

# CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND EDUCATION: A VIEW FROM THE SARAGURO ETHNIC GROUP - ECUADOR

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## RESUMEN

From cultural diversity it is possible to recognize and visualize integrating aspects of societies and cultures. Colonization has left as an inheritance a series of misunderstandings in relation to the presence of ethnic groups throughout the country, especially a low valuation of society. The educational institution, through education, could be the right place for children of the Saraguro ethnic group to share with other cultures and other ways of conceiving the world. The Saraguro are a culture that has remained in time, recognized in Ecuador for its presence and development. This work shows, from education, the integration of children from other cultures, especially the Saraguro, and shelters them from a dominant culture. Tolerance, respect and coexistence are necessary to recover spaces in education and society. The educational experiences collaborate with the views towards diversity and allow rethinking the need to coexist in and from the educational spaces towards a plural society such as Ecuador. This experience, from the Saraguro ethnic group, shows the possibilities and limitations of education and the importance of coexistence. Finally, it is necessary that each culture is recognized in society as an integral part and that, from education, processes are strengthened and work is done for cultural diversity and, on the other hand, society in general should be unconditionally open to each culture.

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## INTRODUCTION

For decades, the Nation-State of Latin American people denied the coloniality of indigenous and Afro-descendant people, “*particularly in their representation as communities with their own identities and visions*” (Gomez, p.13). This situation generated mass exclusion, racism, prejudices rooted in race, abandonment, poverty and an implicit condemnation to be nationals.

The heterogeneity that characterizes Latin America makes it rich in languages and cultures. Hence, to speak of the need for interculturality, especially in education, brings to mind words such as tolerance, diversity, coexistence and respect. However, the directionality of educational projects tends to ignore this view and to impose, in some way, a dominance of the national over “*other*” peoples. This is manifested in the curriculum and in the homogenization of education that insists on these “*other*” individuals, distancing them from their own identities.

Interculturality, a necessary concept for the coexistence of peoples, is understood by Walsh (2009) as follows:

as a process based on the right to peaceful coexistence, recognition and mutual respect among all nationalities, peoples and other social sectors, a process in which the State becomes the social, political and legal guarantor, in order to coexist with equal rights, social justice and in conditions of peace and harmony. (p. 102).

The reality of Ecuador, which it shares with the different countries of Latin America, is pluricultural and multilingual, with different ways and desires of seeing and constructing worlds, but also inequitable because it hides and homologates social diversity, generating inequalities in relationships. “*The consequences have been expressed in discriminations, exclusions, prejudices, stereotypes and even “covert violence” against native populations, who are the bearers of different worldviews*” (Camboni and Juarez, 2020, p.8).

Cultural diversity is considered a foundation of the cultural heritage of the different countries of the world and refers to the interaction, harmony and mutual respect between the various cultures that inhabit the same place and the same time. The Unesco Universal

Declaration on Cultural Diversity reaffirms the human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and affirms that respect for the diversity of

cultures, tolerance, dialogue and cooperation, in a climate of mutual trust and understanding, are among the best guarantors of peace and security, aspiring to “*greater solidarity based on the recognition of cultural diversity, on the awareness of the unity of humankind and on the development of intercultural exchanges*” (Unesco 2021. n.p.).

The different cultures that inhabit our region require dialogue to ensure peace and avoid clashes between cultures and civilizations. In this way, Unesco elevates cultural diversity to the category of “*common heritage of humanity*” (s/p), “*as necessary for humankind as biological diversity is for living organisms*” (s/p). The Declaration insists that each individual must recognize not only otherness in all its forms, but also the plurality of his or her own identity within equally plural societies. This is the only way to preserve cultural diversity in its dual dimension of evolutionary process and source of expression, creation and innovation.

Thus, a constant preservation of cultural diversity is required and to this end, it refers to identity. Diversity and pluralism and in Article 1, it considers “*cultural diversity as a common heritage of humanity*” (s/p). Moving forward with this declaration, Article 2 proposes to move from cultural diversity to cultural pluralism, thus addressing the diversification of our societies and the will to coexist in a democratic context. In Article 3, alluding to the importance of countries recognizing and protecting cultural diversity, it points out that this would be a “*development factor*” (s/p), supporting the influence in all sectors of society, economic, political, social, intellectual, etc. It also refers to human rights as inseparable from each person and to cultural freedoms and rights. It is necessary that each society is responsible for guaranteeing access to cultural diversity for all its inhabitants, including freedom of expression, pluralism, equality, multilingualism, artistic expressions and knowledge.

