



Portrait photography for the **construction of identity** and the preservation of family culture

Fotografía de retrato para la construcción de identidad y la conservación de la cultura familiar

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Abstract

The formation of the identity of people is acquired from an early age within each family. By sharing cultural heritage, a person knows their roots and origins, generating a critical sense of their environment, valuing where they come from and establishing respect for cultures other than their own. However, this practice is not promoted in all families, which could be a source of conflict.

In the present investigation, the ignorance of such cultural heritage that generates a lack of family identity in children between 9 and 11 years old belonging to migrant families residing in the district of San Juan de Lurigancho, in the city of Metropolitan Lima, Peru, is observed. The lack of knowledge about the cultural diversity existing in the child's environment allows in many cases to generate conflicts, such as the lack of respect towards different people and the creation of labels among themselves when considering some customs superior to others.

In this context, the *Soy Cultura* [I Am Culture] project was born, which through the use of portrait photography seeks to contribute to the knowledge of cultural heritage, allowing children to feel proud of their roots, thus promoting the appreciation of diversity.

Keywords: *photography, culture, heritage, diversity, identity*

Resumen

La formación de la identidad de las personas se adquiere desde temprana edad dentro de cada familia. Compartiendo la herencia cultural, una persona conoce sus raíces y orígenes, generando un sentido crítico sobre su entorno, valorando de dónde se proviene y estableciendo un respeto hacia culturas diferentes a la propia. Sin embargo, esta práctica no es promovida en todas las familias, lo que podría ser una fuente de conflicto.

En la presente investigación se observa el desconocimiento de la herencia cultural que genera una carencia de identidad familiar en niños entre 9 y 11 años pertenecientes a familias migrantes residentes en el distrito de San Juan de Lurigancho, de la ciudad de Lima Metropolitana, Perú. El desconocimiento sobre la diversidad cultural existente en el entorno del niño permite en muchos casos generar conflictos, como la falta de respeto hacia personas diferentes y la creación de etiquetas entre ellos mismos al considerar unas costumbres superiores a otras.

En ese contexto, nace el proyecto Soy Cultura, que por medio del uso de la fotografía de retrato busca contribuir al conocimiento de la herencia cultural permitiendo que los niños se sientan orgullosos de sus raíces, promoviendo de esa manera la valoración de la diversidad.

Palabras clave: *fotografía, cultura, herencia, diversidad, identidad*

◆ Introduction

It is important that everyone knows their cultural heritage, as it is a source of identity that allows them to develop an awareness of their country, and respect and preservation of the diversity of different peoples and regions.

The present investigation seeks to report on the ignorance of cultural heritage, which generates a lack of family identity in children belonging to families of migrants residing in the district of San Juan de Lurigancho, in the city of Metropolitan Lima, Peru. This place is made up of just over 1,162,000 people, the largest number of inhabitants nationwide (National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática) [INEI], 2018) and where the largest number of internal migrants from different provinces of Peru is also concentrated (Huarancca, Alanya and Castellares, 2020).

For the purposes of this study, interviews were conducted with children between the ages of 9 and 11 to document the degree of knowledge about their family roots that their parents shared with them, and whether or not they had an influence on the development of their identity. In addition, parents were interviewed to find out, from their perspective, whether or not it was important to share their cultural heritage.

Since childhood, the human being builds his identity through the incorporation of different media. In this process, the job of parents as educational agents is to give their children the necessary tools to strengthen their sense of belonging and thus achieve pride towards their roots. In the present investigation, an analysis is made of all the elements that are related to the construction of family identity, its importance and the means by which it is developed, such as the current circumstances and the situations that have been generated as a result of it.

Peru has a great cultural diversity, since it has customs, traditions and ways of living that together give great wealth as a country. This wealth increases with the contributions of migrants.

Most people tend to live throughout their existence in the same place, while others, for various reasons such as the search for economic development, studies or a conflict, decide to migrate to cities with greater opportunities. In the case of Peru, migrations settle in Lima, the capital, which receives the largest volume of internal migrants (Huarancca *et al.*, 2020).

