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THESIS

SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS DESERT SCHOOL DURING THE PANDEMIC OF COVID
19, METETÍ-DARIÉN.

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ABSTRACT

The general goal of this research is to find the level of school desertion in times of pandemic of the seventh-grade students of the Centro Educativo Marcos Antonio Alarcón Palomino, found in Metetí, Darién. This is qualitative research, the instrument used to collect data was a survey applied face to face and online to 26 students and 26 parents. The results of the surveys yield the following results: 58% are male students and 42% female; 46% of the parents are farmworkers and 42% indigenous. 21% of students live far from school. This is one of the reasons for desertion, of these 17% deserted out due to lack of internet and data; limiting their possibility of completing tasks, 32% use their cell phones and 19% the television.

Parent's income ranges from less of B/.121.00 to a maximum of B/.250.00 per month; this economic factor affected both parents as well as students. Most households were made up of single mothers, on some occasions sisters or grandparents cared for a small percentage of students. 16% had access to the virtual platforms, for example, WhatsApp, Meet, Zoom and cellphones. In conclusion the lack of internet service was one of the main factors that led to school desertion during the pandemic in 2020.

Key Words: innovation, pandemic, school desertion, socioeconomic, virtual education

RESUMEN

La presente investigación tiene como objetivo general determinar el nivel de deserción escolar en tiempos de pandemia de los estudiantes de séptimo grado del Centro Educativo Marcos Antonio Alarcón Palomino, ubicado en Metetí, Darién. Esta es una investigación cualitativa, el instrumento utilizado para la recolección de datos fue una encuesta aplicada de manera presencial y en línea a 26 estudiantes y 26 padres de familia. Los resultados de las encuestas arrojaron los siguientes resultados: el 58% son estudiantes varones y el 42% mujeres, el 46% de los padres son campesinos y el 42% indígenas. El 21% de los estudiantes vive lejos de la escuela, esta es una de las razones de la deserción, de estos el 17% desertó por falta de internet y datos; limitando su posibilidad de realizar tareas, el 32% utiliza el celular y el 19% la televisión.

Los ingresos de los padres van desde menos de B/.121.00 hasta un máximo de B/.250.00 mensuales, este factor económico afectó tanto a los padres como a los estudiantes. La mayoría de los hogares estaban conformados por madres solteras, en algunas ocasiones un pequeño porcentaje de estudiantes eran cuidados por hermanas y abuelos. El 16% tenía acceso a las plataformas virtuales, por ejemplo, WhatsApp, GOOGLE MEET, ZOOM y celulares, en conclusión, la falta de servicio de internet fue uno de los principales factores que llevaron a la deserción escolar durante la pandemia en 2020.

Palabras Claves: Innovación, pandemia, deserción escolar, socioeconómica y educación virtual.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the key to success, where the individual's intellectual, moral and affective capacity is enhanced, enriching the cultures and beliefs of the countries. In the year 2020, millions of students worldwide were affected by Covid -19, which instantly changed the way classes are taught and increased school desertion; a frequent phenomenon in these contexts. Observing that the most vulnerable population to desert school are the seventh-grade students in the district of Metetí, this motivated the investigation. The school selected for this research is the Centro Educativo Marcos Antonio Alarcón Palomino being the highest and largest in the province of Darién.

This study is of the utmost importance in the learning process for the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino, and with this the current situation of desertion in Metetí, specifically in the Centro Educativo. In addition, it can help the school administration create intervention programs to rescue students who have deserted.

Finally, provide the educational community with the criteria that can help develop different strategies that can lead to reducing desertion in this school.

Based on the foregoing, this text is guided by the following question: What were the roots that caused the desertion of seventh grade students during the year of the Covid-19 pandemic at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino?

The general goal is to identify the causes that led to the school dropout of seventh grade students of the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino.

In Chapter 2, literature related to the subject of desertion of the seventh-grade students was reviewed by the researchers to shape the process and gain a deeper understanding of the sources of desertion, specifically during the year 2020 of the COVID-19 pandemic, since the way classes were imparted had change abrupt.

During the years 2018 and 2019 desertion represented approximately 5%. However, for the year 2020 the desertion rate increased to 14.4%. To understand the root, the research prepared a survey directed to 26 students and 26 parents. The factors included in the survey were technology, socio economic, personal, academic and family.

Chapter 4 analyzed the result of the survey and registered the following findings: 58% of the students' interviewed ages are under or equal to 13 years of age. Failure and absenteeism were 43% and 39% respectively, these academic risk factors were the most identified. Although during the time of the pandemic the Ministry of Education sought new strategies to continue the teaching / learning process, including the use of technology. However, the reality for most students were the lack of internet, lack of data for mobile phone or other devises, these factors contributed to the difficulty to fulfill their task. On the other hand, parents had low income, in some cases they had to decide whether to feed the family or invest in connectivity for schooling.

Finally, there were a variety of factors that caused desertion of the seventh-grade students of the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino these factors were, first the implementation of distance learning or on-line learning, the educational system had to change because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Second, the students at this Centro Educativo are from different communities, and many of these students live very distantly from the school where

communication was not stable; third, other factors were the lack of internet, data, family income, family stability, absenteeism, the level of parents' education also influence the possibility of staying in school.

CHAPTER I:
BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

1.1 Background / Context

This project was implemented at the Centro Educativo Marco Alarcón Palomino in the town of Metetí, jurisdiction Metetí, district of Pinogana, Province of Darién. In 1972 the school was founded, and belongs to a semi-urban community called Metetí, with a population of 7,976 as of 2010 census. It was created by Law 58 of July 29, 1998. It is the last major town on the Inter-American Highway before the highway ends at Yaviza. The town has Police station, banks, restaurants, hotels, supermarket, elementary schools, a small health clinic and gas stations. (Wikipedia, 2020)

The education that prevailed in the province during the three quarters of the twentieth century was limited to the primary levels and reduced to the most important towns of the region.

The Primary school began in 1972 with a single room; the first school was in Metetí with a single teacher who was the director. The first educator of this school was the teacher Diocelina Vargas Gómez. The land where the school is found was donated by Mr. Dionisio Lopez. Students at the time finished their primary grade and had to travel to La Palma another town, in Darién, to continue the following high school grades. On June 23, 1979, in Metetí, secondary education was an education choice of the region. From 1979 to 1995, the elementary School shared its facilities with the junior school of Metetí.

Over the years the school has undergone changes in its name. In the decree N°396 of the 22 of July 2003 the Centro de Educación Básica General Metetí was created in the jurisdiction of

Metetí district of Pinogama, in the province of Darién. Later in the decree 521 of 8th of August 2003, changed both the Centro de Educación Básica General Metetí, and the Instituto Profesional y Técnico; to Centro de Educación Básica General Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino and Instituto Profesional y Técnico.

On the year 2021 by Official Gazette 29242, Executive Decree 230 of Tuesday, March 16, that legalizes the creation of the Professional and Technical Institute Marco Alarcón Palomino and offers for the second level of education or middle education for these students; the integration of the center of education is approved Básico General Marco Alarcón Palomino and the professional and technical Institute Marco Alarcón Palomino; with the name Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino Centro Educativo. (Meduca, 2021)

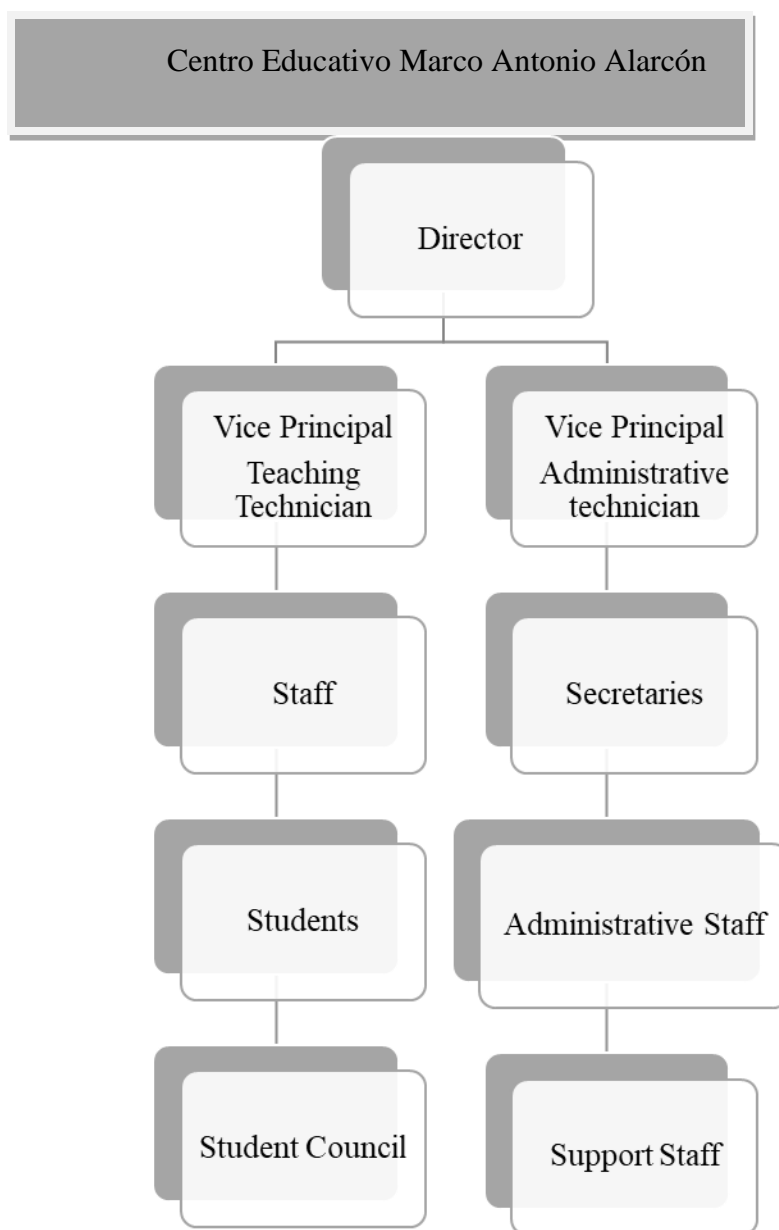
The student population of the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino is about 1640, and covers Preschool, kindergarten, Elementary, Junior, and high school. It has a total of 110 professors. It is the largest school in the province of Darién. The Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino offers degree programs such as: Bachelor of Science, Commerce, Electricity, Construction and Electronic. In this school students are from the communities of Sanson, Canglón, Villa Darién, Nicanor, San Vicente, Piedra Candela, Arretí, and others that are far away as El Real, Sambú, Pinogana, Yaviza. To get to the Centro Educativo Marco Alarcon Palomino, the transportation systems available are taxis, bus or school bus. (Bernal, 2021).

