REVISTA INVECOM
ISSN en línea: 2739-0063

Implementation of gender-inclusive education in school coexistence

Implementación de la educación inclusiva en materia de género en la convivencia escolar

Received: 06/06/2025 - **Accepted:** 05/09/2025

Astrid Carolina Díaz García
https://orcid.org/0009-0006-4716-4135
astriddiaz.est@umecit.edu.pa
Umecit. Panama City, Panama

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the degree of compliance with gender inclusion policies in school coexistence in educational institutions in the North-Central district of Barranquilla. To this end, a mixed, descriptive-explanatory, non-experimental, cross-sectional research design was applied. The population consisted of the official educational institutions that are part of the North-Central Historic District (Norte Riomar) of the District of Barranquilla (153). Coverage was established in the Norte Riomar district, with 27 institutions totaling 675 students (25 per institution), while there were a total of 54 educational leaders (2 per institution). Therefore, a stratified proportional probability sampling was used, with a final sample rounded to 85 teachers. For the administrators, a population census and a purposive sampling were applied, selecting 12 participants (6 teachers and 6 administrators) for the semi-structured interviews and focus groups. A five-point Likert scale questionnaire and a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions were used, both instruments having been validated by experts and tested for reliability. It was concluded that the discourse and institutional stance on gender inclusion remain relatively uniform among teaching and administrative staff, suggesting that institutional initiatives or training policies related to gender inclusion are reaching across the various hierarchical levels.

Keywords: inclusion, gender, school coexistence

Resumen

Este estudio tiene como propósito evaluar el grado de cumplimiento de las políticas de inclusión de género en la convivencia escolar de las instituciones educativas de la localidad Norte–Centro de Barranquilla. Para ello, se aplicó un tipo de investigación mixta, descriptiva-explicativa, con diseño no experimental y transversal. La población estuvo conformada por las entidades educativas oficiales que forman parte de la localidad Norte–Centro Histórico (Norte Riomar) del Distrito de Barranquilla (153). Se estableció cobertura en la localidad Norte Riomar, con 27 instituciones que suman 675 estudiantes (25 por cada una), mientras que los líderes educativos totalizaron 54 (2 por cada institución). Por lo tanto, se empleó un muestreo estratificado probabilístico proporcional, cuya muestra final se redondeó a 85 docentes. Para los directivos se aplicó un censo poblacional y un muestreo intencionado por criterio, seleccionando así a 12 participantes (6 docentes y 6 directivos) para las entrevistas semiestructuradas y los grupos focales. Se utilizó un cuestionario con escala tipo Likert de cinco niveles y una entrevista semiestructurada con una guía de preguntas abiertas, ambos instrumentos validados por expertos y sometidos a prueba de confiabilidad. Se concluye que el discurso y la postura institucional respecto a la inclusión de género se mantienen relativamente uniformes entre las figuras docentes y directivas, lo cual sugiere que las iniciativas institucionales o las políticas de formación en relación con la inclusión de género estarían llegando de manera transversal a los diversos niveles jerárquicos.

Palabras clave: inclusión, género, convivencia escolar

Introduction

Inclusive education is recognized as the educational model that accommodates everyone's participation in training across various levels of the school system. It has recently gained prominence due to the development of diverse policies established globally and in local contexts.

During the 1990s, policies were enacted that significantly advanced inclusion and gender equality in education. One such policy was the World Declaration on Education for All, adopted in Jomtien in 1990, which

SciELO Venezuela latindex LatinREV CC BY

emphasized the importance of ensuring universal access to education and equity for all students. This motivated Latin American countries to commit to inclusive goals (UNESCO, 1990).

Specifically, gender-inclusive education aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as it promotes recognition of gender as an essential human right, advocating for a discrimination-free and equitable teaching approach. Between 2010 and 2020, gender was recognized as an essential human right in education through the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs (UNESCO, 2015), enabling countries to solidify their commitment to providing inclusive and equitable education, highlighting respect for gender identity, and advocating for the empowerment of all women and girls (ONU Mujeres, 2022).

