International Institute of Social Studies

Erasmus

Tackling Exclusion in Higher Education:
Experiences from Colombian youth in the 'Ser Pilo Paga' program

A Research Paper presented by:

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(Colombia)

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Major:

Social Policy for Development

(SPD)

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November 2017

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This document represents part of the author's study programme while at the Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

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List of Acronyms

SPP	Ser Pilo Paga (Being Smart Pays-off)
MEN	Ministry of National Education
ICETEX	Colombian Institute of Educative Credits and Technical Studies Abroad
DNP	National Planning Department
CNA	National Accreditation Council for Higher Education
SENA	National Learning Service
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
FARC	Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces
ELN	National Liberation Army

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Exclusion from the Colombian higher education system has been a constant over the years for vulnerable female and male youth. The internal armed conflict, the limited coverage offered by the State, and the configuration of the system itself have deprived a considerable portion of the population of education and better life chances. To improve this situation, the recent governments have implemented many initiatives that mainly seek the enhancement of access. However, few have been the results. 'Ser Pilo Paga' is currently the most popular and polemic program that has the mentioned goal.

This study draws on empirical evidence of a group of eighteen beneficiaries, a government official as well as secondary data to analyse the social dynamics produced by the implementation of the program. It demonstrates how those dynamics are being influenced by long processes of social exclusion, traditional policy structures, and social class differences. Simultaneously, the research shows the way these intersections interfere in the individual positionalities of the actors within the new context brought by the program. The findings unpacked hidden failures that affect the ultimate goal of tackling social exclusion in a broader sense, beyond the financial alleviation.

Relevance to Development Studies

This research contributes to expose and support the importance of social features in micro and macro levels for policy-making matters. It reaffirms aspects to analyse and improve other experiences that aim to alleviate social exclusion and develop better education systems.

Keywords

Higher Education, Social Exclusion, Youth, University, Colombia.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. Contextualizing the problem

"Colombia will be the most educated country in Latin America by 2025"(DNP 2015: 83). This is one of the goals that the current Colombian government has established in its National Development Plan. A highly ambitious aspiration that has required the implementation of several initiatives to boost the education in the country. One of the most popular initiatives is the 'Ser Pilo Paga' (SPP) program, which main aim is to tackle the exclusion of the low-income population from the higher education system. It is through this program that the government covers the total cost of the academic program selected by the beneficiary, and gives subsidies for housing and other expenses. It tries to improve a social situation that has its origins in the history.

Historically, access to higher education in Colombia has been restricted and exclusionary. It is common for people with limited resources to be left out of the system due to multiple intersecting factors. Among others, the following three are relevant for this paper: First, the internal armed conflict has lowered the value of education as a priority for the significant portion of the population who have been victims of violence. The consequences of the conflict include forced displacement, minefields around educational institutions, forced recruitment, sexual abuse, threats to teachers among other situations as some of the acts that have hindered access to education (Fontanini. 2014) in its first stages. This condition prevents the participation of the affected in the following levels of the education system. Second, the coverage provided by the Colombian State does not include the entire national territory satisfactorily. There is a vast difference between center and periphery, as the capital city and other main urban areas have the majority of higher education institutions (MEN 2015b). Third, the system is composed of both public and private institutions, where the latter has a significant participation in the supply of academic programs due to the current amount of that kind of schools; in total, there are 287 higher education institutions of which 206 are private (MEN 2016a). According to the current Colombian legislation, these private institutions have certain legal autonomies that allow them to accommodate the price of their programs according to their considerations, and within the parameters given by the government (Congreso de la República de Colombia 1992). This situation has provoked the commodification of education with private institutions and limited spaces in the more affordable public universities which sustains inequality.

Given these factors, exclusion understood as a cumulative and transferable process that deprives of capabilities and enforcement of rights parts of the population that have specific features in a multi-dimensional sense, such as the education (De Haan 2000, Sen 2000, Okwany 2010), has historically characterized the Colombian higher education system. This inequality means that just a privileged and limited part of the society can get into the system and enjoy its benefits.

"In 2011 while 53% of young people from Colombia's richest quintile were enrolled in TE (Tertiary Education), the figure was just 9% in the poorest quintile" (OECD 2016). It means that a large part of the population is currently deprived of access to social goods and being educated. That same portion is more likely to have fewer job opportunities and high-standards positions than the ones from the most affluent part.

In spite of above condition, some initiatives are seeking the improvement of this situation. The current stage shows a better panorama with a broader access; nevertheless, there is still a long way to go to achieve the desired level of full and easy access for anyone who wants to pursue a professional career. In general terms, the coverage rate from a national perspective has improved during the last twelve years. It went from 28.4% in 2005 to a nearly 47% in 2015 (MEN 2015a). A closer look will show that even when numbers go up, the concentration of it is in the urban areas of the country. Peripheral regions such as the Amazonian region or the eastern plains of the country has a coverage rate of less than 20%, while Bogota, the capital district, holds a rate of 101% (Ibid).

These rates can be considered as a reflection of the reality when in 2005, 15% of the national budget was focused on the war on drugs and against the guerrilla groups, while the education sector only received a 5% of it (DNP 2014). Then, during the negotiations of the already signed peace treaty and a government focused on the aftermath of post-conflict, the shares in 2015 were off 13.1% and 13.4% correspondingly (Ibid).

From the real practice, it is possible to identify three options for students to access higher education: 1) They can obtain loans from the government through the specialized institution the Colombian Institute of Educative Credits and Technical Studies Abroad (ICETEX) or from other financial institutions. Among other conditions, this option requires a co-signer that can back-up the credit (ICETEX. 2017), which is difficult to have for someone who lives in an environment of vulnerability. 2) They can try to enroll in the public universities where the costs are minimal, but the quotas are few and quite competitive (OECD 2012). The admission exam for the best public universities requires substantial bases on multiple knowledge areas that sometimes are not entirely given in the high schools because they are not well-resourced. This aspect will be expanded in the following chapters. 3) They can get high scores on the national test and apply for discounts or scholarships that some private universities give to outstanding students, such as the 'Quiero Estudiar'[1] program of Universidad de los Andes (UNIANDES 2013). For the last two options, it is normal for students to take additional courses focused on how to make those exams. Sometimes those courses are offered by the high schools, but there are also others provided by private third parties.

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[1] 'I want to study'. It is a program that follows a similar logic of the SPP but is managed solely by the university. It only accepts one student per high school.

Against this backdrop, the government is implementing various initiatives that are called 'Proyectos Cierre de Brechas'[2]. According to the MEN (2017), those projects include: 1) The strengthening of technical and vocational education by financially supporting the creation and consolidation of that kind of programs. They are less costly and shorter in time. It is important to highlight the existence of the National Learning Service (SENA), which is an entity of the Ministry of Labor that offers free professional technician and technological degrees (SENA. 2017). 2) The regionalization and flexibility of the higher education, whose purpose is to bring higher education opportunities in all the regions of the country. Its main strategy is the Regional Centers of Higher Education (CERES), which were created by the previous government. These centers are located in specific towns and offer higher education programs, normally related to the main economic activities of each region. They are supported by the national government and managed by the local and regional governments with the help of medium level universities. 3) The publication of the "Guidelines - Inclusive Higher Education Policy", which "purports to guide the multiple higher education institutions towards the development of institutional policies focused on inclusive education. The main goal is the inclusion of those communities that have been traditionally excluded from the system due to the national context and history"[3]. 4) The incentives to avoid dropouts in the higher education system, which main objective is to achieve that the majority of students who enter to the system graduate satisfactorily. The strategies to do this are the promotion and implementation of retention programs, the monitoring of the drop-out statistics and the consolidation of vocational and professional orientation programs. 5) The strengthening of the financing of higher education, whose goal is to augment the public and private financing sources and financing strategies to enhance the access and completion of students within the system. In this regard, there are two strategies: the reinforcement of credits with compensated rates for higher education institutions, and the creation and promotion of grant-credit programs to subsidize tuition fees and some living expenses of the vulnerable population. The 'Ser Pilo Paga' program is one of those that was launched to fulfill the latter aim.

1.1.1. The 'Ser Pilo Paga' (Being Smart Pays-off) program

Following that new trend of giving more importance to social aspects of the Colombian society, the presidency of the Republic launched the program through the Ministry of National Education. This program, which can be translated as 'Being Smart Pays-off', aims to tackle the exclusion in higher education. SPP tries to reach the most vulnerable and outstanding young people to include them in the higher education system by subsidizing their studies in higher education. The ultimate objectives "are to reach the goal of being the most educated

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[2] Projects of Closing Gaps
[3] Taken from the paper called 'Inclusive Education in Colombia. A Critical Appraisal of a Colombian Proposal' written by the author in fulfilment of the course 'Children, Youth and Development: Policy and Practice'

country in Latin America in 2025 and to ensure an inclusive higher education" (Unión Temporal Educación 2015 2016).

In 2015, mass media called attention to the program including its history and origin. According to those reports, supported by the government, this program was designed from the findings of a thesis on the internal rate of social return of higher education in the country. The thesis is a study by a PhD candidate in Industrial Engineering at Universidad de los Andes. This thesis provides a clear concept of what it is understood by Human Capital and its benefits for education in a country (Penagos Serna 2014). The paper develops an econometric analysis that measures the rates on social returns for the society of the exclusion in the higher education system. It is shown with statistics and indicators how the country is affected when many students who get top scores in the national test are not able to get into the higher education system due to its high costs and the students' economic situation (Ibid).

