
RESEARCH TRENDS ON PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES IN RURAL EDUCATION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SCHOOL WITH CONTEXTUAL RELEVANCE

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Abstract

Comprehensive and contextual training in the educational field refers to an education that not only focuses on the transmission of academic knowledge, but seeks to develop in students skills, values and attitudes that serve them in their daily and future lives. In other words, instead of learning only theory, students are expected to understand how that knowledge is applied and relates to the world around them. Taking into account the above, the objective of this article is to analyze the different research trends around the research trends on pedagogical practices in rural education for the construction of the school with contextual relevance. The process is based on the sociocritical paradigm and qualitative documentary analysis. It was concluded that the analyzed research highlights the importance of adapted and relevant pedagogical practices in basic education, emphasizing that evaluation should not simply be a measurement instrument, but should act as a didactic guide. Education in rural areas must be considered from a holistic perspective, where assessments, academic content, and teaching methodologies are interconnected and aligned with the reality and needs of students. Rural schools, in particular, play a central role in their communities not only as educational centres, but also as custodians of local culture and tradition. However, they face specific challenges, such as integrating technologies and adapting to rapid changes in sectors such as agriculture.

Keywords: education, rural, practice, context, relevance

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most essential tools that society has to face the challenges posed by the contemporary world. In a context marked by dizzying technological and scientific changes, education is presented as a fundamental pillar for the adaptation and progress of communities. The key to effective education lies, to a large extent, in the quality of education. This only refers to material resources or

infrastructures, but also, and essentially, to the pedagogical methodologies and practices that teachers implement in the classroom.

The role of the educator, in this scenario, becomes crucial, not only must he transmit knowledge effectively, but he must do so in a way that is pertinent and coherent with the time and space in which his students are. In other words, pedagogical strategies and methods must be flexible and adapt to the changing needs of society. This dynamism in pedagogical practices is necessary to ensure that education does not become obsolete. That is why the constant review and updating of teaching strategies is essential. But this review should not be isolated, but should take into account the environment and the particularities of the context in which the teaching takes place. Thus, education does not become a mere process of transmitting knowledge, but an enriching and contextualized experience.

As Campos and Moya (2011) point out, the primary objective of teaching practice goes beyond the mere delivery of content. It seeks the integral formation of the student's personality. This holistic approach to education recognizes the student as a multidimensional being who not only acquires knowledge, but also values, behaviors, skills, and ways of learning. In this training process, interaction with the teacher and with classmates becomes essential. The classroom, understood in a broad sense, becomes a collaborative learning space, where students not only face the theoretical content, but also the diversity of perspectives and experiences that their classmates contribute.

Comprehensive and contextual training in the educational environment is not only a contemporary need, but a vital tool to prepare students to face the challenges of the real world. This vision of education emphasizes the importance of connecting academic content with the situations and problems of everyday life. In this context, teachers have an essential role, since they are the ones who must design and implement pedagogical strategies that allow students to connect what they learn in the classroom with their environment. Montes and Machado (2014) present a three-dimensional perspective of education: functional knowledge, competence and being competence. This vision advocates for training that not only focuses on the acquisition of knowledge, but also on the development of skills, abilities and, above all, on the formation of attitudes and values that allow students to mobilize effectively in different contexts.

In countries such as Colombia, rural education has become a tool for social transformation. In these areas, education not only aims to transmit knowledge, but also to connect this learning with the students' immediate environment, thus combining cultural and environmental knowledge. This vision seeks to train citizens who are aware and committed to their environment, who are capable of reflecting, acting and proposing solutions to everyday problems. Quality education that is relevant and contextualized becomes more relevant than ever in a globalized world, where challenges are constantly changing and competitiveness is a constant. Preparing students to face difficult situations, whether in social or professional life, is a mandate for contemporary education systems.

However, it is important to recognize that there are still significant challenges in rural education. According to the OECD (2018), the gap between education offered in rural and urban areas has been evident. This difference not only refers to the quality of education, but also to the relevance and contextualization of the contents. Rural education, having its own characteristics and needs, demands special attention. Training plans must be designed considering the particularities of the rural environment and its challenges. It is imperative that these plans not only focus on replicating urban models, but also seek to respond to the specific needs of rural communities. In addition, the curriculum in rural areas must be designed in such a way that it actively contributes to the social transformation of these communities. This means that education should not only be seen as a means to transmit knowledge, but also as a tool to empower communities, promote sustainable development and close the historical gap between rural and urban.