Globally, parity has been achieved in the completion of primary education and the first cycle of secondary education; however, the trend reverses in higher education, where males complete less (97 males for every 100 females). In tertiary education, the pattern consolidates: females outnumber males (114 females for every 100 males), while only 31% of those conducting professional research are women, highlighting a gap in the transition from education to the scientific field. Additionally, the number of children out of school remains high (251 million), underscoring the importance of gender-focused access and retention policies.

In Latin America, gender-inclusive education has been addressed unevenly among different countries in the region. In Argentina, the Comprehensive Sexual Education Law (Ministerio de Educación de Argentina, 2006) serves a similar function to the Gender Identity Law in Chile (Gobierno de Chile, 2018), as it mandates the teaching of gender and inclusion in classrooms and allows trans students to change their names in school records, favoring advancements in educational inclusion. In countries like Mexico and Brazil, social and political resistance has hindered full implementation, perpetuating gender-based violence in schools and a lack of teacher training on these issues. In Brazil, although the Programa Nacional de Educación en Derechos Humanos (2007) includes guidelines on gender education, its implementation has been controversial and politically contentious, resulting in the removal of references to gender education from curricula in several states. Conversely, Mexico has made some strides towards gender inclusion in education, with programs like “Full-Time Schools,” which promote an inclusive and respectful environment; however, discrimination and gender-based violence in schools continue to be problems, and teacher training in these areas remains insufficient (Gobierno de México, 2007).

In other countries in the region, such as Peru and Uruguay, significant efforts have been made to promote gender-inclusive education. In Peru, the Ministry of Education launched the “National Policy of Intercultural, Bilingual, and Inclusive Education” in 2013, which includes components of gender equity (UNESCO, 2021). In Uruguay, the Ceibal Plan has exemplified how technology can be utilized to promote educational inclusion and gender equity (UNESCO, 2021).

In Colombia, the General Education Law (Law 115 of 1994) formally recognized the importance of including vulnerable populations and ensuring respect for gender rights within the school environment (Congreso de Colombia, 1994). This aligns with school coexistence norms as part of gender acceptance, with Law 1620 of 2013 promoting this aspect without discrimination in the country.

Moreover, within the degrees of appropriation in educational institutions, the National Ministry of Education (MEN, 2018) and the National School Coexistence System have taken on the task of ensuring respect for diversity and managing conflicts peacefully, contributing to providing solutions to situations and behaviors that threaten the exercise of student rights in Colombia.

In institutions where cases of discrimination based on gender identity have occurred, there is a need to examine the impact of administrative management on the implementation of inclusive education policies. Research by Martínez and González (2021) identifies best practices and strategies that school administrators can adopt to promote a school environment that respects and values gender diversity, emphasizing the importance of leadership in the cultural transformation of educational institutions.

It is imperative to underscore that educational institutions have an undeniable responsibility to offer necessary support to students during their gender affirmation process, avoiding imposing administrative barriers that hinder their transition. Furthermore, it is crucial that they promote appropriate approaches to address diversity and resolve any conflicts in interactions among teachers, students, and other members of the educational community impartially, genuinely attending to students' concerns.

The implementation of gender-inclusive education in schools in the Barranquilla District faces several challenges, likely due to many administrators and teachers lacking adequate training to address issues related to gender identity in the school environment. This limits their ability to foster an inclusive and respectful atmosphere (Sánchez-Teruel and Robles-Bello, 2021). The lack of training on gender issues, along with limited community involvement in creating inclusive spaces, may be contributing to the perpetuation of these problems.

Educational institutions in the Barranquilla District are obligated to provide education services under conditions of equality, ensuring that access to this right is not conditioned by factors such as gender identity or inclusion (Reyes, 2020).

Given this reality, there is a pressing need to conduct this research to evaluate the degree of compliance with gender inclusion policies in the school coexistence of educational institutions in the North-Central area of Barranquilla, aiming to design a guiding model of administrative management that promotes inclusive educational practices.