In this city, many of the migrant families adapt to the lifestyle without losing the essence that characterizes them. In this way, they maintain their memory and customs of their locality, such as festivals, traditions and typical dishes. This allows their culture to prevail and continue to stay within the family sphere. However, not all families preserve traditions, which can generate a source of conflict.

Through a research methodology developed through field work for the present investigation, a series of interviews made it possible to identify that there are parents who, for personal reasons, have stopped sharing their cultural heritage with their children, since they consider that the fact of having arrived in Lima is synonymous with the beginning of a new way of life to which they must adapt, not being necessary to know about the place from which they come. In general, this thought generates a lack of family identity in children -a situation that results in lack of interest in learning about Peruvian cultural diversity, lack of respect for it, and the creation of stereotypes or derision among children when considering other customs as inferior or unimportant. Likewise, other conflicts arise, such as low self-esteem, since those children who were not born in Lima feel ashamed to express it or share it with their peers, they are afraid of what they will say and of rejection because of the place they come from.

This situation limits the development of their social skills and highlights the discrimination that occurs due to differences in social class or place of origin. That is why, for the formation of future generations, the thought of the French-speaking Jean Jacques Rousseau should be considered "on the need to develop two strong feelings within an individual: self-love and empathy" (Peñafiel and Serrano, 2010 p.120).

Self-esteem allows us to respect one's integrity, strive to achieve goals, seek well-being and work on what each person stands out in order to contribute at the same time to the growth of the country, while empathy allows us to identify and put oneself in the place of the other (Pastor, 2016). Both feelings allow growth as a country, since they encourage the elimination of existing gaps and create positive behavior in the environment. If these feelings are developed by adults and transmitted to children, there is a greater possibility of educating future generations under these values, since it is children who are in a position to learn and capture what is happening around them. In addition, parents have the duty to share with their children values that allow the strengthening of their identity.

Sharing the cultural heritage of the parents towards the children allows the latter to know where they come from and encourages respect for what is different. Once the child is proud of his family background, he will share his culture within the spaces where he forms his interpersonal relationships. When a person shares their family origin, their customs and traditions with others, they allow others to learn about their own culture, getting to know another part of the country through shared conversations, creating in each interlocutor a strengthening of the pride they feel of his family and the knowledge of the cultural wealth available as a country.

Currently, internal migrations have been decisive to understand the reality of Peru, since social, demographic and economic changes have been generated (Sánchez, 2015). A large percentage of citizens had decided to migrate to another region in search of better living conditions to work, study, and support their families. According to INEI (2020), one in five Peruvians lives in a place other than where they were born, Lima being one of the cities with the highest number of internal migrants; who represent 52% of its population, of which 10.7% reside in the district of San Juan de Lurigancho (Huarancca *et al.*, 2020).

Faced with this reality, it is important that parents share their personal and cultural heritage with their children, providing the necessary information to know their roots and leading them to appreciate the importance of knowing the cultural diversity of the country and the opportunities they will have with this knowledge, which that will allow them, among other things, to take care of and respect their family identity. However, today many children are unaware of their cultural heritage because their parents, for various reasons, did not find it necessary to share that information with them. This has as a consequence that the child lacks a feeling of identification with his roots, and that he shows disinterest towards his own culture and also towards others.

Currently, the main challenge is to generate identity and a sense of belonging through training spaces, such as the school, the university, the neighborhood, among others that go beyond the family.

In the spaces where children develop socially, there is an educational framework that allows the formation of a collective identity at different levels and according to the circumstances in which they live (Cabrera, 2002). For this reason, it is necessary that, from childhood —the stage in which the construction of identity begins— the family be strengthened with activities that allow to capture interest and the search to continue learning about their roots, since it is according to the example provided at home as manifested in their social environment (Peñafiel and Serrano, 2010). Sharing cultural heritage allows children to have knowledge about their ancestors and learn that not all come from the same culture, which leads to a greater openness towards the cultural diversity that Peru possesses. In this way, the values of tolerance and

respect towards all members of society are promoted, since everyone has the possibility of being heard and respected, which contributes to the construction of a fairer country (Barreto, 2015).