Education in rural areas of Colombia, as in many regions of the world, faces significant challenges. The lack of adequate infrastructure in these areas, according to the Ministry of National Education (2017), becomes one of the most obvious obstacles. Schools in rural areas may lack appropriate buildings, teaching resources, access to information technologies, among others, which restricts the possibilities of offering quality education. In addition, there is a palpable disconnect between programmatic content and the realities of rural areas. While curricula may be suitable for urban areas, they do not always reflect the specific dynamics, traditions, and needs of rural communities. This disconnect can make students feel that what they learn in school has no direct relevance to their lives.

Another challenge is the fragmentation of education in rural areas. This fragmentation may be the result of geographic dispersion, where students may have to travel long distances to get to school, or the lack of continuity in educational programs due to a shortage of resources or trained personnel.

Castro et al. (2016) highlight a crucial point, the lack of coherence between curricular objectives and teaching practices. This disconnect can arise for multiple reasons, including the lack of adequate teacher training to adapt curricula to rural realities or the absence of appropriate resources and teaching materials. One of the essential parts of any education system is the active participation of all actors involved. However, in rural areas of Colombia, the role of key actors, such as families, is often overlooked. These family representatives are vital to the effective implementation of Institutional Educational Projects (IEPs), as they

bring unique perspectives and better understand the needs and challenges of their communities. The formation of critical, active and participatory citizens is essential for any society. However, according to Rojas and Castillo (2011), educational programs in rural areas often lack the necessary contextualization to foster this type of citizenship. To effectively transform their communities, students need an education that reflects their realities, challenges, and opportunities.

Taking the situation described above as a starting point, the objective of this article is to analyze the different research trends around the research trends on pedagogical practices in rural education for the construction of the school with contextual relevance.

METHODOLOGY

The process of analysis is based on the socio-critical paradigm, this perspective adopts deterministic or static visions of society, proposes a dialectical and reflexive interpretation of the social environment, as Gurdíán (2007) points out, instead of seeing society as a fixed set of structures and relationships, this paradigm sees reality as something dynamic and changing. that can be transformed through critical and reflective action.

The central objective of this approach is to generate rational autonomy in people, allowing them to understand and transform their social environment. This autonomy is not simply the ability to act freely, but refers to the ability to think, reflect and act critically about reality, with the purpose of transforming it. Martínez (2004) delves into the research process of the socio-critical paradigm, identifying three types of knowledge: that governed by technical interest, practical interest and emancipatory interest. These interests are not mutually exclusive, but can coexist and complement each other in an investigation. The technical interest focuses on the "how" of things, the practical interest is concerned with interpretation and understanding, while the emancipatory interest seeks to liberate people from oppressive structures, allowing them to transform their reality.

An essential aspect in this paradigm is personal reflection. Each individual, when participating in the research process, is expected to reflect on his or her role within the group and understand his or her own interests and circumstances. This, as Martínez (2004) suggests, implies a deep ideological critique, where psychoanalysis can help to unravel the underlying motivations and individual interests.

The emancipatory orientation of the socio-critical paradigm is, in essence, its most distinctive characteristic. According to Martínez (2004), truth in this approach is not absolute or universal, but is influenced by individual values and perspectives. In other words, what is considered true or real is understood in terms of a specific context and the values of those involved in the research.

Within this framework, research on pedagogical practices in specific contexts, such as rural contexts, acquires a special dimension. It seeks to understand not only the practices themselves, but also how they relate to the social environment and how they can contribute to transforming it. Education, in this sense, is not only a process of transmitting knowledge, but also a means for social transformation.