After the results of that research were shared with the National Education Ministry, the government designed the SPP program drawing on this study. With this new program, the government is helping around 12.000 male and female youth per year since 2014, out of approximately 550.000 students who are graduating from high school annually (DANE 2015). The help is concentrated on paying their tuition fees in any certified high-quality university in the country and giving additional subsidies to subsist during the completion of their academic programs. The primary condition is that they have to complete their degrees satisfactorily; otherwise, the scholarship would be turned into a credit to be paid back by the student in installments.

The selection of beneficiaries is mainly made on a merit and socioeconomic status basis. They are calculated based on the students' scores in the national test, which is called SABER 11, and the scores they and their families have in a social protection survey, known as SISBEN III. These two selection features are creating space for a determined number of students into the system, but at the same time is leaving a large portion behind; out of the total number of students graduating from high school, 93% of them are part of the three lowest socioeconomic classes (De Zubiria Samper. 2016).

The conception of the program is mainly ensuring the entrance of the students to the system, but little attention is put on the challenges to stay in it. It is necessary to understand the scope of the program and the dynamics created within it by the youth. It is essential to know if the Colombian higher education system, which in the private universities is mostly configured for middle and upper social classes, is ready to welcome those male and female youth who come from vulnerable contexts. At a glance, this specific program has many gaps in this aspect by leaving that responsibility on the hands of the universities. With the implementation of the program, it is expected a stronger social cohesion among the community as it is bringing together two parts of the society that were traditionally apart from each other, however, there is nothing explicit on the SPP that ensures this possibility.

At the same time, the engagement of the government is insufficient and responds to a detected gap left by a system focused on economic aspects. The fact that the program was created after realizing the lost opportunity of having smart but vulnerable students in the current configuration of the system reflects that the government is not considering the social issue in depth. There is still a significant portion of the vulnerable population that is left unattended. Hence, exclusion is again happening with the introduction of the program. SPP is only taking into consideration the surface of a much broader problem.

With this scenario raised, the pertinence of doing this research on the effects of this program is evident. The fact of having a program that opens the door to higher education for the vulnerable and traditionally excluded population is always considered an achievement. The impact of such programs are commonly measured in quantitative ways, and numbers will demonstrate and determine if a program works, such as the evaluations made by Londono-Velez et al. (2017) and the consortium 'Unión Temporal Educación 2015' (2016). However, little attention is put on social circumstances that could hinder the achievements demonstrated with numbers. Thus, experiential perspectives of young people who are beneficiaries, are critical to detecting structural failures that are causing adverse side effects.

1.2. Research questions

This research paper examines the social dynamics within the 'Ser Pilo Paga' program, and the influences made by social and political structures over those same dynamics. Hence, the following is the research question that underpins this study: ***How do social exclusion, policy structure, and social class differences interfere in the social interactions of vulnerable youth within the SPP program?*** To unpack the essential elements of this dynamic, the following are the secondary questions:

To what extent does the formulation of the SPP program respond to the social needs of the beneficiaries?

What effects do the traditional social structures have over the attempts to fit in the new context brought by the SPP program?

1.3. Theoretical conceptualizations

By looking at the experiences of the students and the perspectives of a government official on the program, this Research Paper analyses the dynamics of a specific group of beneficiaries within the SPP. Conceptually, this study draws on various analytical lenses that intersect within the context, and the experiences presented. Having those involvements as the core of this study, the central analytical conceptualizations used here are focused on analyzing the dynamics of

the social interactions and the implications for social policy. Consequently, the theoretical framework is a composite of social and educational exclusion intersected with social class as well as social justice perspectives and social policy.

The social exclusion explains the contextualization of the problem with its multidimensionality, in which educational exclusion and social class have essential functions at the moment of highlighting the roles within the relationship between the system and the population, and among the community. Those links need to be understood under the light of social justice since it is present at the various levels where it develops. Then, all those aspects have to be taken into account in the formulation of social policy, or in this case, of the SPP program.

Social Exclusion

Social exclusion as a term was first propagated by Rene Lenoir for the French government in 1974. Initially, the ones considered as excluded were the poor, the handicapped, the aged people, the abused children, among others. Later on, the theory included other aspects that made it a multi-dimensional concept and centered on practices and interactions that provoke deprivation (De Haan 2000).

Through this conceptualization, it is possible to find a link between the decisions and actions taken and made by a group of people towards other groups, and the current social statuses and configurations of both groups. Social "exclusion happens at each level of society" (De Haan 2000), in micro and macro levels. The power relations between the multiple components of a community determine their level and number of benefits that one can get in comparison to the others.

In other words, social exclusion explains "the role of relational features in the deprivation of capability and thus in the experience of poverty" (Sen 2000: 6). Those relational features can be understood as the dimensions of class, race, ethnicity, gender, place where they live and/or age. In certain ways, all of them determine to what extent people can enforce social rights (Rodgers 1995: 43; De Haan 1999 as cited in Okwany 2010: 137). It is critical to note that those features develop over the years. Thus, it can affect future life chances and citizenship (Okwany 2010).

Sen (2000) brought another important point on the development of social exclusion as a concept. The distinction between passive and active exclusion is fundamental to understand how the social dynamics in the higher education system are configured. Active exclusion refers to the deliberate actions that a government or other power source make to restrict the actions and rights of a specific population. In contrast, passive exclusion happens when there is no intention to generate deprivation of rights, but it indeed occurs due to different social processes.

For this study, social exclusion and its passive feature help to understand and analyze the social context where the program is positioned and the dynamics, behaviors, opinions that develop among the students in the university. Indeed, by conceptualizing the social context presented here under these understandings facilitate the identification of reasons and aims for the dynamics that are going to be described in the following chapters.

Educational Exclusion

By talking about social exclusion in the higher education system, educational exclusion, which is a subset of social exclusion, is another important concept inserted in this study. In essence, this concept "has become a shorthand for discussing the inequities of class, race, gender, ethnicity, and poverty" (Sayed and Soudien 2003: 10). It indeed has helped to understand the complexity of the social problems, their interlinked relations, and the need for coordinated and cohesive actions from the government to be solved (Ibid).

According to Sayed and Soudien (2003), there is a trend on putting the focus on the excluded students rather than looking at the system: "students are seen as deficit while the situations from which they are being excluded are seen as upholding good quality standards and producing quality graduates" (Ibid). It is in this sense that the concept brings tools to construct the analysis in this study. Educational exclusion allows to understand the position of the government towards the situation and to interpret where the focus of the program is. It helps to see the issue from another perspective and draw new conclusions on the program goals and their consequences.

Additionally, it is important to highlight another input that this concept adds to this study. With regards to government programs and/or policies, it is essential to take into account a holistic conception of the problem to solve; "innovative approaches to educational inclusion will need to address issues at macro, micro, personal and interpersonal levels" (Sayed and Soudien 2003: 17). A broader consideration of the features of a problem will enrich and secure the implementation of a program or policy. In this respect, the political perspective will be analyzed to see how broad are the strategies implemented. Among others, the features related to the intersection of social class and education are essential to consider.

Social class

As mentioned before, one of the dimensions of the social exclusion is the social class, which in this study plays a vital role as a component of the vulnerability of the participants. This concept is a determinant of positionality (Weis and Dolby 2012). Thus it establishes how people would behave and fit within a community or group. It relates to income, occupation, and practices of living in social and physical means (Ibid).

In turn, social aspects, which can go from the food we consume to the education received and how we pay for it, will be comprehended as classed experiences generated by material realities and "shared culturally based expectations and understandings"(Weis and Dolby 2012: 2). This comprehension of the realities is determining the configuration of social dynamics. Thus it is necessary to inspect alterations and features of a situation to reveal how social class influences in those dynamics (Olmedo and Santa Cruz 2012).

By having this conceptualization about social class, it is possible to identify and examine the decisions and means that the participants of this study developed to carry on their interactions with the rest of the university community. It facilitates the analysis of how they find their ways to fit or not in new social and academic dynamics.

Social Justice Perspective

Following the conceptualizations that have been developed through the years by several scholars, the concept of justice defined by Nancy Fraser as "parity of participation" (as cited by Tikly and Barrett 2011: 6) is crucial in this study. Moreover, Tikly and Barret (2011) drawing on Fraser's conceptualization highlight the importance of having social inputs and disband any and every institutional barrier that deprives people of access to diverse resources. By doing so, people will have the sufficient tools to interact with the rest as equals. In an educational sense, that conceptualization would help to conceive a more inclusive educational model by identifying those barriers.

Three specific dimensions are critical for a good quality education from a social justice perspective: inclusion, relevance, and democracy (Tikly and Barrett 2011). Inclusion refers to "the access that different individuals and groups have to a good quality education and the opportunities they have for achieving desired outcomes" (Ibid). Democracy is concerned with the participation of individuals and communities in the education quality. Relevance is referred to the content of the curricula and its outcomes for the individuals in their respective contexts.

The three dimensions are key to the development of this study. Inclusion has a pivotal role since the main purpose of the analyzed program is aimed to enhance the access to higher education and ensure a more educated country. It helps to identify the scope of such inclusion within the program. Democracy, on the other hand, adds to the analysis by identifying what option the community has to participate in the building of a better system or policy. Lastly, the relevance component will play a significant role at the moment of looking at the upper secondary education of the participants and how its structure is having effects on their following steps.

Social Policy in the Development Context

Based on above conceptualizations, the role of the social policy in the development context plays an essential role in the course of this research paper.

Social policy, conceived "as a key instrument that works in tandem with economic policy to ensure equitable and socially sustainable development" (Mkandawire 2001: 1) is critical to understand the perspective of the government to examine their position within the higher education system.