If Peruvians know and value the various existing cultures, they will be able to strengthen the national identity and put aside the discrepancies, which the only thing they achieve is the breakdown of society, also affecting future generations.

For this reason, education and the strengthening of values in children must be the priority of society, especially with regard to respect and tolerance to develop personal and group growth and, in this sense, the origins of origin and the fortune that means being born in a country that has a varied cultural richness.

◆ Internal migration

The modernization process was – in all regards – a synonym of progress and development during the 20th century, whose main components were geographic and territorial displacement. This concept of modernization was entirely urban and resulted in the development, strengthening, and expansion of cities. This process also led to a change within society, the economy and displacement from the countryside to the city, which made it clear that modernization processes are closely related to migration, seen as a resource to achieve certain objectives, among which highlights the improvement in the quality of life, through greater access to basic services (Rodríguez and Busso, 2009).

In this way, the search for greater economic development was consolidated as a determining factor of migration to the cities, where commercial activities have their highest point of concentration, since they have the necessary resources to expand. In this sense, the capital of Peru, Lima, concentrates the highest rate of internal migrants in the country due to its prevailing centralism that allows concentrating employment opportunities; but, at the same time, migrants are the ones who have created —thanks to their efforts— more opportunities for other migrants, producing important changes that reflect cultural diversity (Matos Mar, 2012).

In addition to economic development, another of the main attractions why people decide to migrate to cities is the quality of education and technology. It is in this way that "from the last decades of the last century and based on the work culture of migrants, its inhabitants are reconfiguring the city, making their localities fulfill new roles, such as productive, commercial, educational, etc." (HERE, 2011, p. 16).

Internal migrations contribute favorably to the correct use of the resources available as a country. This is due to the fact that migrants have access to better water, electricity, health, education and, above all, jobs,

which reduces poverty rates and obtains a positive result regarding the quality of life. and the progress of people. And, in turn, it contributes to demographic growth, configuring what is currently known as cones or emerging neighborhoods.

It can be considered that migration in Lima is organized in three generations, which allows identifying three types of migrants (Arellano, 2010 in Barreto, 2015), this due to changes within the city, the passage of time and the way in which the first migrants managed to consolidate their presence in the capital.

- ◆ The first generation is made up of people who came to Lima in search of new opportunities and resources that allowed them to progress. They were characterized by maintaining their customs without adapting to the lifestyle of a Lima. They sought to relate to a community equal to them, preserving their knowledge and experiences of life in the province and maintaining their culture through the life story of themselves to others who came to the city for the same circumstances.
- ◆ The second generation is made up of the children of the previous ones, who were born in the same place as their parents and spent a large part of their lives in Lima. Contrary to the first generation, they sought to "clean up" to avoid rejection within their environment, although, even so, they kept to themselves the customs that they inherited from their parents and shared them within their closest circle.
- ◆ Finally, the third generation is made up of those who were born in the city of Lima and consider themselves to be complete Lima residents, acknowledging on many occasions that their family roots are provincial. For them, the place of origin of their parents is part of the past and does not have much value today. Children of non-migrants are not considered equal; however, they have established a feeling of belonging to the city where they have grown up.

◆ **Cultural heritage** People develop within different contexts throughout their lives and their diverse interests lead them to live various experiences, both emotionally and socially, since through them it is how they will know the world and prepare to act in it. him (Flores, 2008 in Zavala, 2014). The person is usually defined by his family, place of birth, customs and events that have taken place throughout his life. These situations are what determine their way of acting and facing life, as well as building their own identity.

