Conceptions of Corruption in Children and Young People from a Rural Educational Institution of Villagómez, Cundinamarca (Colombia)*

⌈English Version⌉

Concepciones de corrupción en niños y jóvenes de una Institución Educativa Rural de Villagómez, Cundinamarca (Colombia)

Concepções de corrupção em crianças e jovens de uma instituição educacional rural de Villagómez, Cundinamarca (Colômbia)

José-Eduardo Cifuentes-Garzón**
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5602-957X
Colombia
Luz-Dary Linares-Garzón***
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1933-5399
Colombia

Abstract

Objective: to report on the understandings about corruption that circulate in students of primary and

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** PhD in Education and Society. Postdoctoral Research Studies in Education, Social Sciences and Interculturality. M.Sc. in Pedagogy. Specialist in Educational Management. Degree in Basic Education with Emphasis in Mathematics, Humanities and Spanish Language. Director-Teacher of the Education Secretary of Cundinamarca, Colombia. Contact: josecifuentes1980@gmail.com

*** Public Management Specialist. Business Administrator. Master's student in Organizational Management. Official of the Superintendence of Notaries and Registry-Colombia. Contact: linaresluzdary@gmail.com

secondary basic education of the rural sector in the municipality of Villagómez, Cundinamarca in Colombia. Through specific actions such as: identifying the meanings assigned to the concept of corruption, describing the ways to proceed concerning corruption in daily actions and determining the yearnings for change regarding corruption, which are proposed by the students. **Methodology**: the fieldwork was developed from a qualitative approach and with a descriptive research type. Those who participated were 18 students of primary basic education and 16 of secondary basic education from the Telesecundaria educational model. **Results**: Theoretical approaches and understandings of children and young people in the rural sector versus the concept of corruption are presented. They focus on the relationship with political figures, the ambition of having and power, stealing and mistrusting the truth. **Conclusions**: in this approach, it was possible to recognize the voices of children and young people in the face of the phenomenon of corruption and to define the possible lines of action that the school can undertake to educate in values and citizenship.

Keywords: Political corruption; Understandings of corruption in children and young people; Rural school and corruption; Civic education; Values system.

Resumen

Objetivo: reportar las concepciones sobre corrupción que circulan en estudiantes de educación básica primaria y secundaria del sector rural en el municipio de Villagómez Cundinamarca-Colombia. A través de acciones específicas como: identificar los significados que le asignan al concepto de corrupción, describir las formas de proceder con respecto a la corrupción en las acciones cotidianas y determinar los anhelos de cambio respecto a la corrupción, que proponen los mismos estudiantes. **Metodología**: el trabajo de campo se desarrolló desde un enfoque cualitativo y con el tipo de investigación descriptiva. Participaron 18 estudiantes de educación básica primaria y 16 de básica secundaria del modelo educativo Telesecundaria. **Resultados**: se presenta unas aproximaciones teóricas y las concepciones de niños y jóvenes del sector rural frente al concepto de corrupción, las cuales se centran en la relación con los personajes políticos, la ambición del tener y el poder, robar y faltar a la verdad. **Conclusiones**: en este abordaje se permitió reconocer las voces de los niños y jóvenes frente al fenómeno de la corrupción y definir las posibles líneas de acción que la escuela puede emprender para educar en valores y ciudadanía.

Palabras-clave: Corrupción política; Concepciones de corrupción en niños y jóvenes; Escuela rural y corrupción; Educación ciudadana; Sistema de valores.

Resumo

Objetivo: relatar as concepções de corrupção que circulam em estudantes do ensino fundamental e médio do setor rural no município de Villagómez Cundinamarca-Colômbia. Por meio de ações específicas, tais como: identificar os significados atribuídos ao conceito de corrupção, descrever maneiras de proceder com relação à corrupção nas ações diárias e determinar os anseios de mudança em relação à corrupção, propostos pelos próprios alunos. **Metodologia**: o trabalho de campo foi desenvolvido a partir de uma abordagem qualitativa e com o tipo de pesquisa descritiva. Participaram 18 alunos do ensino fundamental e médio do modelo educacional de Telesecundaria. **Resultados**: abordagens e concepções teóricas de crianças e jovens do setor rural são apresentadas diante do conceito de corrupção, que enfoca a relação com figuras políticas, a ambição de ter e poder, roubar e perder a verdade. **Conclusões**: nessa abordagem, foi permitido reconhecer as vozes de crianças e jovens diante do fenômeno da corrupção e definir as possíveis linhas de ação que a escola pode empreender para educar em valores e cidadania.