As Mkandawire (2001, 2007) explains, the importance of conceiving this kind of programs from a social perspective is the consideration of a wide range of social relations; it goes from micro to macro levels, which includes intra-household relations, class, community, ethnicity, gender, among others. The ultimate goals of a social policy intervention are to create or boost the redistribution of income to generate equity, to amplify the social protection for consolidating the provisioning of services, and to enhance the productive capacity of citizens (Mkandawire 2007).

However, all this ideal construction about the social policy interventions depends on the political context and is directly connected to the existent power relations and economic system. The politics of social policy configure the formulations and implementation of any and every social policy. The ongoing political regime, the cultural values and the internal dynamics regarding ruling elites and their own goals, play important roles in the conception of an intervention (Mkandawire 2001).

In addition, this concept also includes the influence of the international sphere on social policy. Global agendas push the generation and application of certain social policy interventions. For instance, the adhesion to international conventions or the co-optations made by international financial organizations are the most recurrent reasons why many initiatives get through. In other words, the permeability of the international discourses over the domestic sphere affects the social policy (Ibid).

Taking this concept jointly with the other conceptualizations, the program needs to be configured according to the social issues from a holistic perspective. It has to be socially driven rather than being a residual initiative that only responds to the failures or gaps left by economic policies. Precisely, the use of this concept helps to determine how the design and implementation of the program react to a complex political panorama. It facilitates to see if SPP follows the dynamics of diverse actors pursuing a national political agenda that is evidently influenced by external discourses.

1.4. Methodology

1.4.1. Data Sources

Study Participants:

This research paper is based on primary data collected on the experiences of a group of 18 students who are beneficiaries of the 'Ser Pilo Paga' program. These students were selected from a bigger group of 70 surveyed students who were

willing to participate in this study. The study participants were contacted through an email sent by the university where they are currently studying, asking them to contact me if they were interested in collaborating. The survey consisted of nine basic demographic questions: sex, age, the city of their high school, type of school (public or private), level of parental education (of mother and father), victim of the internal armed conflict and member of a minority group. The latter two were made with the objective of detecting and considering possible degrees of vulnerability among them.

All of the surveyed male and female youth are current students at Universidad de los Andes, in Bogota, Colombia. Apart from being the private university with the highest prestige, and with the most expensive academic programs in the country, the selection of this institution as the only source of students responds to the will of the university to collaborate with the study. This particularity allows the paper to have an examination of inclusivity of the program in a context of prestige at the private university.

In addition to the beneficiaries, this study also takes into account the view of the government as the duty bearer, the designer and the implementer of the program. A semi-structured interview was conducted with the leader of the program at the National Minister of Education. This person is in charge of the supervision of the program, the management and analysis of the data, and the supervision of the permanence and wellness of the beneficiaries. This component permits me to examine the way they are looking at the needs of the beneficiaries and how they are addressed.

Secondary Data:

The analyzed data came from official published government documents, such as the Operative Regulations that each version of the program has, and the 'Baseline Survey Result Report, Short-Term Impact Assessment and Third Delivery of Database Documentation' (Unión Temporal Educación 2015 2016) where the program is described and evaluated. The former documents were published by the National Minister of Education to establish the guidelines for the granting, legalization, permanence and adjudication of scholarship/credits. The latter was issued by the National Department of Planning and done by a consortium formed by a private consulting company and the Faculty of Economics of Universidad de los Andes. Furthermore, the information regarding the tools to implement the program into the university, academic studies produced by other institutions and press articles were used and analyzed.

1.4.2. Data Collection

The selection of the 18 students was made by taking into account the degree of vulnerability among them, mainly according to the city where they studied the high school and the level of parental education. Also, the students were selected by having an equal number of male and female participants to have gender equity

in the participation. The criteria of being members of a minority group and victims of the internal armed conflict were less determinant in the selection process due to the given answers; the vast majority answered 'no'.

The interview process was based on the informal semi-structured format following the aim to generate a comfortable environment where the female and male youth can express their ideas in a very relaxed and confident way. According to the premises given by O'leary (2014) about the data collection, this kind of interviews offers a more conversational style and helps the respondent to be honest and open to give information. The interviews were conducted through virtual platforms: Skype, Whatsapp, and Google Hangouts. Study participants were first contacted by email, and then the interviews were arranged individually in accordance with their preferences and availability.

The content of the interviews was divided into three categories: Family Environment, Upper Secondary School Experience, and University Life. The first group of questions was related to their family composition and its internal relations, to understand their backgrounds and vulnerabilities. The second category was intended to discover their experiences and opinions about their high schools, to know their academic preparation towards a university life. Finally, the third category of questions was about their life at the university in the academic and the social aspects, with the purpose of knowing their academic performances and social interactions within this new environment. The duration of each interview was between 30 minutes and 1 hour depending on the attitude of the students towards giving their testimonies.

With regards to the interview with the government official, the questions were focused on the design process, the strengths and opportunities for improvement and the expectations of the government with the program for the incoming years. Those questions allowed me to have a better perspective on the position of the government, its expectations and ways to manage this situation. The information was gathered through the conversation which had a duration of 40 minutes.

The semi-structured format allowed me to explore not only the strict information I was looking for with the questions but also other details that came out with the conversations. In general, I could draw the answers to the proposed research questions. It gave me enough information to discover the social and political dynamics behind the implementation of the program, which at the same time lead me to analyze the situation of the beneficiaries in the system from their perspectives.

In specific, the conversations with beneficiaries gave me the opportunity to go deeper in their social contexts when they grew up. Their beliefs, dynamics, and customs were fundamental to understand better their roles, behaviors, and opinions during their current stage as university students. The conversation with the leader of the SPP program and the review of the secondary data showed me

the way the government understands this issue of exclusion and how it is being addressed. They gave me hints to discuss the scheme and make a more in-depth analysis of the effects of that understanding over the real situation of the beneficiaries.

1.5. Ethical Issues

Some ethical issues I faced during this research were related to the protection of the personal data that the Colombian law has enforced recently. In fact, many universities did not help me to contact the beneficiaries and claimed the law as their main reason. Since the beginning, I acknowledged that this could happen. Thus I avoided to ask the universities for their students' contact information but to ask them to send my contact details to those students. Despite that, only one opted to help me.

Due to this issue related to the management of the personal data, I decided to give a very detailed statement to each of the interviewed students. Such statement explained the confidentiality principles that guide this study and the final use that I gave to the information provided by them. Also, all of them were asked for their authorization to use their data, to record the conversations and to take pictures of them; all of them agreed and accepted that. "Responsibility for the dignity, respect, and welfare of respondents, both mentally and physically, is central" (O'Leary 2014: 52) to this study. To get both the consent and permission of the study participants as well as the institution is my responsibility as researcher.

In addition, I was aware of my position as a researcher, middle-class man that studied in a private university in Bogota with some financial support, and with the privilege of being able to afford a Master's program abroad. I recognize that this position could raise power relations that could affect the results of the interviews and their testimonies. To deal with that, I tried to generate a comfortable environment for them by reflecting my struggles as a student and similar anecdotes that brought fluidity to the conversation.

Chapter 2 Seeking solutions from the government

2.1. Looking for roots: A failed attempt to reform the higher education system

Large students' demonstrations and protests were recurrent in the streets of the big cities during the second semester of 2011 (Wallace. 2011). The government of president Santos was trying to introduce an in-depth reform on the legislation of the higher education system without consulting any external sector. The legislation indeed is outdated since it was created in 1992.

According to the Ministry of National Education (CVNE. 2011b), the system needed to be adapted to the new Colombian reality and to be consistent with the regional and international trends by reinforcing the good governance and transparency. The government was seeking to enhance the academic offer and expand and diversify its financial sources in order create new spaces for those who want but are not able to get into the system. It was also aimed to make the system more participatory for the regions and modernize it according to the international standards.

These mentioned standards refer, among others, to the parameters established by the OECD. In February 2011, president Santos expressed his desire of becoming part of that organization: "'We want to enter the OECD because it is the club of good practices', and being part of it for Colombia 'means a very qualitative change'" (Portafolio. 2011). Then, by 2012, that organization was launching its review on the national policy for higher education (OECD 2012). It is evident how the international sphere influences the policy formulation by "setting constraints that the social policy must be attentive to" (Mkandawire 2001: 19). The efforts of the government to become a member of the OECD boosted the desire to reform the system.

Expressly, the reform contemplated four main objectives: 1) "To promote greater quality through a better offer of academic programs and the expansion of the sources of resources. 2) To generate conditions so that more Colombians of scarce resources and vulnerable population enter and graduate from higher education with the expansion of the supply of quality programs. 3) To promote access and permanence and to strengthen the funding sources for students. 4) To make the educational offer more flexible and strengthen regional participation" (CVNE. 2011c).

All those goals seemed to be in line with the needs to be attended. The objectives proposed to be pursued could be considered as the right ones to follow if it is taken into account the multidimensionality of them. For instance, by

giving more importance to the participation of the regions, the needs of the most vulnerable population could be represented, and the inclusion of those relegated parts of the society would be boosted in the system. Indeed, the aims seemed to be involving an important concern amidst social development, working jointly with economic policy (Mkandawire 2001), however, the core of the problem was located in the means to develop them.

The trigger point for the widespread discontent with all this situation was the ways proposed by the reform to achieve that desirable improvement. In all and every aspect of it, there were many criticisms of the formulation process and strategies determined by the government to obtain the achievements. Among others, the most controversial strategies were the creation of university institutions with a profit motive, following the Brazilian example. Also, the encouragement for the public universities to receive investments from companies and the private sector in general, and the allocation of a more significant amount of public monies in the ICETEX to give more credits to a bigger number of students (CVNE. 2011c), following the Chilean model. In other words, the main issue was the way the government conceived the highly needed reform.