The school mission is to train students integrally based on the ideals of peace, freedom, health, and social justice, taking into consideration technological, scientific, and humanistic

development to achieve better living standards and a strengthening of ethical and moral values. (Secretaries, 2021)

The Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino's vision is reaching an educational excellence through academic training, which must be given in an appropriate school environment, using equipment and didactic resources that allow the development of curricular programs and, above all, a strengthening of investigative, critical and academic spirit of the students and community, according to the scientific and technological advances needed in a competitive society. (Secretaries, 2021)

The school was renamed Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino in honor of a teacher from Darién, was born in La Palma, province of Darién; a town with a peaceful life, humble and diligent people found on the banks of the Tuirá River. Marcos coined that virtue in his personality: humility. (José, 2003)



Source: Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón

1.2 Problem Statement

Based on information received by the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino (Secretaries, Student's statistic, 2018 to 2020) the percent of students' desertion in the Seventh grade during a three-year period is as follows: 2018 about 4.64%, 2019 about 4.97%, and 2020 about 14.36%.

During the years 2018 and 2019 desertion rate at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino was an average between four to five percent. However, in the year 2020 desertion rate increase to 14.4%. So, this research is to understand what factors have influence the desertion at this Centro Educativo.

School desertion is defined as an abandonment of the educational system by the students, caused by varied factors.

The Cambridge Dictionary online defines desertion as a person who leaves school, college, or university before completing a qualification, or a person who lives in an unusual way. (Dictionary, 2021)

During the pandemic, 14.9% of the population from ages 0 to 17 suffered from deficiencies that a society deprived of internet access experiences. (Alabarca, 2020)

Article 91 of the Political Constitution of Panama says that everyone has the right to education and the responsibility to educate themselves. The state organizes and directs the public service of national education and guarantees parents the right to take part in the educational process of their children. Education is based on science, and uses its methods, encourages its growth and

dissemination, and applies its results to ensure the development of the human person and the family, as well as the affirmation and strengthening of the Panamanian nation as a cultural and political community. (PGN, 2016)

UNICEF wrote that in Latin America and the Caribbean, schools had an absence of about 114 million students from the classroom in the year 2020. According to reports given to the Education Commission by the Permanent Multisectoral Council for the Implementation of the National Commitment to Education, approximately 80 thousand students, among boys, girls and adolescents, did not attend classes during the Covid-19 pandemic (Duviellier, 2021)

1.3 Justification

Across the country, students were in quarantine and studying virtually including the province of Darién. In this manner, professors had to learned and use technology and platforms to prepare and deliver classes using the following: Microsoft Team, Zoom, Google Meet, and video calls to help students and achieve significant successes in teaching and learning.

This research will offer to the Ministry of Education and Regional Direction of the Ministry of Education in the province of Darién. This will raise awareness of the present situation of desertion in Metetí, specifically in the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino. Also, it can help the school administration to create interventions programs to rescue the students that deserted. Finally, provide the education community with the criterions that can help develop different strategies that lead to diminish desertion at this school.

In this regards, the following question is a guide to identify the problem related to desertion:
 “What were the causes that led to the desertion of seventh grade students during the Covid-19 pandemic year at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino?”

1.4 Objectives

1.4.1 General Objective:

To identify the causes that led to the desertion of seventh grade students during the Covid-19 pandemic year at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino (CE MAP) and to develop strategies and recommend actions that will help to overcome this situation.

1.4.2 Specific Objective:

- Review bibliographic and statistics information about school desertion rates.
- To select the sample from five groups of seventh grade students from Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino through an aleatory simple sampling.
- To apply the instruments of questionnaire in the research with closed questions to students and parents.

1.5 Definition of terms

- **Innovation:** is the introduction of new ideas, methods, or things. (Collins, 2022)
- It is to improve what exists, providing new options that meet the needs of consumers, or even create new products in order to be successful in the market. (conomipedia, 2022)
- **Pandemic:** A pandemic is the spread of an infectious disease of humans over a large geographical area (Universidad Catolica de Chile, 2000)

- It is an epidemic of an infectious disease that has spread over a large geographical area, for example, over several continents or around the world, affecting a considerable number of people (Wikipedia, 2008)
- **School desertion:** This is the situation in which the student, after a cumulative process of separation or withdrawal, begins to withdraw before the time established by the educational system without obtaining a grade or a school certificate (Wikipedia, 2010).
- Abandonment (*Abandonamiento*) that someone makes of the appeal that was filed (Real Academia Española, 2021; Thesaurus, 2006-2013)
- **Socioeconomic:** It is an alternative economic and social paradigm to neoclassical economics. (Wikipedia, 2022). It is an indicator that arises from the analysis of the salary or the money that an individual obtains; of their conditions of employment; and their educational background (definition, 2021).
- **Virtual Education:** Online education is understood as that in which teachers and students participate in a digital environment through new technologies and computer networks, making intensive use of the facilities provided by the Internet and digital technologies. (Wikipedia, 2022). Also called “online education”, refers to the development of training programs that have cyberspace as the teaching and learning scenario (MEDUCA, 2022)

1.6 Research Method

The type of research method chosen for this project is qualitative, this research related to one school. The result of this study can only be applied at this school. It will collect data from students and parents, through a survey that will be applied in the school and at the home of some of the students.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Literature review

According to the Forbes Central America magazine the pandemic has forced physical distancing, before this, the ideal strategy to continue with education is virtual classes, but in rural areas internet access is limited, parents prefer to use money for food “I saw the case of a student who was unable to send her homework because the only thing the family had was food. The father told me: 'How am I going to spend those 10 on the internet when there is no food on the table,’” says the teacher Edwin Cáceres. ((Ola, 2020).

In this context, the authors refer to education in times of pandemic has been a challenge for students, parents and teachers, the possibility of continuing with the education system has provided positive, but also negative, aspects. The problem lies in the economic factors and connectivity on the Internet, causing instability in the teaching-learning process of the students of the upper elementary school (María Yesenia Pachay-López, 2021)

School closures caused by the coronavirus disproportionately affected boys and girls, because not all had the opportunities, tools or access to continue learning during the pandemic.

Education should be at the center of the recovery plans of all governments, so that education is free and accessible to all children in the world. Children from low-income families were at greater risk of being excluded from online learning because they could not afford enough internet or devices. Even the use of other devices such as: television was not available to some families that live in remote areas and without electrical service.

In Panamá, the government introduced an initiative for early education services to promote the development and learning of children at home. Initiatives such as "Tu Caipi en Casa" promoted by the Ministry of Social Development or the "Mochila Cuidarte", which will arrive with a guide of activities and toys to the homes of 5,000 children in rural areas and with difficult access are examples of how the educational content was adapted to reach the most vulnerable families even in the pandemic. However, other means were available, such as, community radios, television channels, telephone services and other technologies. Through these means, parents and caregivers can be guided on how to create stimulating environments at home, establish care routines, play and language development. There are other examples in the region and it is possible for Panama to learn and adapt different tools to fit the diverse context of the panamanian community wrote Carolina Freire (Freire, 2020).

In regards to the issue of the impact of covid-19 in Panama, children were exposed to different ways of innovation in education, development of different teams and learning services were carried out. One of the methods implemented by the Ministry of Social Development made was a backpack known as "your backpack at home". This kit is a guide for parents and guardians mainly living in rural areas, The purpose include educational activities in order to enhance their children's learning. In this case, the main device were television and telephone communication are used as teaching instruments.

School dropout is due to various causes, generating serious consequences that affect personal, economic, emotional and social development. They determined that school dropout is a multi-causal problem, involving personal, economic, family and teaching factors, among others; therefore, it is not an easy problem to address, and isolated intervention strategy will be

insufficient; Therefore, it is necessary to carry out various measures, where parents, partners of the student body, teachers, educational authorities and students participate, so that they commit to mitigate this problem for the common good of the family, the community, society and the country. (Ramirez, 2020)

Families play a very important role so that students do not abandon their studies, they mainly provide financial and emotional support so that the student can remain in the educational system and manage to finish their studies with a good academic performance. The quality of family relationships has a significant impact on academic success. Successful students receive a lot of encouragement and social support from parents. Within the learning process, motivation is fundamental, since the one that encourages learning and promoting motivation is the family nucleus ". (Ramirez, 2020)

"The situation is alarming in the segment of 15 to 24 years, where the combined effect of the increase in school dropouts (15-19) and the contraction of job opportunities for young people in urban settings, resulted in that two out of three Males who entered the age range of 15 to 24 years in urban settings between 2014 and 2019 were "Ninis". COVID-19 aggravated school dropouts and the youth employment crisis in the short term, which will accentuate the productive exclusion and social inequality of the young population, especially in urban settings ". (Ramirez, 2020)

School dropout is a reflection of the inequality of educational opportunities, either due to a lack of state resources that prevent education from being available to all children and young

people, or due to the poverty and vulnerability of the families of those children who are withdrawn or excluded from the school system.

In the report writing by a core team that was led by Halsey Rogers and Shwetlena Sabarwal they wrote that in the pandemic year of covid-19 the dropouts increased, especially among the most disadvantaged and learning inequality increased, because only students from wealthier and more educated families had the support to learn at home. Finally, dropout risk rose, as the lack of encouragement from teachers reduces the attachment to schooling for low resources students. During the crisis of covid 19, students had differential access to remote learning and conditions at home, some had computer equipment and connectivity, a space to work, and books and other learning materials at home, while other students were lacking more than one of the aforementioned resources.

Further The Statistical Data Integration System (SIDE spanish acronym) of the Ministry of Education (MEDUCA) indicated that 13,051 students (1.7%) failed the school year. Meanwhile, another 30,224 students failed one to three subjects, this represent (3.9%). There were 4,177 who desertion. (Sistema Estadístico de MEDUCA reflect the desertion of 11049 in 2020, 2021).

Given the health emergency of Covid-19, educational institutions were forced to apply strategies that validate the education process, ensuring emotional support not only for families and students, but also for the group of professional teachers who went through difficult situations, the strategies implemented by most of the countries in Latin America was distance and virtual education, giving results in cities where the accessibility of the internet was efficient; However,

vulnerable areas or sectors have not counted on an educational stability, causing school dropout (María Yesenia Pachay-López, 2021)

According to Pachay -López the Latin america schools tried to identify strategies as the virtual education reinforced and ensured emotional support to teachers and families. In some cities the accesibility of internet wasn't efficient, as in the province of Darién. Some parents had the opportunies to have the materials available while others didn't. This increase the gap between students from rural and urban communities.

