they are good students, but emotionally, they seem dulled. The parents communicate with their children, but it is not that affectionate, that intimate. It consists of instructions, of orders, of lessons of life through values, of responsibility. Mothers sometimes say that they do not touch their children when asked: "And you are affectionate? You should hug them because they need more affection." They say, "It's not that we're used to not hugging; it's because we're not that close" (psychologist, 2017).

Among sociocultural tensions, educational actors identify that some migrant parents frequently use physical punishment as a parenting tool. This situation problematizes the relationship between families and the school because an intense debate is occurring in Chile on how to reduce violence toward minors. The country is becoming aware of the urgency of addressing this issue. Although the child abuse figures are worrisome, in the school context, a condemnatory speech clearly prevails in the face of the violation of the rights of children, and specific social devices exist to promote the care and well-being of students.

The same mothers tell the teachers, “yes ma’am, I hit him because if I don’t, he’ll become rebellious.” This situation then becomes something that the teachers themselves incorporate into their classrooms with respect to the rights of children to educate them on Chilean laws, and our discourse is always that children are above everything and that the law always protects children. We understand that they bring their customs and ways of acting or raising children, but they also have to understand what our own customs are—what is allowed—because if what happens there is what happens here, we would have a problem. If they hit the child or the school lets them hit the child, and that child arrives here with a bruise, we are going to verify the injuries and then go to the police (psychologist, 2017).

Geography of Social Exclusion

The Chilean economy stands out for its stability and openness to international markets but also for the unequal opportunities for social development that unfold through its growth. In this scenario, migrants also face numerous social exclusion spaces, similar to those they faced in their countries of origin and that justly urged them to leave. In the workplace, abusive practices are observed that lead to the acceptance of low-paid jobs and sometimes to the concealment of exploitation conditions.

They work in jobs as waitresses, cleaning, and taking care of children. They usually have impediments because they do not want to make contracts. When I ask them what time I can meet with them, I see that they have long days, and sometimes they have one day off a month—not like us who work at the most on Saturday and have all Sunday free. They do not. Sometimes they have to agree on one day off every two weeks. We also see economic abuses when they keep quiet to avoid losing their job (social worker, 2017).

Sometimes, when their bosses have the same nationality, I see little solidarity in the manner in which their bosses formalize their papers or facilitate contracts. For example, when they have to ask permission to be at a meeting at school, they say, “no, my boss will not let me—she is very strict.” Their boss is Peruvian, like the Peruvian women I deal with, or Bolivian, like the Bolivian women themselves (psychologist, 2017).

Long working hours, together with working more than one job, prevent parents from adequately meeting the needs of their children who are left alone or in the care of their neighbors. Thus, children must perform adult tasks and assume parental roles that expose them to severely stressful situations by assuming responsibilities that, logically, they are not in a position to manage.

The extensive work days that make children assume adult roles, take care of younger siblings, organize housework, and adopt a parent’s mentality of the importance of work sometimes leads children to neglect their studies (social worker, 2017).

The adjusted budget contributes to the urban segregation of the migrant groups that are located in impoverished areas of the city, where they form collaborative networks with other migrants. In these zones of segregation, rented properties abound that generate overcrowded conditions, the risk of fires, problems of coexistence, and lack of protection for children.

One fire that happened was because they cook in the same room. They have the kitchen there, the beds, everything is done in the one or two rooms that they rent. This was due to neglect because the children are left alone (psychologist, 2017).

I have to do home visits, and it upsets me because I have entered some spaces that are very cramped. How do you have sexual relations that are natural—how do you do that, at what moment? We ask ourselves what things these children have seen. Sometimes, children hear things, so that is very worrisome (social worker, 2017).

Because they rent units, 20 people can sometimes occupy a single bathroom. We've seen that sometimes, children come poorly washed, and we understand this reality. Of course, sometimes the bathroom only takes a few minutes, washing your face and that's that. But one realizes how they actually live, taking turns for the bathroom, and that really is the only way it can be for them (psychologist, 2017).