Palavras-chave: Corrupção política; Concepções de corrupção em crianças e jovens; Escola Rural e corrupção

Introduction

The corruption events in Colombia made visible in various media outlets are an important factor in generating reflection on: what is happening to the ethical and moral training of public servants today; what do children and young people in the country think about the corruption issue; and how can the culture of anti-corruption be fostered in schools. In this sense, this article reports the findings of the research conducted with children and young people of a Rural Educational Institution in the municipality of Villagómez Cundinamarca, Colombia.

The study asked as a research question: What are the understandings of corruption circulating at the level of primary and secondary basic education in the rural sector in the municipality of Villagómez, Cundinamarca? In this way, the general objective was to analyze the notions of corruption that circulate among students of primary and secondary basic education in this sector. This is done through specific actions such as identifying the meanings assigned to the concept of corruption by students at the primary and secondary levels of basic education, describing the ways to proceed concerning corruption in the daily actions of students, and determining the yearnings for change regarding fraud proposed by them.

Hereafter, several theoretical approaches related to corruption are made, followed by a presentation of the methodological perspective and the voices of children and young people compared to the categories addressed in the research. Finally, it concludes with some possible lines of action that the school should develop for the training of citizens in the search for the common good.

The Concept of Corruption

Corruption in Colombia has become a phenomenon that permeates all social spheres. The existence of this fact has led to the prevalence of personal interests over general concerns. When there is an appropriation of public resources destined to develop public policies, not only the State but all its citizens are harmed, by putting human integrity at risk when the possibility of developing social programs aimed at improving the quality of life of the most underprivileged sectors is diminished. This way of acting constitutes punishable conduct in the Colombian justice system. Comfortable situations, confusing circumstances, internal and external agents are common causes for acts of corruption to materialize, which brings serious consequences that affect the objectives and pro-

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cesses of an entity, the loss, the damage of an organization and the patrimonial detriment of a nation. In this perspective, Del Castillo (2003) points out that

> Corruption inhibits the social effect of public investment in strategic areas, fostering the exacerbation of poverty and marginalization; thus, it is undeniable that corruption indices exert an important influence on the political, economic and social development of a given country (p. 5).

Accordingly, corruption is conceived not only as a structural problem but also as a moral and cultural one. Therefore, definitions of corruption range from general terms of 'misuse of public power' and 'moral deterioration' to strict legal definitions, which describe this phenomenon as a mere act of extortion involving some public servant (Del Castillo, 2003, p. 14). Besides, it is important to highlight the notion of corruption defined by CONPES No. 67 (2013; cited by the Administrative Department of Public Service, 2015a) as the use of power to divert management from public to private benefit (p. 9).

On the other hand, for Nye (1967; quoted by Castellanos, 2014) corruption is defined as the violation of the norms of public service for personal advantage (p. 2). Thus, corruption is interpreted as a behavior or an action that concentrates on the inappropriate exercise of the public function. This type of corruption refers to non-compliance with the social contract between citizens and the government, where the public official takes advantage of his or her position for personal gain, rather than promoting the interests of citizens (Castellanos, 2014).

It also states that corruption is a complex phenomenon with multiple causes and effects, ranging from the simple act of illicit payment to the endemic functioning of the economic and political system (Del Castillo, 2003, p. 14). Consequently, corruption has a long and short term causality that, among other factors, is found in state intervention, the crisis of parties and the new spirit of professional politicians (Caciagli, 1996, p. 2). For this reason, it is urgent to reflect from school on this phenomenon that affects the institutionalism of the State, to encourage actions for the promotion of the culture of legality.