It is possible to take the necessary corrections and support the student so that despite the continued pandemic, students can connect or be provided cards and free internet, said Luis López, teacher leader. (Fernández, 2021)

This would be a very good action since it has been an important factor for school dropouts.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Methods

The first step the researchers took to undergo this research was to identified the problem. In this case, the Marco Alarcon Palomino Centro Educativo, seventh grade students, registered in 2018 and 2019 registered 4.6% and 4.97% respectively. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic year, 2020, dropout increase to two digit, this represented 14.4%. This leads the researcher to investigate the factors that influence the desertion at this Centro Educativo.

The seventh grade students of the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino is a total of 181, of which 26 students were chosen using the invitation technique where the criteria were those who had lost the 2020 school year, yielding 26 students, which is equivalent to 14%.

The next step the researchers took was the review literature to understand previous study related to school dropout, this information helps shape the study and set the questions for the research.

The researchers used a structure survey with close questions to collect the data. The data gathered from surveys will be analyze using the microsoft excell. The type of sample is not probabilistic the sampling technique used was intensional sampling. "The selection is made "intentionally among a preselected group of the population". (Sanchez, 2010)

Students and parents were the main source of information. They were 26 students and 26 parents. The researcher use the classroom facilities of Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon

Palomino, to apply the questionnaire to students and parents at the same time. For those students that did not attend the school facilities the researchers visited their homes. -Another source used to collect the data is google forms.com to reach out to those students that didn't come to the school and they live far away. The survey could easily be viewed and filled out on mobile devices, but some of the participants don't have devices cell, those were visited by the researcher.

The following factors were considered to understand if they influence dropout at the seventh grade, these are: .

- Technologics (No signal, no data, no devices, share divices with another person)
- Socio economic (low economic resources, lack of family support, working)
- Personal (motivation, emotionals, no adaptation to the virtual education class, dissatisfaction of expectations).
- Academic (time spent on activities, missed trimester, missed assignments, dissatisfaction with the planning of the academic program; which makes them not feel calm, satisfied and secure with what they do, backlog of tasks, failures, understanding the virtual instrucctions, work and study).
- Family (parents separation, parents live far away from school, parents moved to another rural place where the signal isn't good).

Finally, the researchers tabulate the data and generate the graphics of circulars and bars to prepare the results. This analysis was followed by the process of collecting and modeling the data

to extract insights that support decision-making. Excel is the program used to tabulate ,once the data is organize, the researchers proceed to analyze the results.

CHAPTER 4

RESULT

CHAPTER 4

RESULT

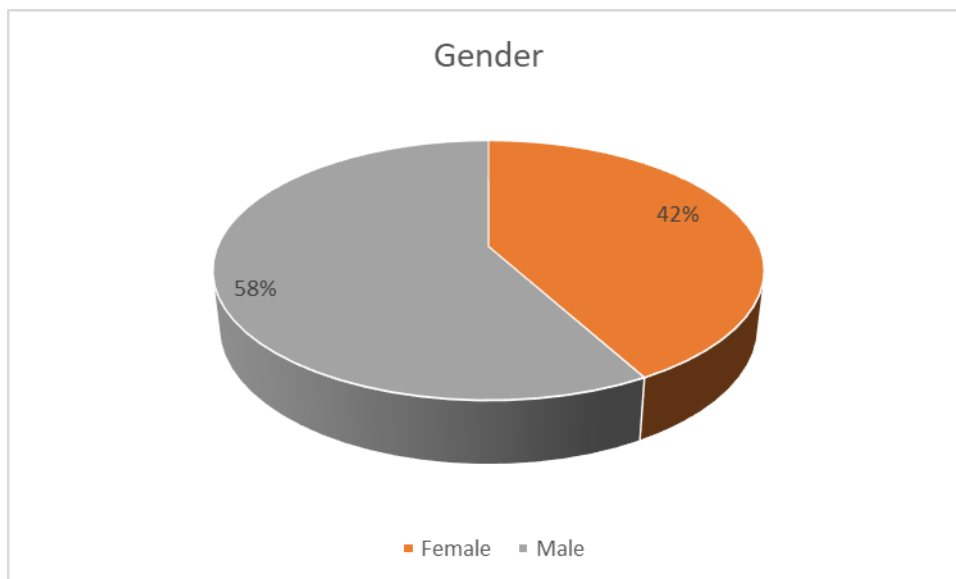
1. General Information

To answer the first section of the questions post in the research is to obtain general information of the students in the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino; the information in this stage includes, sex, age and ethnnc group. As follow; the analysis of this first section: General Information

Graphic No.1

What is your gender?

2021

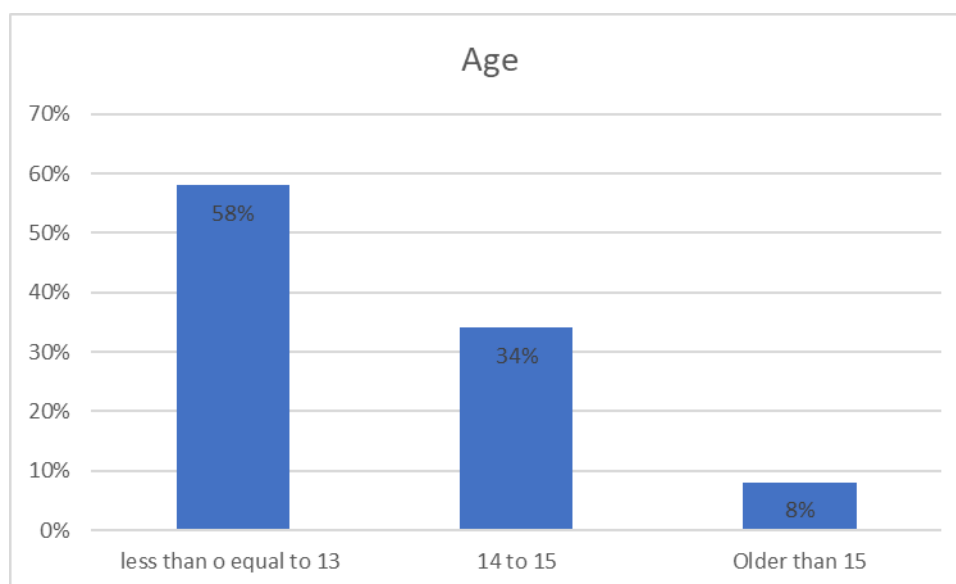


Source: Survey of seventh grade students at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio

Alarcón Palomino. December 2021.

As observed in Graphic No.1 a total of 26 students participated in the survey of which 42% are male and 58% are female.

Graphic No. 2
What is your age?
2021



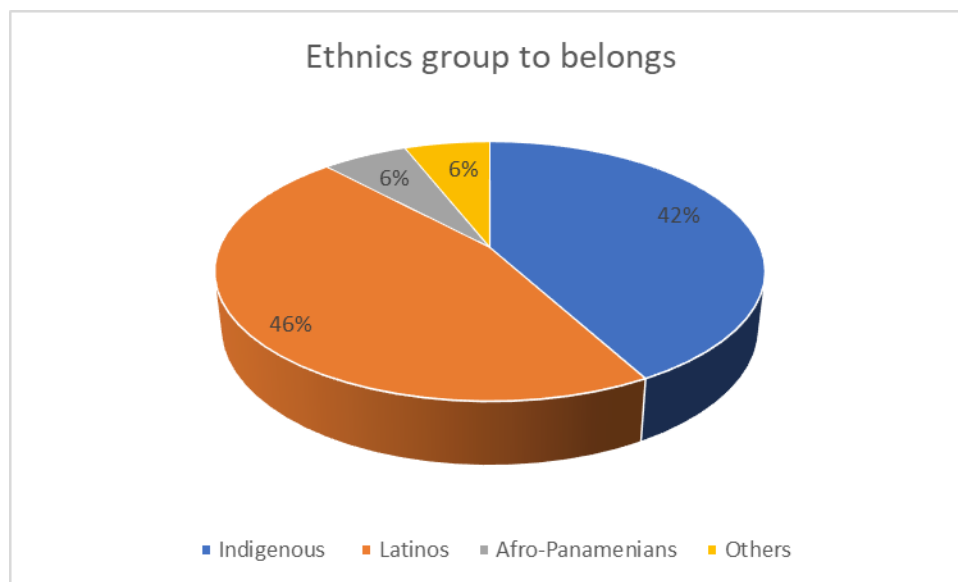
Source: Survey of seventh grade students at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino. December 2021.

As reflected in the Graphic No.2 a total of 26 students participated in the survey of which 58% are less than o equal to 13 and 34% are 14 to 15 years old.

This stage were seventh graders are engaged in an even more disturbing new reality. Seventh grade students also go through intense cognitive, physical, and emotional changes that

bring out uncomfortable contradictions. They are no longer small children, but neither are they adults. While sixth and eighth graders receive special attention as they adjust to middle school and prepare for high school, seventh graders find themselves stuck somewhere in between. (Crawford, 2019)

Graphic No. 3
Specify the Ethnic group to which you belong?
2021



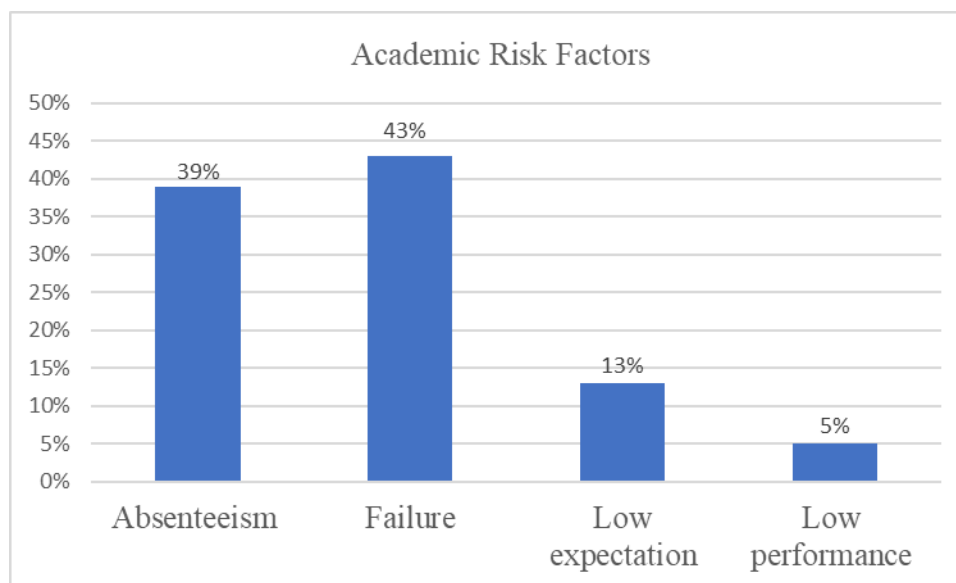
Source: Survey of seventh grade students at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino. December 2021.

