



TRADITIONAL MUSIC AND DANCE OF THE MALES RESERVE AS A PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGY FOR STRENGTHENING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION.

Carlos Hernán Pantoja Agreda
Jeferson Alexander Benavides Betancourht
Mauricio Gutiérrez Delgado

University of Nariño

Date of receipt: 13 de septiembre 2024

Acceptance date: 29 de julio 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22267/huellas.251122.45>

TRADUCCIÓN: Sandra Viviana Casanova
**Departamentolinguística e Idiomas - Facultad de Ciencias Humanas -
Universidad de Nariño.**



Abstract.

This research has been conducted at the Indigenous Agricultural Technical Educational Institution of the Males Resguardo, to evaluate the traditional music and dance of the Resguardo as a Pedagogical Strategy for strengthening Environmental Education in grades 10 and 11 of the Technical Agricultural Institution of Males, Indigenous Territory of Córdoba-Nariño, through which it is intended to strengthen it.

In this project, it is essential to describe the current situation of young students regarding environmental education, taking into account cultural factors that influence each student's perspective; likewise, to analyze their actions in relation to the pedagogical strategy that promotes traditional music and dance. For the development of this research, a qualitative paradigm was adopted, including a documentary review of the available information on the study topic. Additionally, direct observation of the cultural and social context of the Indigenous Agricultural Technical Institution of the Males Resguardo was carried out.

By promoting actions that strengthen environmental relationships based on the indigenous worldview, the creation of a research group called "KUNTURI" was proposed as a pedagogical strategy. This term comes from the Quechua language and means "sent by the ancestral spirits." This group is focused on preserving ancestral artistic expressions as pedagogical means to reinforce environmental awareness among students. Traditional music and dance not only represent forms of identity expression but also channels through which ecological knowledge, the history of the territory, and respect for Mother Earth are transmitted. Thus, the project seeks to promote a contextualized education to strengthen cultural roots, indigenous identity, and commitment to the protection of the natural environment.

Keywords: Environmental Education, Territory, Males, Culture, Traditional Dance and Music.

Resumen.

Esta investigación se ha llevado a cabo en la Institución Educativa Técnica Agropecuaria del Resguardo de Males, para evaluar la música y danza tradicionales del Resguardo como estrategia pedagógica para el fortalecimiento de la educación ambiental en los grados

LA MÚSICA Y LA DANZA TRADICIONALES DE LA RESERVA DE HOMBRES COMO ESTRATEGIA PEDAGÓGICA PARA FORTALECER LA EDUCACIÓN AMBIENTAL.

10° y 11° de la Institución Técnica Agropecuaria de Males, Territorio Indígena de Córdoba-Nariño, mediante la cual se pretende fortalecer la educación ambiental a través de la música y danza tradicionales propias del territorio indígena.

En este proyecto es de vital importancia describir la situación actual de los jóvenes estudiantes respecto a la educación ambiental, teniendo en cuenta factores culturales que influyen en la perspectiva propia de cada estudiante; así mismo, analizar su actuar frente a la estrategia pedagógica que fomenta la música y la danza tradicional. Para el desarrollo de esta investigación, se tuvo en cuenta el paradigma cualitativo, posteriormente, se realizó una revisión documental de la información disponible sobre el tema de estudio. Así mismo, se lleva a cabo la observación directa del contexto cultural y social de la Institución Técnica Agropecuaria Indígena del Resguardo de Males.

Al establecer acciones que fortalezcan las relaciones ambientales en función de la cosmovisión indígena, se planteó como estrategia pedagógica la creación de un grupo de investigación denominado "KUNTURI", término que proviene de la lengua quechua y significa "enviados por los espíritus ancestrales". Este grupo está enfocado en el rescate de expresiones artísticas ancestrales como medios pedagógicos para reforzar la conciencia ambiental en los estudiantes. La música y la danza tradicionales no solo representan formas de expresión identitaria, sino también canales por los cuales se transmite el conocimiento ecológico, la historia del territorio y el respeto por la Madre Tierra. Así, se busca una educación contextualizada que fortalezca el arraigo cultural, la identidad indígena y el compromiso con la protección del entorno natural.

Palabras Clave: Educación Ambiental, Territorio, Males, Cultura, Danza y Música tradicionales.

I. INTRODUCTION.

In Indigenous territories, the relationship with nature is not limited to a utilitarian perspective, but is based on a deep ancestral worldview where the earth, water, wind, and all living beings are considered sacred. In this context, environmental education must go beyond traditional approaches, incorporating the knowledge and cultural practices of each community as living pedagogical tools.