Cultural heritage is determined by the experience that each person has with their own culture, turning it into a practical experience that is characterized by the gestures, actions or customs that are carried out, which "allows the identification of objects belonging to other cultures or cultural moments by the similarities and differences they present with those that surround us today; that is, we identify them in relation to our own culture" (Garcia, 2004 in Zavala, 2014, p. 34).

In accordance with the previous definition, it can be concluded that each person has their own experience of their culture and finds a way to connect, in addition to adapting, to the context in which they operate, thus building their cultural heritage. In the same way, the different elements found in the environment and in the culture are those that tend to prevail forever in each person, since the interaction is daily. Thus, cultural heritage represents a set of acquisitions that each person receives from their family and from society. In this process, parents are the ones who, through their way of life and experience, manage to transmit teachings to their children, either in values or in anti-values. And since, in childhood, the first approach that children establish is with their parents, they are the first to be able to form an identity that will be modified through the relationships that are maintained with the outside world.

Thus, it is important to highlight that as long as the person is clear about their roots and the place to which they belong, they will be able to define themselves adequately in front of others. The set of customs, beliefs, traditions and values will allow you to confirm the sense of belonging and will define not only the person but also a family or social group. Therefore, in order for this cultural heritage to continue to be maintained and prevail, it must be transmitted and communicated to future generations, thus allowing their correct development, in addition to the maintenance of culture (Julien, 2007).

This situation tends to change on occasions when the parents are migrants, because they have to reach a new place to live, where they begin a new stage in their lives. Faced with this new panorama, there are people who still keep the culture of origin alive within their families, such as preparing typical dishes, visiting their birthplace and a series of customs and knowledge that allow their children to participate in the knowledge of its roots. However, these experiences are not put into practice by everyone. Each family has a particular way of seeing and living life, as well as different ways of transmitting their knowledge, and not all consider it necessary or important to know details about their family roots. For example, there are people who can meet grandparents and visit them, but they do not necessarily know about festivities or customs practiced in said celebrations. This responds in many cases to the desire of the second generations to prevent their children from suffering discrimination or some type of violence, but it entails the loss, perhaps not all, but many elements of a cultural heritage that was initially

rich and diverse. and that ends up being simplified and transformed by being merged with the modernity of the city.

◆ Learning of the family cultural heritage

Cultural heritage is learned at home, without formalities, in a natural way and as each family deems appropriate, there is no rule that indicates how to do it; For this reason, parents are encouraged to teach this knowledge from an early age, since children acquire and appropriate it through daily coexistence with other family members, through anecdotes, stories and traditions that are shared throughout the generations, from how to make a bed to how to prepare a birthday dinner (Tenorio, 2004).

This natural teaching of parents towards their children of what makes up their family and cultural roots allows them to find themselves with a greater willingness to learn and adopt their way of life. This knowledge favors that the formation of children is based on their sense of belonging and that they can be participants in the issues that pertain to their culture, which – by feeling identified – they will be able to maintain and defend.

Thus, from the knowledge of their cultural heritage and their early experiences at home, children learn behaviors and attitudes that are carried out within their closest and most intimate environment and begin to adopt customs and attitudes that are externalized in the social circles as they grow, be it in the neighborhood, school, work, etc. In this way, they manifest their knowledge towards others in a natural way, without any kind of problems or complexes towards the rest.

However, this dynamic is not encouraged by all families, as there are cases of little acceptance by the children, who only take as a reference knowing where their parents come from. We see this situation, for example, reflected in the third generation of internal migrants from Lima, that is, the one in which people were born in the city, but have parents who come from the provinces and, although they acknowledge that they have provincial roots, consider that this has no greater value today (Barreto, 2015). In addition, these people show disinterest in and rejection of knowledge of elements of their family culture and origins, due to the little relevance they give it and the belief that, in a certain way, it could play a negative factor in them.