Anti-Corruption Regulations in Colombia

Colombia has sought to legislate as to prevent corruption in the different levels of the State. The following is a summary of the regulations that exist in this regard:

Table 1. Anti-Corruption Regulations

Category	Regulation	Content
Management of corruption risk	Law 1474 of 2011. Anti-Corruption Statute	Article 73. Anticorruption and Citizen Service Plan. It states that each national, departmental and municipal entity is obliged to prepare an annual strategy to combat corruption and provide assistance to citizens; and one of its basic components is the Corruption Risk Map and the measures to mitigate them. The Presidential Program for Modernization, Efficiency, Transparency and the Fight against Corruption (now the Secretariat of Transparency) is responsible for designing the methodology for drawing up the Map of Corruption Risks.
	Decree 4637 of 2011. Suppresses and creates a Secretariat in the DAPRE (Administrative Department of the Presidency of the Republic)	Article 4. Abolishes the Presidential Program for Modernization, Efficiency, Transparency and the Fight against Corruption.
		Article 2. Creates the Secretariat of Transparency in the Administrative Department of the Presidency of the Republic.
	Decree 1649 of 2014. Modification of the Structure of DAPRE	Article 55. Repeals Decree 4637 of 2011.
		Article 15. Functions of the Transparency Secretariat: 13) Identify the methodology for designing and monitoring the anti-corruption and citizen service strategies to be developed annually by national and territorial entities.
	Decree 1081 of 2015. Unique to the sector. Presidency of the Republic	Articles 2.1.4.1 and subsequent articles. It points out as a methodology for elaborating the anti-corruption strategy the one contained in the document "Strategies for the construction of the Anti-corruption and Citizen Attention Plan".
Transparency and Access to Public Information	Law 1712 of 2014. Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information	Article 9. Paragraph g) Duty to publish in the State's information systems or tools to replace the Anti-Corruption and Citizen Service Plan.

Category	Regulation	Content
Integrated Planning and Management Model	Decree 1083 of 2015. Unique of the Civil Service	Articles 2.2.22.1 and subsequent articles. It establishes that the Anti-Corruption and Citizen Service Plan is part of the Integrated Planning and Management Model.
Standard Model of Internal Control for the Colombian State (MECI)	Decree 943 of 2014 MECI	Article 1 and subsequent articles. Adopts the MECI Update.

Source: authors' elaboration, adapted from Departamento Administrativo de la Función Pública (2015a).

With the formulation and implementation of the 2015 Anti-Corruption and Citizen Service Plan, the national government has detected the most recurrent problems in this area and the benefits generated by its application and follow-up in State entities. Its greatest usefulness as a management tool has been to integrate the planning of the strategies of the entities around the fight against corruption. The Anti-Corruption Plan must be completed annually by each national, departmental and municipal public entity. It should include guidelines for the development of an anti-corruption strategy (Administrative Department of the Public Service, 2015b). These plans must be socialized with citizens more frequently. In this task, the school can contribute a great deal by opening up scenarios for disseminating, debating and proposing concrete actions against corruption.

Conceptions in Children and Young People

Following what has been said in the previous section, it is important to know the perceptions of children and young people regarding the phenomenon of corruption. According to Ponte (1992, quoted in Mora and Barrantes, 2008, p. 73) conceptions are cognitive constructs that can be seen as the underlying framework that organizes concepts in the individual (...) conceptions are the main notions that describe that domain. In this sense, conception is the process of the activity of mental construction of the real. This elaboration is carried out starting from the information that is recorded in the memory and results from the senses and the relations with others (Moreno, 2002, p. 4). In line with Valerio (2011),

Conceptions, in addition to perceiving the meanings of the object, include -implicitly or explicitly- the principles necessary for their application in specific cultural contexts... conceptions in general terms must be understood both from their symbological dimension and from their pragmatic dimension. From the symbolic dimension the social organization of meaning would be perceived, that is, the patterns of meaning (knowledge, values, beliefs) that have been constructed through history and that are transmitted in the processes of socialization and constitute the immediate referents of the action; and from the pragmatic dimension it would be conceived by how the meanings are used in communication and interaction, as well as by the intentionalities and circumstances in which the subjects use them (pp.199-200).

In this vein, this research sought to collect the voices of children and young people in a rural sector to analyze the representations they have built on corruption, from the daily actions and information disclosed in the media. Undoubtedly, Research with children represents a contribution to the social sciences (Sánchez and Lombardo, 2017, p. 9), since their knowledge, experiences and representations of the world constitute a valuable source of socio-cultural knowledge (Glockner, 2007, p. 67), from which routes can be defined that teach adults to act with decorum and honesty in all dimensions of private and public life.