In addition, it was oriented from a qualitative documentary analysis, a way in which a technical inquiry is carried out in order to describe and represent the information contained in the texts in a synthesized and organized way, which facilitates its retrieval and dissemination, making it easier for future users to consult. This research technique enhances the skills of analysis and condensation, for which it is essential to carry out interpretation activities that make it possible to construct a text that has the main ideas of the original document, without ambiguity or interference with the ideologies and interests of the person who performs the work. In addition, in the execution, classifying, extraction, writing and translation activities are carried out with the aim of objectively reflecting the original source, evidencing its transcendental information.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Regarding pedagogical practices, Hernández (2015) carried out a study in the educational field focused on teaching practices and how they are related to the evaluation of student learning in basic education. Through this study, she sought to understand and break down the ways in which educators value and recognize student knowledge and how these practices intertwine with the assessment methods they employ. In his research, Hernández was inspired by the principles proposed by Castillo and Cabrerizo (2003), who suggest that evaluation should not only be a measurement instrument, but should have a didactic character. For these authors, assessment is a tool that allows teachers and students to guide and adjust the learning process, supporting both the construction and structuring of knowledge.

The conclusions derived from Hernández's work highlight the need to rethink the way in which teachers understand and carry out the evaluation of their students. It is essential that educators reflect on their assessment practices, not only from a technical or methodological point of view, but also from an ethical perspective, aligned with the fundamental values and principles of the teaching profession. The teacher should not be seen only as someone who measures and qualifies, but as an expert, advisor, mediator and

guide in the learning process. This renewed vision of evaluation invites teachers to reconsider their role in the classroom, providing them with the opportunity to approach their pedagogical work with a broader and more enriching perspective.

For their part, Martínez et al. (2016) addressed in their study the relationship between the role of the trainer and efficiency in education. These researchers emphasized that the issue of educational quality in a country cannot be addressed with generic solutions or solely based on quantitative reports. Instead, they argue that it is essential to actively involve all stakeholders in the educational process. Every individual, whether a student, educator, administrator, or parent, has a role to play in the educational process and must take responsibility for that role. In addition, the authors suggest that it is crucial to analyze the specific conditions of educational establishments and, based on this analysis, generate proposals for improvement that are appropriate for those specific contexts.

On the other hand, Silva (2017) focused on a particular study on teaching practice at the Don Bosco Technological College in Arica. Her research highlighted the importance of teachers being actively involved in understanding and reflecting on their own teaching. This means that educators must not only be aware of the techniques and methods they employ, but must also be able to critically reflect on them and adapt them as needed.

In particular, Silva (2017) identified four key areas on which teachers should focus their attention: the promotion and encouragement of learning, adequate preparation for teaching, the creation of an enabling environment for learning, and teaching adapted to the needs of all students. These areas are not only essential for effective teaching practice, but must also be considered and reflected in all aspects of the teaching-learning process.

In addition, Reyes (2018) in his research on the educational and evaluative practices of the El Tambo professional technical high school, underlined the relevance of the relationship between the teacher and the student in the learning process. This interaction acts as a catalyst in education, guiding and determining the course of learning. Since teachers play a central role in any education system, any effort or strategy aimed at improving educational quality must focus on providing them with tools and methods that respond to the specific demands and characteristics of their environment, thus ensuring that teaching is adapted and relevant.

Along the same lines, Hernández (2017) addressed in his research the relevance of the cultural context in the educational practices of science teachers in rural areas. The study highlights the importance of incorporating traditional knowledge into the teaching of natural sciences, recognizing its cultural value and the need to preserve it. This knowledge, far from being static, is constantly evolving, influenced by various factors that enrich the educational process.

By integrating this knowledge into the classroom, educators can provide more contextualized and relevant teaching, which takes into account students' experiences and visions. This integration requires an understanding of the environment, as well as the ability to observe and contrast the different forms of knowledge that coexist in the community. Thus, in the educational field, especially in natural science classes, it is essential to recognize and value cultural diversity, avoiding any form of discrimination and fostering an environment where multiple perspectives coexist and mutually enrich each other.

Regarding the relevance of the curriculum, Mena (2012) conducted a study at the State Distance University focused on the curriculum of the basic education career of the Open University for Adults (UAPA) and how it is aligned with the demands of the teaching profile in the Dominican Republic. The core of this curriculum lies in the philosophy of interculturality, which emphasizes three fundamental pillars: learning to learn, to be and to live together. This orientation seeks not only to transmit knowledge but also essential skills for students to face and resolve conflicts both in their daily lives and in the educational field.