All those strategies were seen by the vast majority of the population as an attempt to privatize the higher education system. The rector of the largest and most important public university of the country – Universidad Nacional de Colombia – was among the critics. He pointed out that the Brazilian model was indeed successful in augmenting the coverage, but the quality had the opposite effect; like any private company, the perfect performance is to invest the minimum to gain the maximum (Revista Semana 2011). Also, he mentioned that the participation of the private sector in the public universities is not a new invention; the public universities had been working with the enterprises since long time ago for research purposes. Thus, the complaint was referring to the blurred lines of the proposal that could lead to various interpretations and applications. It could have allowed the private sector to intervene and condition the performance of the universities, and hence modify the nature of them (Ibid).

Regarding the allocation of budget for expanding credit opportunities for students, the representative of the professors at the third bigger public university of the country – Universidad del Valle –, gave his opinion. He mentioned that with this proposal, the government would have financed the private universities indirectly as the money would end up in those that are mainly funded by tuition fees (El País 2011). This is problematic since the state's efforts and budget should be focused on financing the public institutions, which indeed are in need of a bigger financial help. Also, this strategy would have increased the number of families of low socioeconomic classes getting into debts that last for long periods of time. (Ibid). Those debts would affect not only the student financial future but also the student's family, who would have had to risk other aspects of their life and the future of other sons or daughters.

With this scenario, the students of all the public universities of the country, supported by various other sectors, such as the professors, peasants, transporters, labor unions, and some of the private universities, initiated a strike that lasted more than one month. It was finished when the government gave up on the proposal, and the reform was taken back from the parliament(CVNE. 2011a).

Drawing from this attempt to bring options for enhancing the coverage and hence fomenting the inclusion in the system, is possible to analyze the perspective that the government has over the problem of social exclusion within the higher education system. It is clear that the problem is seen more as an issue of the community rather than of the structure of the scheme itself. The puzzle to solve was minded on how to incorporate those parts of the excluded population into the already working system. This means that, as commonly happens, the excluded students are seen as the matter to improve rather than looking at the situation as a whole and the system itself (Sayed and Soudien 2003). This perspective is reinforced and boosted in the conception of the SPP program, as it is depicted later in this paper.

Also, the attempted reform showed the lack of interest from the government towards the position of the population. Since the reform was proposed without considering the opinion or perspectives of the society, the project was lacking any legitimacy from its conception. A social policy has "to keep in mind the broader political alignment of forces that can sustain" (Bardhan and Bowles 1996 as cited by Mkandawire 2001) it; the failure was imminent in this case.

The objective of looking back at this failed reform is to have an in-depth view of the government's position towards this kind matters and to seek for the roots of the model proposed in the SPP program. As it can be perceived by now, the program keeps some similitudes with the failed proposed reform. SPP follows a similar logic of providing access for the vulnerable population to a system considered as good and working. It is also having the component of putting more resources on the demand through credits for students. The help has two faces: a loan and a scholarship, and the funds are going in its majority to the private universities. In the paper, those are the similitudes. In practice, other are the effects.

2.2. Contextual examination of the "Ser Pilo Paga" program in practice

2.2.1. The government perspective

Numbers are the main topic to speak about when the government is asked to deliver information about the SPP program. And indeed, it is important to know and highlight the results that the program has had so far until now. In a conversation with the leader of the program at the Ministry of National Education, the first things this person mentioned were the good results: So far, the total number of beneficiaries is around 31.000, who is from 990 municipalities across the

country, out of the total number of 1.122 towns and cities. 75% of the beneficiaries graduated from public high schools, and 1.700 recipients are victims of the violence (Government Official August 2017). Also, she highlighted that the implementation of the program had improved the academic quality among the students. She explained that the program has worked as an incentive for high school students to get higher scores in the SABER 11 test, which explains why the minimum score required to be beneficiary has increased year after year.

In addition to those statements, a recent study published by the Center for Economic Development Studies of Universidad de los Andes shows that there is a considerable increase in terms of "class diversity at top-ranked private institutions" (Londono-Velez et al. 2017: 27) thanks to the implementation of the program. Specifically, this aspect analyses the trends in the number of new students according to their socioeconomic stratum during the years of 2014 to 2016. The results demonstrate that more students from the low socioeconomic levels are accessing those top universities, which in fact represents a gain regarding equity (Ibid).

Above aspect was also highlighted by the Government Official during the interview. She mentioned that the probability of a young male or female of scarce resources to enter to a top university went from 36% to 69% in three years, "which is a quite good number since it means a reduction of social segregation in private universities. A student in a private university is now sharing with other young people from totally different backgrounds and regions" (Government Official August 2017).

At first glance, with these accomplishments, the government is reaching its purposes of enhancing the coverage on the higher education system, benefiting other regions traditionally left out of the system, and fostering social cohesion as a side effect. However, while those numbers demonstrate the effectiveness of the program in the short run, a closer look will show that, as considered before, it is leaving unattended other aspects that may harm the ultimate goal of including vulnerable population.

There is no mention of how well prepared were the system, the universities and their communities, to welcome the beneficiaries. As pointed out by Sayed and Soudien (2003: 11) "one size does not fit all because citizens are not located in homogeneous, symmetrical and stable social, economic and political positions". Hence, what may work for the ones who were traditionally accepted in those universities may not do the same for these new students.

Additionally, the SPP leader was asked for those aspects that need to be improved. One of them is the academic level of the beneficiaries at the moment of entering into these top universities. "The young female and male who come from far regions in the periphery have a bad academic basis" (Government Official August 2017). To tackle that situation, the government is currently working

jointly with the universities to level them before they go into their academic programs. By having a plan with the universities, the main goal is to prevent possible dropouts in the future, as the Government Official (August 2017) highlighted.

This situation is in line with the experiences showed in the participants of this study, where they pointed out the conditions of their education when they were in high school. Also, it reflects on the issue of exclusion as a process that starts early in life and diminishes "quality of life and life chances" (Okwany 2010: 137) in the future. In this sense, social exclusion and educational exclusion are evident from the fact that the beneficiaries are indeed being affected by this exclusionary situation and configuration of the system from early stages in their life.

To deal with above issue, the universities have to have more than enough resources and aims to respond. The responsibility of the universities in this way is crucial for the development of the students and to supply those gaps left by the education policies. With this situation, the government is allocating one of its tasks on the hands of the universities instead of dealing with the actual structure of the secondary education, which means the perpetuation of the exclusion by leaving unattended those who could not get into the universities.

2.2.2. The role of the universities

To be in the program, the universities have to be certified in high quality by the National Accreditation Council (CNA). This entity, which is linked to the Ministry of National Education, is in charge of "guaranteeing to the society that the institutions that are part of the Higher Education System comply with the highest quality standards to fulfill its purposes and objectives" (CESU 2013). In this sense, the universities are encouraged to voluntarily present themselves before the CNA to prove their programs, procedures, and infrastructure as of high quality. Those that achieve the standards of the accreditation receive many benefits such as prestige, recognition, participation in governmental activities and programs, among others. One specific benefit is to be able to accept SPP students.

According to that, the government seeks to ensure that the beneficiaries of the program receive the best education available in the country, corresponding the national standards. In the same way, the government also ensures that those institutions can handle and administrate all the needed procedures that the program requires. It is important to note that the process of accreditation does not discriminate between public and private institutions. In this sense, the private and public institutions are measured with the same evaluation parameters (CESU 2013). Due to this, it is possible to have both kinds of institutions between the ones that are receiving beneficiaries.

When the institutions get the accreditation and start receiving beneficiaries, they have the responsibility "to carry out the necessary actions for the accompaniment and academic, social, welfare, and other follow-ups during the process of academic formation of the students of the program" (ICETEX and MEN 2015: 6). According to this, the government is putting the responsibility of taking care of the students' social and academic performances on the universities. As the Government Official (August 2017) said, "due to the number of beneficiaries, the relation between them and the government is not one-to-one but through the universities, which in this matter are playing the role of intermediaries". It is in this sense that the role of the universities is key in regards to the success of the beneficiaries during their journey in this system.

2.3. Universidad de los Andes at a glance

Universidad de Los Andes is the fifth university with more beneficiaries enrolled in its academic programs by 2016, and it is also the university that is receiving more resources from the government through the SPP program (MEN 2016b). Located in the city center of Bogota, this university was founded in 1948 by a group of young Colombian scholars led by Mario Laserna Pinzón, a very well recognized educator, ambassador, politician, and mathematician. His education was mainly done in the United States, where he met several important scholars such as Albert Einstein and Mark Van Doren. These personalities advised him on the idea of creating a university in Colombia (Garcia Marquez. 2012). Currently, the university has more than eighteen thousand students enrolled in its undergraduate programs (UNIANDES 2017). It has been certified twice in high quality by the CNA and awarded internationally by many different academic associations in different areas.

Its prestige has also been built thanks to many alumni that are currently working in high positions within the government, the corporate sector and international entities. In the popular knowledge, the university is always related to 'the best' and the one of 'the experts'. Also, there is a link between the rich part of the society and the university since it is known that many of the Colombian elite class have studied there or are currently studying there.