The cultural diversity of the 21st century, accompanied by the globalization of societies, contributes to form multicultural and inclusive educational centers, it becomes essential to integrate educational experiences in classrooms that promote the acquisition of essential competencies to foster intercultural coexistence in the entire educational community (Hernandez, 2021).

Observing educational experiences allows us to see “*diverse ways of being and being in the world as differentiated logics and distinctive memories*” (Vergara, 2010, p. 15). Each

person contributes in his or her uniqueness, each culture collaborating in educational spaces. In this way, the children of the different ethnic groups, especially the Saraguro, contribute that relationship of the world together with the people with whom they relate at school.

The educational space is, by nature, where different cultures converge. In Ecuador, a multicultural and multilingual country, cultural diversity is present in all its nature and, therefore, it is necessary to rescue and socialize from one of the ethnic groups present in the community: the Saraguro ethnic group.

It is not easy to recognize cultural diversity since the dominant and prevailing cultural patterns are imposed in social and educational spaces without further reflection. As a consequence, the following can be considered, according to Cardozo (2020):

Manipulation mechanisms: fashion, standardization, trends, which end up turning the human being into a cog in the wheel of the dominant culture. This problem is transferred to educational institutions, where different manifestations that deny cultural diversity are observed: exclusion, harassment, mockery, selectivity and homogenization, to which students are exposed daily. (paragraph 4).

Educational systems in Latin America have constructed a single, universal or Western way of thinking that leaves indigenous knowledge isolated and separated from what should be learned and taught.

Indigenous people have their own ways of seeing the world and of being in relationship with it, with the universe, and with other people. The traditional educational processes are carefully elaborated from the observation of nature adapting, from the animal and vegetable worlds, from the modalities of survival to extract the substance and use the necessary materials for the confection of their instruments. All of this is understandable through demonstration and observation, accompanied by stories full of reflection and that build learning processes. (Barnhardt, 2005, p. 10)

The intercultural and educational experience is manifested in all schools in Ecuador. The Saraguro ethnic group is one of the many that characterize this country. Boys and girls, every year, leave their home contexts to join formal education. It is here, where interculturality is put into practice, from the reception, recognition and positive acceptance of differences. To this end, the educational system must prioritize cultural development, the search for recognition by students, adjust the curriculum and promote healthy coexistence with respect

to differences.

It can be said that, from the Saraguro ethnic group, sending children to formal education is a challenge. Since, from their own way of conceiving the world, language and clothing, the incorporation to the classroom does not occur in a familiar context. The education of boys and girls requires the necessary adjustments for full entry into formal education. It is necessary to attend to all the needs of native peoples and communities, recovering their history, strengthening their identities and generating the necessary spaces for social interaction that constitutes them as relevant actors.

### **1. The Saraguro culture of Ecuador**

Ordonez Sotomayor and Ochoa Cueva (2020) maintain that there is no precise information on the ethnogenesis of this population; however, some believe it has an Inca origin (Ogburn, 2007). It has also been considered that part of the population was forced to come from Cuzco (Peru), or from the vicinity of Lake Titicaca (Bolivia), with the rise of this empire. As these civilizations were very territorialist, their presence and permanence in the sector was determined by the border between the Palta culture of the southwest. It is characterized for being *“one of the ethnic groups that best preserves its culture and traditions”* (Ordonez and Ochoa, 2020 p. 1).