Methodology

Participants

Thirty-four students participated in the research: 18 of primary basic education and 16 of secondary basic education of the Departmental Educational Institution Misael Gómez, headquarter Escuela Rural Veragüitas of the municipality of Villagómez, Cundinamarca (Colombia). This educational establishment was chosen for three reasons: first, because it is located in the rural sector; second, because it has the largest number of students from rural schools in the municipality in the second semester of 2018; and third, because it develops the Escuela Nueva (from first to fifth of primary basic education) and Telesecundaria (from sixth to ninth of secondary basic education) educational model. This population allowed the voices of a significant group of children and young people from the rural sector to be collected concerning perception of corruption, as demonstrated later in the results section.

Approach

The study used a qualitative approach. Qualitative research tries to identify the profound nature of realities, their system of relationships, their dynamic structure (...) This type of research is interested in the particular, the contextual, the lived stories, with the predominance of the deductive method (Rivadeneira, 2015, p. 173). This is how the study found in the qualitative, the appropriate approach for its development. In Table 2, the ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological support of the qualitative approach related to the present research:

Table 2. Characterization of the Qualitative Approach

Assumptions	Qualitative Methodology	Application to the Study
Ontological: What is the nature of reality?	Reality is subjective and multiple.	It takes into account the diverse perspectives of the research participants concerning the conceptions they have constructed about corruption.
Epistemological: What is the relationship between the researcher and what he is researching?	The researcher is immersed in the context of the interaction he wishes to investigate. It is assumed that the interaction between the two and the mutual influence are part of the research.	Both researchers and participants approach the conception of corruption from real experiences and external opinions.
Axiological: What role do values play in research?	The researcher assumes that his values are part of the knowledge process and reflects on it.	Reflectivity is provided within the framework of respect for the voices of the participants and mediated by the interactions of the researchers with the acting subjects.

Assumptions	Qualitative Methodology	Application to the Study
Methodological: What are the procedures used to construct empirical evidence, and how do they logically relate to the rest of the design stages?	Emerging concepts and categories inductively throughout the research process. Multiple factors influence each other. Flexible and interactive design. In-depth and detailed analysis in relation to the context is favored. Trust and authenticity.	The voices of the participants are collected from written exercises, transcribed and regrouped according to content, thus consolidating the gear of the emerging categories.

Source: authors' elaboration, adapted from Dalle et al. (2005, p. 40)

Type of Investigation

Descriptive studies are intended to delimit the facts that make up the research problem. For this reason, it is possible to establish the demographic characteristics of investigated units (...) identify forms of conduct and attitudes of people (...) establish specific behaviours (...) and discover and verify the possible association of variables (Méndez, 2007, pp. 230-231). Thus, in the present descriptive study there was interaction with the participating primary and high school students, their voices were registered in front of the concept of corruption and from the double reflexivity the respective interpretations were established.

Techniques, Instruments for Collecting and Systematizing Information

For the collection of information, a writing activity was applied to the students of the Veragüitas Rural School in the municipality of Villagómez Cundinamarca:

Table 3. Guiding Questions for the Implemented Instrument

Technique	Instrument	Guiding Questions
Writing activity	Questionnaire format	- What is Corruption? - In what daily actions is corruption evident? - What would you like to see changed in relation to corruption? - What do you propose to eradicate corruption?

Source: Author's

Congruent with the above, it was possible to identify in the speeches of the students the perceptions and beliefs for the topic axis of investigation. Subsequently, the responses were transcribed into matrixes, where the categories of analysis presented in the following section emerged. These results were made known to the participants who, from the reflection of the findings made the proposals that the school must undertake to educate in values and citizenship, to eradicate from society the phenomenon of corruption.

Results

Tables 4 and 5 show the perceptions students had about corruption. First, the voices of primary school students are collected:

Table 4. Systematization of Ideas About Corruption in High School Students
Veragüitas Rural School. July 9, 2018

Student	Conceptions About Corruption	Emerging Categories
E12, E13, E15, E16	*When you tell lies, no one believes you,* and we must not steal or kill. Corruption is a bad person, who is a liar and that if she is rich, she detests the poor do not respect people of color. It's like telling someone to do good things and we've heard on TV not to take things away from others and tell the truth to teachers and parents. Corruption is for me to tell lies to humanity.	Stealing and lying