This perception was shown in the participants' stories. As one of them mentioned, many chose to study there due to the reputation: "after I did some research on what university I should select, I realized that many of the current ministers are 'uniandinos'[4] (…) and actually, as my mom pointed out once, they are always in the news, like… 'the expert from Universidad de los Andes explains…'" (Luisa, participant from rural area 2017). Also, others were discouraged to study there due to the class differences or were advised to not fall into the so-called 'rich system'. One of them said: "a teacher once told me 'do not

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[4] Nickname for students and alumni of Universidad de los Andes

forget about the poor once you are with the rich'[5], which is an expression I hate…" (Leonardo, participant from rural area August 2017).

Understanding that the social class is an organizer of the social, cultural and material world through exceptionally powerful ways (Weis 2004, 2008 cited by Weis and Dolby 2012), above information shows how the prestige of the university plays an important role for these students by acknowledging the power of los Andes. Like the family, the school is also an external relevant institution that plays as a mediator of class (Weis and Dolby 2012). Thus the selection of this university has an important significance for the participants. This decision will modify their position in the society at the end of their careers and probably will improve their chances of getting high standards jobs in the future.

Regarding the internal organization, the university offers a wide range of faculties and academic departments and a vast campus where the community can have integral development (UNIANDES. 2017b). Inspired by the US university model as mentioned before, the welfare division plays a key role in the development of the students in the whole sense. This key component is responsible for bringing the resources and executing the SPP program within the university. It is called Students' Deanship.

The fact that this university is privately funded allows it to offer all those facilities with some ease. Those facilities are essential in the dynamics of the universities since it is enforced by law to have welfare divisions and to invest in those (Congreso de la República de Colombia 1992). However, in this specific case, Los Andes can be seen as a status-seeker university, which means that "they engage in various activities intended to enhance their prestige in terms of attracting 'high quality' faculty and students" (Arum et al. 2012: 18). This aspect is also linked to the so-called 'client-seeker' character that characterizes all privately funded schools and makes the university for engaging in demand-generating activities (Ibid). For the specific case of the SPP program, to offer more facilities and help to the beneficiaries, probably more students would consider Los Andes as their choice.

2.3.1. Helping the beneficiaries at the university

The role of the help offered by the university is essential in the development of the study's participants. Universidad de los Andes has put strong and significant efforts on providing good services that enrich the whole experience of studying in there. It is a way also to call the attention of more prospective students and increase the recognition among the community (Arum et al. 2012). Nevertheless, in an indirect way and the context of this research, the services described as follows contest the idea of considering access just as a matter of human capital, as it was pointed out by Penagos Serna (2013).

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[5] This is a popular saying when a person from the lower socio-economic levels reaches the higher ones

The Students' Deanship is a dependency of the university in charge of the provision of services that contribute to the formation and development of all the students. "The main purposes of its activities are the permanence and adaptation of the students to the university life. This is done through counseling, workshops and the formation, development, and participation of the students through sports and cultural activities" (UNIANDES. 2017b). Its efforts are mainly focused on students of the first semesters, students with scholarships and students with academic and/or personal problems.

In order to fulfill those objectives, the Deanship services are divided into four main areas: Cultural Center, Sports, Employability and Support Center. The latter is the one that the SPP beneficiaries most use. It is in charge of counseling the students academically and psychosocially in order to promote the permanence and success of the students in the university (UNIANDES. 2017b).

It is through this area that they receive the most important help in order to reach the ideal level to succeed in their classes. Also, through this area, the beneficiaries receive counseling for things related to their adaptation to the university life. In conversation with the beneficiaries, one of the most recurrent services they acknowledge and use are the Spanish Center, for improving their writing skills, and the English Club for improving their English skills.

Apart from those services, the Deanship supports an initiative created by former students and ruled by volunteer students. This support network is called 'ANDAR' and was created by scholarship students to help other students with scholarships and/or with financing assistance. Its main aim is to help each other by donating books, photocopies, lab coats, globes, and so on to lend and borrow. Also, they organize different integration activities to strengthen the community and fraternity values (UNIANDES. 2017a).

Finally, the Office of Financial Support manages a program of financial help for those outstanding students who are paying their tuition fees with loans or financial schemes, and for those with internal scholarships. This program is called 'FOPRE' (Special Programs Fund) and covers subsidies in photocopies, transportation, alimentation and/or materials, according to each case, during the entire duration of the semester. The funds are given by the University and by members of the university community (UNIANDES. 2017c).

These subsidies are given to the students according to their needs, which are assessed by the Office by looking at their economic situation through the analysis of their public services' invoices and other documents the students have to present. For the case of the SPP beneficiaries, all of the participants of this study are using this subsidy. All of them highlight the importance of this fund and how it has helped them. "Thanks to this program, I have 1500 free photocopies, I receive three hundred eighty-five thousand pesos for breakfast, lunch, and transport. It has helped me a lot!" (Keyla, participant from urban area 2017).

Indeed, and in words of the participants, this fund has been a lifesaver in various moments of their journey through the university life. In fact, those services described above reflect what is considered as engaged participation under a social justice ideology (Gidley et al. 2010). In this sense, participation is understood as an improved stage that exceeds the conception of access as just the supply of education through financial means, among other services (Ibid).

Consequently, by taking into account Keyla's comment about the extra services offered by the university, it is clear that the conception of the program as mainly ensuring the financial aspect of the inclusion process is not enough. The scope of the program should be broader and take into consideration that the experience of learning in a top university includes other aspects that must be attended due to their importance. There is a risk of generating other kinds of exclusion by not addressing this aspect directly since not all universities understand nor attend the situation in the same way. The beneficiaries come from diverse backgrounds and have different needs that have to be taken into account, as it is described in the next section.

Chapter 3 Growing up in contexts of inequality

3.1. 'I am who I am'. Participant students' general profile.

Luisa was raised in a medium-low class family in a touristic town on the south-west side of Colombia. She was the best student of her secondary school, and her biggest aspiration is to become a minister in the future. She is now studying Economics in Bogota. Inocencio grew up in the rural part of a small town in the eastern plains of Colombia. Sometimes, he had to skip classes due to armed clashes between the two guerrilla groups that were fighting in the zone. Today, he is studying Languages & Culture and Political Science in Bogota. Camilo lived all his childhood and adolescence in Ciudad Bolivar, one of the poorest localities in the south of Bogota. He wants to succeed in his work life thus one of his main goals is to build a good network. He is currently studying Law and Political Science. Daniela is from Barranquilla, the most developed city on the north coast of the country. She studied at a well-known secondary school thanks to a scholarship. Her goal is to study a graduate degree in Japan. Now, she is pursuing a degree in Environmental Engineering. The idea of being students of the most prestigious and expensive university never crossed their minds before.

The previous four are part of the 'Ser Pilo Paga' program as beneficiaries. They are all studying at Universidad de los Andes and come from different backgrounds with similar conditions. Some of them have had fewer opportunities than others by living in small villages or socially depressed zones within capital cities. Some of them have had better living conditions than others by having good or bad relations with their families. All of them experienced vulnerability by living in environments of scarce resources and knowledge. All of them are part of the 18 interviewed beneficiaries who are the focus of this research paper.

3.1.1. Reflecting on spatial locations

These students have grown in environments of low-medium classes, and mostly in the periphery zones of the country. Those in the periphery lived in small towns or medium-size cities. In most of the cases, the primary economic activity of those villages is related to agriculture or tourism. These configurations determine the most recurrent professions and aspirations for the majority of the high school students. For instance, one study participant. Angie is from a region in the west part of the country, which is well-known and nationally famous for the production of guava snacks. Her mother works in that industry by selling them to tourists in the town.

"My mother never thought that I was going to study in a university. She didn't have money to afford it, so she expected me to work with her or to get a

job as a bank secretary in the town, at best" (Angie, participant from rural area 2017). With this sentence, Angie is expressing how one aspect of her life could condition the rest. In a deeper view, this specific situation is telling us how "past experiences have imprints on the present" (Mersha 2007: 33). Angie's mother took into account her own experiences of limited opportunities and tried to reflect and reproduce them into her daughter. In other words, the exclusion from better life opportunities could be repeated and perpetuated through generations. The opportunity to access high quality higher education through the SPP programs can help to break this cycle.

Also, that testimony, which reflects the reality of the majority of the interviewees, is showing how rurality is playing an important role. The spatial location where each of them was raised is vital at the moment of looking at the educational opportunities in their contexts. Many of the tertiary education institutions are located in the large urban areas of the country, which means that the best options are far from them and thus costly. It is expensive for a population that is seen and "labeled as 'traditional' in the discourse of 'modernity'"(Mersha 2007: 36), which is evident in this case by knowing that her mother works in the traditional industry of guava snacks of the region.

On the other hand, there are three of them who grew up in the capital city. However, they live in three of the localities that have been most affected by socioeconomic problems, such as vandalism, unemployment, drugs consume, etc.: Kennedy, Ciudad Bolivar and Úsme (Alvarez 2014). The case of Yulieth is particular in this sense. Her family was forced by the former guerrilla group FARC (Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces) to leave their hometown in Boyacá, a nationally renowned region for its agricultural activities. They arrived at Úsme in Bogotá and started a new life even though they did not consider themselves as victims because they saw the movement as something 'normal'.

In this case, the spatial location plays an essential role since Úsme has the mentioned reality of insecurity and is still far from the university, even though they are in the same city. The social exclusion in this kind of cases is related to the opportunities they have by living there. As in the rural cases, the chances of accessing quality education are far economically and spatially; Yulieth spends more than one hour and a half to get to the university from her home by using different kinds of public transportation. Also, in the imaginary of her family, they were not expecting her to reach a higher education level in that specific university since they are from the low socioeconomic levels. This paradigm is a trend among the selected students and a social class issue.

