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Integration of local and traditional knowledge into the rural curriculum of the Municipality of Sahagún, Córdoba, Colombia

Integración de conocimientos locales y tradicionales en el currículo rural del Municipio de Sahagún, Córdoba, Colombia

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Abstract

This study addresses the integration of local and traditional knowledge into the rural curriculum of the municipality of Sahagún, Córdoba, Colombia. The inclusion of this knowledge is justified by its ability to enrich education, strengthen cultural identity, and foster respect for diversity. Through a bibliographic review, strategies and methodologies used in other rural contexts are analyzed, and the educational and cultural impacts of this integration are evaluated. The findings highlight the relevance of traditional knowledge in areas such as agriculture, crafts, and medicine, suggesting the implementation of an interdisciplinary curriculum and community collaboration for more contextualized and meaningful education. Practical recommendations are proposed to improve the implementation of this knowledge in the educational context of Sahagún, promoting inclusive and culturally relevant education.

Keywords: traditional knowledge, rural curriculum, educational integration

Resumen

Este estudio aborda la integración del conocimiento local y tradicional en el currículo rural del municipio de Sahagún, Córdoba, Colombia. La inclusión de este conocimiento se justifica por su capacidad para enriquecer la educación, fortalecer la identidad cultural y fomentar el respeto por la diversidad. A través de una revisión bibliográfica, se analizan estrategias y metodologías utilizadas en otros contextos rurales y se evalúan los impactos educativos y culturales de esta integración. Los hallazgos destacan la relevancia del conocimiento tradicional en áreas como la agricultura, las artesanías y la medicina, sugiriendo la implementación de un currículo interdisciplinario y la colaboración comunitaria para una educación más contextualizada y significativa. Se proponen recomendaciones prácticas para mejorar la implementación de este conocimiento en el contexto educativo de Sahagún, promoviendo una educación inclusiva y culturalmente relevante.

Palabras clave: conocimientos tradicionales, currículo rural, integración educativa

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INTRODUCTION

Sahagún, a municipality in Córdoba, Colombia, is a space distinguished for its extensive cultural history and rurality, an aspect which gives it an educational reality full of obstacles. Community members embody a wide range of traditional knowledge, related, for example, to agricultural practices, health practices or information related to the knowledge of the culture of the region (Barrera-Perales et al., 2021). The traditional knowledges often contrast with the educational curriculum that marginalizes traditional knowledge in favor of a standardized curriculum which may not respond appropriately or sensitively to the preparation of the realities of the rural students in the communities (Ramirez-Ruz et al., 2023).

To incorporate the wisdom of the territory into the curriculum is a strategy to generate an education that is more appropriate and contextualized, which can enrich the educational experience of the children, nourish the culture of the children, and foment the respect for, and preservation of, the tradition of the culture (López-Pérez & García-Lobo, 2022). Integration in a rural context such as Sahagún could increase the participation and motivation of the students, recognizing and valuing the culture and the wisdom of the region (Miramá-Posos & Villota-Yaqueno, 2022).

To be able to undertake this work, the bibliographic review will be necessary to document and analyze ways in which the territory knows very well how to integrate traditional knowledges of the territory in the rural curriculum. These educational benefits are transformed into an increased sense of relevancy and praxis of the educational content, while the cultural benefits are related to strengthen identity and respect for cultural diversity.

The general objective of this study is to analyze the integration of local and traditional knowledge into the rural curriculum of the municipality of Sahagún, Córdoba, through a bibliographic review of previous documented studies and experiences. Specifically, it aims to identify the most relevant local and traditional knowledge for the educational context of Sahagún; review the strategies and methodologies used in other rural contexts to integrate this knowledge into the curriculum; evaluate the educational and cultural impacts of such integration; and propose recommendations for the effective implementation of these strategies in the educational context of Sahagún. The research questions guiding this study include: What local and traditional knowledge is considered most relevant for the rural educational context of Sahagún? What strategies and methodologies have been used in other rural contexts to integrate this knowledge into the educational curriculum? What educational and cultural impacts have been observed following the integration of traditional knowledge into rural education? What recommendations can be derived from the bibliographic review to improve the implementation of this knowledge in the Sahagún curriculum?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Conceptualization of Local and Traditional Knowledge