Intangible Cultural Heritage

Good academic performance distinguishes many students from those of migrant families, who often obtain recognition and incentives for their high performance in the celebration of annual school awards. They also stand out for their good use of language and the respect that they show toward their teachers.

The outstanding students are many foreign students and a few Chileans. The best performance was generally nine courses that were awarded, seven foreigners and two Chileans. Also here, they were awarded the best attendance, and many foreign students had the best attendance. Foreign students add and contribute to the school (psychologist, 2017).

The educational agents describe the migrant representatives and their children as participating in and committed to school activities. In artistic endeavors, they show poise and charisma. These spaces allow them to express themselves with greater freedom and without fear of discrimination or criticism for being different.

One teacher commented that she had three Colombian representatives, and the rest were Peruvian, Bolivian, and Chilean. However, those three wanted to organize something to present on Colombia, even if there were only three. They were excited about bringing a typical meal and showing part of their culture; it was something that excited them because that possibility was open (social worker, 2017).

From an early age, their pronunciation and the words they use show a rich vocabulary. What I also once said is that they can express emotions. The accent is what differentiates them. They sometimes tell us words that we do not use, and they themselves explain them so that we understand (psychologist, 2017).

The cultural contribution of migrant students enriches the educational process and nourishes the knowledge and traditions of the different subjects taught by professors. In particular, teaching the Aymara language generates a common ground from the cross-border nature of this cultural group. Thus, cultural diversity is understood as having indispensable value in the training of students.

Their contributions have to do with the previous knowledge they bring, the linguistic topics, linguistic variants, the cultural topics in relation to dances, and songs—knowledge that they contribute and that they share with their classmates. In the Machaq Mara (Aymara New Year), they perform several dances from Bolivia and Peru (teacher, 2017).

What I like most about my practice is transmitting the language. What rewards me the most is the transmission of the linguistic code itself but also the cultural richness that it has. I always like that. It's not that I'm teaching a word because it's a word; no, that word has its meaning, it has its semantics, something behind it. Almost all of the words in Aymara—some are concepts of the culture, such as when we see the *Taypi*, which is the balance of nature, or the *Suma Qamaña*, which is living well—so many words. Each concept of each word talks about something specific about the culture that has to do with principles, with values, so I mix the mystical theme, the theme of values, of culture, and the class enriches me a lot. I can work with students who are from other countries, and if they do not understand, I'll show them. Everything will depend on the ethics of the teacher, how you approach it. How is it in Colombia? What word do you use to name this? You are focusing your class, and you are integrating the ways of seeing the world of these children, which is different (teacher, 2017).

By recognizing and incorporating the diverse cultural heritage of their students, teachers also manage to generate networks between the different subjects, contributing to a more flexible educational curriculum open to the free expression of differences and the promotion of creativity.

We teach cross-sectionally; in physical education, they experience a lot; in history, we deal with the entire subject of territory, we focus on pre-Columbian technology—all of that is taught. The theme of petroglyphs, territories, and archaeological issues are also focused on. In that way, the topics of culture, language, and history are mixed. Some children from small towns in Bolivia have seen petroglyphs (teacher, 2017).

They now perform dances and have even divided one course to schedule two dances, such that one can be the central *cueca* and another the *marinera*, which is Peruvian. There is a dance that is Afro, that has Arica roots but it is African. There are also students who are going to dance that. The *zambos caporales* are from the altiplano here. In Chile, they dance the *zambos*, in our

religious festivals in the north, and in Bolivia and in Peru. Several dances are from other countries. Therefore, we will have children of their nationalities dancing maybe dances of their own, or Chileans dancing dances that are new for us (psychologist, 2017).

The aim of including cultural diversity in educational practice is to promote cultural identity as a tool against social exclusion. Understanding the wealth of origins to reaffirm students facing multiple challenges in the host country is an excellent strategy to stimulate resilience and a sense of personal worth.

I emphasize that they must have autonomy in their decisions on cultural issues, of the pride they must have to be indigenous and to be different. I try to make them understand that they have to be very clear about where they come from, that they have to care for nature and language, and that they have to learn their heritage because that way, they can defend themselves (teacher, 2017).