This research project stems from the need to identify strategies to inspire young people to rediscover their traditions and customs, starting with the symbolic value of music and dance in relation to the community's environmental vision. Unfortunately, artistic expressions such as the indigenous music and dance of the Males Indigenous Reserve have been neglected by young people, who have lost sight of the significance these practices hold within their territory. This leads to the central research question: How does traditional music and dance contribute to strengthening environmental education within the indigenous culture of the Males Indigenous Reserve (Córdoba), specifically in the 10th and 11th grades of the Males Indigenous Agricultural Technical Institute? In accordance with this vision, the overall objective of the project is to strengthen environmental education through the traditional music and dance of the Males Indigenous Reserve, specifically among 10th and 11th grade students of the Males Indigenous Agricultural Technical Institute. To achieve this goal, three specific objectives are proposed:

- Identify the environmental education present in the indigenous culture of the Males Indigenous Reserve, based on the perceptions and knowledge of 10th and 11th grade students.
- Describe the characteristics of the indigenous culture of the Males Indigenous Reserve that are expressed through traditional music and dance, as fundamental elements of cultural identity.
- Design and implement a pedagogical strategy based on these cultural expressions, which will strengthen environmental education from a context-specific perspective and consistent with its values, practices, and knowledge.

This approach seeks to integrate the spiritual, cultural, and ecological dimensions of education in Indigenous contexts, thus promoting a holistic education that reaffirms the connection with Mother Earth and contributes to the defense of the territory through a living and meaningful pedagogy.

The importance of environmental education can be integrated with the culture of the Males Indigenous Reserve through the appropriation of native music and dance through pedagogical processes. This approach recognizes the role of music and dance in the educational process at all levels, with the aim of fostering attitudes, values, and commitments toward the environment, promoting harmonious relationships with the surroundings, and restoring the interactions between society, nature, and culture within the territory.

It is here that the pedagogical strategy for addressing this issue and harmonizing community culture with environmental education originates. In this work, the KUNTURI research group was formed in order to promote the interrelation of the artistic-traditional groups of the Males Reserve with the educational community of the Males Agricultural Technical Institution, especially with the young students of grades 10th and 11th.

II. BACKGROUND.

It is relevant for this research to define the conceptual framework related to the study objectives with respect to the objectives stipulated in this work. Since this project focuses on environmental education and the use of pedagogical strategies to strengthen culture, it is important to clarify the relationship between them.

Pedagogy is directly linked to educational knowledge, and the task of education belongs to professionals in this field, who must perform it with professional competence. From a pedagogical perspective, it is argued that educational quality is largely determined by the quality of these professionals. Although education is a collective responsibility, it is also established that the technical competence of educators is largely based on the educational knowledge they have acquired, developed, and applied. Touriñán, J. M. (2019).

Environmental education is a social practice that connects the educational component with environmental activities

in order to promote harmonious relationships between humans and their environment. Similarly, it promotes positive attitudes toward the environment, encouraging awareness of technological changes without harming nature of technological changes and advances without affecting nature.

Environmental education refers to a continuous and interdisciplinary process focused on training, characterized by the recognition of values, the development of concepts, skills, and attitudes necessary to achieve harmonious coexistence among people, their culture, and the biophysical environment that surrounds them. (Valera & Silva, 2012, p. 196).

Similarly, the research addresses concepts such as indigenous culture, traditional dance, and music. In general, culture is a social fabric that encompasses the diverse forms and expressions of a given society; it is also defined as the set of information and skills possessed by an individual.

Approaching the concept of culture, Geertz (1989) states: "The concept of culture presented here is, in essence, a semiotic concept. Following Max Weber, who affirms that human beings are immersed in networks of meaning that they themselves have created, I maintain that culture is that network." Therefore, cultural analysis should not be an experimental science in search of laws, but an interpretive science in search of meanings. Its aim is to provide explanations based on the interpretation of social expressions that are enigmatic on the surface. (Geertz, C, 1989, p.20).

In this research, traditional music represents a pedagogical strategy for addressing cultural gaps in young people because it embodies history, emotions, and experiences shared through lyrics and musical notes, highlighting Indigenous identity and strengthening cultural identity.

The term "traditional music" is a controversial topic that has generated numerous discussions within the context of public policy and identity movements, where musical practice has acquired significant relevance as a symbol of cohesion and cultural identity (Sevilla, 2008; Lewis, 2005; Wade, 2000, 1998).