In this type of case, it is important to recognize that sharing cultural heritage, family ties and mutual respect for different cultures is a priority for the future of Peru. This is linked to the recognition of the benefits of diversity, in the understanding that not everyone has the same origin, which allows developing the values of tolerance, empathy and respect towards all members of society (Barreto, 2015).

However, an alternative to avoid cases in which there is detachment or rejection of family roots is intercultural education, which should be taught in every school in order for students to be aware of the cultural diversity existing in the country. This should adapt an educational program for each region, making a list of the main topics that must be known with the existing problems in the different localities. In this sense, interculturality should be applied transversally, from the first years of school, as an integral element in any learning-teaching process (Walsh, 2005). And it is that the construction of an intercultural society must be based on the recognition of cultural wealth, where the diverse cultures are valued and respected for a peaceful survival that seeks the future development of humanity (Walsh, 2005).

In the capital Lima, the issue of interculturality has not been addressed in the best way, and to correct this deficiency, a series of projects have been implemented that seek to enable children to learn about the existing cultural diversity through activities in which they can participate actively. The existence of these projects, undoubtedly valuable, also allows emphasizing the importance of intercultural teaching that fosters a feeling of pride towards family origin, as well as the reception of migrants who have moved from their place of origin in search of a better future.

◆ **Soy Cultura**

In order to help ensure that cultural roots are not lost in the new generations of children, the *Soy Cultura* photographic project is designed, whose concept is related to keeping culture alive, so that the target audience (children between 9 and 11 years) maintain and practice the knowledge and appreciation of their own culture. The term "maintain" works effectively as a call to action and the term "live culture" evokes, on the one hand, living an experience and, on the other, praising it and shouting for it with happiness.

The concept informs about the benefits of knowing the cultural heritage and the construction of a family identity; In this way, the photographic project seeks for children to know and live their culture through dialogue with their parents and relatives, personal research and learning from peers, resulting in the construction of a critical sense of their environment that Allow yourself to express and make your culture known without prejudice or complexes, feeling proud of your heritage through a personal experience.

Peru is a rich in diversity of cultures, traditions, and stories that have been shared throughout the centuries country; hence, the importance of children knowing about their own heritage and respecting it. For this reason, the concept of "keeping culture alive" expresses the intention of living and making one's culture work through the recognition of the

elements that make it up, which have allowed it to be preserved until today (see figure 1).



Figure 1. Inspiration board reflecting the concept.
Source: Valenzuela, 2018.

The name of the project is built so that children feel identified with their own culture and, above all, live it through portrait photography. The name represents the main objective of the project, which is to feel connected to their own culture, to live it bearing in mind that you only live what you know.

On the one hand, the word "I am" emphasizes the person, in the recognition of the elements that build their identity, reinforcing the image that children have of themselves with the purpose of recognizing what their inner being is like. On the other, the term "culture" is one of the most important elements in the identity of people; in this regard, as will be seen below, reference is made to objects inherited by the family (photo, painting, plate, tablecloth, ring, necklace, etc.), which is important to evoke, generate memories and, at the same time, build an imaginary that lasts, is unique and that can continue to be shared.

In addition to the name, the slogan "Live your cultural heritage" is built to give greater meaning to the objective of seeking that children have and live that connection with their past, making them value it and share it with their environment in an authentic way.

The project consists of taking photographic portraits of children from a public school in the San Juan de Lurigancho district, to later mount an

exhibition with all the material prepared to make the children feel proud of their cultural heritage. Through this experience, which is related to the elements that make up their culture, the children are able to identify the importance of knowing it and recognizing the cultural richness present in Peru (see Figure 2).



Figure 2. Inspiration board reflecting the concept.
Source: Valenzuela, 2018.

◆ Stages of the photographic project

The first stage is introductory. An informative and didactic workshop is carried out with the children making use of an informative totem that allows the explanation of the problem related to cultural heritage, since it contains information about the regions of Peru, highlighting their folklore, typical dishes and culture (see Figure 3). Through this activity, the participation of children is encouraged through various questions about knowing the origin of their family, the place of birth of their parents or grandparents, etc. (see Figure 4).