Methodology

The study employs a mixed descriptive-explanatory approach, utilizing a non-experimental and cross-sectional design that incorporates surveys designed for a single point in time. The study group comprises the official educational entities located in the North-Central Historic area (North Riomar) of the Barranquilla District, consisting of 153 educational institutions spread across four localities: North Riomar, Occidente, Metropolitana, and Oriente Medio. For this research, the focus was narrowed to the North Riomar locality, which includes 27 official educational institutions selected based on factors such as accessibility, geographical representation, operational viability, and urban agglomeration. Consequently, the total number of teachers is 675, with an average of 25 per institution. Regarding educational leaders, a population of 54 (2 per institution) was estimated, leading to the use of proportional stratified random sampling, with the final sample rounded to 85 teachers.

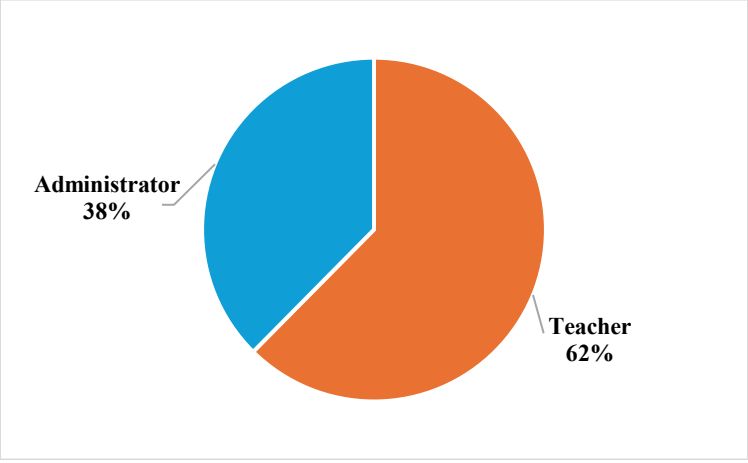
For school administrators, a population census was conducted that encompassed all 54 from the 27 official institutions in the locality. Additionally, a criterion-based purposive sampling was implemented, resulting in the selection of 12 participants (6 teachers and 6 administrators) for semi-structured interviews and focus groups. In the quantitative phase, a structured survey technique was employed, utilizing a questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale aimed at measuring perceptions, attitudes, and practices related to gender inclusion. In contrast, the qualitative phase utilized semi-structured interviews, guided by open-ended questions designed to explore narratives, experiences, barriers, and proposals concerning the implementation of inclusive policies in school coexistence.

The validity of the questionnaire was established through expert review and a pilot test, with reliability calculated using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a value exceeding 0.80.