Student	Conceptions About Corruption	Emerging Categories
E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, E10	To be corrupt is that when they're going to fix something, they last 3 years and never do, corruption affects democracy. Corruption is when they say they are going to build a school or a house and it takes, 10, 20, 50 years and they lie a lot to people and have the right to report. Being corrupt is a person who promises to do something but doesn't. Corruption is the people who say they're going to do one thing and they last a long time and they don't. Thieves when they steal are stingy, corrupt, when they don't finish school. Corruption is selling stolen things to a person.	Breaking what's promised
E8, E9, E11, E14, E16,	Bad people, lying people, rude people and Thieves. Bad people who steal, corrupt, rude people kill and promise and never deliver. Corruption is robbing others to spread the profits, they cheat, and it also affects education. Corruption is a very dishonest person and if they are rich, they don't like the poor. Corruption is someone who is evil, a liar and a stealing person. Corruption is being dishonest NOT friendly, being a liar, corruption is evil not living with someone in the world. Evil when it's dishonest, when people kill. Liar, bad.	Negative aspects of people
E17, E18	*Corruption is a politician*. Corruption is when people's resources are stolen, they steal the cars and sell them again. Corruption is when they steal, lie, when they don't finish building schools, when they vote they expect everything to change, but they don't just steal and lie.	Politics-related
E1, E2, E6, E7	Don't tell lies, don't steal, don't fight, don't cheat or be rude. Corruption helps us solve a problem and not steal. Don't steal because they would throw you in jail, you're stealing your life, you shouldn't tell lies because when you tell the truth they won't believe in what you say. We must stay in school to keep our career from telling lies. *Don't throw your life away*. We must share things and we can all fix it without a fight and that's how things work out. To be honest, to be shared. *Corruption is correcting a person*. Don't throw stones at people and not fight people, don't knock down trees, don't kill animals and not kill people. It's correcting people or an evaluation.	Associated with positive actions

Source: author's

Table 5 reports the perceptions of high school students on corruption:

Table 5. Systematization of Ideas About Corruption in Students of Rural Veragüitas Tele-secondary. July 9, 2018

Student	Conceptions About Corruption	Emerging Categories
E7, E8, E10, E11, E12, E14	Corruption is that corrupt person, forgery or alteration of a text, is sin, is not to think of the damage that can cause to other people, it is to *agree to steal* or hurt someone, it is to promise and not to comply, that is lies, it is not fulfill what one commits. Corruption is forgery or alteration of a writing. Not telling the truth is when a person does not fulfill what he promises, abusing trust. It is to promise and not to comply, it is to rob all people so that at once they will regret believing and confident that everything will change, is to do something wrong, it is to sin, it is not to think about the harm they can cause. It is to forge documents, to act badly or against the law affecting people. It's giving a bad example, it's working badly or illegally. For example, selling or exporting weapons or drugs. Corruption is offering to help someone with a problem they have either for money and taking away or taking out them to leave them on the street. It's helping or supporting criminal street fights. To falsify a text, to do the opposite that the law says, to lead people in the wrong way, is to be dishonest, is to disrespect, to give bad advice, to make people fight. Corruption is a person who is corrupt, who forges a writing and is a person who is false and they hand out the money and take it away from the citizens and the peasants, we also need that there is no more corruption or that they take money from the peasants to give it to the corrupt. Promise and fail, fail others and say false things or show something falsifying documents, act against the law, and do wrong things. It's like stealing. Corruption is a crime that must be punished with prison.	Counterfeit
E2	Corruption is the act of acting badly in the face of a community causing it damage whether economic or material, it is to falsify a writing for material gain. For example, those in the government that takes a portion of the budget. It is to act improperly with some power of government that you have no matter what evil you do to others. It is to act illegally in order to obtain self-gaining by acting without moral, ethical and spiritual principles or values.	Acting badly

Student	Conceptions About Corruption	Emerging Categories
E1, E6	A person capable of taking something that is not his. Person carrying illegal things. It's agreeing to steal and hurt someone, it's having to be bad to be recognized or remembered, but evil won't change them for life or get them out of trouble. Corruption affects democracy. Corruption is stealing from other people, it's stealing money from companies, it's lying to make more money, it's not giving what they've promised people, it's playing dirty with others, it's agreeing to steal something. Corruption is a crime that affects the people and democracy of a country.	Steal
E3, E4	Corrupt another person through actions or words. Corrupt yourself by being with other people. Situation where some people promise something they're never going to meet just for a profit. Perform activities with forgery of documents when wanting to pass over someone else.	Corrupting others
E5, E9, E13, E15	Corruption is about a person who promises things and does not fulfill them, it is also someone who steals money from another person. Corruption affects us all. They shouldn't do those things, although it's a pleasure for them to steal from others, they don't care what others think, they're only interested in money and the chances of reaching the top. When people *get carried away by ambitions and misuse their power*, they promise help to gain some benefit and aftergaining they do not help or keep their promises. It is to take advantage of your economic or political position or situation in order to harm or hurt people and benefit from it. It is violating the rules or laws only for self-benefit, it is abusing a person's trust and it is defrauding people after showing themselves as good citizens. It's when people get carried away with ambition and it's corrupt with their duties, they promise, but they don't do something wrong, to do something wrong is to sin is NOT to think about the harm they can do to other people.	Product of ambition