The study also highlights the active role that teachers must play in this educational process. The teacher is expected to promote collaboration with students, using innovative and dynamic teaching methods that place them as a key participant in learning. Through meaningful learning, it seeks to form autonomous citizens, with a pluralistic and democratic mentality, capable of working individually and collectively, using tools that the environment provides them. In addition, these students are expected to be able to face challenges, value cultural and artistic expressions, and master information and communication technologies.

Corzo and Marcano (2012) also delved into the curricular field with their study on the relevance of the curriculum in higher education institutions. Its approach is more holistic, arguing that the coherence and relevance of the curriculum are not only evident in the content taught, but also in the educational vision of the institutional project. This approach goes beyond the classroom, connecting the curriculum to the institution's management philosophy and ideology, both at the academic and administrative levels.

Likewise, these authors point out that the relevance of a curriculum is not only based on its philosophical foundation, but also on its scientific foundation. In other words, a relevant curriculum is not only well grounded in educational theories, but is also organized and structured in a way that adequately prepares students for today's world, integrating relevant content and making progressive use of technological tools, all in tune with the pedagogical strategies applied in the classroom.

Rentería (2020) focused his research on the importance of adapting curriculum design to current needs, considering both local and global problems, and making use of educational innovation. This approach proposes that in order to achieve sustainable human development, it is crucial that educational institutions adopt innovative approaches that respond to the changing realities of the world. In addition, Rentería suggests that curriculum development should go beyond simply conveying information. It must promote the development of skills and competencies that enable students to face and solve problems effectively, both inside and outside the educational environment. In this sense, the curriculum should promote harmonious coexistence, strengthen cultural identity, and foster respectful interpersonal relationships in a world that faces increasing challenges of polarization and diversity.

On the other hand, Malagón (2012) provides a perspective on curricular relevance at the university level. Their study shows that, in many cases, educational processes are not taking full advantage of opportunities for the active participation of all actors involved, beyond teaching and administrative staff. Although progress has been made in terms of accreditation and self-assessment, these efforts still lack full and meaningful integration with the communities they serve. Rather than being dynamic spaces for building and collaboration, external communities are often seen only as practical fields for academic pursuits.

This narrow perspective of the curriculum, focused only on specific disciplines, restricts the ability of educational institutions to be truly relevant and respond to the changing needs of society. A strictly disciplinary approach leaves no room to address emerging and urgent issues, or to adapt to specific local contexts.

However, if a broader and more flexible curricular approach is adopted, combining disciplinary bases with relevant topics and problems, greater interaction and commitment to the environment can be encouraged. By including regional themes, current issues, and a cross-cutting exploration of different topics, the curriculum becomes more dynamic and relevant, allowing students to meaningfully connect with their context and be active agents of change in their communities.

In this same line of research, De Ávila and Patiño (2015) carried out research in the educational institution of La Boquilla, highlighting the importance of connecting the curriculum with the specific needs and characteristics of the environment. The key lies in uniting academic and technical training with the cultural, social and economic aspects of the community, in such a way that the study offers reflect and adapt to the local reality. These offers, in the specific case of La Boquilla, revolve around areas relevant to the community, such as fishing, culture, hotels and tourism. However, the research also highlighted the need to maintain the relevance of the curriculum, adapting to changes and evolutions in society, especially in relation to globalization, technological advances and the changing needs of the population.

For his part, Palacio (2017) analyzed the curriculum of the agricultural technology program at the Colombian Polytechnic J.I.C, highlighting the coexistence of a developmentalist pedagogical model with more traditional models. Despite this coexistence, emphasis is placed on content that reflects practices and concepts related to agricultural production systems, thus aligning with national and international policies in this area. These observations underscore the importance of ensuring that curricula reflect not only local realities and needs, but are also aligned with broader standards and expectations.

Likewise, Molina (2016), in his study at the University of Tolima, highlighted the relevance of considering the social relevance of a curriculum. In his specific analysis of secondary education with a focus on productive training learning, Molina identified that, despite the restructuring and adjustments made to the curriculum in the last decade, it is still crucial to consider the social, economic and cultural characteristics of the community in which the educational institution is inserted. These considerations are vital to ensuring that the curriculum effectively serves students and the community at large.