Therefore, the role of the educational agent is fundamental to materializing intercultural practices. These practices require the commitment, sensitivity, and critical perspective of those who execute them to denaturalize the dynamics of exclusion that are normalized in migratory contexts.

Some immigrant families were surprised when, for example, at the beginning of the year, all students who were enrolled were entitled to a set of school supplies that the Mayor distributed in the municipal schools. All of the children enrolled from such a month to such a month were considered, and then those who are added would get another set. However, they were sometimes surprised because they come with the idea that, here, they will find barriers and problems and that their children will face discrimination and not have the same as the rest (psychologist, 2017).

Sometimes, they do not have a table to do homework—the table is to eat, to put a TV on. They do their homework in the beds. But here, we give them all of the amenities. They have a locker where they can keep their notebooks, each has a bench and a chair, they are all equally comfortable. So it fills us with joy that they are happy with such small things (psychologist, 2017).

I'm going on vacation to Tacna (Peruvian border city) and, for example, I buy something for myself, some book, but am always thinking about bringing these things to school (shows some toys bought in Peru). When you are so immersed in what you do, you are always thinking about what you're going to take to school because, for the recreation period, we are going to blow them away. We want to grab their attention and for them to enjoy it (social worker, 2017).

In short, facilitating the reception processes of migrant families and valuing the traditions and customs of the cultures of origin weakens the borders and promotes equal development opportunities from the particularity of each student. Through this exercise, the key may be found to breaking the stigmas and making schools true communities by promoting social development.

Foreign students and Chileans are mixed here. At recreation time, you line up for a game. There are all nationalities, and everyone laughs. At the end of the day, these feelings are universal. We all have them, the laughs, seeing their happy faces when they have free time, they have fun and they sweat because they gave it all during those recreation periods, and the problems that sometimes lie behind them, in their families, are left aside because they are happy in those minutes (social worker, 2017).

For us, they all have equal rights, but they have their individualities, their particularities, and I believe that all this is a learning process for us. With every interview with a representative, with a child, we are learning new things that they bring from their cultures, and all of it helps me understand them. Knowing their ways of seeing life, their projections, and how their families lived has been a learning experience for me that also helps me understand them better. The view that I have of migrant students is that they contribute to our happiness and add to performance, so I think it is nice what is happening here in school in relation to Chileans and immigrants. It is learning that does not end. In the school, different things happen every day (psychologist, 2017).

Conclusions

Latin America is one of the most violent and inequitable regions in the world. In this scenario, the macroeconomic development that Chile has sustained in recent decades, together with its institutional stability, has transformed it into one of the main destinations for Latin American migrant families. However, the findings of this and other investigations demonstrate that, when arriving in the country, some families find multiple contexts of territorial segregation and social practices that constitute a geography of social exclusion.

During migratory processes, family structures undergo major changes that can cause disagreements between parents and children. In some cases, family reunification involves a thorny path when emotional ties have been damaged after years of estrangement. It is difficult for parents to regain authority over their children who invalidate it as a form of protest over long periods of separation. This situation generates twice the frustration—that of the parents who perceive that the effort they invested in through years of working is not valued by their children and that of the children who resent the time that they were left in the care of other adults.

To these difficulties are added the patterns of the new sociocultural context that sometimes do not conform with those brought from their countries of origin. Parenting models change from one society to another, as do ways of relating to neighbors, coworkers, or peers in schools. A culture shock can occur that stresses the family system and that involves an adjustment period to integrate the differences that the migrants experience when entering the daily life of the receiving society.

At the labor level, migrants face precarious conditions marked by intense days and reduced wages. Almost two decades ago, the 2002 Census revealed that intraregional migrants suffered from labor segmentation in Chile that was limited to the areas of

domestic work, informal commerce, and construction (Martínez, 2003). This situation is reinforced in the northern border of the country that constitutes a circulation space that allows migrants to come and go, favoring the prevalence of gender-biased work and that is oriented to care and temporary domestic services (Tapia & Ramos, 2013).