Traditional dance plays an important role within Indigenous culture because it is an artistic expression that symbolizes community unity and sharing. Furthermore, the origin of the choreographies and each of their steps

is linked to beliefs and, therefore, to the relationship with nature.

Regarding the importance of dance, Muela & Señor (1997) state: "Folk or traditional dances are an excellent way to introduce students to movement, since, in addition to their rich symbolism and tradition, they are accessible and do not require specific physical preparation. These dances playfully foster psychomotor development related to the use of space and time, the knowledge and unprejudiced expression of their own individuality, as well as a connection with their cultural identity".

III. METHODOLOGY.

The paradigm underlying this study is qualitative. This paradigm allows for a more accurate characterization of the social factors related to the environmental and cultural aspects of the Males Indigenous Reserve.

This research approach is based on the historical-hermeneutical method, which is understood as a process through which the researcher seeks to understand and interpret a phenomenon or reality within a specific context. This approach encompasses realities that reflect historical, psychological, ideological, and linguistic foundations.

For this project, it is vital to describe the current situation of young students regarding environmental education, taking into account cultural factors that influence each student's perspective; Furthermore, to analyze their behavior in relation to the pedagogical strategy that promotes traditional music and dance.

The project carries out ethnographic research, using the qualitative paradigm, with the purpose of providing environmental education and strengthening ties to cultural identity. The unit of analysis consists of 184 students from different grade levels at the Indigenous Agricultural Technical Educational Institution of the Males Reservation, narrowing the focus to a working group of 25 students from grades 10th and 11th.

For the development of this research, a review of available information on the topic was conducted. Additionally, direct observation of the cultural and social context of the Indigenous Agricultural Technical Educational Institution

of the Males Reservation was carried out (Institución Técnica Agropecuaria Indígena del Resguardo de Males). Similarly, surveys and interviews are used as useful tools for this research. Above all, to meet the proposed objectives, semi-structured interviews and surveys are used. Research techniques such as qualitative data collection and focus groups are also employed.

IV. RESULTS.

The study began by addressing with the concept of environmental education as it is addressed in the classroom. To this end, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the science teachers and the school principal, since it is vital to recognize the teachers' dynamic role in shaping how the concept of environmental education is perceived within their cultural context. The interview questions addressed topics related to environmental education, its concept, and how this topic is approached in class.

When questioned about the concept of environmental education, both teachers agreed that it is an educational tool for promoting environmental protection. Furthermore, teacher D1 understood that environmental education extends beyond the educational sector, encompassing the general population that depends on the use of natural resources; while teacher D2 referred to the development of environmental values, focusing more on the responsibility of the educational institution.

Similarly, as Valera and Silva (2012, p. 196) state, environmental education is an ongoing process aimed at development, focusing on the recognition of values, concepts, and skills that help individuals establish a harmonious relationship between their activities and the environment. Thus, it is established that D1 and D2 share a similar concept, focusing on holistic development that integrates human development with the appropriate use of natural resources. Therefore, when addressing environmental education in the classroom, each teacher works autonomously and collaboratively to achieve the objective, which, based on the responses, is environmental protection.

Continuing the research to explore students' knowledge, a semi-structured survey was conducted. This survey contained questions designed to assess the students'

level of understanding of their indigenous territory and culture, with an emphasis on the traditional music and dance of Males, their history and traditions, as well as their relationship with nature.