Source: author's

Having reported the conceptions of children and young people, the following categories were established, entitled with the same voices of the participants:

Corruption is Politicians

The imaginary of corruption is associated with politicians. It is both the discredit of those who hold positions of popular choice that the same children and young people in the rural sector assimilate corruption in the first place as inherent in political exercise. This discourse permeates various scenarios with ideas such as "our biggest problem is the political class (...) they don't make the right decisions or do it too late (...) the left and right no longer exist; they are unable to agree... they don't represent us (...) the more transparency the better; it's all due to the unethical..." (Innerarity, 2015, p. 22), which is naturalized in social dynamics. However, "The problem with these reproaches is that they are not completely false, but not entirely true" (Innerarity, 2015, p. 22). In other words, it has become customary to assign politicians the like-of-money without having examined their public and private actions.

According to the above, the banality of opinions has led to unknown the very essence of politics. "To make matters a little worse, if we are sincere, we should recognize that people do not know exactly what politics should do; uncertainty has taken hold of the rulers, and the ruled ones" (Innerarity, 2015, pp. 22-23). In this uncertainty and outrage, the premises that are all corrupt are installed on the citizens as truths and politics is useless. This causes students to take on the role of spectators in political participation contests in times of outrage in the "moments of special disorientation and that is why we pay more attention to corruption than to bad politics; we demand greater transparency and do not wonder if we are looking where we must look or on what they let us" (Innerarity, 2015, p. 22).

For this reason, it is the school's duty to open spaces for critical reflection of politics and politicians in order to transform ways of acting and thinking as citizens, because "There have never been so many possibilities in history to access, monitor and challenge authority, but people have never felt so frustrated about their ability to make politics different" (Innerarity, 2015, p. 23).

They Let Themselves be Carried Away by Ambitions and Misuse Their Power

For students involved in the investigation, corruption is related to the human ambitions of possessing and power. Possessing, in terms of the acquisition of material goods, going to illegal means to obtain them. Power, such as the ability to dominate and take advantage of public office to meet personal needs. In this sense, corruption is based on elements such as "the abuse of a position of

power, the attainment of an asset advantage in return for its use and the secret nature of the payment" (De la Mata, 2016, p. 4). In addition, "the causes that generate it, as well as the strategies for its containment, are different. But if there is consensus in the need to deal with it from both repressive and preventive positions, conceding corruption from a global perspective" (De la Mata, 2016, p. 4), which affects with particular attention the exercise of public power.

According to Nieto-García (quoted by De la Mata, 2016), public corruption "begins when the power that has been handed over by the State to a person as a public administrator (...) is not used correctly when its exercise is deviated, defrauding the trust of the constituents, to obtain a personal enrichment" (pp. 5-6). In addition, the acts and practices of corruption are very varied "While some examples of corruption include unlawful and criminal conduct, other practices associated with this phenomenon may be of perfect legality, but of questionable morality" (Sandoval, 2016, p. 123). It is therefore up to the family and the school to encourage constant reflection on children and young people on the practice of values such as honesty, transparency and truth, in such a way as to seek the common good above the satisfaction of the private interests.

According to the above, "it is necessary, from the academic sector, to contribute to documenting and analyzing the abuses of power, prevailing impunity and citizen alienation, in order to contribute to the thorough restructuring of State-society relations" (Sandoval, 2016, p. 145). In addition, it is necessary to "create an ethical culture by generating awareness in the citizens, in the different members of the State, inviting action by pressuring public representatives to take real actions to prevent and control corruption" (Baptist, 2016, p. 30).