Local and traditional knowledge is a collection of information, customs, and beliefs stored in memory and passed on orally from one generation to another within a specific community, domain knowledge, the information drawn from agriculture, the traditional pharmacopoeia, craftsmanship, and cultural and religious manifestations. It is indispensable for the daily living and survival of rural communities given that it is functional and adaptable in the local environment. In the case of a rural educational context, the importance of including local and traditional knowledge in the curriculum has diverse implications (Beltrán et al., 2021).

First, it provides added value to education by linking academic knowledge to the reality and experiences of students or to "real life." Another aspect is the fact that it allows for the recovery and visibility of cultural heritage, and brings awareness, affiliation, and solidarity to the group. Lastly, the inclusion of

local and traditional knowledge in the curriculum has the potential to promote diversity and sustainability in education by recovering, revitalizing or signing those local traditions which have proven to have an operational effectiveness and have an environmental consciousness (Angulo González, 2023).

Relevant Educational Theories

Constructivism and intercultural education are the most common educational lenses used to integrate local and traditional knowledge into the educative program. Constructivism, based on the theories of Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, explains learning as an active process where students develop new knowledge by engaged in meaningful dialogue with their prior experiences and socio-cultural environment. With an orientation toward community, constructivism integrates traditional knowledge into the curriculum, working from the premise that education is purposeful and relative to the community. Rural students have several academic resources that connect academic content to their experiences and local knowledge and help build a deeper and longer-lasting understanding with greater depth and endurance by students (Restrepo-Restrepo et al., 2023).

However, intercultural education specifically addresses the acknowledgment and appreciation of cultural differences in the educational context. It promotes a curriculum that incorporates a wide range of cultural knowledge, as well as an ethos that values discussion and understanding of cultures that are not our own. By including local, traditional knowledge in rural education, we can make education more meaningful for local students and help all students build their appreciation, understanding, and relationship with other cultures, a cornerstone of intercultural education. This use of local knowledge and traditional knowledge in rural education becomes a vehicle in which students of diverse backgrounds can share their own cultural heritages (Gómez & Orozco, 2024).

The example also uses theory on curricular integration, theories that considered how different forms of knowledge and experiences could be systematically integrated into the educational curriculum. Models such as the integrated curriculum present traditional and local knowledge across multiple domains of knowledge as promoting a more complete and cohesive education. This approach not only makes teaching local knowledge easier, but it also enhances the development of critical, reflective thinking of students, making them better capable of tackling the issues relevant to their position (Torres-Zambrano & Herrera-Córdova, 2022).

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach and Design

A qualitative methodology is used in this investigation because of its ability to delve into the intricacies of the process and context of incorporating recognize local and traditional knowledge into the rural education. The research design employed is a bibliographical review, which allows for the gathering and analysis of information from various academic and documentary sources, which speak to the problem of study. This technique allows for a comprehensive and contextual understanding of the strategies and consequences of the integration of curriculum within places like Sahagún, Córdoba.

Population and Sample

This study participants include educators, students, and members of the community from the rural municipality of Sahagún, Córdoba. The research design is a bibliographic revision, implying it will not involve the direct collection of primary data but, rather, studies that have previously taken place in rural educational contexts with similar populations will be selected for this study. The corpus will be a comprehensive collection of research and academic materials that pertain to the incorporation of traditional and local knowledge into the school curriculum.

Data Collection Instruments

The methods for data collection will involve the utilization of instruments schema analysis and scientific literature reviews. This will allow to draw from considerable amounts of secondary source material- e.g., academic articles, research papers, dissertations, and other relevant documents. The decision for using these instruments can be defended based on their ability to provide a comprehensive, evidence-based outlook on the study topic, as well as not imply primary data collection methods.