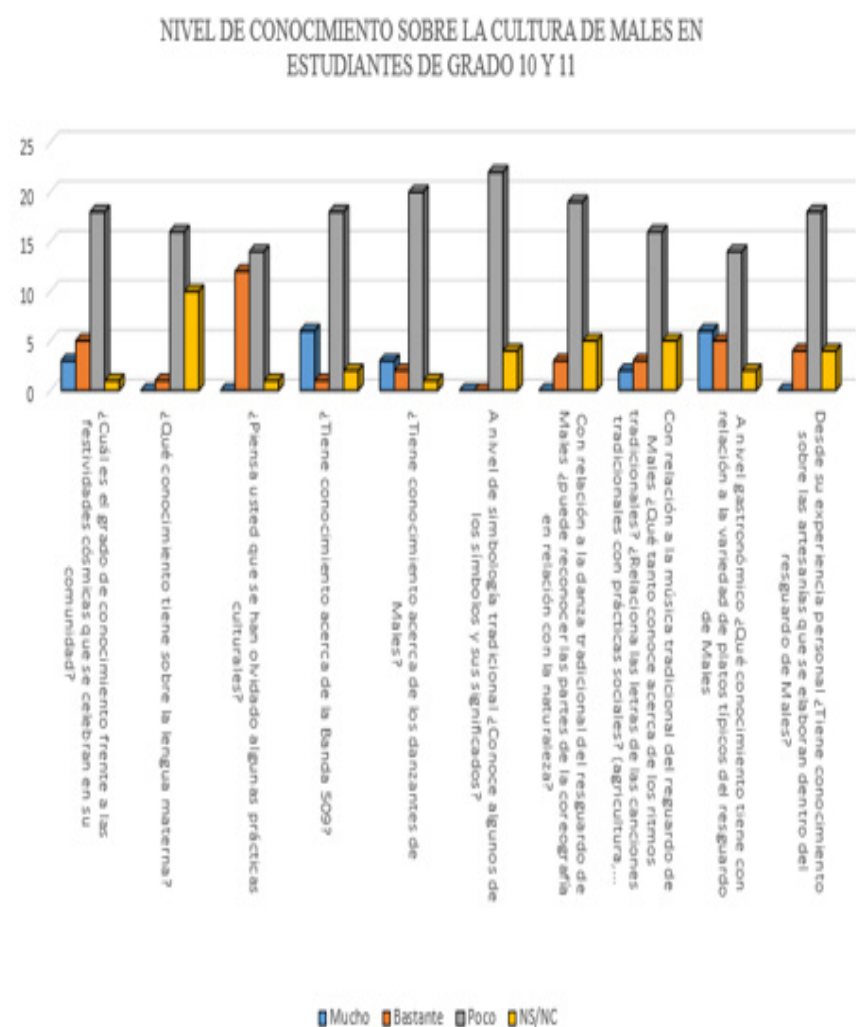


Chart: Survey results of 10th and 11th grade students at the school. (IE.Intutución Educativa) Source: this research.

It is highlighted that the majority of respondents stated they knew little about the various questions posed regarding the indigenous culture of the Males reservation, with the greatest areas of limited knowledge concerning traditional symbolism and the Males dancers. Similarly, the results presented in the graph demonstrate that the loss of knowledge specific to the indigenous community is a problem present among the community's youth.

Based on the cultural diagnosis conducted through data collection, which determined a high level of ignorance among students of the educational institution regarding the cultural aspects surrounding their own context, the creation of a research group called "KUNTURI" was proposed as a pedagogical strategy to strengthen environmental relationships based on the indigenous worldview. This term comes from the Quechua language and means "sent by the ancestral spirits."

The KUNTURI research group aims to rediscover the customs of dance and music, starting from the origins of these traditions. Likewise, it seeks to connect, from an environmental perspective, the relationship between cultural expressions, specifically traditional music and dance, and the perception of their own environment.

Through this approach, students broaden their learning horizons, with their own traditions serving as the starting point for a new way of engaging with knowledge. This is achieved through the integration of environmental education, fostering a social awareness that goes hand in hand with the cultural environment and the preservation of traditions.

The following phases were planned for the implementation of this strategy:

Fase	Actividad
1. Socialización	Presentación de la estrategia pedagógica a los estudiantes de 10° y 11° de la IE.
2. Conceptualización de la educación ambiental	Encuentro tipo conversatorio abordando el concepto de educación ambiental en su contexto indígena.
3. Organización del grupo de trabajo	Formación de los equipos de trabajo para la investigación de una temática o problemática dentro de la cultura de Males relacionada con la educación ambiental.
4. Conversatorios	Conversatorios con los principales representantes culturales de la comunidad, en los que entran Danzantes, San Juanes, integrantes de la Banda 509 y Médicos tradicionales.
5. Minga de pensamiento estudiantil	Socialización de lo aprendido sobre los temas asignados, en torno a la educación ambiental y la proyección cultural.

Table: Implementation phases of the pedagogical strategy. Source: this research.

Each phase was developed in conjunction with the research group, who showed genuine interest in receiving knowledge from the invited speakers. They also took notes on the information they received, which facilitated the sharing of this knowledge through a collaborative process, which we called the “student thinking group.” In this space, the students acted as the main participants in sharing their knowledge of traditional dance and music

with their peers, as well as how this knowledge is linked to the significance and environmental perception of each of these artistic expressions.

The results obtained through direct observation, discussions, and the thinking group demonstrate that the traditional music and dance of the Males Indigenous Reserve are not only artistic expressions but also effective channels for transmitting ancestral knowledge and environmental values. The musical and dance practices of the community reflect a close relationship with nature, where elements of the environment are invoked, represented, and honored as a fundamental part of the spiritual and daily life of the indigenous people.