As observed a total of 26 students participated in the survey of which 46% are latinos and 42% belong to indigenous.

2. Continuing with section number two about academic risks(absenteeism, failure, low performance and low expectation) the following information was generated.

Graphic No.4

**What issues students face that impact their ability to perform in school?
2021**



Source: Survey of seventh grade students at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino. December 2021.

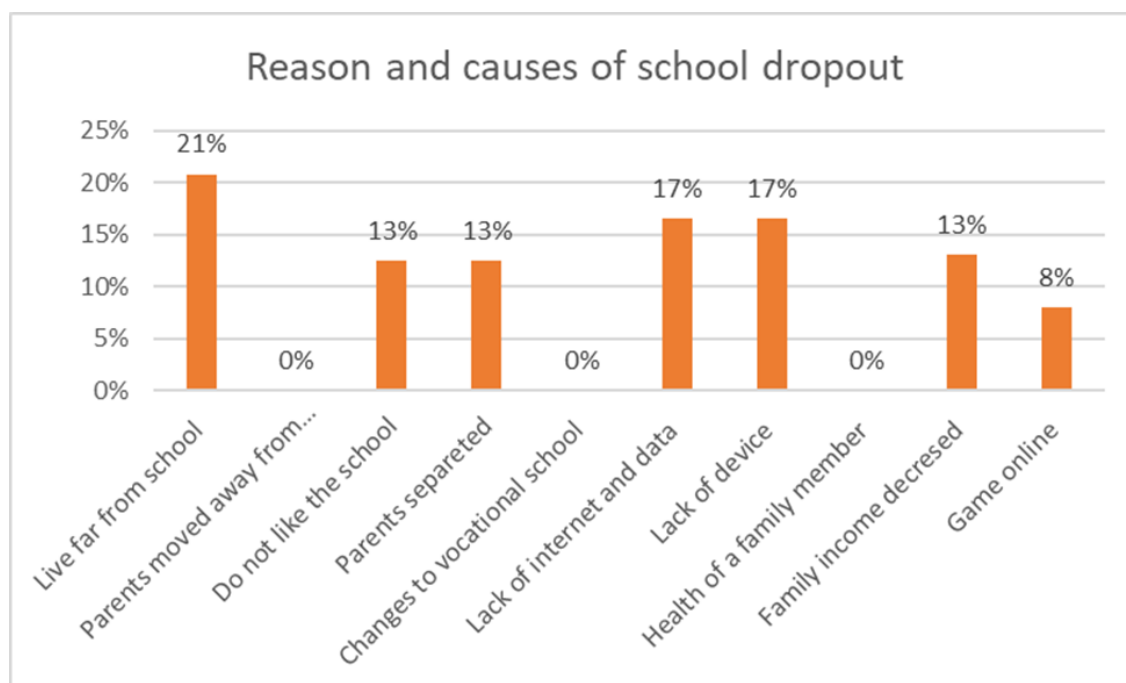
The 43% of students of a total 26 said that failure was the main risk factors. They desert when they received the grades and realized that they failed, this situation makes them sad and unmotivated. Following was the absenteeism, with 39% these did not participated in classes, for different reasons, such as: lack of transportation, lack of access to the internet and so on. Others, use the phone for playing or texting, this was the option of one of the student that responded the survey, and the other 13% of students were with low expectation about school.

3. About the reasons and causes of school dropout in the pandemic year of Covid 19 at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón students of seventh grade, the answer has been analysis and obtained following data:

Graphic No. 5

What were the reasons and causes of school desertion?

2021



Source: Survey of seventh grade students at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino. December 2021.

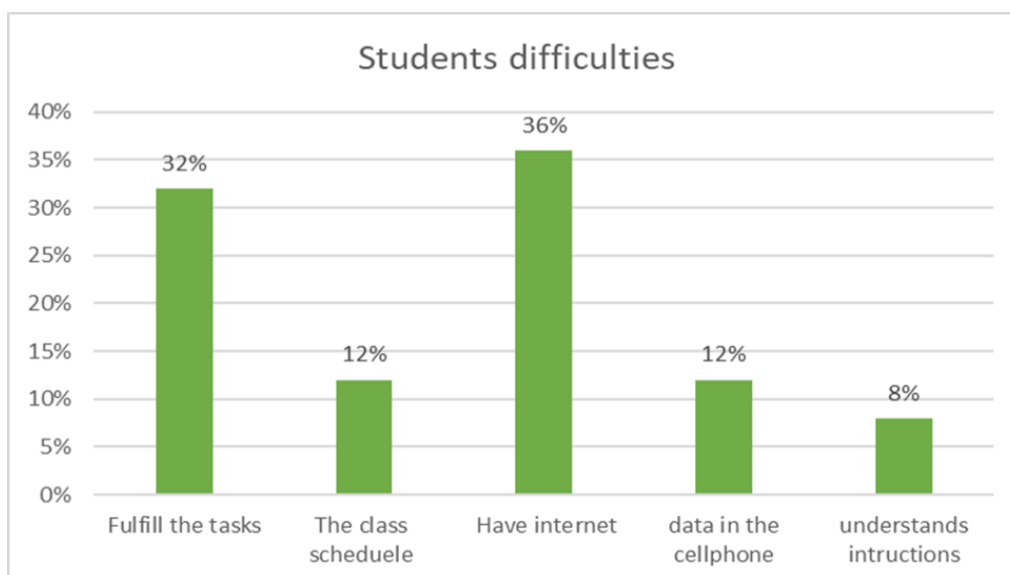
As seen on the graphic No.5 a total of 26 students participated in the survey of which 21% live far away from school, they considered that this was the main cause of desertion of school at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino, 17% were lacking internet and data, another 17% did not have any type of device, both condition became the second cause. The third causes why students of seventh grade at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino desertion of school, where because their parents were separated in the year of the COVID-19 pandemic; family income decreased, and students did not like school, all of this represents a 13% of the total of 26 students, and 8% were engaged with online game.

4. According to the questions number four about students difficulties, the students at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon answered the following:

Graphic: No.6

What are the difficulties that I have as student?

2021



Source: Survey of seventh grade students at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino. December 2021.

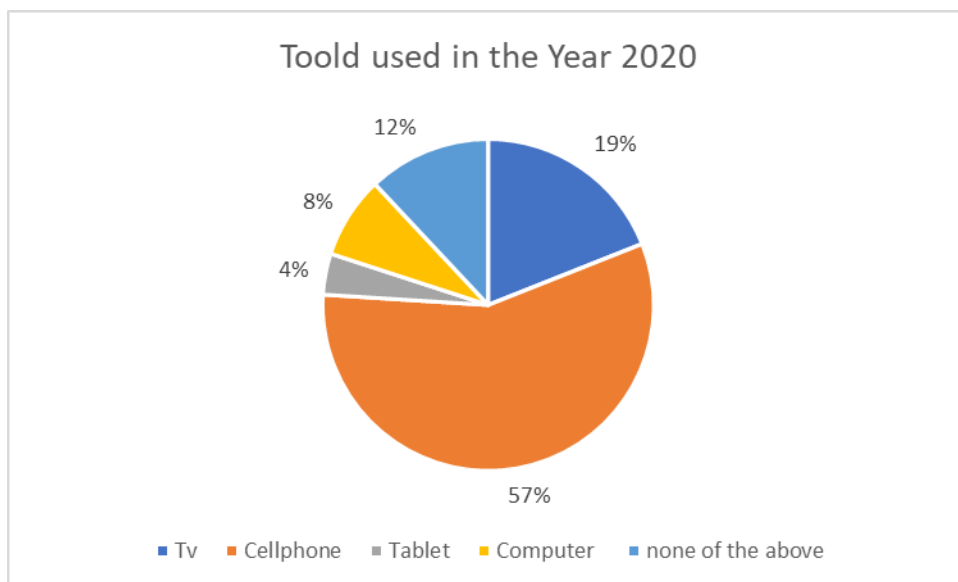
As observed in the Graphic No.6 in reference to difficulties that students had the 36% of students of seventh grade of the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino had not internet connection and 32% said that their difficulties were fulfill the task.

5. Referring to this question about the device used in the year 2020, students answered the following the data:

Graphic No.7

In the 2020, which device did you have to receive your virtual classess?

2021



Source: Survey of seventh grade students at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino. December 2021.

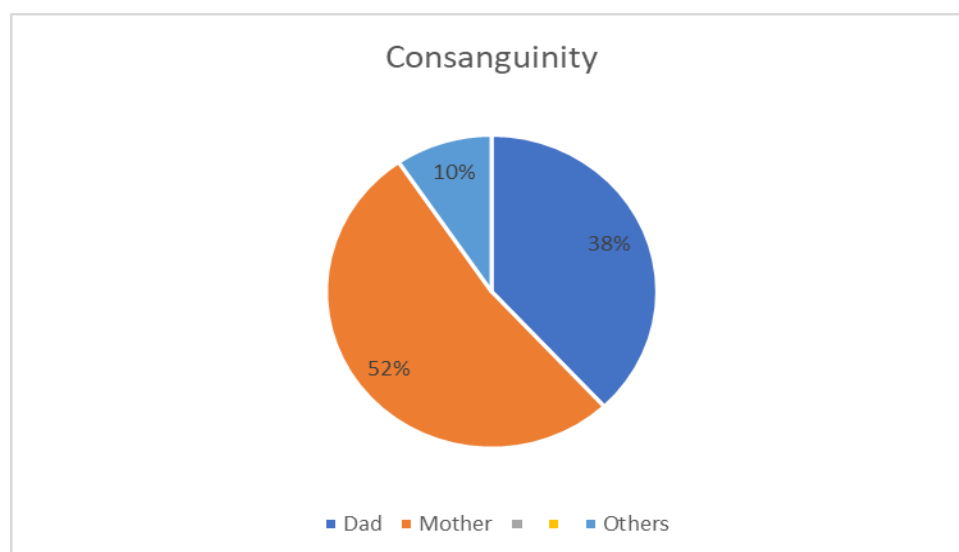
The 57% of students from Seventh grade at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino had cellphone device in the year or the pandemic Covid 19 and 12% did not have The 19% only have TV at home to received their classes.