Procedure

Research methods will follow a series of systematic steps. To begin, pertinent documentary sources appropriate to the study will be gathered and sourced from academic databases and digital libraries. Subsequently, the documents will be searched by literature review, and all relevant information will be extracted and collated. During this activity, measures will be put in place to ensure ethical research, including correct citation of sources and an appreciation of the copyrights and intellectual property of selected papers.

Data Analysis

The qualitative data collected will be analyzed using qualitative methodologies, specifically content analysis and thematic synthesis. These methods will allow the research to determine common patterns, themes, and trends through to make meaning of the ways “local and traditional knowledge” has been integrated into rural educational contexts. This analysis will also focus on understanding the impacts identified and identifying the most innovative and impactful solutions, which will guide strong recommendations and conclusions.

RESULTS

Data Presentation

The outcomes obtained are shown following the outlined objectives and research questions. The review of studies revealed many references to local and traditional knowledge and the educational context of Sahagún, Córdoba. A body of knowledge has developed around agricultural practices, artisan techniques, and traditional medicinal knowledge, the utility and validity of which in the rural curriculum has been established. In rural environments, this knowledge has become integrated in the curriculum through interdisciplinary approaches, community projects, and a triadic collaboration between teachers, students, and communities (Díaz-Manchego & Pabón-Ruíz, 2022). Throughout, the authors reported the use of various strategies across several entries, each documented in the subsequent table.

Table 1

Identified Local and Traditional Knowledge

Traditional Knowledge	Description	Educational Application
Traditional Agriculture	Cultivation methods adapted to the local climate	Natural Sciences
Local Crafts	Craft techniques such as basket weaving	Artistic Education
Traditional Medicine	Use of native medicinal plants	Health Sciences

Interpretation of Results

The analysis of the data reveals that there are different educational and cultural benefits of integrating local and traditional knowledge into the rural curriculum. With respect to the goals, it was stated that

the traditional knowledge that was identified was not only specific to the context of Sahagún but could be utilized in other parts of the curriculum from the natural sciences to arts and health. The curricular integration possibilities discussed in the literature review were described in a manner that was consistent with constructivist and multicultural education concepts (Arias-Gaviria, 2021).

There are elements of interdisciplinarity and community involvement that can foster a constructivist approach; this approach seeks to produce learning experiences that are situational and meaningful. Additionally, the area of intercultural education is enriched by incorporating and appreciating Indigenous knowledge, which values diverse cultural perspectives from the region and values regional heritage. The educational effects that were addressed included a heightened sensibility to the practical or applicable nature of the curriculum, which increased with the motivation and inclusion of the students (Frutos & José, 2023).

From a cultural perspective, the integration of traditional knowledge plays a role in the construction of identity and the enhancement of shared culture for rural communities. These elements are particularly important when considering the enduring and sustainable development of these communities. The analysis from the study highlights the potential for curricular integration strategies and it can be suggested that it would be beneficial to tailor these to the specific context of Sahagún (Ortiz-Bravo, 2023).

Within the findings, it was observed that a structured and participatory developmental process will be necessary to implement. The success of the project predicates the need for collaborative efforts which requires active participation from teachers, students, and members of the community (Schnellert et al., 2023).

DISCUSSION

Implications of the Findings

The findings of the literature review have important implications for both educational theory and pedagogy. The results show that including the local and traditional knowledge into the rural curriculum is aligned with constructivist and multicultural educational theories, which makes student learning more meaningful and relevant to their lives. The theoretical framework positions students as knowledge creators; based on their life experiences and the cultural surroundings they operate within; students are equipped to generate new knowledge (Castro et al., 2023).

Including traditional knowledge in the current curriculum has the potential to revolutionize education in Sahagún and in rural areas more broadly. Providing students with educational material that they can directly connect with leads to increased engagement and motivation to learn, as it is relevant and useful to the students. This approach not only challenges the traditional understanding of curriculum, but also reinforces cultural heritage and diversity, which are paramount in a high-quality intercultural education (Blanco-Capia, 2021).

