EDUCABILITY CONDITIONS

OF INDIGENOUS OTOMI CHILDREN AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL, IN THE COMMUNITY OF SAN ANDRÉS TIANGUISTENGO, IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ACTOPAN, HIDALGO

CONDICIONES DE EDUCABILIDAD DE LOS NIÑOS INDÍGENAS OTOMÍES EN EL NIVEL PRIMARIA, EN LA COMUNIDAD DE SAN ANDRÉS TIANGUISTENGO, EN EL MUNICIPIO DE ACTOPAN, HIDALGO

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ABSTRACT _____

This research analyzes the diverse social conditions that influence the education of indigenous Otomi children in the community of San Andrés Tianguistengo, Hidalgo, focusing on how economic, cultural, and educational factors generate barriers to access and retention in primary education. Among the main factors are family poverty, which forces children to prioritize subsistence activities over education, and the community's worldview, which influences educational practices and perceptions of learning. Furthermore, it highlights the impact of an assimilationist educational model that has historically sought to integrate indigenous people under an ethnocentric logic, ignoring their cultural particularities and reinforcing educational inequality. The research was conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach, using the ethnographic method to construct a detailed description of the educational experiences and practices of children and their guardians. Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews, allowing for the capture of perceptions and experiences directly linked to educational barriers. Ethical aspects such as confidentiality and respect for the participants' worldview were considered. The results indicate that poverty is the main limitation, although other social and academic factors also influence these children's education. Worldview and a history of cultural marginalization contribute to both the origin and persistence of educational barriers. The research highlights the need for inclusive, contextualized, and culturally sensitive educational strategies that promote equity and full access to primary education for this population.

Keywords:

Education, indigenous people, student lag.

RESUMEN _____

La presente investigación analiza las diversas condiciones sociales que inciden en la educación de los niños indígenas otomíes de la comunidad de San Andrés Tianguistengo, Hidalgo, enfocándose en cómo factores económicos, culturales y educativos generan barreras en el acceso y permanencia en la educación primaria. Entre los principales factores se identifican la pobreza familiar, que obliga a los niños a priorizar actividades de subsistencia sobre la educación, y la cosmovisión de la comunidad, que influye en las prácticas educativas y en la percepción del aprendizaje. Además, se destaca el impacto de un modelo educativo asimilista que históricamente ha buscado integrar a los indígenas bajo una lógica etnocentrista, ignorando sus particularidades culturales y reforzando la desigualdad educativa. La investigación se desarrolló bajo un enfoque descriptivo cualitativo, utilizando el método etnográfico para construir una descripción detallada de las experiencias y prácticas educativas de los niños y sus tutores. La recolección de datos se realizó mediante entrevistas semiestructuradas, permitiendo capturar percepciones y experiencias directamente vinculadas con las barreras educativas. Se consideraron aspectos éticos como la confidencialidad y el respeto a la cosmovisión de los participantes. Los resultados indican que la pobreza constituye la principal limitante, aunque otros factores sociales y académicos también influyen en la educación de estos niños. La cosmovisión y la historia de marginación cultural contribuyen tanto al origen como a la persistencia de las barreras educativas. La investigación evidencia la necesidad de estrategias educativas inclusivas, contextualizadas y culturalmente sensibles que promuevan la equidad y el acceso pleno a la educación primaria en esta población.

Palabras clave:

Educación, indígenas, rezago estudiantil.

INTRODUCTION

The inclusion of Indigenous students and their academic outcomes has been analyzed from various international perspectives. Meléndez-Grijalva et al. (2023) highlight that the effectiveness of inclusive education depends largely on teacher preparation and the implementation of differentiated pedagogical strategies. Teachers recognize the need for curricular adaptations, culturally relevant teaching materials, and the promotion of participatory environments, but they face institutional constraints and workload, which directly impact the academic outcomes of Indigenous students.

In addition, Lennon del Villar (2016) analyzes the limitations and possibilities of intercultural pedagogy, pointing out that curricular rigidity and limited teacher training are significant barriers; however, he emphasizes that a well-implemented intercultural approach can value cultural identity, encourage active student participation, and generate contextualized learning, thereby reducing historical educational gaps.