Questionnaire Aimed at Parents or Assistants

1. General data:

Information gathered in this section of the research was applied to parents or assistants to the students of seventh grade at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino. At this stage the researchers proceed to analyze the following data.

Graphic No.8
What is your affiliation relationship?
2021



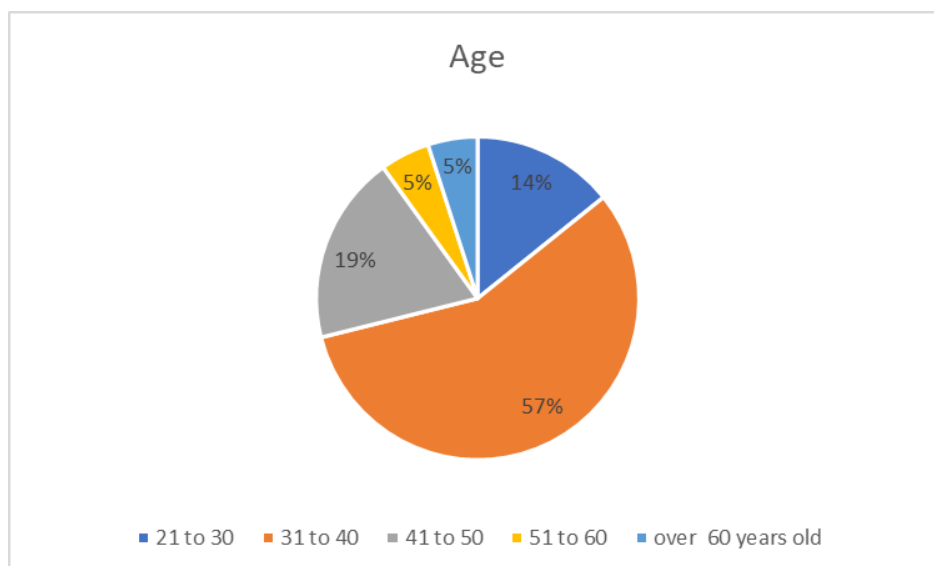
Source: Survey of seventh grade parents at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino. December 2021.

As observed in the Graphic No.8 a total of 26 parents participated in the survey. The data analyzed shows that 52% of the mothers are the ones who are more involved, and are responsible for their children education, of which parents specially mom are the responsible of their education, 38% of the fathers have affiliation with the students and. 10% are under the care of other members of the family, such as sister, brother, uncle or aunt.

Graphic No. 9

How old are you?

2021



Source: Survey of seventh grade parents at the Centro Educativo Marco Alarcón Palomino.

December 2021

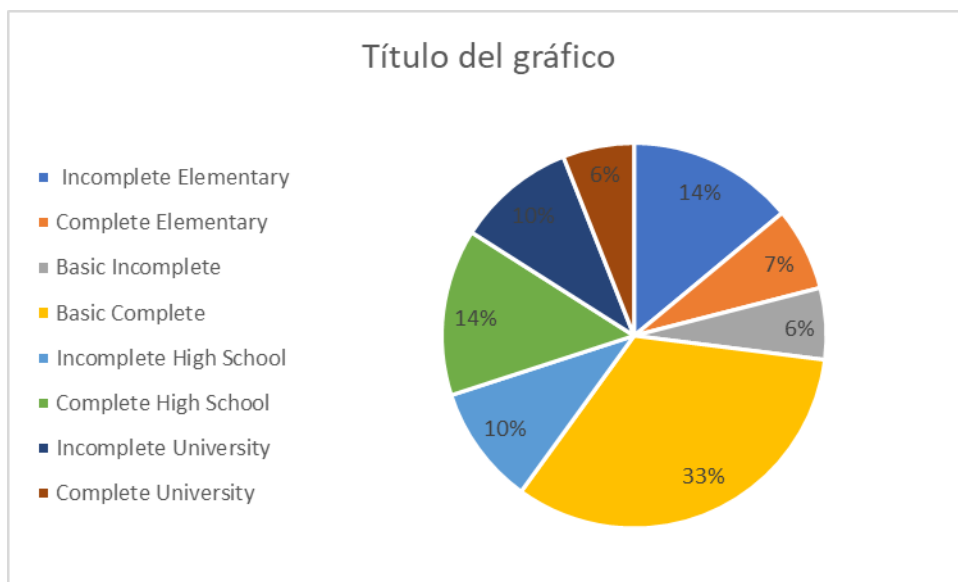
According to this Graphic No.9, as observed the majority of the parents are young adults 57% between 31 to 40 years old, and 14.5% are between 21 to 30 years old. In other words approximately 71.5% are under 40 years of age. 19% are between 41 to 50 years old, only 10 % are over 51.

Highest level of education attained by the parents, they answered the following information:

GraphicNo. 10

Level of education

2021

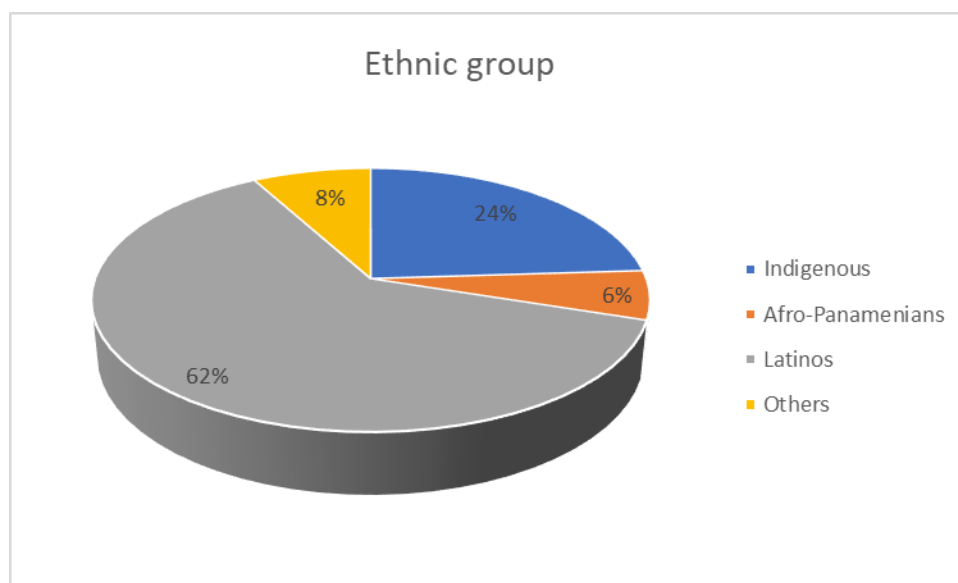


Source: Survey of seventh grade parents at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino. December 2021

Graphic No.10 take into account the level of parents education. In literature it is normal to find information on how parents education can influence their children education. In this case, as researchers it is important to know if this factor influence the school desertion in the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino. The result of this question is as followed: 33% of the parents have complete Basic Education, following with 14 % each are with elementary and highschool incomplete. Only 7% of the parents completed university education.

Graphic No.11

Specify the Ethnic group to which you belong?

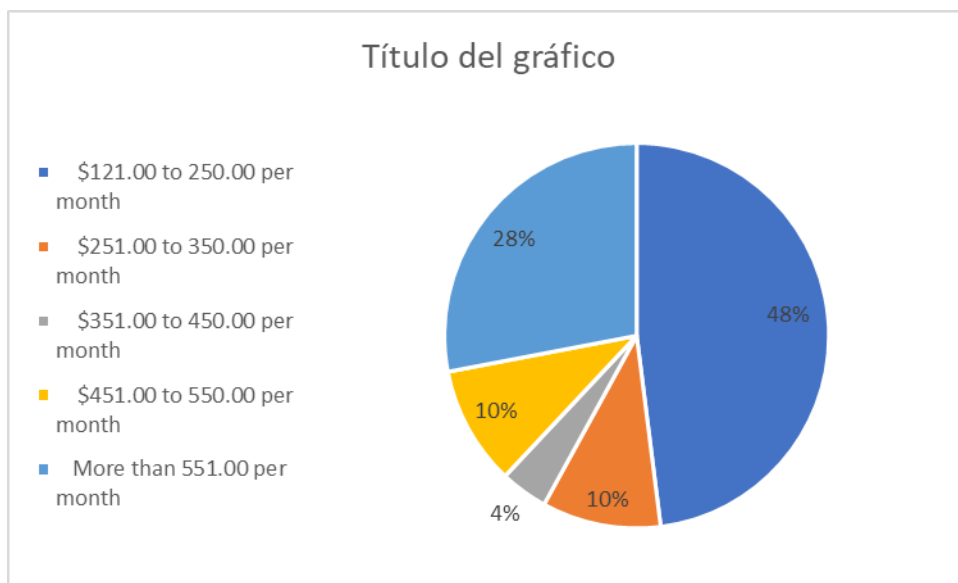
2021

Source: Survey of seventh grade parents at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino. December 2021.

The province of Darien is composed of different ethnic groups, This is the importance of this question, taking into account that there are also inequality based on ethnicity. Graphic No.11 shows that 62% of the parents are latinos, 24% are indigenous, 8% are afropanamanians and 8% of parents are others (chines, Costaricans)

2. In this section of the research it was analyzed the social risk factors: (socio-economic),family structure were parents answered the following data:

Graphic No.12
Family Income
2021



Source: Survey of seventh grade parents at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino. December 2021.

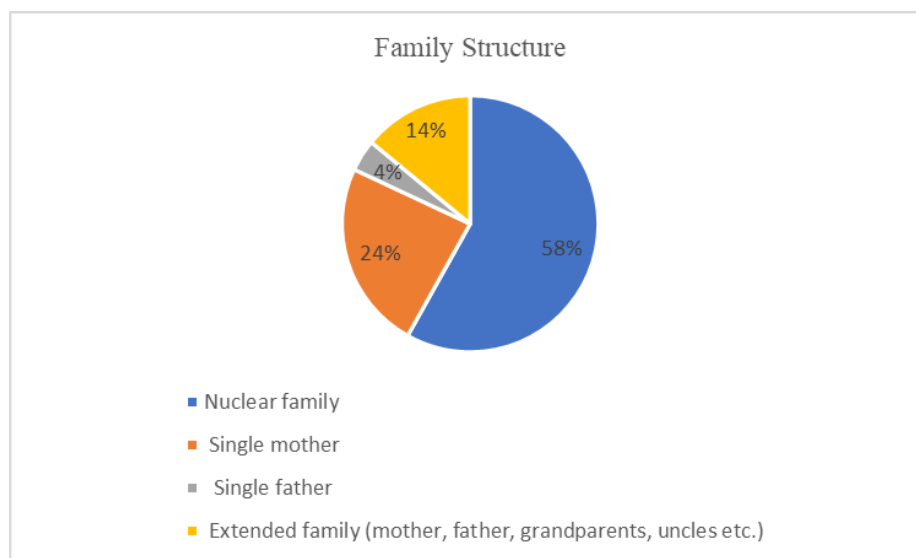
Public education in Panama is free, however, parents still has to invest in uniforms, shoes, books, transpotation and other expenses related with education. It is also important to express that on occasion families has to decide between education or family nutrition and health, in this case understanding the family income can help understand the reason why some students desert.