Figure 3. Explanation of the informative totem.
Source: Valenzuela, 2018.



Figure 4. Participants filling out survey.
Source: Valenzuela, 2018.

Subsequently, an explanation is made about migration so that children know its concept and causes. Then there is a discussion about how to preserve culture, the characteristics of migrants that keep it alive are described, and it is mentioned how it is shared in the home of the participants.

Finally, the question is answered: "What happens when you know your culture?" In this way, the importance of knowing the past and one's own origins is reported. This is how it seeks to encourage curiosity on the part of children, who will seek answers to their questions through

the dialogue they will have with their parents; achieving in such a way one of the objectives of the project: that more is known about the family cultural heritage.

After the informative workshop, an art dynamic is carried out with the children, during which they make lines, draw and color various graphic pieces related to the topics explained. Subsequently, they are invited to participate in a photographic portrait with the indication that they bring objects, photos and/or representative elements of their family and culture, all this after having talked with their parents and having duly informed them of everything related to the project. The photographic portrait is, at the same time, a cultural record where each child is shown with representative elements of his family. Through this experience it is possible to contribute to the construction of the family identity of the children, who are then able to recognize the elements that are part of their history, life, culture and family.

The *Soy Cultura* project includes a photographic exhibition with all the portraits of the children, which is presented to them, their parents and relatives. At the end of the photographic exhibition, each family is given a photograph of their child so that they can be taken home and serve as a reminder in their homes of the importance of knowing and identifying with their culture.

With this project, the children get to know up close the cultural diversity present within the educational space, the importance of valuing and feeling pride in diversity, as well as respecting cultures different from their own. On the other hand, parents, while involved, share experiences with their family so that their children have a better handling of information and can feel identified with it, being able to talk openly with the people around them.

For the design of the graphic pieces involved in the project, a style full of color, patterns and textures typical of the various regions of Peru was used to reflect multiculturalism. Through illustrations of children's characters, a dynamic and lively message is projected that accentuates the concept of living, allowing children to identify with them. On the one hand, the colors refer to the Peruvian coast, highlands, and jungle regions, while, on the other, the typography used generates empathy, friendship, joy, and rapprochement with the target audience. The aesthetic is playful and dynamic to generate a greater approach and learning (see Figure 5).



Figure 5. Project brand.
Source: Valenzuela, 2018.

❖ Photographic portrait for cultural heritage

There is a way to perpetuate memory through an image, to make known to future generations a visual heritage of their ancestors, that is where photography plays an important role for human existence. For the present project, a series of photographic portraits was made, due to the close link that the portrait has with the concept of the human being, as a reflection of the cultural context in which it develops (Casajús, 2009). Through it a documentary testimony is created, which communicates more than what people are willing to admit.

For the project, photographs are taken in color with a professional digital camera. They are portraits where the infant is in a medium shot, frontal view and where it has representative elements of its culture or its family.

When the children attend the photographic session it means that they have already participated in the workshop and understand the purpose of taking the photo; Above all, it already has the knowledge and consent of the parents. The photo session includes talking with the boy or girl about the items taken for the photo, what their meaning is, how they relate to their family, if they have a particular story, etc. This allows the photographer to know more about the person to be portrayed, to be guided and to work in the most appropriate way, since it is not just about taking a photograph, but about capturing the essence, in which happiness, acceptance, pride of what is transmitted, what is worn and what belonging means.

The project in this first experience had the participation of 50 children, whose ages are between 9 and 11 years old, who are in the fourth grade of primary education in a public school in the district of San Juan

de Lurigancho, in Lima. In the closing stage, an exhibition of all the photographs was made together with teachers, parents and friends, who highlighted the value and importance of sharing their traditions and culture from generation to generation.

This is how it is evident, according to Vivanco (2016), that through design and photography you can achieve transformations in society, raise awareness and show that these actions are effective if you want to be a true agent of change.