That issue of social class has a crucial role in the analysis of this study. As Weis and Dolby (2012) mention, class is easy to be related to income and occupation, but should also be seen as the practices to live. "The social and physical practices through which ordinary people live, survive and cope" (Walkerdine et al. 2001 as cited by Weis and Dolby 2012: 1). In this sense, the backgrounds of the participants are essential, as it has previously shown. It helped to establish how their realities in their towns intersected to determine what their paths

should have been. Clearly, the role of their families is crucial in the development of that path, as life examples and/or life advisors.

In general, and concerning their possibilities to study a higher education degree without the program, all of them said that they would not have been able to study at that university. Most of them would have had to apply to the nearest public universities or technical institutions of their regions and localities, which are not of high quality. Few of them mentioned they could apply to less expensive private universities by using financial credits, and a few others said that they would have had to study a technical level degree. Here it is possible to mention the failures regarding social justice. There were no options for the participants and their parents, to access good quality education and thus they lacked opportunities to achieve their wanted outcomes (Tikly and Barrett 2011). Despite this, none of them mentioned the option to seek a job.

3.1.2. Family composition

In regards to their families, it was important to know the level of parental education. In eleven of the eighteen cases, their parents never stepped in a university or tertiary education institution. Only five participants have at least one of their parents with a higher education degree, which is mostly in the education sector. Concerning their jobs, the answers were diverse, but mainly located in a similar level of informality. Most of their parents are in low-skilled tasks such as taxi drivers, maids, cleaners, day laborers, hairdressers and security guards. Apart from those, others are merchants, secondary school teachers or peasants.

The level of education of the parents is also essential to understand the configuration of their possibilities and their level of vulnerability. By having those kinds of jobs, the capacity to acquire better quality of life and standards are low. Growing in that environment of scarce resources means for the participants to deal with the paradigm of poverty. Social exclusion starts by living in conditions of scarcity and deprivation of capabilities due to their social and economic environment. In other words, family, as an external relevant institution, is an essential mediator of class by conditioning the development of the participants (Weis and Dolby 2012).

This situation helped to understand the value that some of the families have concerning education and its quality. Many of them mentioned that their parents did not want them to follow their same paths; hence, they were always pushing the participants to study and finish their high school. Also, the participants mentioned the support received from their parents to keep studying after graduating from high school, however, the idea of going to the university never crossed their minds. In fact, in almost all of the cases, the parents were not confident of the students getting into the best private university in the country. They were afraid of possible academic failures or discrimination once they get there. Again, a consequence of the enormous social classes differences was influencing their possibilities and regenerating possible exclusions from the system.

3.2. 'It was good, but it could be better'. Upper Secondary Education experiences.

The second part of the interviews was about their life at their upper secondary schools. This section was conducted to see how this phase of their academic life influenced in their choice of following a higher education degree, the effects on their performance at the moment of entering to the university, and the kind of education they received during those years.

3.2.1. Public schools vs. private schools

A total of 12 out of the 18 interviewees obtained their diplomas at public institutions. It is important to acknowledge that according to the most recent ranking made by the National Ministry of Education, the top ten of the best upper secondary schools in Colombia are private and seven of them are located in Bogota. The best public high school is ranked in the 14th position and is located in a city of the west-south part of the country (MINTIC. 2016). Among the remained five participants who studied in private schools, only one studied in a well-recognized school thanks to a scholarship.

They were asked about their opinion on their high schools. From those who were at the public institutions, the perception of the majority was that the education that they received was good and they felt well when they were studying there. However, their opinions changed when they were asked if their high schools should improve on something. They consider that there are many aspects to improve. They realized that there were many blanks in the content of the courses. The most recurrent complaint was about the English classes, which were missing, quite basic, or did not have enough time per class.

They are students who are learning from low-quality schools that do not offer the expected level to enter to the higher education, but still, they are required to be well prepared. It is necessary to look at the problem from its roots in the entire education system, and not only at the students as the matter of the problem. The need of provision of higher education should be tackled from earlier stages and taking into account further aspects and the democratic participation of all the stakeholders to ensure the capabilities of the students (Tikly and Barrett 2011). Having the democratic dimension, the professors could participate and be more proactive in the education processes. Situations like the following ones could be avoided.

In words of Carlos, "the teachers were so relaxed that they preferred to follow what the students wanted. It wasn't like that all the time, but it happened" (Carlos, participant from rural area 2017). Others mentioned that the contents were so superficial and never went deeper on the topics. As many of them said,

this happens due to the attitude that the teachers have about their job. As Inocencio mentioned, "they are more concerned about the money than about to teach well" (Inocencio, participant from rural area 2017).

However, there is Luisa who says that the superficiality of the topics responds to the focus of the school as itself: "The burden was too heavy because we saw 23 classes. The school has a commercial focus. (…) I didn't feel as academically encouraged as I wanted because for me it was too technical due to that focus. It affected me because the time I put on the commercial classes took time from other classes such as math and English" (Luisa, participant from rural area 2017).

The commercial focus mentioned by Luisa is also consistent among these participants. This emphasis is due to a policy from the government that is promoting the possibility of getting a vocational degree when reaching the upper secondary school. To give better tools and knowledge to the students so they can insert themselves into the labor market, which has been the usual path the students at the public institutions follow, the National Ministry of Education implemented those vocational studies. These studies can be focused on commerce, agriculture, industry, pedagogy or social services and can be found mostly in the schools of the rural areas. (OECD 2016)

This aspect can be seen through the lenses proposed by Tikly and Barret (2011) about the dimension of relevance in good quality education from a social justice perspective. It is possible to understand that the state is trying to bring good quality education to the regions by providing specialized education according to the context of each region and the skills that are detected as fundamental to help the youth to enter to the labor market. Following this logic, the State is taking into account aspects that are proposed by this theory. However, with the SPP program, the reality has changed, and the students are getting other options that do not require them to learn those skills. On the opposite, they are in need of a better academic education that allows them to succeed in the higher education. Once again, it is evident that the program is being implemented without considering further aspects than just providing financial access.

On the other hand, the ones who studied at private schools were there because of two main particular reasons. One of the reasons to be in private schools was the chance of getting scholarships or financial aid. Daniela from Barranquilla mentioned: "I could study at 'Colegio del Sagrado Corazon' (Sacred Heart School) because my mom was working there as a teacher" (Daniela (A), participant from urban area 2017). In the same way, Daniela from Yopal said: "My mom put me in that school because it was new and private. Then one of the teachers became my godmother because we got very close. Later, my godmother became the rector of the school, and she helped me a lot with the financial matters" (Daniela (B), participant from rural area 2017).

A second reason was related to the preferences of the parents to have them in the private schools. Their parents considered the private better than the public ones. In fact, there is the case of Ian from Neiva, whose parents put him in the private school only during the last two years so that he could receive a better preparation for the national test. In particular, one of the most recurrent complains among these six students was the catholic nature of their schools. Those schools were created by diverse Catholic communities; hence the religious component is solid. Apart from that, they do not think the schools should improve in other aspects.

The preference for private schools responds to the social class status, which interferes in the selection of choices, and intersects with the financial position of the families. In this sense, the financial aspect jointly with the social class plays a determinant role since these families cannot afford a good private school. It is one of the aspects included by De Haan (2000) at the moment of mentioning the multidimensionality of social exclusion. The intersection of these two elements produces the deprivation of getting a good quality education, which is a social right.

On the last question, regarding the influence of the schools in the selection of following a university path and a career, the big majority mentioned that the schools did not interfere with the decision. They knew they wanted to pursue a university career since the beginning and by their own choices. At the moment of having to choose where to study after being accepted in the SPP program, many of the students at the public schools were discouraged by their teachers to go to Universidad de Los Andes:

"(…) the school was actually more like an obstacle. (…) The teachers were telling me about alleged cases of students from Saravena (a nearby town) that dropped out from that university, because of the academic burden that it is put on oneself. (Also, they told me that) the career (I wanted to study) was not the best. (They said that) it should be taken more like a hobby and not like a career" (Inocencio, participant from rural area 2017).

Similar experiences were seen in the stories of all the ones who studied at public institutions. In the cases of the ones at the private institutions, all answered that their schools advised them well or at least gave them guidelines to decide. Concerning this, the situation is not only boosted by the financial and social class aspects, but also by the understanding or the positionality of the population within the system. The social exclusion is in this way, affecting the capabilities of the students and their family and communities. They are not only directly affected by the whole situation, but also it is producing self-underestimations about the capabilities of each. As mentioned before, the social exclusion is seen in the individual and the social aspects, in the micro and the macro contexts.

A final and common observation from the testimonies of these students appeared when talking about their preparation for the SABER 11 test. Most of the participants who were in the public institutions opted for various and different strategies. They studied by themselves, with the help of their parents who are professors or by taking courses at other establishments. A few of them, plus the ones that were in the private high schools, prepared the test at their high schools.

Above situation reflects the low academic status that the public institutions have. In 2016, according to the test results, the best public high school of the country was ranked in the 119th position, out of 11.472 high schools (MINTIC. 2016). Even though the trend of looking for extra help to take the exam is not exclusive for the ones at public schools, it is important to point out the importance that this exam is acquiring for the students at public institutions. It is becoming crucial for getting into the SPP program.

Due to this situation, students at the public institutions are seeking other options to get ready for the exam, which indeed is helping them to achieve better scores. Those increases are being reflected in the rankings of the high schools, which are getting better positions. Those improvements are seen by the government as one of the good outcomes of the SPP; the program is improving the academic quality of the high schools nationwide (Government Oficial August 2017). However, this progress might not be because of the improvement of the high schools themselves. At first glance and for the case of these participants, the improvement is because of the individual efforts of the students. In this sense, the government should address this new trend by providing a policy that does indeed improve this fundamental part of the educations system. The government needs to take it as a central component in social policy, and not as a residual in the scenario of economic policies (Mkandawire 2001).