In this case, Graphic No.12 highlights the family income of the 26 parents of Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino. The province of Darien is classified in Region 2

where the average minimum monthly salary is \$290.00. When this is compared with the results of the survey 48% of the parents income is between \$121.00 to \$250.00 montly, these families are under the minimum establish by the Executive Decree 74, of december 31, 2021. There is 10% with monthly income of \$252.00 to 350.00 these are more or less within the average minimum monthly wage. 10% earns \$451.00 to \$ 550.00 montly. 4% are \$351.00 to \$ 450.00 monthly. 28% gain greater than \$551.00 per month

3. Family structure:

Graphic No.13
Family Structure
2021



Source: Survey of seventh grade parents at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino. December 2021.

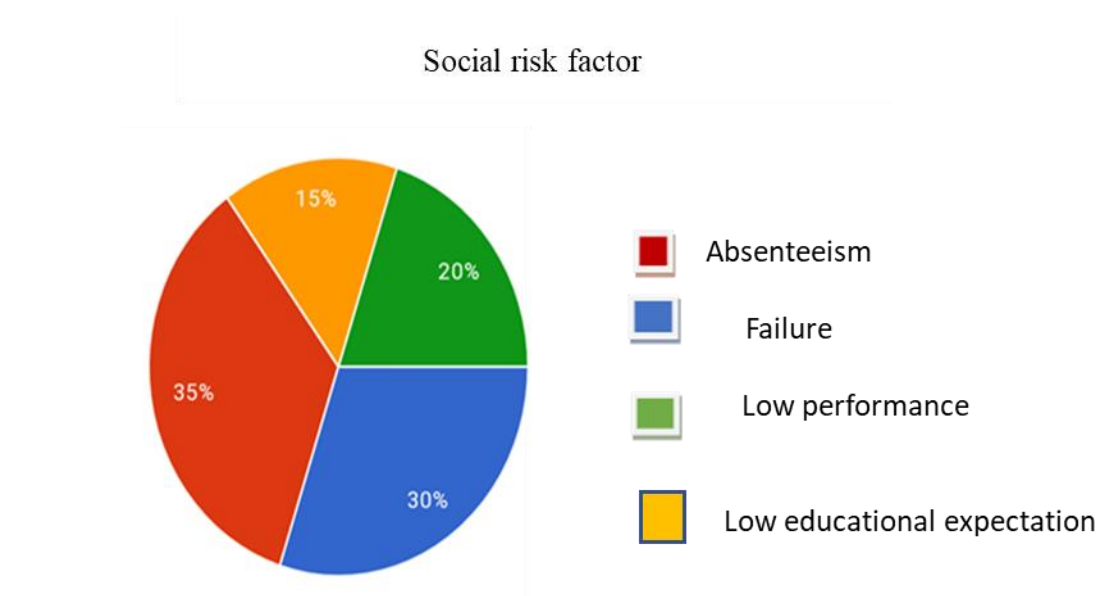
Family structure is also important for students specially during there teens. Graphics No. 13 presents the family structure. Nuclear family represnts the 58%, this family unit consist of two adults and any number of children living together and sharing a lot of thinsgs. Follows with 24% single family and 14% extended family (mother, father, granparents, uncles, cousins)

4. Social risk factors (socio-economic):

Graphic No.14

Risk factors

2021



Source: Survey of seventh grade parents at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino. December 2021.

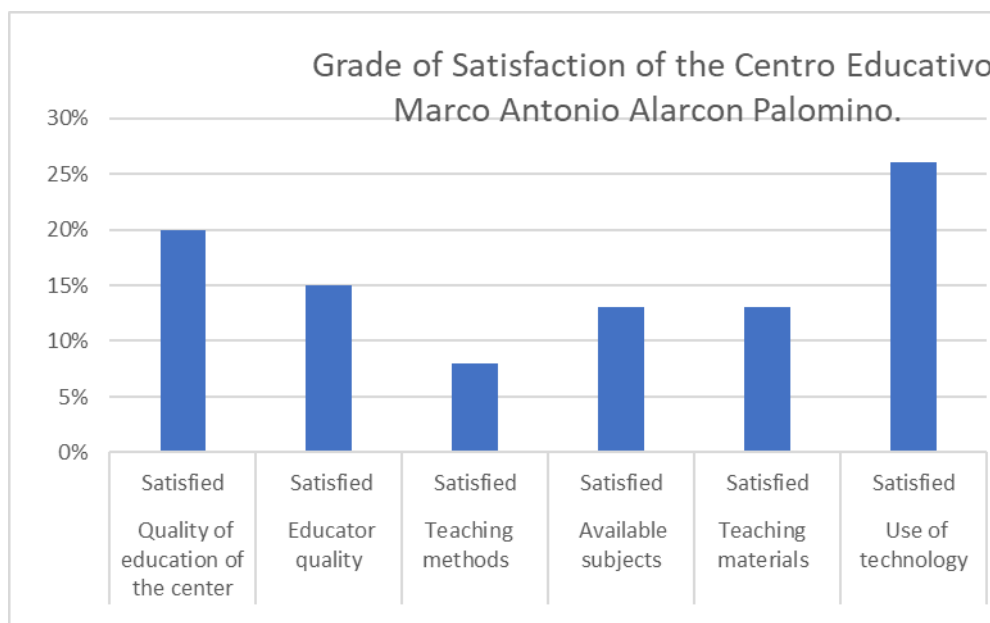
Whiting the risk factor, the researchers observed in Graphic No.14 about risk factors the parents selected that 35% of absenteeism, this represents the highest rate, follow by 30% failure. Then the 20% registered low performance and 15% of low expectation educational.

5. Rating of the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino, according to its degree of satisfaction. Mark for each reason or cause one of the criteria on the Lickert scale (being 1 Very dissatisfied, 2 dissatisfied, 3 neutral, 4 satisfied, 5 Very satisfied).

Graphic No.15

Were the parents satisfied with the Center Educativo?

2021



Source: Survey of seventh grade parents at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino. December 2021.

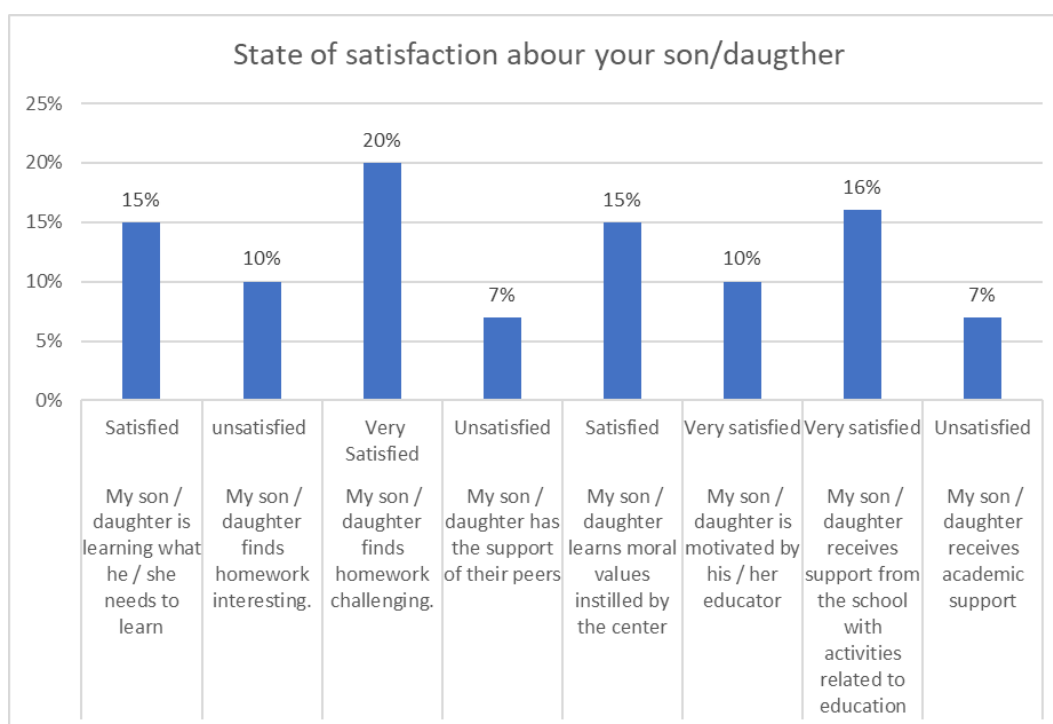
As observed in the Graphic No.15, the 26 parents which were satisfied with the center in the use of technology by the teachers, by the quality of education of the center, educator quality,

available subjects, teaching materials and teachings methods. Parents are satisfied with the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino how it worked in the year 2020.

6. State your position regarding the following sentences. The parents write the following information .

GraphicNo.16

**What is your opinion about your son or daughter
2021**



Source: Survey of seventh grade parents at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino. December 2021.