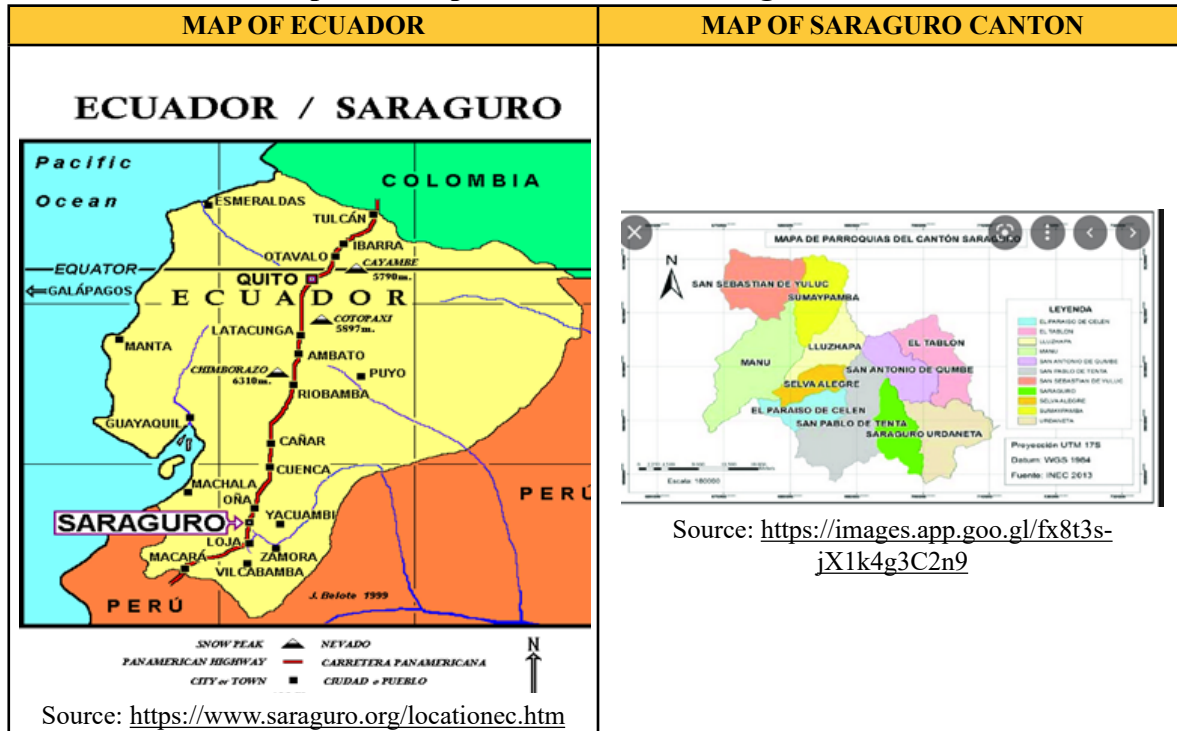
It is known as a people of Kichwa nationality who mostly live in the Saraguro canton, province of Loja, Ecuador, although they generally speak Spanish, Kichwa is also spoken.

According to the data reflected by the National Institute of Statistics and Census of Ecuador, the Saraguro canton has a population of 30,183 inhabitants between indigenous and mestizos, of which 16.060 are women and 14.123 are men.

There is no certain etymology recognized for the general term, however, in the Kichwa dialect of Saraguro there is the following definition: Sara is equal to corn and Saraguro refers to dried corn cobs (Belote, 1998).

The Saraguro people live mainly in southern Ecuador. The Saraguro canton, province of Loja, which is administratively divided into cantons, is located in southern Ecuador (see map N°1). Saraguro is one of the largest cantons in the province, with an approximate area of 1080 km, its altitude ranges from 1000 to 3800 m a.s.l., and its climatic range is from 8 to 26°C (46 to 79°F).

Map N°1: Map of Ecuador and Saraguro Canton





The Saraguro people celebrate the four “*raymis*”, which are festivals of Andean origin; that is to say, typical of the indigenous culture and tradition. These festivities coincide with the four seasons of the year; the following is an explanation of these festivities by a member of the community:

We have the “*koya-raymi*” (September 21), also called “*killa raymi*” in the north it is the moon, it is a woman, a grandmother. It is also the sowing, it is the fertility celebration. Then we have the “*kapak raymi*” (December 21), which in the Catholic religion represents Christmas, in the Andean spirituality we have this celebration that means the feast of power, the feast in honor of authority; then here we have the transmission of command through the baton. The “*pawkar raymi*” (March 21), is called in the north the feast of flowers and fruits, in the Andean world it is the celebration of the new crops, it is a feminine feast, the green, the water, in honor of mother nature, the “*Pachamama*”; and we have, finally, the “*Inti raymi*” (June 21) very popular, it is the feast of the sun in honor of “*Taita inti*”, the celebration of the harvests, the ripe grain, the ripe products, like corn; there we have the sun, but in the Andean world it is dual, it is the sun and the moon, the duality: “*man-woman, the masculine being and the feminine being*” (Luis Lozano Shingre, community leader of Ilincho. Hostal Inti Wasi, Amauta).

From their clothing, fortunately, the self-styled “runas” of Saraguro, have remained in constant possession of their culture that is expressed in: The “Kichwa” language; their black and white attire (shorts, poncho and hat the men, and the women “anaco” or skirt, blouse, overcoat and hat); their long hair gathered in braid, called “jimba” without difference of age or sex. These features are so deeply rooted that rejection of them constitutes the abandonment of their ethnicity, to give way to being considered as white. Masson (2005), describes it as: historical-cultural and ethnic-social self-identification of the indigenous segment; this construction or reconstruction of identity is possible thanks to the constant search for their roots, their rights, their culture and also to the degree of preparation and intellectual training that some of its members have.

**Image N°1: Saraguro men’s and women’s clothing**

WOMAN FROM SARAGURO	MAN FROM SARAGURO
 <p>Source: <a href="https://www.corape.org.ec/centrodedocumentacion/documento/item/vestimenta-del-pueblo-saraguro">https://www.corape.org.ec/centrodedocumentacion/documento/item/vestimenta-del-pueblo-saraguro</a></p>	 <p>Source: <a href="https://images.app.goo.gl/K5sZPnAzE8uLS-gQK6">https://images.app.goo.gl/K5sZPnAzE8uLS-gQK6</a></p>

**Image N°2: Saraguro children’s clothing**



Source: <https://images.app.goo.gl/bEZb6iqPQinqEbxB7>

## 2. Organization of the educational system in Ecuador

The educational system is organized according to the parameters established by the Ministry of Education of Ecuador, specifically in the canton Saraguro there is Hispanic and intercultural bilingual education, each of them has its own curriculum, appropriate to their cultural context and especially to their language in this case is the Kichwa,

The 2008 Constitution established the right to education and in its Art. 27 it mentions the following.

**Art. 27.-** Education will be centered on the human being and will guarantee its holistic development, within the framework of respect for human rights, sustainable environment and democracy; it will be participatory, compulsory, intercultural, democratic, inclusive and diverse, of quality and warmth; it will promote gender equity, justice, solidarity and peace; it will stimulate the critical sense, art and physical culture, individual and community initiative, and the development of skills and abilities to create and work.

**Article 343.-** of the Constitution of the Republic establishes a national system of education which shall have as its purpose the development of individual and collective capacities and potentialities of the population, which make learning possible, and the generation and use of knowledge, techniques, knowledge, arts and culture. The system shall be centered on the learner, and shall operate in a flexible and dynamic, inclusive, effective and efficient manner. The national education system shall integrate an intercultural vision in accordance with the geographic, cultural and linguistic diversity of the country, and respect for the rights of communities, peoples and nationalities.

In this Constitutional framework, the Organic Law of Intercultural Education was issued, which among its principles referred to the subject of study include the following:

To guarantee the intercultural bilingual education system, in which the main language of education will be the language of the respective nationality and Spanish as the language of intercultural relations, under the guidance of the State's public policies and with full respect for the rights of the communities, peoples and nationalities.