Agree to Steal. When you Tell Lies, no one Believes you

Study participants associate not telling the truth with the phenomenon of corruption. Therefore, there is a need to reflect on ethics and public morals, understood as "a science that shapes human behavior because through it is that man manages to acquire good habits of behavior and that... will allow him to be disciplined to achieve self-leadership according to the moral principles that exist" (Zuleta, 2015, pp. 9-10). It is also essential that public ethics are more effectively addressed in vocational training, "related or linked to the practical tasks of public officials, so their presence or absence determines the functioning of the established institutional structure" (Zuleta, 2015, p. 10).

Rescuing the value of honesty in all organizations is a way to combat corruption. For Rest (1986; quoted by Arellano, 2017) "Corruption, in fact, is a social phenomenon: an individual decides to be corrupt or performs a dishonest

action... always in a context where their psychological reactions, their experiences, their values and the social interrelationships that lives and suffers constantly" (pp. 5-6). For this reason, coherence at home, at school, at the university, and in all public life scenarios regarding honest actions. In relation to the university field, some studies indicate the disinterest and lack of political participation of young university students (Taguenca and González, 2018; Sañudo and Falika, 2018).

Thus, "[c]orrupt acts appear in people's conduct when there are no brakes on their minds to perform them. The brakes that can prevent a person from performing corrupt acts are the principles and values he/she has" (Baptist, 2016, p. 34). In this sense, an education focused on human values is important, because "[w]hen there is no education, neither principles nor values in the mind of the person, it gives way to ignorance. Ignorance is breeding ground for anti-values and corrupt practices... Ethics draws from that ignorance" (Baptist, 2016, p. 34).

Corruption in Students' Day-to-day Actions and Yearning for Change

Students who participated in the investigation point to day-to-day actions of the school in which corruption is evident in facts such as:

> "Unjustified excuses: When classmates make excuses for absences from school and presentation of assignments, they do not respond to the truth. Cheating in evaluations, wanting to deceive the teacher by answering questions taken from books or notebook notes. Cheating in games, making illegal plays for the purpose of winning regardless of the means used. When teachers arrive late or leave school early without meeting all the hours" (Young of the Rural Educational Institution of Villagómez).

On the other hand, students point to corruption in town

> "When adults ask for help in the municipal administration without need or urgency. Moreover, when in stores they don't pay what they owe and the promises that politicians never keep after they've won. In the same writings, students propose as actions of change that parents teach to always tell the truth, the school enforces the word, zero cheating in games, assignments and assessments, and the family and school teach to comply with the laws of God contemplated in the Bible" (Child of the Rural Educational Institution of Villagómez).

This gathered the voices of students regarding conceptions and proposals to combat corruption from the everyday settings of children and young people. So, knowing students "means learning to give them the floor or listening to their voices and trying to understand their experiences in school, the ways in which it acquires meaning and becomes a space of realization of everyday life" (Saucedo and Guzmán , 2011, p. 269).

Conclusions

The research process recognized the meanings assigned to the concept of corruption by students at the level of primary and secondary basic education of the rural sector in the municipality of Villagómez, Cundinamarca, which were related with negative aspects of people as a result of ambition and associated the actions mainly with politics. Regarding ways of proceeding related to corruption in the day-to-day actions of students, it was found that they refer to important scenarios for the school and the family. Adults who are part of them, are models that influence the learning and application of ethical and civil values. Regarding yearnings for change over corruption, students propose important tasks to the family and school, in the sense of teaching the behaviors of honesty and righteousness.

According to the results of this investigation, it can be inferred that conceptions of corruption are mediated from an approach to ethics and morals. In this perspective, the strengthening of cognitive, emotional and communicative citizen competences in the different areas of social interaction is important, in order to educate citizens who respect the institutional customs; fulfillers of their duties, and who exercise the human rights with strictness and transparency in the various social, economic and political scenarios.

In the face of the social phenomenon of corruption, it is up to the school to envision alternatives that lead to the permanent reflection of the individual and collective actions of children and young people, in the sense of rescuing the practice of values such as transparency in all actions, always telling the truth, complying with what has been agreed, rejecting any kind of bribery and other actions against ethical principles. Sccording to Sañudo and Palifka (2018), even at university level which should continue to guide young people to "learn to distinguish how corruption settles in their daily practice, combat it and commit to being attentive to the honesty of their actions and the veracity of their discourse" (p. 21).

In these times when traditions tend to disappear, the school must safeguard the mission of educating, which by nature falls to it in alliance with the fami-

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ly. If any practice leading to the maintenance of corruption is removed in the family and school, this scourge that affects the very progress of humanity, will ultimately begin to be eradicated.

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