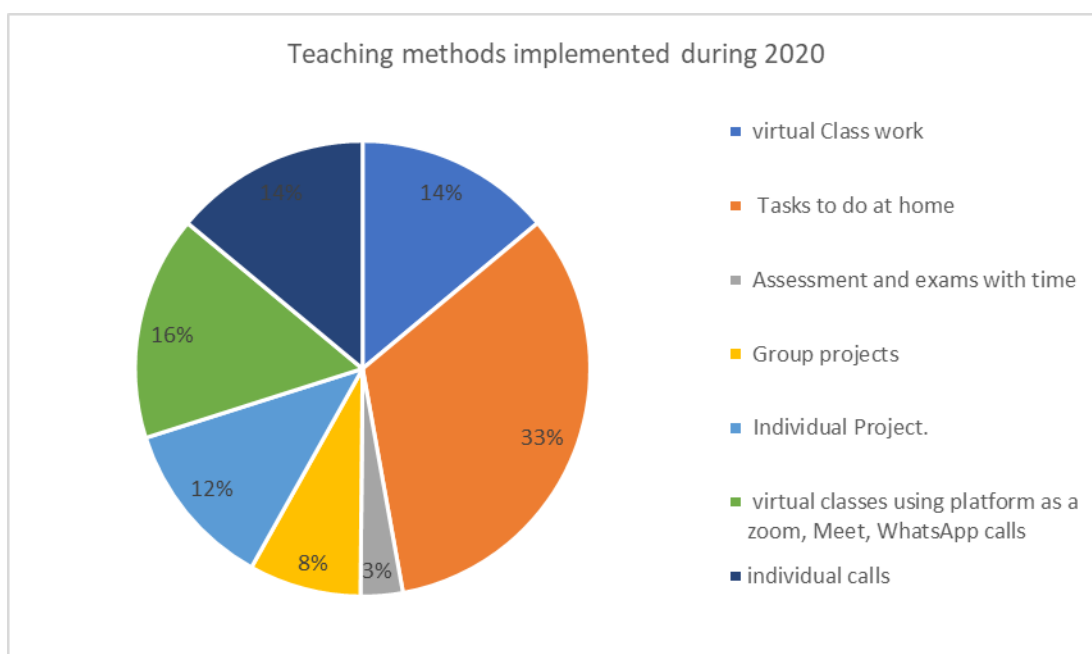
Based on the Lickert scale the parents position in reference to the school is that 20% are very satisfied with the sentences my son /daughter finds homework challenging; and 16% are very

satisfied with my son /daughter received support from school with activities related to education; 15% of parents are satisfied with their son /daughter learning what she/he needs and learns moral values instilled by the center.

7. Referer to the teaching method in the Centro Educativo Marco Alarcón Palomino, the analysis threw the following information that parents affirmed :

GraphicNo.17

**Teaching methods implementedat at the Centro Educativo Marco Alarcon Palomino.
2021**



Source: Survey of seventh grade parents at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino. December 2021.

As seen in the Graphic No.17, the 26 parents that participated in the surveys 33% of them considered that homework is an effective method, but some students are not comfortable with this

activity; 16% participated in Virtual classes using platform as a zoom, Meet, whatsapp calls. And with 14% virtual classes work and individual project.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Discussion

These results are very important for the educational community (students, parents, teachers, administrative and principal staff) since it can present findings to the Ministry of Education and present to both the ministry and the Centro Educativo programs that will be able to help seventh grade students return to school as well as promote school retention.

In the same way, this research will help the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino develop a strategy that can work as an instructional management plan where teachers are motivated to communicate with students to identify their interests, in order to keep them committed to their learning. In addition, to carrying out a protocol of student follow-up where the parent is integrated to be more participatory in the education of their children. On occasion students need to be motivated by their attendees, more so if it is seventh grade, who are in a stage of adolescence where they requires much more attention, being a year of transition from elementary to basic.

Taking into account the results obtained in the research carried out at the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino, in the 2021 school year. The theme of this research is the seventh grade students that desertion in Darien. The research also showed that the majority of the dropout students were male, with ages ranged from 13 to 14 years old. The majority of the groups are latinos and indigenous families. The dropped out in 2020 were due to failure and absenteeism in virtual classes. Seeing the number of failures that they brought in the first quarter of 2020, they

were scared and decided not to continue the school year, the same thing happened with absenteeism in classes due to lack of connectivity.

In addition, some reasons and causes of the school dropout of the seventh grade students of the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino were because of the distance between students home and the school, the lack of internet and mobile phone in 2020 to access the classes. It is also, important to take into account, that those that living far away, communication was not satisfactory. The cell phone signal in the province of Darién is not stable. Another reason that was establish during the research by the students were their poor motivation, family low income and their parents separation. Has part of the survey seventh grade students were asked about their difficulties during the year 2020, they answered that the internet connection was the main difficulty they had for completing school tasks. Other important difficulties encountered were the class schedule and frequently lack of data.

To receive classes in the year 2020, the seventh grade students of the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcón Palomino had a cell phone, television at home, but others did not have any tools to continue studying.

Regarding the parents, the mother is the one who bears the responsibility in the education of those attended, followed by other members of the family. The majority of the parents are young adults, who had completed basic education, with low income, which is under the country minimum wage, the nuclear families are large with more than one child.

Parents are satisfied that homework was a challenge, very satisfied with the support of the school, the parents are happy with the moral values that the center share with their children.

Parents are satisfied with the quality of education, teaching methods implemented that they received from the Centro Educativo Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino. The most effective teaching methods in 2020 were: homework, assignments and individual projects.

Before the pandemic, parents were facing economic problem, that increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Student did not have the opportunity to practice reading and writing. Another problem encountered were the distraction of the online games distractor and other apps that interfere negatively on how students pursue their study.

Among the factors faced by students and parents during this research was poor accessibility to the internet connection, in some cases due to not having the system and in others, even having a mobile phone, family income was limited to acquire data. In all cases, the family was faced with a dilemma in which would be the best use of the money, to feed the family and maintain health or to buy data where only one member of the family can take advantage of the studies. In this case, the family priority was food, therefore education took a backseat.

Secondly some students expressed their lack of motivation, so did the parents. In this regards the process of learning at home represented a challenge, because of the lack of technology which enables them to take part in the virtual classes. The majority of the parents registered a very low educational level is low. The parents were not prepare to support their children with education task at home, this represented a new task and challenge. On the other hand, students lack the place at home where they could concentrate on their task without been interrupted by external factors in the environment.

RECOMENDATIONS

1. If the virtual classes were to continue, an alternative would be to create support material for the students; the instruction from the teachers should be clear, these can include visual aids, teacher could also use videos to make the class more dynamic and interactive.
2. The Ministry of Education or the Centro Educativo should invest on connectivity or work in collaboration with the private company to patronize equipment and data for the students in the province of Darién,
3. Each school should have its proper wifi.
4. The Centro Educativo must incorporate workshops for parents where the student and parents receive motivational talks.
5. Create a psychopedagogical cabinet in the Centro Educativo, so that the student is evaluated, attended to, provided with follow-up in the psychosocial line of learning, attitude problems, anxiety and depression, among other situations that are not consistent with the behavior of a student.
6. Provide low-income students through the student welfare program with benefits such as transportation, learning materials, and food..
7. Make direct visits to students who are observed demotivated, who have absenteeism and failure.
8. Provide the student with frequent tutorials on basic subjects

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ANNEXES

Marcos Alarcón Palomino School located in the district of Meteti province of Darien



Placement of questionnaires to students of the Marcos Alarcón Palomino School



Questionnaires for students of the seventh grade of Marcos Alarcón Palomino secondary school



Seventh grade students from the Marcos Alarcón Palomino Centro Educativo located in Metetí