Interculturality and plurinationality guarantee the recognition, respect and recreation of the cultural expressions of the different nationalities, cultures and peoples that make up Ecuador, as well as their ancestral knowledge, promoting unity in diversity, intercultural



dialogue and recognizes the right of all individuals, communities, peoples and nationalities to access face-to-face or virtual services and works of the school library in their own language and in the official languages of intercultural relations;

**Table N°1. Organization of Ecuador’s educational system**

Levels		
INITIAL	INITIAL 1	FROM 0 to 3 YEARS OLD
	INITIAL 2	FROM 3 to 5 YEARS OLD
BASIC	PREPARATORY	5 to 6 YEARS OLD
	ELEMENTARY	2nd, 3rd and 4th grades 6 to 8 YEARS OLD
	MID-LEVEL	5th, 6th and 7th grades 9 TO 11 YEARS OLD
	SUPERIOR	8th, 9th and 10th grades from 12 TO 14 years old
BACCALAUREATE	FIRST	15 years old
	SECOND	16 years old
	THIRD	17 years old

Source: Ecuador’s Ministry of Education (2022)

The Secretariat of the Intercultural Bilingual Education System implements the Intercultural Bilingual Education System Model (MOSEIB). This is an educational model developed by indigenous nationalities and peoples for the full exercise of their rights and the validity of their ancestral wisdom. It strengthens the quality of education with cultural and linguistic relevance in order to develop the cognitive, psychomotor and affective skills and abilities of the students of nationalities and peoples in bilingual intercultural educational institutions.

Based on the proposals of the MOSEIB, the Secretariat is in charge of implementing the curricular proposal and elaborating didactic materials for the country’s Community Intercultural Bilingual Educational Centers (CIBECs), the name given to the schools where IBE is implemented.

This model allows for education that respects the context, cultural traditions and above all the ancestral language, since the Plurinational State of Ecuador recognizes Kichwa as an official language at the same level as Spanish.

### **3. Diversity in education: the singular and the plural**

School education has tried to achieve educational quality as a goal based on the individualization of the educational process, Martín and Mauri (1996 p.14) argue that *“the quality of the teaching-learning process depends fundamentally on the ability to adjust the teacher’s intervention to the varied educational needs of the students”* (p. 12), i.e. it is the teacher who has to adapt in a singular and plural way to his group of students and not the students to the teacher, In Urunuela’s words (2009)

the role of the teacher is key to the creation and development of a positive or negative classroom climate, as he/she has the capacity and responsibility to implement initiatives and actions that allow him/her to effectively address the differences that arise in the classroom. (p. 59).

For Muntaner (2020), *“education in school institutions is faced with a double dichotomy: a) The dominance of uniformity over diversity b) The categorization of students versus equal opportunities”* (p. 3). These two elements are constantly present in schools and, on the other hand, from the teachers’ point of view, require constant revision.

The diversity of thought allows generating different ways of thinking and acting that shape the personality of each individual, this diversity is mainly evident in educational centers since it is the propitious space to interact with various people in an attempt to insert themselves in the social, cultural, sporting and academic environment based on the analysis proposed by (Chul-Han, 2017)

The effort to be authentic and not to resemble anyone but oneself triggers a permanent comparison with others. The logic of comparing by equating causes otherness to barter into sameness. This is how the authenticity of otherness consolidates social conformity. It only allows those differences that conform to the system, that is, to diversity (p.14).

In Ecuador, educational inclusion is a public policy whose obligatory nature falls on all public officials, mainly on teachers who have the task of shaping their educational practices for each of their students. The inclusive approach seeks to seek school success for all students, allowing them to overcome all the difficulties that arise in the development of the teaching-learning process; it should be added that addressing diversity will prevent conflicts in the classroom; however, the great challenge for teachers is to put this theory into practice in order to contribute significantly to solving the current problems of society.

This statement agrees with Urunuela (2009), who “*compares the way of planning our task of teaching with the Myth of Procruste’s Giant’s Bed which resembles the current way of planning in which it is the student who must accommodate to the subject and not the other way around*” (p.95). Where is the attention to diversity? (p.95). This question is the one that will revolve around the experience that will be described below.

According to the Council of Nationalities and Peoples of Ecuador (CODENPE), there are 14 nationalities and 18 indigenous peoples in the country. In a territory that is not so extensive that it is inevitable to speak of diversity and interculturality; however, despite being such a small and diverse country, there are many practices of social and educational exclusion whose eradication has become a challenge for the State and all those who make it up.

