

THE VULNERABILITIES OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN THE VENEZUELAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN THE PERIOD 2007- 2017. CASE OF EL HATILLO MUNICIPALITY.- BOLIVARIAN STATE OF MIRANDA

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Summary

This research examines deficiencies in municipal schools in El Hatillo, a municipality with significant socioeconomic disparities. Key issues include lack of school transportation, food shortages, and low teacher salaries. A Public-Private Partnership is proposed to enhance education quality by offering tax incentives to companies sponsoring municipal schools.

Keywords: education, inequality, public policy, public-private partnership, Venezuela, municipal schools, educational crisis.

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Introduction

This research analyzes the deficiencies that affect the municipal educational units in El Hatillo. Although this municipality is recognized for being one of the most privileged, since it is home to many families with high purchasing power, there is a reality that not many know or want to face: the neighborhoods and rural areas that are part of this geographic space.

There are a total of five municipal schools in El Hatillo, these precincts provide basic education to approximately 1,180 students and are mainly responsible for the education of young people who do not have sufficient supplies. However, the children who attend these schools go through, together with their schools, a series of difficulties that limit and greatly affect their educational process.

Several studies have evaluated the issue of education in adverse situations and have made a general analysis of the education of the child in the neighborhood. However, this research, beyond investigating the problem, has been committed to the creation of a proposal for a public policy project to improve the current situation of municipal primary education in El Hatillo.

The objective of this graduate work was to determine the current situation of the municipal schools of the municipality of El Hatillo and the obstacles they face. As a result of this objective, it was possible to delve into the educational model that has been promoted during the presidential administrations of Hugo Chavez and Nicolas Maduro, who have sought the homogenization of education through the implementation of a socialist model, resulting in the reform of the educational system in the last twenty years has been more ideological than practical.

Likewise, through this research it was possible to verify that the modifications that have been carried out in the Venezuelan educational system have been linked to the approach that each government has given to the educational sector. For example, the administration of Nicolás Maduro has focused mainly on secondary education, while during the government of Hugo Chávez education was treated as a whole and curricular reforms were proposed that affected the entire educational system and not a specific level.

It should be noted that since 2015 there has been no public record of the Memory and Account of the Ministry of People's Power for Education, which does not allow knowing with certainty the level of school dropout, the exact number of educational facilities in the nation and how many would be needed, the budget allocated to education and the achievements of the ministry.

On the other hand, there is no clear or regulated classification and delimitation of the function, benefits and differences that each type of educational institution possesses, i.e., there is no clear delimitation of the powers of a municipal, state or national school.

Similarly, the Mayor's Office of El Hatillo does not have public records of its past administrations that would allow reviewing the public policies implemented during its terms: the only one available is from 2014, which does not allow knowing if there was continuity of the programs implemented in previous administrations. And despite the reforms that have been made to the Venezuelan educational system, these are not the main reasons for the obstacles that have affected education in the municipality of El Hatillo.

The current problems of this municipality are a reflection of a generalized economic situation that has led to the collapse of basic services and the supply of basic necessities. As a result, the quality of education in El Hatillo has diminished notably. In support of this, surveys were conducted with the principals of the five municipal schools in the municipality.

Their testament allowed us to learn first-hand about the particular situations that afflict the operation of the schools and to understand from another perspective each element involved in the education of a population of children in El Hatillo. The following are the results of one of the questions in the survey, where food and public transportation are identified as the main obstacles in the municipal schools.

Graph I.

What are the main obstacles and problems that are evident today at the school you direct?



Source: Responses to question 3 of the survey. Own elaboration

It is important to note that there is currently no clarity in the programs and guidelines of the Directorate of Education of the Municipality of El Hatillo, nor is it known what plans are in place to address the problems identified in this research, such as school transportation, student nutrition and low teacher salaries. Despite the fact that both the Director of Education and the five directors of the municipal schools agree that the alliance between private companies and the municipality is the best solution to solve the problems present in the municipality, there is no stipulated plan of this nature, no records were found of sponsorship programs of private companies to municipal schools in Venezuela similar to the one that has been proposed in this research work.

However, it should be noted that private companies have supported educational programs of the Municipality of El Hatillo on different occasions, but they have never received tax reductions from them due to the conditions established by the municipal ordinance that regulates such action.