Students in grades 10th and 11th demonstrated greater interest in and engagement with environmental content when it was approached through their own cultural practices. Through music and dance, the students not only revived rituals and celebrations from their community but also gained a deeper understanding of the principles of caring for, respecting, and protecting the land. This emotional and symbolic connection with Mother Earth strengthened their cultural identity and their commitment to defending the natural environment.

Furthermore, the implementation of a pedagogical strategy based on these expressions, through the research group, revitalized the learning process, making it more participatory, reflective, and contextualized. The interaction between the artistic, the educational, and the spiritual fostered an environment conducive to the collective construction of environmental knowledge, moving beyond a purely technical or scientific perspective and recognizing the value of their own knowledge.



Student Minga at the Agricultural Technical Institution of the Males Reservation.



Work, table of the Males Dancers graphic created with information collected by the students. Source: this research.

V. CONCLUSIONS.

Environmental education in the indigenous culture of the Males Indigenous Reserve is deeply rooted in its history, symbolism, and ancestral practices. Through traditional music and dance, the memory of their sacred relationship with nature is kept alive, evidenced in the ancestral use of instruments made from elements of the environment and in costumes that evoke historical struggles and connections with the natural world. The movements of the dancers, inspired by animals and elements such as the snake or water, express values of fertility, renewal, and harmony with life. All of this demonstrates that environmental education in this

context is not an external component, but an essential part of their worldview, transmitted from generation to generation through art and tradition.

Traditional music and dance play a fundamental role in strengthening environmental education within the indigenous culture of the Males Reserve (Córdoba), especially in the 10th and 11th grades of the Indigenous Agricultural Technical Institute. These artistic expressions not only preserve and transmit ancestral knowledge, but also promote a harmonious relationship with nature by integrating values of respect, care, and reciprocity with the environment. By linking environmental education with local cultural practices, a sense of belonging, identity, and collective responsibility is strengthened, allowing students to understand the importance of protecting their territory from a culturally situated and meaningful perspective.

This demonstrates that it is possible to diversify the teaching of Environmental Education, not only by starting with well-known topics such as recycling or the promotion of sustainable development, but also by implementing knowledge of the natural environment based on traditions and all the stories surrounding them. Similarly, by focusing on each aspect that can be discovered from each of the Indigenous experiences, it becomes possible to propose new teaching strategies that establish a different kind of awareness than the usual one.

Likewise, the environmental conceptions that the participants initially held were strengthened thanks to the direct interactions established with the historical context behind the cultural expressions that are the subject of this research. The "student collective thinking" became a significant space for strengthening cultural identity and environmental awareness among students. By taking on the role of protagonists, the young people not only shared knowledge about traditional dance and music, but also reflected on their deep connection to nature and the land. This experience allowed them to recognize how these artistic expressions convey environmental perceptions imbued with symbolism, memory, and respect for the environment, reaffirming that environmental education, when built upon local knowledge, has a deeper and more transformative impact.

Bibliography.

Geertz, C. (1989). La descripción densa: hacia una teoría interpretativa de la cultura. En la interpretación de las culturas. (E. e. Barcelona, Ed.) Barcelona , España : Gedisa. Recuperado el 26 de marzo de 2023, de https://personal.us.es/dflorido/uploads/Actividad%20docente/HistoriaAntropologia/PracticaHTA_4Geertz.pdf

Touriñán, J. M. (2019). Pedagogía, profesión, conocimiento y educación: una aproximación mesoaxiológica a la relación desde la disciplina, la carrera y la función de educar. *Tendencias Pedagógicas*, 34, 93–115. <https://doi.org/10.15366/tp2019.34.008>

Valera Mejía, F., & Silva Naranjo, E. (2012). Guía de capacitación en educación ambiental y cambio climático. USAID, CDCT y The Nature Conservancy de <https://bvearmb.do/bitstream/handle/123456789/275/Guia-capac-educacion-ambiental.pdf>

Puebla, B. J. (s.f.). PARADIGMA CUALITATIVO VS CUANTITATIVO. Recuperado 22 de febrero de 2023, de https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Bartolo-Jaramillo-Puebla-2/publication/341960136_PARADIGMA_CUALITATIVO_VS_CUANTITATIVO/links/5edb0d8445851529453bffa3/PARADIGMA-CUALITATIVO-VS-CUANTITATIVO.pdf

Muela, F. J. & Señor, D. M. (1997). Danzas del Mundo. *Eufonía. Didáctica de la Música*, (6), 45-52.



23