#### **4. The educational experience of Saraguro children**

Experience, according to Larrosa (1995), is that exteriority of the event that is not reduced to the fact itself but is related to words, ideas, feelings, knowledge, power and will. In this case, the experience is the one built by each Saraguan child at school. That which happens to a person and which has to do with a movement, with subjectivities, appreciations, comparisons, with his interiority and exteriority, is what builds the possibilities of education. The experience marks in a positive or negative way what the student perceives in his context, the opportunities and threats it gives him and the possibilities he has within the institution called school.

This observation takes place in the “*Alonso de Mercadillo*” School of General Basic Education, located in the city of Loja, Ecuador. It is an urban educational institution, of a fiscal type, with a population of 1030 students between men and women distributed in the levels of pre-school, high school, elementary and middle school, from 3 to 11 years of age. The socioeconomic context is diverse because it welcomes all economic strata, the education is secular, multicultural and inclusive in which children from all corners of the country who share academic, social, cultural and sports activities and unquestionably share cultural traits of each region are educated.

In this Institution of Basic Education, a new school year begins and with it begins a host of new experiences, which will be shared throughout an educational process that in Ecuador has a duration of 10 months, to one of these classrooms, a student who belongs to the Saraguro Ethnic Group is enrolled, His cultural identity is reflected in the way he speaks, dresses and relates to others. Because of his identity traits, he feels different from others and

is afraid to come to the classroom for fear of being rejected or discriminated against by his teachers or classmates; However, on the first day of class, he feels very satisfied because his teacher has implemented a number of active strategies that have allowed him to be included in a satisfactory and cooperative way in his new work group.

The teaching-learning process usually begins with a period of adaptation or pre-training, which consists of providing a space for both teachers and students to integrate and coax themselves as a human group prior to the development of the academic process, which is why the teacher plans recreational, motivational and integration activities, The teacher plans recreational, motivational and integration activities mainly to welcome new students, group dynamics in which students participate in playful games and active methodologies that allow them to form identity and strengthen personal relationships in order to configure a classroom climate suitable for the development of academic activities.

Academic activities are planned focused on raising the sense of empathy in teachers and students to prevent situations of harassment or discrimination among peers, the work done by the teacher in charge is aligned with what Walsh (2009) proposes regarding the perspective of interculturality.

Here, the intercultural perspective is rooted in the recognition of cultural diversity and difference, with the goal of its inclusion within the established social structure. From this perspective -which seeks to promote dialogue, coexistence and tolerance- interculturality is “functional” to the existing system, does not touch the causes of social and cultural asymmetry and inequality, nor does it *“question the rules of the game”*, and is therefore perfectly compatible with the logic of the existing neo-liberal model. (p.3).

However, as the days went by, a group of classmates began a series of mistreatments against these students, they used their cultural traits to generate harassment and exclusion which greatly affected the classroom climate and learning environment in which he developed daily, this affectation was very serious to the point that the student in question lost the taste for attending school which motivated his parents to seek help from the teacher and the authorities of the Educational Institution.

Faced with this, the authorities proceed to carry out a restorative intervention in order to put an end to the exclusion problem that has arisen in the Educational Institution, they begin by making it known that inclusion is a public policy that is included in the Constitution

of the Country and in the legal Laws and Regulations of Education; moreover, in Ecuador it is called LOEI Organic Law of Intercultural Education and therefore its faithful compliance is mandatory for all citizens of the country.

Walsh (2009) argues that since its beginnings, interculturality has meant a struggle in which issues such as cultural identification, right and difference, autonomy and nation have been in permanent dispute. It is not strange that one of the central spaces of this struggle is education, as a political, social and cultural institution: the space of construction and reproduction of values, attitudes and identities and of the historical-hegemonic power of the State. For this very reason, the proposal that interculturality should be the axis and duty of education is substantial. However, the genealogy of its use in the field of education is marked by a series of motives, tensions and disputes. In the following, we explore its use, development and significance in three moments: intercultural bilingual education, the educational reforms of the 1990s and the emerging educational policies of the 21st century (p.5).

According to Urunuela (2009), these techniques allow *“breaking automatic responses and introducing a mechanism between emotion and response, this ability implies being open to positive and negative emotional states”* (p. 145). The aim was to increase emotional intelligence in order to transmit a sense of security based mainly on listening and active communication among all members of the educational community, especially in the classroom where this situation was detected.