At the neighborhood level, the overcrowding conditions in which families live in the most impoverished areas of the city are evident. In some cases, old mansions are sublet among several families of different nationalities, which increases the likelihood of fires and drives problems of coexistence. In other cases, the migrant families are located in camps of extreme poverty that, despite the sustained efforts of the Chilean State and nongovernmental organizations, persist in the peripheral areas of the cities. There they build houses out of light materials, and they lack basic services, permits, and legalization. For that reason, they enter into constant conflicts with the municipal governments and the neighbors of the surrounding sectors who blame them for the increasing degradation of the neighborhoods.

These discouraging backgrounds highlight the geography of social exclusion in the workplace and at neighborhood levels. Thus, an ecosystem of segregation is configured with certain territorial limits but also with social practices that perpetuate it over time. However, a fundamental point of interest for this research is the schools that are located within this geography of social exclusion because they can challenge social exclusion by becoming spaces for encounters and cooperation among the actors that participate in them. That is, the school space can be presented as the appropriate place to become aware of these exclusions and approach them from an intercultural approach.

In this regard, Arias and Campos (2011, p. 11) pointed out that the territory should be considered an articulating actor of its problem and its solution. Therefore, the barriers to social inclusion are not limited to the material sphere but also relate to the spaces for building the social and political link. Consequently, schools that enjoy a heterogeneous interacting social composition can stimulate equity in the distribution of social capital assets.

Prior to the arrival of migrant students to Chilean schools, the State established a series of measures to guarantee their right to education. The delivery of a Provisional School Identifier (IPE) was established for students who enter the school system without a visa or permanent residence. With the IPE, students gain access to a definitive registration even if they do not have an identity card, maintaining the benefits of the nutritional and social support programs.

However, these measures must also advance toward the creation of educational programs that promote the cultural heritage that migrant families bring to schools. This recommendation is based on the findings of this research that reveal how the educational community—by establishing spaces of dialogue and valuing cultural diversity—can advance in counteracting the social suffering caused by exclusion. The objective is not to fall into the idealization or victimization of migrant families but to focus attention on the possibilities of collective development that they bring with their arrival as well as social responsibility to meet the needs that develop from the processes of population mobility. This approach could ensure a better reception that promotes and respects the human rights of migrant families and that serves to prevent the negative consequences associated with the process of social segregation.

In short, cultural heritage allows us to assess the cultural capital that students bring to their educational communities, making visible the common origins of Latin American societies and the heritage of colonialism from which racism emanates that, until now, has defined the social organization of the continent. In this regard, Huerta and Domínguez (2013, p. 12) promoted the incorporation of migrant heritages in the educational context, noting that the pathways and itineraries that students and their families go through are transformed into other manifestations of migration and paths of art, heritage, and artistic education.

It should be noted that the promotion of the social inclusion of intraregional migrants is of vital relevance in the northern border of Chile because nationalism on both sides of the border is fed by the incessant revision of the old geopolitical conflicts that defined the territorial limits between Chile and its neighboring countries. However, this constant political tension among States prevents focusing attention on the social suffering faced by migrants. These migrants, on the one hand, are forced to leave their countries of origin and, on the other hand, must resist the complexities that emanate from the reception process in the destination country. Whereas governments occupy their time and valuable resources in sustaining demands, divisive discourses, and ethnocentrism, migrants must survive in the geographies of social exclusion.

In this scenario, children who have no responsibility for the harsh living conditions in which they must survive end up facing the consequences of the inefficient management of their countries' social development. Therefore, schools should be thought of as spaces of protection, inclusion, and generation of opportunities for the vital development of students.

We can conclude that intraregional migrants escape misery, violence, corruption, and lack of opportunities, but they arrive in a country that imposes new barriers to achieving better living conditions. Faced with this situation, inquiring into the experiences of the schools that host migrant families is interesting and makes visible the commitment and strategies used by the educational communities to counteract discrimination.

In short, intraregional migration confronts us with the enormous challenge of breaking the boundaries of the geography of social exclusion that remains entrenched in Latin American societies and thereby allows the possibility of new horizons that enable us to move toward a continent where migration is understood as an alternative and not a forced survival strategy.

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