Results and discussion

Figure 1

Frequency of participation by role

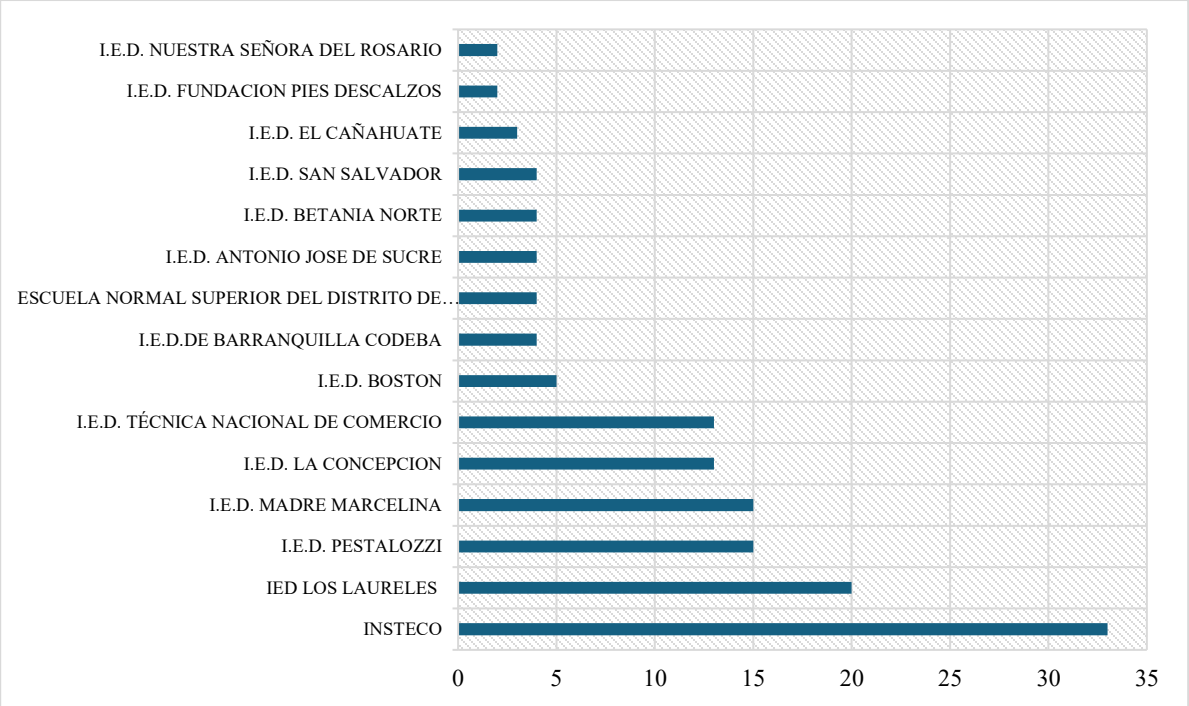


The diagram illustrates the frequency of participation by role in the research, highlighting the relative proportion between teachers and administrators who responded to open-ended questions. Here, 62% of participants occupy teaching roles, while 38% belong to the administrative body of the educational institutions under study. This distribution reflects a higher representation of teaching staff, which can be explained by several factors, including the fact that teachers constitute the largest group within the educational system, thereby increasing their presence in any data collection through proportional sampling. Furthermore, the role of teachers is crucial in research on gender inclusion in school coexistence, as they maintain direct, daily, and sustained

contact with students. The participation of administrators at 38% is strategically important, as they play an essential role in the formulation and execution of institutional policies. The integration of both perspectives not only enhances the analysis but also strengthens the validity of the proposed administrative management model.

Figure 2

Frequency by institutions



The diagram illustrates the identification of each institution's level of participation, prompting reflection on the institutional context framing the received responses. The INSTECO institution stands out with approximately 33 responses, followed by I.E.D. Los Laureles with around 20 responses. An intermediate group includes institutions such as I.E.D. Pestalozzi, I.E.D. Madre Marcelina, I.E.D. La Concepción, and I.E.D. Técnica Nacional de Comercio, each contributing between 13 and 15 responses. Conversely, there are entities with minimal contributions, with only one or two responses, such as I.E.D. Nuestra Señora del Rosario, I.E.D. Fundación Pies Descalzos, and I.E.D. El Cañahuate. This may indicate variations in institutional size, as those with a larger teaching staff are more likely to be regularly represented.

Another significant variable may be the support and engagement of administrative teams in implementing the instrument, which directly influences the response rate. It is probable that institutions with higher participation provided a more substantial volume of information, raising the necessity for balanced interpretation.

There is a common perspective among teachers and administrators regarding the importance of incorporating a gender perspective in educational institutions in Barranquilla. Responses reflect a broader awareness of the need to promote changes at both structural levels and in daily pedagogical practices.

One frequently mentioned aspect is the training of teachers on gender issues, indicating that educators recognize themselves as essential agents in the cultural transformation of the educational institution. However, gaps in their knowledge and tools to address equity from the classroom were also identified.

Among the prominent emerging categories are the need to implement awareness campaigns targeting the entire educational community, updating Institutional Educational Projects (PEI) with a gender perspective, training specialized teachers, and forming inclusion committees with student participation. Additionally, the necessity for establishing clear protocols for addressing discrimination situations is emphasized, indicating a desire to provide an adequate institutional structure and response to these circumstances. Responses that were vague or indeterminate (“I wouldn’t know how to say”) may reflect a lack of training or knowledge on the topic among some teachers. This suggests that, despite a general willingness to address gender inclusion, structural and formative gaps remain that must be addressed from a comprehensive institutional perspective.