Above aspects and situations were key to determine the ways these eighteen participants positioned themselves in a completely new context. Being accepted to study in the most prestigious private university in the country was quite a challenge. After that, the challenge acquired other connotations as they got immersed in the university life. The puzzle was then about how to fit in a totally different reality.

Chapter 4 Journeys in a new reality. Stories of in(ex)clusion from the university

'It is incredible!'. That is the expression of the participants when they were asked about their first impression of being at the university. This part of the interviews was aimed to discover their perceptions, opinions, and realities in this new stage of their lives. With this information, it was possible to see the dynamics within the university regarding social interactions, the services offered by the university and the impact on their academic performance.

4.1. A matter of expectations and popular beliefs

At first, when the question about the first perception came out, the students mentioned how amazed they were by the infrastructure of the university and the city itself. It was a cultural shock since that was the first time they went to Bogota for most of them. Those new environments represent a challenge for them that add to the pressure of being academically well prepared.

The next opinion was regarding the nervousness and anxiety they felt about the treatment they were going to receive from the people at the university. In words of one of them: "I had a really bad perception of that university… I was like 'oh my God, they are going to bullying me!'… That was my fear, to enter into the social environment. No the academic part, but the social part" (Yulieth, participant from capital area 2017).

It reflects the current and traditional configuration of the system, where huge social class differences play an important role in the access and positionality of ones and the others. Having those perceptions of 'them and us' and the fears regarding of being accepted or mistreated by others, depicts the long tradition of exclusion.

It is known and accepted the existence of determined universities where the elite class goes, and others are hardly welcomed for one reason or another. There is an implicit acceptance of the differences and the structure of the system, where the social class is simply a normal conditioning. This can be considered as potent and damaging regarding policy since it means that inequality is not being explained concerning class, thus classed policies are naturalized and become common sense (Ball 2003 cited by Olmedo and Santa Cruz 2012). The question then is how the system is prepared for this new scenario with new actors on the ground.

Also, it has to be stated that those fears were originated to some extent by their parents, teachers and the media. The latter is key in this situation. Various cases of bullying and discrimination against the beneficiaries of the program in

los Andes were reported by the national news (El Colombiano 2015). Some of the cases were reported to be done through the social media.

There are Facebook pages where the students of the universities can post anonymous announcements or opinions. In the case of Los Andes, this Facebook page is called 'UniAndes Confessions'. One of the participants pointed out and showed print-screens of some of the commentaries made by the students in that web page. One of them was referring to the security at the university during the recent years. It was a denouncement made by a regular student about recurrent robberies in-campus, and that the security perception within the university was getting lower since two years ago; the same time of the SPP program's implementation. Despite these prejudicial insinuations, it was also mentioned that several other students responded by defending the beneficiaries and supporting them.

That last part indeed exemplifies what all the participants mentioned towards the reality when they entered the university. They all indicated that the bad perception they had before entering was wrong. They stated they have never been victims of bullying or any other kind of discrimination. It was totally the opposite. People at the university have been very welcoming and have treated them very well. According to that, the commentaries such as the mentioned in the Facebook post are not so common.

Here, the interactions between them start to develop. Those socially constructed notions determined the roles that each of them, the SPP students and the regular ones, would play in the new context of the university community. In the surface and in a first look, the exclusion will not be perceived, and thus the welcoming sensation will be generalized. However, the social exclusion will be present at a micro level, when stereotypes from each side collides at the moment of direct interactions enforced by lectures and common spaces. Not deliberated actions of exclusion (Sen 2000) will be seen.

4.2. Fitting in a new social and academic context

After talking about those first experiences and expectations, the questions were focused on two aspects: their academic performance and their social interactions. In regards to the former, many participants answered that they had difficulties by studying some of the basic courses. One of the participants said he was behind in one of the mathematics classes because of the superficial level at her high school: "I couldn't keep the path of my classmates because I had to take a remedial course for calculus. Most of the ones who were taking that remedial course were also beneficiaries" (Ian, participant from urban area 2017).

Others mentioned that they did not have problems with the level of the courses of their careers. They felt very well at those specific courses. However,

the level was not so good when taking other classes out of their programs. English is one of the most recurrent complains. As Angie mentioned: "Supposedly, I was one of the best students in the English classes at my high school, but after I came here, I realized I did not know anything about it" (Angie, participant from rural area 2017)

This aspect reflects the inefficiency of the government in regards to implementing effective strategies to improve the relevance of the classes at public schools. As stated in the third chapter, the current structure of the secondary system in the public institutions attempts to address the real needs of the students according to their regions and cultures. In other words, the model, as proposed by the inclusion dimension of Tikly and Barret (2011), is trying to incorporate the abilities that are key in the students' context and for their needs, however, they are still superficial or do not take other important skills into consideration.

The implementation of the program has put other paradigms in the scenario, and it is imperative that the government addresses them to make it more inclusive and open. In a broader view, it is necessary that the system reflects on the real situation of the academic preparation received at public schools. Thus not only the best and smartest students can get the tertiary level. Improvements at those levels will signify better outcomes for the beneficiaries and the implementation of the program.

Regarding the strategies, they used or are using for reaching the desirable levels. The majority of the participants claimed to have studied and improved on their own in spite of the services of counseling that the university offers. Some of them knew about those services but did not want to use them, while others barely knew about them at that time. Few participants did use those facilities.

Even though the facilities offered by the university are well structured as explained in Chapter 2, they are not seen like as useful by these students. The reasons behind those possible perceptions need to be analyzed more deeply to improve the offered services. However, this dynamic of preferring to study by themselves reflect once again the normalization of the failures of the system (Olmedo and Santa Cruz 2012). They know since high school that they have to fill the gaps by themselves.

On the other hand, and with regards to the social dynamics within the university, many were the findings that depict the real situation of the interactions. Most participants noted that their friends are mostly other SPP beneficiaries or students who are under scholarship programs.

For instance, Angie mentioned that almost 90% of her friends are other beneficiaries. In her opinion, that happens for two main reasons: the first is related to the classes she took. As it was explained before, many of these students

had to take remedial courses. Thus all of them knew each other from those classes. The second reason is related to empathy. She mentioned that she finds many differences between them and her way to think. She categorizes them as superficial and with a lower social conscience.

In a more critical way, Luisa mentioned that she felt inferior when she noted and accepted those differences:

"I came here and felt bad by realizing the huge difference that exists. I felt bad for the economic difference because it made me feel less than the others. My first semester was emotionally really hard, and it didn't allow me to give all my effort on the academic part. I was always thinking about the social difference. (…) One can feel that they (the regular students) only get surrounded by other people who wear brand clothing like Adidas or something like that. And I am not the only one who thinks like that. We talk about that with my friends, and we all conclude that it is hard to have a conversation with them. We have had different lives. We have different goals…" (Luisa, participant from rural area 2017)

The effects social exclusion started to appear in the experiences of these beneficiaries. Even though the university and its community have shown to be prone to be inclusive and welcomed   any kind of students, the interactions will demonstrate other behaviors. Such propensity will not be enough to break other paradigms that have been socially constructed and accepted over the years. As De Haan (2000: 26) said, "group formation is a fundamental characteristic of human society, and this is accompanied by the exclusion of others", which for this case is determined by class structures.

The historical processes of exclusion and inequality mentioned at the beginning of this paper undermined this attempt to create space for inclusion in the higher education system. For the majority of the cases in this study, growing up in so different environments, where the opportunities were quite different for each part, makes the acceptance of the others to stay in a superficial level. The social cohesion mentioned by the government as a positive side effect is not happening deeply and solidly.

In contrast, there was one experience that is completely the opposite. Camilo mentions that he has all kinds of friends (beneficiaries and regular students), but then he recognizes that he does not have friends but acquaintances from the SPP program. He stayed away from other beneficiary students because his purpose is to get better job opportunities in the future. In his own words:

"If I am in a friendship with people who live in my same neighborhood and went to my same school, the maximum that I can expect from them is a job with a low payment. It is like that because that friend who has that salary will recommend another friend who probably will reach the same salary. On the contrary, if I have a friend with a higher position, or more intelligent than me

or better than me, he or she can help me to grow and be better. But if I stay with the same people of always, I will get stuck, and that's not my idea" (Camilo, participant from capital area 2017).

The normalization of the historical, social structures is generating the acceptance of ones as better than others. Certainly, by looking at the real scenario, it is clear that those in the upper levels of the social classes have better living standards and good quality jobs, which make them seem to have better skills and abilities. In this sense, Camilo is trying to reach that desirable level by generating a separation from his background, and indeed perpetuating those differences instead of embracing and modifying them.

Later, he mentioned that one of his biggest changes after entering that university was his physical appearance by changing his style and buying new clothing. He decided to accept the system as it is and modified himself to fit in it. This depicts how he positions himself into this new situation in a traditional system. His understanding on who has the power to speak and surge, and how the concepts of development and education are constructed, shape his identity as individual, and the identities of the groups in which he interacts (Tikly and Barret 2011)

In addition to this situation of division between ones and the others, other dynamics were discovered in a similar sense. At the moment of asking about their eating habits and the services provided by the university for that, another common opinion came out. Most students comment that they do not use the food services at the university due to the costs. They prefer to bring their own food or to go outside the campus to buy it since there are more and cheaper options. Inside the campus, there is only one option that these students claim as the most affordable: The Central Cafeteria, which is where they can get discounts for being beneficiaries of the program.