Currently, modern society is unaware of its own culture, which causes a loss of identity and values, as it has progressively lost knowledge of the environment, traditions, stories, legends and new cultures are being adopted.

Education is considered a fundamental element for people’s lives, where the effective strengthening of intelligent and creative thinking is put into play based on the aptitudes, capacities and competencies of each child, giving priority to strengthening the ancestral wisdom that belongs to the indigenous communities with a teaching governed by their principles, knowledge, traditions and customs that are part of their cultural identity. In this sense, interculturality requires a preponderant effort to achieve equity without discrimination of any kind.

One of the activities that generated the greatest impact was the reading of legends focused on the importance of maintaining the country’s identity, using a reading based on

dialogues in which all the students participated by dramatizing the actions written in them. This work is based on applying a didactic strategy that favors the identity of the native peoples. For the development of this proposal, didactic scripts based on oral traditions were used to rescue ancestral cultural values in the Kichwa community of Saraguro.

The text *Legends of the Saraguro People* by Rosario de María Zhingre was used as a reference, this text was sponsored by the Institute of Languages, Sciences and Ancestral Knowledge of Ecuador published in Quito Ecuador in 2017. In this text there are legends written in the Kichwa Language and translated into Spanish.

This activity allowed the students to raise the sense of empathy because it gave them the opportunity to know that diversity unites and magnifies us, the group began to feel admiration for the history and culture of the Saraguro people initiating a new period of adaptation and inclusion towards the original student of this ethnicity, the authorities and families were pleased with the actions of the teacher who did not have to incur punitive measures, but on the contrary used reading as a source of inclusion; As a result, the classroom climate improved and the learning environment became the ideal scenario for understanding that the true path of education is the humanization of students, teachers and society in general.

## CONCLUSIONS

The need to recognize, care for and respect cultures and peoples in all countries, helps children of different ethnic groups in Ecuador to have access to education. The Saraguro ethnic group is a culture that coexists and remains in time. Education, a symbol of modernity, tends to homologate the knowledge of children in the face of a dominant culture that recognizes little of the uniqueness of the native peoples. However, these experiences allow us to give recognition to educational work in intercultural contexts.

The presentation of these children, different from the common, singular in their origin, with a way of dressing and speaking, is striking. But, at the same time, it gives hope for integration, recognition and appreciation of the singular as a unique way of life. This child represents all those who begin a school process and who do not share the dominant culture; on the contrary, they are part of a social group with ancestral knowledge, with an understanding of nature and a way of living life as their ancestors have done.

Ecuador's public education policies are in line with the growing incorporation of children from different ethnic groups. However, educators must be prepared to work with

diversity. It is not enough just to have a public policy; it requires teachers committed to developing the guidelines of the Ministry of Education of Ecuador and those of UNESCO.

Educational Inclusion is a public policy of Ecuador, therefore, its implementation and compliance is mandatory. However, it depends on the people and their understanding of the concept of Cultural Diversity. With this, it is possible to think of teachers as cultural mediators.

Diversity is part of us, we have to assume it with responsibility, for which the promotion of cultural identity is essential. It requires people and teachers willing to take up this challenge and develop it in the culture of the educational institutions in the different environments of Ecuador. It is here where it becomes relevant what Unesco (2010, p.1) points out in *“Investing in cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue”* showing that countries must invest in public policies that guarantee respect for cultural diversity.

The correct configuration of learning environments and classroom climate will allow the development of a meaningful education whose strength is ethnic, cultural and thought diversity. The children of the Saraguro ethnic group are present in education, they shape it and share it with others. This is the richness of cultural diversity that must be emphasized, insisted upon and socialized to future generations.

Thinking about cultural diversity is possible, if we place it as a challenge in education.

A possibility of rediscovery of each child with his or her singularities, with his or her past, traditions and contribution to coexistence in school and in society. Education must strengthen local cultures, otherwise the passage of time will end up erasing them and losing an important cultural heritage of this country. As Sartori (2001) points out, we are in a multicultural society that requires *“convergent policies from within the society itself .... To seek channels of understanding”* (p. 210).

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