The most recurrent thematic categories among participants were “Awareness and Educational Community,” “Student Participation and Inclusion,” “Teacher Training in Gender,” and “Protocols and Response

to Discrimination," each with two references. These topics emerge as primary focal points in the proposals made by teachers and administrators regarding gender inclusion. A unique mention in the category "Psychosocial Support" suggests a holistic perspective on the issue that encompasses both structural aspects and emotional well-being.

Conversely, the category titled "Undefined Response," with a single occurrence, indicates that some participants still exhibit gaps or lack clarity regarding the gender perspective. Overall, the information reflects a cross-cutting concern for strengthening the institutional structure regarding inclusion through actions ranging from collective awareness to the development of protocols and the creation of participatory spaces.

Thematic diversity with an institutional focus

The evaluation of open responses reveals a notable thematic diversity, organized around six main categories: teacher training in gender, psychosocial support, awareness and educational community, student participation and inclusion, protocols for addressing discrimination, and institutional updates with a gender perspective.

Teacher training and psychosocial support as priorities

The most frequently mentioned category was teacher training in gender issues, indicating a clear need for theoretical and methodological tools that enable education professionals to address diversity from an equity perspective. The category of psychosocial support highlights a pervasive concern for the emotional well-being of students. This suggests that inclusion cannot be divorced from acknowledging and supporting the emotional realities experienced by children and adolescents.

Participation, awareness, and institutional policies

Other prominent categories included awareness campaigns directed at the educational community and student participation and inclusion, indicating a broad perspective that extends beyond the classroom towards building a conscious and committed educational community. The emphasis on student participation is particularly significant, as it introduces a democratic perspective that recognizes students as active agents in institutional transformation. Additionally, suggestions regarding protocols for addressing discrimination reflect the necessity for educational institutions to have clear strategies in place to address situations of gender-based violence.

Updating the institutional educational plan and absence of response

The category focused on institutional updates with a gender perspective and modifications to the Institutional Educational Project (PEI) shows that a segment of the teaching staff acknowledges the need to incorporate gender perspectives into the foundational documents of the educational organization. This structural perspective is crucial, as it advocates for changes to be implemented from the mission, vision, and institutional policies.

Connections between roles and potential for action

Examining responses by role reveals that both teachers and administrators share concerns and proposals. This strengthens the notion that gender inclusion is a collective task that must be addressed transversally. No significant differences in discourse were observed between the two groups, which could be considered a favorable starting point for developing common policies.

Qualitative findings indicate that gender inclusion in the school context cannot be addressed solely through normative implementation or superficial behavioral changes. From the initial perspective, it was found that, although perceptions among administrators and teachers are generally favorable regarding inclusion, there is a notable discrepancy between proclaimed discourse and daily practices. This aligns with Foucault's notion of the creation of school subjectivities through relationships of knowledge and power.

Inclusive language may be present in discourse; however, it does not necessarily materialize into transformative actions, particularly when the training received has been limited or merely declarative. Regarding institutional policies, many institutions have incorporated gender inclusion into their official documents, but this perspective remains predominantly formal, lacking practical implementation that alters school dynamics.

On the other hand, descriptive results from the eight questionnaire variables (P1 to P8), evaluated on a Likert scale from 1 to 5, enable characterization of participants' perceptions regarding gender inclusion. Mean responses range from 2.90 (P4) to 3.19 (P8), suggesting that, in general, participants tend to express moderately favorable positions concerning the evaluated items, without reaching points of total agreement or disagreement.

The variable with the lowest mean is P4 (M = 2.90; SD = 1.389), indicating that for this particular item, possibly associated with an uncommon practice or less widespread knowledge, responses show lower frequency or consensus. This contrasts with P8 and P2, both with mean values of 3.19 and 3.16 respectively, which demonstrate a higher level of consensus, indicating greater familiarity or acceptance among participants regarding these contents or practices.

In terms of dispersion, standard deviations range from 1.322 to 1.434, indicating moderate variability in responses. In other words, while the means cluster around the value of 3, significant differences exist among participants, which may be linked to factors such as the originating institution, role (teacher or administrator), or previous experiences with gender inclusion.