Study Limitations

Even though they provide a thorough overview of the literature about 'integrating Indigenous knowledges into the mainstream curriculum,' it is important to recognize that the literature review has limitations (Puruncajas, 2023). The review reveals that a substantial proportion of the information comes from "research on research," rather than reports of the researchers' own empirical studies. This could make the findings less relevant outside of the circumstances in which the research was conducted, e.g., Sahagún (Santos, 2021).

Also, the variations in the contexts and methods of the research being examined could introduce potential biases and influence the transferability of the results to other populations. Another limitation is the possibility that some of the reviewed sources may not include current information. However, because educational practices and sociocultural contexts are in a constant state of change, some research may not necessarily reflect current realities, influencing how much weight should be placed on the recommendations (Murcia, 2024).

Suggestions for Future Research

To confront the problems identified and move forward in study in the field, it would be valuable to conduct field research within a specific context like Sahagún. This would involve primary research with teachers, students, and community members that would provide direct and initially encountered data. The inclusion of perspectives from the field would help in understanding the implementation of the program and its effects on the curriculum more precisely. Likewise, we would have to also know the effectiveness of various integration methods they used in their studies by analyzing the usage of a multidisciplinary, by educators within a community initiative, or by another method they deem necessary (Muñoz-Lira et al., 2022).

The implementation would also provide an opportunity to examine the sustainability of the intervention and measure the impact on the students' academic performance as well as their cultural development. To add, it would be helpful if the study could expand to other similar rural villages to provide some comparison information about how this was addressed successfully in other areas with similar characteristics (Berbemo et al., s. f.). This could lead to a more comprehensive comparison and the recognition of potentially generative educational practices that could be adapted to different contexts. After a comparison in these educational practices, it also broadens the discourse of the drivers and barriers of traditional knowledge integration in rural settings (Redondo-Maya, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

Synthesis of Main Findings

This study conducted a bibliographical review to identify and analyze some aspects linked to the integration of local and traditional knowledge within the education program of the rural area of Sahagún, Córdoba. Some research findings support that including traditional knowledge, among which there are agricultural, craft and medical techniques, is essential to provide education that is more pertinent and adapted to the context. The methodology generated, as well as the approaches used to integrate this knowledge into the curriculum, like interdisciplinary focuses and community initiatives, have been effective in another rural context by achieving significant effects in terms of student participation and motivation.

So, it is a fact that according to existing literature, this kind of knowledge contributes significantly to educational attainment, enhances cultural preservation and recognition of diversity, and moreover, motivates positive attitudes towards that knowledge. With these findings it is concluded that recognizing and incorporating Indigenous knowledge into an educational context could positively influence problem solving in educational and cultural terms, boost community cohesion and achieve strong participation/identification as a student.

Practical Recommendations

The study's suggestions for how to incorporate local and traditional knowledge, based on the needs of Sahagún, Córdoba's rural curriculum, are:

To design an interdisciplinary curriculum which allows local and traditional knowledge to be integrated across academic subjects to help students understand the meaning and application of such knowledge in various sectors.

To generate community engagement opportunities by maintaining the active participation of community members within the education process, for example, through local experts and those with traditional knowledge coming to be in school events as guests and collaborators.

Community and Service Projects: Develop activities that blend the school and the community to allow students to use their knowledge and engage in tangible projects that result in a positive impact on the community, for example, school gardens or craft workshops.

Teacher Training: Deliver extensive professional development and training to teachers with the aim of equipping them with skills and strategies to be able to include traditional knowledge into teaching smoothly and respectfully so they can use a range of approaches well.

To modify educational resources to include local and traditional knowledge so that students in rural areas can have access to educational resources that are relevant and accessible to them.

Ongoing Assessment: Introduce evaluation and feedback mechanisms to enable a continuous review and adaptation of the ways in which local, traditional knowledge are being included in the curriculum. This will enable an evaluation and understanding of how the strategy has been implemented and the needs of students and the community more broadly. These recommendations aim to provide support to an inclusive and culturally relevant education that recognizes and respects the assets brought by traditional knowledge and will promote the holistic development of the student and the strengthening of their cultural identity in the rural landscape of Sahagún, Córdoba.

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