It is clear how passive exclusion is generated by the dynamics within the implementation of the program. "There is no deliberate attempt to exclude" (Sen 2000: 15), but the structure of the university, which has been traditionally prepared for the elite classes of the society, is generating exclusion by not being prepared to offer options for the new students. It becomes clear how the program's formulation fails by leaving important social aspects behind, placing them on the universities' hands, trusting the current configuration of the system as good, and focusing only on the provision of access (Mkandawire 2001; Sayed and Soudien 2003).

The mentioned situation is generating other social dynamics. Mainly, the generation of strategies to fit in those new environments and circumstances. From the university, they implemented discounts in the Central Cafeteria for SPP beneficiaries, nevertheless the participants say it is not enough. Many of them are going to specific restaurants that are affordable. Esteban pointed out how such restaurant is popular and always full of beneficiaries. Paola, also, expands on that and describes another interesting dynamic.

She explains that she has two main friends, one is a regular student, and one is an SPP beneficiary. She mentions that there are certain differences between them, and they can be perceived mainly when having lunch. She always brings her food from home but sometimes goes with them to eat. With her regular student friend, she realized that they pay a lot of money for what is known as 'healthy salads'. "Sometimes, I actually prepare salads for my lunch when I know I am going to eat with her and her friends" (Paola, participant from capital area 2017), she said. When she eats with her SPP friend, they go to a much cheaper restaurant outside the campus. Her friend usually goes there with more SPP beneficiaries.

Once again, it is possible to see how the beneficiaries are playing with the tools they have to fit into the system. They have to deal with institutionalized obstacles, meaning social, cultural and "economic structures that deny access to resources that they need to interact with others as peers" (Tikly and Barret 2011: 6). By their means, they have to achieve and fulfill the requirements that are not attended by the program, nor by the university, nor by the system.

On the other hand, Jesus and Camila mention that there are other cases where that kind of interactions also depends on other aspects. In the case of Camila, she mentions that sometimes her regular-student friends help her to complete the payment of her food when they eat together. In the case of Jesus, the level of support is higher and his friends, who are mainly regular students, help and include him in any social activities they do, even by paying all the cost of his participation. Unfortunately, both of them mentioned that it is not the same for all their other friends who are also beneficiaries.

The awareness shown by their friends depicts how possible is to overcome differences and achieve better inclusive outcomes. However, there are external aspects that facilitate that awareness. Aspects that are not precisely related to the execution of the program but social attitudes. The case of Jesus demonstrates this. He mentions that he is part of the university's LGBTQ focus group, and so do the majority of his friends. This aspect allows linking the awareness with the importance that is given to social justice around the LGBTQ community. In fact, "solid data are emerging that support the argument that social attitudes toward LGB people are changing, particularly among young people" (Evans and Broido 2005: 48).

In general, all the beneficiaries identify many changes in their lives since they started their careers in that university. Each of them has made decisions to fit in those new scenarios at the academic and the social levels. It is clear to see how the structure of the policy on higher education is at the same time structuring perceptions over the population. It is possible to identify how the university and the participants' own means are filling the gaps left by the program.

Chapter 5 Concluding thoughts

This study went through a complex road of political and social facts that compose the current situation of the higher education system. It unpacked some of the dynamics that a group of vulnerable female and male youth face and have to deal with to fit into a top university as beneficiaries of the 'Ser Pilo Paga' program. It also exposed the way the study's participants position themselves within the context of an elite university and how the historical structures have influenced those roles among them.

Consequently, this Research Paper analyzed the role of the Colombian government within the problem of exclusion in the higher education system. By looking to the background of the SPP program, it was possible to observe that the issue is being treated as a residual aspect of an economic structure that is not responding as it should to the whole affected population (Mkandawire 2001). The scope of the program is not only problematic for the intended number of beneficiaries, but also for the aspects it takes into consideration in the design and implementation of it.

Like any situation, this has two possible entry points or tails; the students (demand) and the system (supply). From this study, it is clear to see how the government is addressing the problem from the tail of the students by indirectly blaming them for not being able to fit in a system that is considered as in good condition and functioning. The government, by tackling the situation as an issue of demand, is mistakenly assuming that one size fits all the students (Sayed and Soudien 2003) thus assumes that the current structure of the private universities works perfectly for everyone.

In fact, as it was stated in Chapter 2, the mentioned government's position is not exclusive to the SPP program. The failed attempt to reform the higher education system was indeed seeking to augment the demand and to boost the private conception of education. The program can be seen as another attempt to reach that same aim. It is helping the population to enter into a system that is designed, in its private conception, to respond to the needs of the medium and upper classes of the society.

Such structure of the private institutions is the typical configuration of those institutions whose main aim is to seek for clients and improve its status (Arum et al. 2012). In the scenario shown by this study, Universidad de los Andes has those characteristics, which cannot be judged. What can be problematic is the blindness of the government towards this reality, when it was decided to leave the welfare of the beneficiaries to the autonomy and means of the institutions. The beneficiaries of the program are dealing with those gaps in the program as seen in Chapter 4 when they try to fit socially and academically in this new context.

The failures by attempting to bring inclusion and high-quality education to the vulnerable population originate struggles to fit. From what was shown in Chapter 3, it was clear that the education offered by the public schools in the secondary system is not designed for launching them to a higher academic life. It is mainly focusing on giving them the skills to work afterwards, which indeed is not wrong since it is relevant and inclusive by taking into account the real context, needs and location of the students (Tikly and Barrett 2011). However, the current configuration is not helping them to achieve other goals different to seeking for a job; for example, being successful by entering to a university.

Those features are configuring and shaping the roles these study's participants have when they get into the university life. Those conditions are hampering their performances at the higher education level. There is an evident passive exclusion when in a non-intentional way (Sen 2000), the whole body of students are determining their social circles and interactions by using classed experiences and features (Weis and Dolby 2012). The study determined how the study's participants are positioning themselves in this context at the most prestigious university. It is demonstrated how social constructions made by the society and enforced by the policy design interfere with the social dynamics of the university community.

The study's participants demonstrated how their backgrounds affect the socialization and academic performances. From the experiences of this specific group of participants, it is possible to see how passive exclusion is happening in a classed way and different directions. Chapter 4 exposed that it can go from those beneficiaries judging the others for their way of thinking and act to beneficiaries underestimating other beneficiaries for the same reason.

All in all, the focus of the government on dealing with the problem by fostering the demand, which is to address the access mainly in a financing way, shows how little its interest is on the social aspects of it. In short, those processes of social exclusion along history, boosted by traditional policy structures, and consolidated by social class differences, are in fact having exclusionary effects in the social interactions between the study's participants and the rest of the students.

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Table 1. List of interviwees

Name	Origin	Date
Luisa	Rural	15-Aug-17
Paola	Urban	18-Aug-17
Juan	Urban	12-Aug-17
Laura	Rural	14-Aug-17
Inocencio	Rural	13-Aug-17
Leonardo	Rural	17-Aug-17
Camilo	Urban	17-Aug-17
Carlos	Rural	14-Aug-17
Esteban	Rural	25-Aug-17
Daniela (A)	Urban	12-Aug-17
Ian	Urban	14-Aug-17
Keyla	Urban	10-Aug-17
Yulieth	Urban	12-Aug-17
David	Urban	12-Aug-17
Jesus	Urban	16-Aug-17
Angie	Rural	21-Aug-17
Daniela (B)	Rural	8-Aug-17
Camila	Rural	9-Aug-17
Gov. Official	-	18-Aug-17

* Rural: little towns or villages. Urban: capital cities of the regions. Capital: Bogotá (national capital district)

Table 2. Identification of the study's participants

Name	Sex	Age	Type of High School	Location of School	Level of Parental Education		Victim of the Violence	Minority Member
					Father	Mother		
Luisa	F	17	Public	Rural	I-HE	I-HS	No	No
Paola	F	20	Public	Capital	C-HS	I-PS	No	No
Juan	M	18	Public	Urban	C-HS	I-HE	No	No
Laura	F	17	Public	Rural	I-PS	I-HS	No	No
Inocencio	M	18	Public	Rural	I-PS*	C-PS	Yes	No
Leonardo	M	17	Public	Rural	I-PS	C-HS	No	No
Camilo	M	20	Private	Capital	C-HE	C-HS	No	No
Carlos	M	17	Public	Rural	-	C-HS	No	No
Esteban	M	17	Public	Rural	C-HS	C-HS	No	No
Daniela (A)	F	19	Private	Urban	I-HE	C-HE	No	No
Ian	M	17	Private	Urban	C-HE	I-HE	No	No*
Keyla	F	18	Public	Urban	C-HS	C-HS	No	No
Yulieth	F	17	Private	Capital	I-HS	I-HS	Yes	No
David	M	17	Public	Urban	C-HS	C-HE	No	No
Jesus	M	20	Public	Urban	-	C-HE	No	No*
Angie	F	19	Public	Rural	I-PS	I-PS	No	No
Daniela (B)	F	19	Private	Rural	C-HS	C-HS	No	No
Camila	F	20	Private	Rural	-	C-HS	No	No

Conventions:
M: Masculine
F: Feminine
I-PS: Incomplete Primary School
C-PS: Complete Primary School
I-HS: Incomplete High School
C-HS: Complete High School
I-HE: Incomplete Higher Education
C-HE: Complete Higher Education
* LGBTQ member (Mentioned during the interview but not in the survey format)

Map 1 Origin of Study's Paticipants