Overall, these statistical data indicate that, although a general trend toward neutrality or moderate consensus prevails, certain elements generate greater consensus than others. The internal variability suggests that not all educational actors share the same stance or level of experience, highlighting the need for differentiated educational strategies and institutional policies that promote awareness and the effective adoption of inclusive practices at all educational levels.

Table 1
Participants by institution

Institution	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)
INSTECO	27	18.44
I.E.D. LOS LAURELES	21	14.19
I.E.D. PESTALOZZI	16	10.93
MADRE MARCELINA	16	10.93
LA CONCEPCIÓN	14	9.52
I.E.D. TÉCNICA NAC. DE COMERCIO	13	8.84
I.E.D. BETANIA NORTE	10	6.8
ESC. NORMAL SUP. DE BARRANQUILLA	6	4.08
I.E.D. SAN SALVADOR	6	4.08
I.E.D. EL CAÑAHUATE	4	2.72
I.E.D. ANTONIO JOSÉ DE SUCRE	4	2.72
I.E.D. CODEBA	4	2.72
I.E.D. FUNDACIÓN PIES DESCALZOS	3	2.04
I.E.D. BOSTON	3	2.04
I.E.D. NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL ROSARIO	2	1.36

The distribution of participants by institution shows considerable concentration in certain educational institutions, particularly INSTECO, which constitutes 18.44% of the total sample, and I.E.D. Los Laureles, with 14.19%, together accounting for nearly a third of the participants. This overrepresentation may be attributed to their size, the level of institutional commitment to research, or greater accessibility to data collection instruments. Although participation is extensive, the representational load is not entirely balanced, a factor that should be considered when interpreting overall results.

At the second level, institutions like I.E.D. Pestalozzi, Madre Marcelina, and La Concepción present frequencies above 9%; these entities make up an intermediate nucleus of representation, providing territorial and organizational diversity to the sample and allowing for more nuanced patterns to be observed among various school realities.

Other institutions, such as the Escuela Normal Superior, stand out; although with lower participation frequencies (between 2 and 6 cases), they contribute qualitative richness to the study. Their presence indicates an openness to the topic from various educational structures, albeit with less quantitative relevance. Despite their smaller proportion, these educational institutions may offer unique and distinctive perspectives that are relevant for qualitative or case analysis.

Overall, the frequency table shows a heterogeneous sample in institutional terms, though there is evident asymmetry in representation. This factor does not invalidate the results; however, it suggests the need to nuance conclusions and avoid hasty generalizations. From a methodological standpoint, it would be beneficial to consider this distribution as a criterion for conducting comparative analyses between institutions with high and low participation, which could reveal differences in organizational culture, teacher training, or levels of implementation of gender inclusion policies.

Table 2
Chi-square calculation

Item	χ^2 (Chi-square)	df	p-value	Significant association
P1	3.21	4	0.522	No
P2	2.17	4	0.705	No
P3	4.56	4	0.336	No
P4	1.90	4	0.754	No
P5	2.88	4	0.578	No
P6	0.94	4	0.918	No
P7	1.35	4	0.852	No
P8	2.45	4	0.654	No

In all items (P1 to P8), p-values exceed 0.05, indicating no statistically significant correlation between the role (teacher or administrator) and the responses to the questionnaire items. This suggests that both groups exhibited similar responses across all aspects related to gender inclusion.

The Chi-square test (χ^2) was utilized to evaluate the presence of a statistically significant association between institutional role (teacher or administrator) and individual responses to each item of the instrument (P1 to P8). The findings indicated that, for most items, no statistically significant differences were detected between teachers and administrators. The significance values ($p > 0.05$) indicate that responses to the items are independent of the role participants hold. The lack of correlation between role and response corroborates results obtained through other statistical tests, such as the Student's t-test, which also found no significant differences between the two groups in the averages of the evaluated dimensions.

Table 3
Correlation matrix

	Knowledge	Attitude	Practice
Knowledge	1.00	0.07	0.09
Attitude	0.07	1.00	0.09
Practice	0.09	0.09	1.00

Pearson correlation indicates no significant links between the evaluated dimensions: knowledge, attitude, and practice in gender inclusion. The identified correlations are very low: 0.07 between knowledge and attitude, 0.09 between knowledge and practice, and 0.09 between attitude and practice. These values suggest that the dimensions operate almost autonomously within the examined sample, with no evidence that a higher level in one dimension linearly relates to the others.