Thus, the proposal derived from this research consists of carrying out a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) between the municipal schools of Hatillo and some Venezuelan private companies that have education among their Corporate Social Responsibility objectives so that, through a sponsorship program, they collaborate with the improvement and sustainability of the work of these schools. This, applying the following Implementation Plan of the Sponsorship Program.

Table I.

Sponsorship Program Implementation Plan Source: Prepared by the company.

Plan de Implementación del Programa de Apadrinamiento			
Primera Fase	Segunda Fase	Tercera Fase	Cuarta Fase
1. Reformar la ordenanza municipal de exención de impuestos, para hacer la propuesta más atractiva para las empresas privadas. 2. Realizar diagnóstico de las necesidades de cada escuela municipal. 3. Identificar cuales empresas privadas de El Hatillo tienen la Educación como un valor contemplado en sus proyectos de responsabilidad social empresarial.	1. Una vez identificadas las necesidades de cada escuela, realizar un portafolio de proyectos por escuela que estén organizados por carácter de urgencia. 2. Después de reformada la ordenanza municipal, elaborar propuestas que contemplen los beneficios para las empresas postulantes. Estas pueden incluir: talleres de formación, publicidad en redes sociales y en espacios físicos dentro de la institución beneficiada o en otros espacios a discutir.	1. Presentar el portafolio que contenga los proyectos por escuela y posibles beneficios para las empresas a las compañías identificadas en la Primera Fase. 2. Proponerle a las empresas la posibilidad de desarrollar en paralelo programas de formación y capacitación para miembros de la comunidad estudiantil de la escuela elegida. Por ejemplo: agricultura en Galipán, Turismo en Turquá o Ingeniería Mecánica en El Calvario. 3. concretar las alianzas y los acuerdos establecidos.	1. Ejecutar los acuerdos y alianzas logradas. 2. Hacerle seguimiento al proyecto para asegurar que se esté llevando a cabo correctamente y en los tiempos establecidos. 3. Una vez finalizado el proyecto, medir el impacto y los resultados del mismo.

The Andean Development Corporation (CAF), in a publication published in January 2018, highlights that there are four reasons why Public-Private Partnerships have been increasingly used in recent years: first, these partnerships have improved the productivity of governments because they help them better use their resources. Then, the second reason is based on the premise that indefinite privatization generates, in the long term, dissatisfaction; This conception is based on the fact that privatization is associated with the fact that, by putting public objectives in the hands of private interests, they will not take into account the general interest.

The third important point is that governments observe that these types of alliances allow participation in different sectors and markets, resulting in the attraction of talent and technology. The fourth and final reason is that PPPs tend to focus on large infrastructures that are the result of an increase in global demand due to accelerated population growth worldwide.

Thus, once the company's areas of action and the ideal times for executing the program are defined, this proposal will meet the objective of strengthening the municipal education system through public-private partnerships that can generate benefits for all the entities involved.

Because educational institutions would have the resources to overcome the obstacles they face, they would be able to offer better quality education and combat school dropout. Meanwhile, companies would have a corporate social responsibility program ready to be developed that could generate a tax reduction, if the proposed reform to the municipal ordinance were implemented. Finally, the Mayor's Office could allocate other resources to solve some other problems that concern it.

This proposal could be effective, since public-private alliances seek to complement the needs and benefits to be provided by both public agencies and private companies, so there is a beneficial relationship between the two parties involved. The proposal would positively affect the target public to which the program is directed, such as municipal schools, thus meeting their needs. As for the local governments, they would be able to fulfill their function and have a good management, and finally the companies, who would not only benefit from the tax exemption in the municipality, but would also be more attractive to the population by showing interest in the welfare of their environment.

In the current reality facing Venezuela, this proposal is of great importance because it promotes cooperation among institutions, the identification of specific problems and the active search for solutions to them, thus demonstrating that we are all part of the same community and have the duty to ensure the proper functioning of everything in our environment.

In conclusion, this research makes a general analysis of the development of the educational system in Venezuela and then focuses on the municipality of El Hatillo. It analyzes the current situation of the municipal schools of the municipality of El Hatillo and describes the deficiencies found in the project also proposes a possible solution through a Public-Private Partnership.

This research work may give rise to other studies that will allow us to know and analyze in greater depth the problems of each municipal school. As a result of this in-depth study, projects can be designed to provide solutions to the specific problems identified in each educational institution, thus creating current, feasible and necessary proposals to have a direct impact on the educational system of the municipality of El Hatillo.

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