In the sample, the photographs of all the children are exhibited in order to recognize the multiculturalism present in the classroom, generating identification with their culture, knowing the culture of their classmates and valuing the multiculturalism present in Peru (see figures 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10).



Figure 6. *Child portrait.*
Source: Valenzuela, 2018.



Figure 7. Child portrait.
Source: Valenzuela, 2018.



Figure 8. Portrait of girl.
Source: Valenzuela, 2018.



Figure 9. Exhibition of photographic portraits.
Source: Valenzuela, 2018.



Figure 10. Exhibition of photographic portraits.
Source: Valenzuela, 2018.

◆ Analysis of the results

The methodology used for the project allowed to fulfill the objective that the children could talk with their parents and know their roots and the origin of their family; making it easier for parents to reflect on how important it is to preserve and transmit traditions and customs to their children, as an activity that can be daily.

Each stage of the implementation of the project was important for the students, since it allowed them to contextualize the situation, generate curiosity and encourage the search for answers through their families; as well as a complete closure of the experience through the photographic exhibition. In this way, it was possible for the children to become involved and learn about their own cultural heritage, as well as about the diverse cultures of which their peers are a part.

In carrying out the project, 50 children from the fourth grade of primary school from a public school in the district of San Juan de Lurigancho participated, who, through an explanation with the use of an information totem, learned about the Peruvian cultures, migrations, the characteristics of migrants and the importance of valuing and feeling proud of their past, as well as valuing diversity; they even discovered that it existed within their own families. The learning was effective, as it captured the attention of the participants, who learned about the subject in a didactic way, reinforcing and identifying themselves and their families with the traits and characteristics of the cultures explained.

At the same time, the children enthusiastically participated in the making of the photographic portraits, bringing the objects and elements requested for this activity, that is, those that were representative of their cultural heritage.

As a closure of the *Soy Cultura* project, the 50 photographs were exhibited in a large sample with the participation of parents and grandparents, relatives, friends and teachers; making a positive impact in the community of this school. At the end of the sample, surveys (75) and interviews (45) were carried out with various guests, with the purpose of being able to know the positive or negative impact that the project had, if it was fully understood and if its importance had been understood. It is noteworthy that 100% said that it was an enriching experience, beneficial for learning about family roots and, above all, for feeling proud of who one is.

For more information on the implementation of the project, see <https://bit.ly/3cejgZP>



◆ Conclusions and recommendations

The *Soy Cultura* project, through the photographic portrait, managed to awaken the curiosity of the participating children between the ages of 9 and 11, as well as the identification of the need to know their origins and family background, with the purpose of creating emotional ties with their cultural heritage. In the process of investigation and identification of the problem, a survey carried out among the students gave as a result that 60% of the sample did not know about their culture, family background and history. After the implementation of the project, through surveys and interviews, it was determined that 100% of the

children knew about their cultural heritage, which meant the success of the project.

Through the project, the children learn about their own culture and diversity, as well as the importance of knowing where they come from. Knowing their roots allows them to be better human beings because it helps them not to be ashamed, but rather proud of being who they are, and this attitude allows them to strengthen their self-esteem and respect for their family.

Through interviews and conversations with the parents attending the photographic exhibition, the recommendation was received to extend the project, not only to fourth grade children, but to all primary school students of this school, because they considered that this experience served them as a communication tool with their children.

In this sense, the parents acknowledged that they had not had the time or the opportunity to talk about these issues with their children until the workshop and the photo session. By choosing and selecting the elements that their children would use for the portrait, they managed to establish links with family history and cultural heritage, as well as the development of their family and personal identity. With this, they were able to recognize the importance and value of each element, also managing to promote cultural heritage within their daily lives. Thus, they considered the project as an incentive to be able to achieve the above.

Finally, the children got to know the diversity that exists and is present in their own classroom, understanding that each and every one of them deserves the respect of the society where they develop. 🍷

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