This could indicate that theoretical understanding of inclusion does not, by itself, ensure a positive attitude or effective practical implementation; likewise, a favorable disposition towards inclusion does not necessarily imply the application of inclusive strategies or practices in the classroom. This disassociation reinforces the notion that each dimension represents a distinct construct requiring a specific approach, rather than an automatic progression from knowing to feeling to doing.

Additionally, the weakness of the correlations could be influenced by methodological factors, such as the scarcity of items per dimension or the potential homogeneity in responses, emphasizing the importance of developing intervention strategies that not only provide information but also foster emotional awareness processes and, primarily, practical transformation.

Conclusions

It is concluded that the institutional discourse and stance regarding gender inclusion remain relatively uniform among teaching and administrative figures, suggesting that institutional initiatives or training policies related to gender inclusion may be reaching various hierarchical levels transversally, or that significant differences in training and awareness capable of generating divergent responses do not yet exist.

Both groups expressed analogous perceptions regarding the proposals and challenges related to gender inclusion in their respective institutions, indicating a common understanding framework among actors with different roles, which can be interpreted as an institutional strength. Decision-makers and those implementing pedagogical practices recognize similar needs: reinforcing psychosocial support, teacher training, awareness, and institutional updates. This discursive convergence reaffirms the notion that gender inclusion should not be viewed as an individual responsibility, but as a collective commitment extending across all strata of the educational community.

References

Congreso de Colombia. (1994). *Ley 115 de 1994: Por la cual se expide la Ley General de Educación*. https://www.funcionpublica.gov.co/eva/gestornormativo/norma.php?i=292

Gobierno de Chile. (2018). *Ley de Identidad de Género*. https://www.bcn.cl/leychile/navegar?idNorma=1126480

Gobierno de México. (2007). *Programa Nacional de Educación en Derechos Humanos*. https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/263926/PNEDH.pdf

Ley 1620 de 2013. *Por la cual se crea el Sistema Nacional de Convivencia Escolar y Formación para el Ejercicio de los Derechos Humanos, la Educación para la Sexualidad y la Prevención y Mitigación de la Violencia Escolar. Diario Oficial de la República de Colombia.* https://www.funcionpublica.gov.co/eva/gestornormativo/norma.php?i=52287

Ley general de educación. *Ley 115 de 1994. 8 de febrero de 1994.* https://oig.cepal.org/sites/default/files/1994_ley115generaldeeducacion_col.pdf

Martínez, J., y González, A. (2021). El impacto de la gestión directiva en la implementación de políticas de educación inclusiva en escuelas colombianas. *Revista Colombiana de Educación, 74*(1), 45-67. https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1780/articles-363488_recurso_17.pdf

Ministerio de Educación de Argentina. (2006). *Ley Nacional de Educación Sexual Integral N.° 26.150*. https://www.argentina.gob.ar/educacion/ESI/ley26150

Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN). (2018). *Educación inclusiva Bogotá.* https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/micrositios-preescolar-basica-y-media/Direccion-de-Calidad/Gestion-Institucional/374740:Educacion-inclusiva

ONU Mujeres. (2022). *Igualdad de género en la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible*. https://www.unwomen.org/es/digital-library/publications/2018/2/gender-equality-in-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-2018

Reyes, J. (2020). La educación inclusiva y el derecho a la igualdad en contextos escolares. *Revista de Estudios Educativos y Sociales, 12*(3), 45–60. https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/3382/338230794003.pdf

UNESCO. (1990). *Declaración Mundial sobre Educación para Todos y Marco de Acción para Satisfacer las Necesidades Básicas de Aprendizaje*. Conferencia Mundial sobre Educación para Todos, Jomtien, Tailandia. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000127583_spa

UNESCO. (2015). *Transformar nuestro mundo: la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible*. Naciones Unidas. https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda

UNESCO. (2021). *La inclusión y la igualdad de género: informe sobre inclusión y educación*. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000387889