The research carried out by Mendoza (2018) at the Universidad Externado de Colombia, addresses an essential issue in current education: the social relevance of the curriculum, especially in contexts where educational inclusion for adults is sought. This relevance is not simply a mechanical adaptation of content to the demands of the labour market or to global educational trends. Rather, it is a deep reflection on how the learning process can be meaningful and relevant to adult learners, taking into account their experiences, contexts, and needs. This approach highlights the idea that learning is not simply acquiring information, but building knowledge from experience and interaction with the environment.

In addition, the study highlights the need for all stakeholders – society, government and educational institutions – to work closely together to create conditions conducive to local and social development. This collaborative approach not only benefits adult learners, but also contributes to building a more inclusive and equitable society. A society in which everyone, regardless of age or background, has equal opportunities to access education and, through it, improve their quality of life and contribute to collective well-being.

The concept of flexible education stands out in research, where the need to adapt teaching and assessment methods to the needs and realities of adult learners is emphasized. This adaptability is crucial to ensure that education is relevant and effective. Flexibility in curriculum, teaching methodologies, and assessment systems allows the institution to adequately serve a diverse population, with different backgrounds,

experiences, and goals. In this context, social relevance is not just a theoretical issue, but a practical tool to ensure that education truly fulfills its transformative purpose in people's lives and in society as a whole. On rural education, Marcos' (2014) research reinforces the idea that rural educational institutions, like all educational institutions, are unique in their nature and character. Each rural school has its own culture, history, and dynamics based on its local context. These institutions, rooted in specific communities, have characteristics that cannot be replicated or compared directly with others. The uniqueness of each educational center comes from the interaction between its geographical location, local cultures, traditions, and specific pedagogical practices.

Similarly, García (2015) illustrates that rural schools have evolved and adapted over time, not only due to political or regulatory changes, but also due to the collective efforts of the communities where they are located. Although these schools may face resource constraints compared to their urban counterparts, they play a crucial role in their communities. Not only do they offer education, but they also serve as centers of cultural and social activity. Their role in preserving and transmitting local culture is invaluable, and they often act as catalysts for the revitalization and modernization of rural communities.

However, the evolution of these schools has not been without its challenges. One of the biggest challenges is the integration of information and communication technologies (ICTs). These tools, which are fundamental for modern education and inclusion in the globalized society, are often less available in rural areas. The risk here is that a lack of access to and training in ICT can further increase the gap between urban and rural areas.

For his part, Marcelo (2015) offers us a vision of the situation in northwestern Argentina, highlighting that, despite investments and advances at the formal level, public policies have not managed to generate a lasting impact on rural education. Rather than seeing education in these areas as an opportunity to empower and develop communities, it has historically been treated more as a tool of control and homogenization. This perspective must be challenged and reframed to ensure that education policies and programs in rural areas are truly effective and beneficial to their communities.

In the contemporary era, with rapid changes in agriculture and technology, rural schools face new challenges. They need to not only adapt to these changes, but also lead them, ensuring that rural communities are not left behind. Transformations in agricultural production and the incorporation of modern technologies in the rural world require a reevaluation of curricula and pedagogical strategies in these schools. Rural education now has the opportunity, and the responsibility, to be an engine of change and development in the communities it serves.

Osorio's (2018) research sheds light on the complex and multifaceted situation of rural education. By highlighting existing gaps, lack of resources and inequality in relation to urban education, it highlights the urgency of comprehensive reforms that not only focus on education, but also address broader issues such as land management, agricultural investment and food security. Education, in this context, is not only seen as a tool for transmitting knowledge, but as a means to foster sustainable rural development and competitiveness in the global economy.

The proposed simultaneous and coherent intervention approach suggests closer collaboration between all stakeholders in rural education: from government to local communities, educators and families. It is not enough to simply inject resources into rural schools; It is crucial that these resources are used strategically and tailored to the specific needs of each rural context. This includes, but is not limited to, playful pedagogical strategies that are relevant to the community and actively engage students in their learning.

The fact that many rural education programmes do not reflect the interests and needs of rural communities is a serious problem. The strategies and methodologies that are applied in rural education often seem disconnected from the reality of these communities, which can lead to a lack of interest and commitment on the part of students. The lack of specific and efficient public policies for rural education further aggravates this situation, leaving many rural communities at a disadvantage.