Darién



Visiting the library at ISAE UNIVERSIDAD city of Panamá, observation of thesis



Visit to the library at ISAE UNIVERSIDAD city of Panamá, observation of thesis



Thesis preparation at ISAE Meteti Darien University



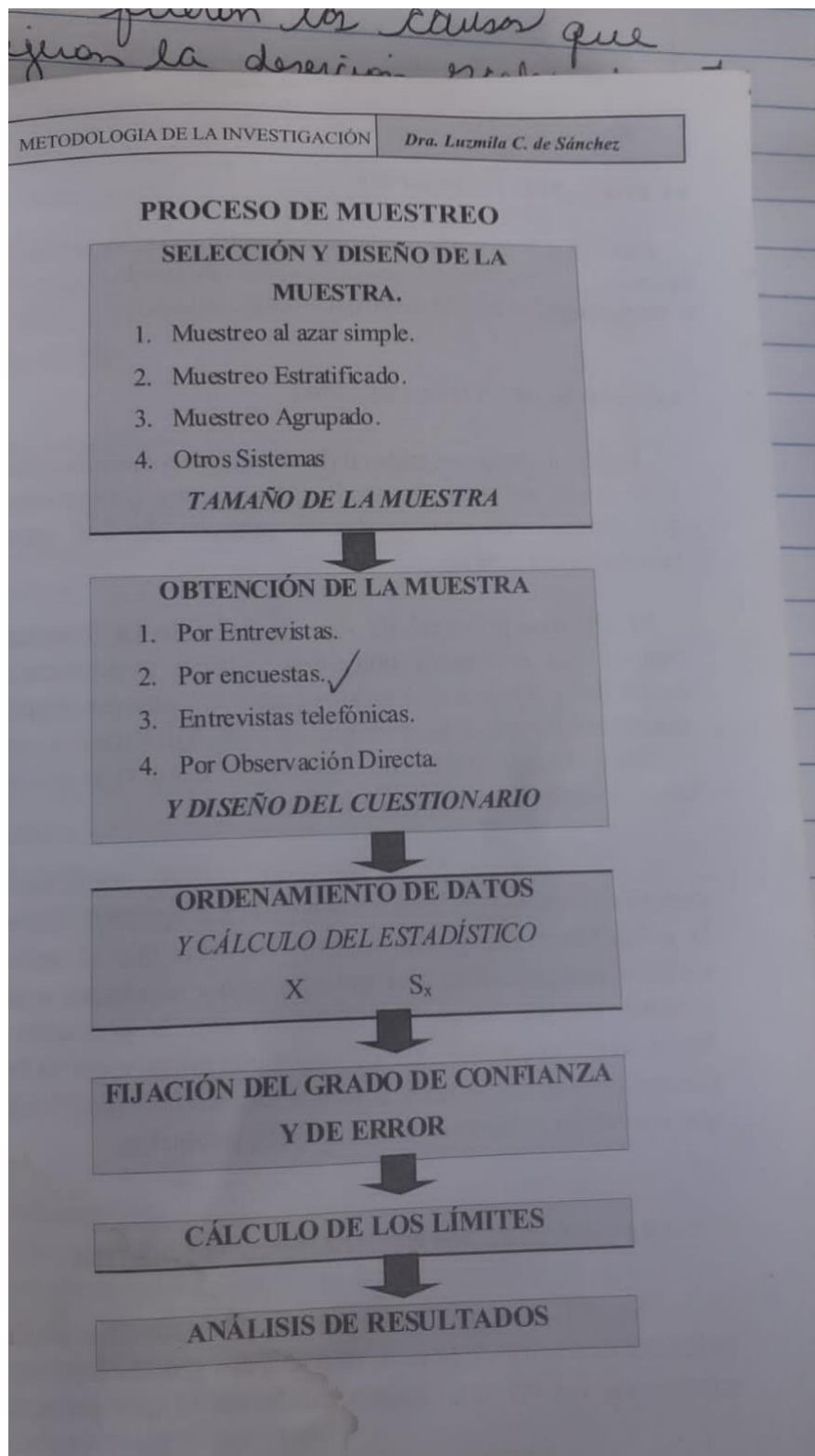
A parent completing the survey



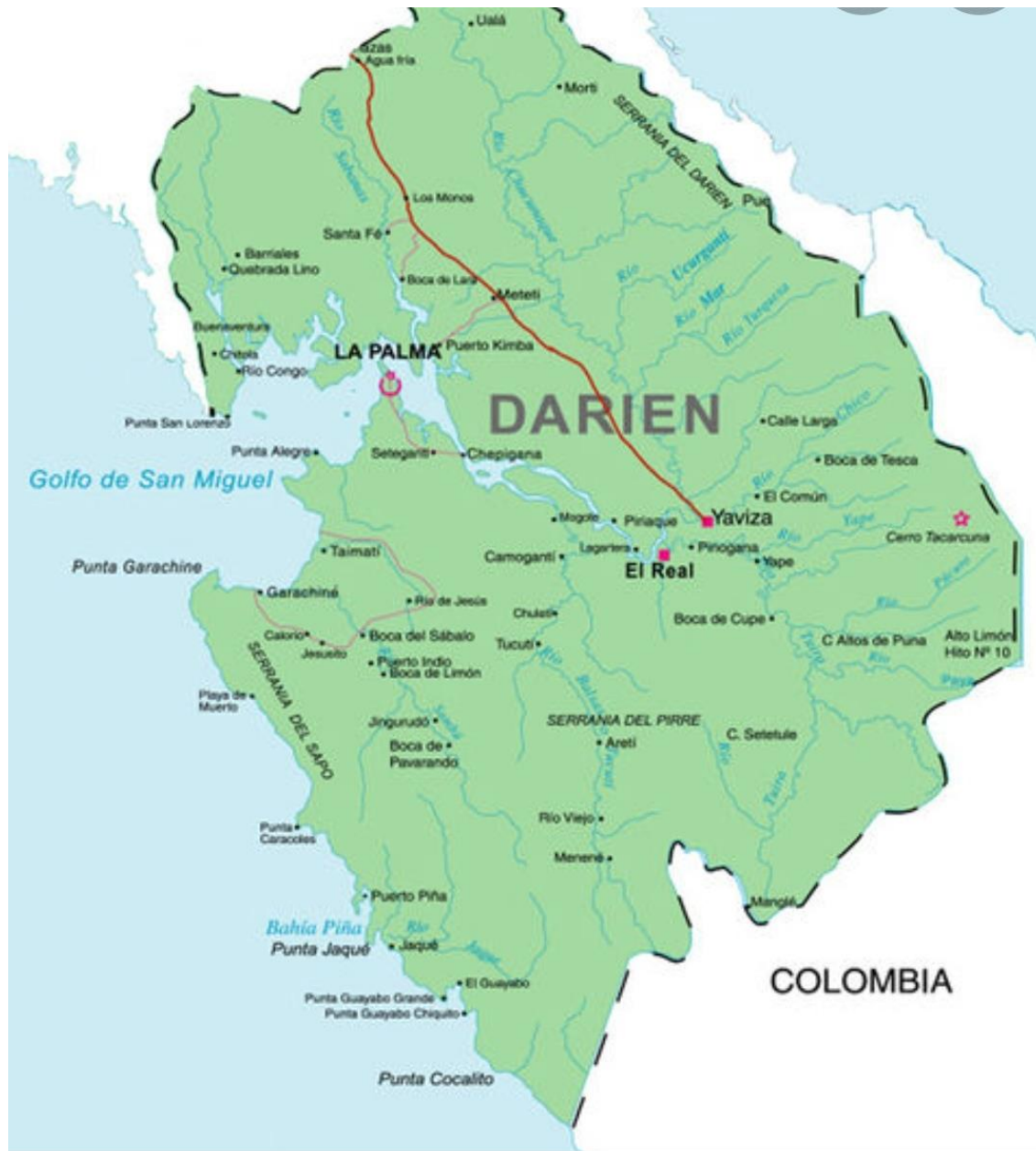
Parents answering the surveys



Material used during the investigation



Map of the province of Darién



RESEARCH SCHEDULE

Research about Seventh Grade Students drop out of school during the pandemic of covid 19, Metetí-Darién

Marco Antonio Alarcon Palomino Educative Center

[illegible]

Student Questionnaire

We appreciate your collaboration in answering the following questionnaire that will help understand the reasons why seventh grade students at the Centro Educativo Marco Alarcón Palomino desertion or abandon their studies

It is a closed survey, so it will take less than 30 minutes.

1. General data: select an answer

1.1 What is your gender?

_____ Male

_____ Girl

1.2 How old are you?

_____ Less than or equal to 13

_____ 14 to 15

_____ Greater than 15

1.4 Specify the ethnic group to which you belong

_____ Indigenous

_____ Afro-Panamanian

_____ Latinos

2. What problems do students face that affect their ability to function in school?

_____ Absenteeism

_____ Failure

_____ Low performance

_____ Low educational expectation

3. Reasons and causes of school desertion

Reasons and causes. Check list. Choose more than one	
Live far from school	
parents moved	
He does not like school	
Doesn't like school staff	
Parents separated	
The friend dropped out of school	
Lack of internet connection	
Data malfunctioning	
Family income decreased	

4. What are the difficulties I have as a student?

Difficulties. Check from the list	
Fulfill the tasks	
The class schedule	
Have internet	
Have data on the phone	
Understand the instructions	

5. In 2020, what device did you use for your virtual classes?

_____TV

_____Telephone

_____Tablet

_____Computer

_____None of the above

Questionnaire Aimed at Parents or Assistants

We appreciate the time you take to answer the following questionnaire that will help to know your opinion, attitude, belief, and point of view as a tutor about the education of your child who studies at the Centro Educativo Marcos Alarcón Palomino.

1, General data. check one

1.1 What is your blood affiliation?

_____ Dad

_____ Mother

_____ Others specify

1.2 How old are you?

_____ 21 to 30

_____ 31 to 40

_____ 41 to 50

_____ 50 to 60

_____ Over 60

1.3 Highest level of education achieved

_____ Incomplete Elementary

_____ Completed Elementary

_____ Incomplete Basic

_____ Complete Basic

_____ Incomplete High School

_____ Complete High School

_____ University incomplete

_____ University completed

1.4 Specify the Ethnic Group to which you belong

_____ Indigenous

_____ Afro-Panamanian

_____ Latinos

Others (specify _____)

2. Social risk factors (socioeconomic). Check the one that fits your situation.

2.1 Family income

_____ Less than or equal to \$120.00 per month

_____ \$121.00 to 250.00 per month

_____ \$251.00 to 350.00 per month

_____ \$351.00 to 450.00 per month

_____ \$451.00 to 550.00 per month

_____ More than 551.00 per month

2.2 Family structure

_____ Mother, father and sons/daughters

_____ Single mother

_____ Single father

_____ Extended family (mother, father, grandparents, uncles, etc.)

3. Academic risk factors.

_____ Absenteeism

_____ Failure

_____ Low performance

_____ Low educational expectation

4. Rating of the Centro Educativo Marco Alarcón according to its degree of satisfaction. Check for each reason or cause one of the criteria of the Likert scale (1 being Very Dissatisfied, 2 Dissatisfied, 3 Neutral, 4 Satisfied, 5 Very Satisfied)

Center satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of education of the center					
Educator quality					
Teaching methods					
Available subjects					
Teaching materials					
Use of technology					

5, Check your position about the following sentences. Check for each reason or cause one of the criteria of the Likert scale (1 being Very Dissatisfied, 2 Dissatisfied, 3 Neutral, 4 Satisfied, 5 Very Satisfied)

Sentences	1	2	3	4	5
My son / daughter is learning what he / she needs to learn					
My son / daughter finds homework interesting.					
My son / daughter finds homework challenging.					
My son / daughter has the support of their peers					
My son / daughter learns moral values instilled by the center					
My son / daughter is motivated by his / her educator					
My son / daughter receives support from the school with activities related to education					
My son / daughter receives academic support					

6. The teaching method in the Centro Educativo Marco Alarcón Palomino educa.

_____virtual classes

_____tasks to home

_____assessment and exams with time

_____group project

_____individual Project

Año CXX Panamá, R. de Panamá martes 16 de marzo de 2021 N° 29242-A



GACETA OFICIAL

DIGITAL

CONTENIDO

MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN

Decreto Ejecutivo N° 230

(De martes 16 de marzo de 2021)

QUE LEGALIZA LA CREACIÓN DEL INSTITUTO PROFESIONAL Y TÉCNICO MARCO ALARCÓN PALOMINO Y SUS OFERTAS ACADÉMICAS PARA EL SEGUNDO NIVEL DE ENSEÑANZA O EDUCACIÓN MEDIA Y SE APRUEBA LA INTEGRACIÓN DEL CENTRO DE EDUCACIÓN BÁSICA GENERAL MARCO ALARCÓN PALOMINO Y EL INSTITUTO PROFESIONAL Y TÉCNICO MARCO ALARCÓN PALOMINO, BAJO LA DENOMINACIÓN CENTRO EDUCATIVO MARCO ANTONIO ALARCÓN PALOMINO

UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE CHIRIQUÍ

LA FACULTAD DE

Humanidades

EN VIRTUD DE LA POTESTAD QUE LE CONFIEREN LA LEY Y EL ESTATUTO UNIVERSITARIO
HACE CONSTAR QUE

Arturo Rogelio Britton Donaldson

HA TERMINADO ESTUDIOS DE MAESTRÍA Y CUMPLIDO CON LOS REQUISITOS
QUE LE HACEN ACREEDOR AL TÍTULO DE

**Magíster en Inglés con Énfasis
en Metodología**

Y EN CONSECUENCIA SE LE CONCEDE TAL GRADO CON TODOS LOS DERECHOS,
HONORES Y PRIVILEGIOS RESPECTIVOS, EN TESTIMONIO DE LO CUAL SE LE EXPIDE
ESTE DIPLOMA EN LA CIUDAD DE DAVID, A LOS **Treinta y un** DÍAS
DEL MES DE **Agosto** DEL AÑO DOS MIL CUATRO.

Clara E. Jiro C.
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Friday, March 25, 2022

Letter of Final Reading of Dissertation

This is to certify that this thesis entitled, Seventh grade students desert school during the Pandemic of COVID 19 Meteti Darien

Prepare and submitted by Corina Ramos, Karina Chévez, Carlos Acevedo has fulfilled the requirements for the bachelor's degree in English.

This certifies that the undersigned has reviewed and went through all the pages of the thesis/research paper and it is aligned with the set of structural rules that govern the composition of sentences, phrases and words in the English Language.


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Signed the 