This research underscores the need for greater awareness and understanding of the culture and dynamics specific to rural communities. The term "pedagogical struggle" suggests that education in these areas is not an easy task and that an active and continuous commitment is required on the part of educators to ensure quality education. This commitment goes beyond the simple act of teaching and goes into the field of understanding and valuing the local culture and the specific characteristics of rurality.

CONCLUSIONS

From the analysis of the referenced research, the following trends can be established. Pedagogical practices in basic education are crucial to ensure meaningful learning. Assessments, far from being simple measurement tools, should act as didactic guides, designed not only to assess the student's knowledge, but also to enhance and adjust the learning process. This more enriching perception of the evaluation process aims at a more comprehensive education adapted to the individual needs of each student.

Moreover, educational quality in any country cannot be determined solely through quantitative data or generic solutions. It is essential to consider the specific context and particular conditions of each educational environment. In this regard, it is vital that all actors involved in the educational process, from students and educators to administrators and parents, are actively engaged and take responsibility for the process.

Self-reflection and adaptability are essential components of effective teaching practice. Educators, by being aware and critical of their own methodologies, can adapt them according to the changing needs of students and the educational context. It is essential to promote teaching that takes into account the diversity of students' needs, ensuring an environment conducive to learning and adapted teaching.

The relationship between the teacher and the student is a cornerstone of the learning process. This relationship, based on mutual trust, respect, and open communication, facilitates a learning environment where the student can thrive. Educational and assessment practices should therefore be focused on strengthening this relationship, providing educators with appropriate tools and methods to address the specific demands of their environment.

The cultural context in rural areas plays a fundamental role in education. By recognizing and integrating traditional knowledge and cultural practices in the classroom, a more contextualized and relevant education can be offered. This traditional knowledge, in addition to having an inherent value, provides a rich source of knowledge and perspective that can enrich the educational process.

Research highlights the crucial role of the teacher as an active facilitator in the educational process. Far from being a simple transmitter of information, the teacher is expected to act as a mediator and guide in the learning process, promoting a collaborative and innovative approach. This vision of the teacher as an active participant highlights the importance of teaching methodologies that promote meaningful learning and form citizens with an open and democratic mindset.

The coherence and relevance of the curriculum are not limited only to the content that is taught. It is vital that the curriculum reflects the vision and mission of the educational institution, thus connecting the pedagogical philosophy with institutional management. This holistic view of the curriculum recognizes that education is a process that involves multiple dimensions, from academic content to institutional management and organization.

Adapting curriculum design to current needs is essential. In an ever-changing world, with both local and global challenges, it is critical that educational institutions adopt innovative and relevant approaches. This adaptability ensures that students not only receive relevant information, but also develop skills and competencies that enable them to effectively face and solve problems in various contexts.

The social relevance of the curriculum is an essential component in adult education. This perspective recognizes that learning is a continuous process that is built on the basis of individual experiences and realities. Adult education, therefore, must be adaptive and responsive to the specific needs and contexts of each learner. By adopting a curricular approach that is centred on the individual and their context, a more inclusive and transformative education for all is ensured.

Despite their intrinsic value and vital role in their communities, rural schools face significant challenges, with access to and integration of ICTs being one of the most prominent. In an increasingly globalized and digitized world, it is essential that these institutions are not left behind and can offer their students the necessary tools to actively participate in modern society. However, current public policies do not always reflect an adequate understanding of the particularities of rural education, which can lead to ineffective solutions or misaligned with the realities of these communities.

In the same vein, the need for rural education to adapt to contemporary transformations in areas such as agriculture and technology is imperative. For these schools to be truly effective in preparing their students for the future, it is necessary that curricula and methodologies reflect not only the local context, but also the demands and challenges of the modern world. The commitment of rural schools to lead these changes and proactively adapt is essential to ensure the sustainable development of the communities they serve.

Finally, the interaction between education and sustainable rural development underscores the interdependence between the school and its community. For rural education to be truly effective and relevant, it is crucial to adopt a holistic approach that addresses not only the educational needs, but also the economic, social and cultural challenges of rural communities. This implies closer collaboration between different actors and a deep understanding of the importance of education as a driver of change and development in rural areas.

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