In line with these perspectives, Mendoza Zuany (2017) emphasizes that intercultural education must integrate the cultural and linguistic identity of indigenous children as a central axis, building equitable and meaningful school environments and promoting teacher training in intercultural approaches, as well as adapting curricular content to the sociocultural reality of each community.

In the Mexican context, Gallegos Ruiz & Tinajero Villavicencio (2022) show that indigenous preschool education policies face a tension between compulsory education and conditions of backwardness, limited by structural factors such as a lack of infrastructure and trained teachers. This highlights the need for more flexible and contextualized strategies that recognize the cultural and linguistic diversity of indigenous peoples, preventing regulatory policies from becoming an instrument of educational exclusion.

To offer a socio-historical construction on the diverse conditions of educability present in the indigenous population, and particularly in the indigenous Otomi children of the community of San Andrés Tianguistengo, in the municipality of Actopan, Hidalgo, emphasizing that, for example, the idiosyncrasy of the native peoples is diverse and therefore different from that of the rest of the people of this nation.

The above has produced, and derived from an ethnocentric vision (on the part of the rest of the Mexican population), a conceptualization of the indigenous person as an ignorant person or of little value, thus giving rise to poorly focused educational models that have only sought assimilation and integration by indigenous people into the construction of the Mexican nation, which in turn results in various educational barriers, such as access to or permanence in educational institutions.

In addition to the social marginalization suffered by the indigenous population, this also impacts their economic status. As the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (2019) points out, this segment of the Mexican population lives in poverty or extreme poverty. According to Schmelkes (2013), this can be the main factor that causes indigenous people to face educational barriers, as this population prefers to devote more attention and effort to primary activities such as food (which requires all family members to work from an early age due to their economic status) than to secondary activities such as education.

This provides a broad overview of the educational problems faced by indigenous peoples, as the situation stems from various social conditions, which deserve to be explained in order to understand the origin, characteristics, and current status of the situation, in order to find a possible solution.

METHODOLOGY

The research is conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach, aimed at providing a deeper understanding of the educational reality of indigenous Otomi children in the community of San Andrés Tianguistengo, Hidalgo. This approach allows for an analysis of the diverse educational conditions and barriers faced by students at the primary level, considering economic, social, and academic factors (Hernández et al., 2010).

The ethnographic method is used, which facilitates the construction of a detailed and authentic description of the meanings and practices present in the daily lives of the study subjects (Rodríguez et al., 1996). This method allows us to understand how cultural, economic, and social conditions influence the education of Otomi children and the configuration of educational barriers.

A semi-structured interview was used as the primary technique for data collection. Using the interview guide, questions were directed at the children and their guardians in a cordial and respectful atmosphere. The aim was to obtain detailed information on educational conditions and to validate and complement the findings derived from the ethnographic analysis. This strategy captures the participants' perceptions, experiences, and educational practices, offering a comprehensive overview of the educational problems in this community.

Fundamental ethical aspects were also considered, ensuring the confidentiality of participants and respecting their worldview and cultural context. The methodology adopted provides a solid framework for identifying the factors that influence the education of Indigenous children and for proposing possible strategies to help reduce educational barriers for this population.

DEVELOPMENT

The family economic situation faced by indigenous Otomi children in the community of San Andrés

Tianguistengo, Hidalgo, in the Mezquital Valley region, is considered the main reason why they face barriers to access and permanence in primary school, although it is necessary to point out that there are other aspects, social and academic, that also permeate the educational problems of this indigenous population.

The research is built under a qualitative descriptive approach, since this type of approach and according to Hernández et al. (2010), includes a varied use of concepts, techniques and studies, in order to achieve a correct interpretation of reality, which in this case is about the diverse conditions of educability of the indigenous Otomi children of the community of San Andrés Tianguistengo, which then give rise to educational barriers such as falling behind or remaining in primary school in said community.

In order to subsequently offer a possible answer that can solve such educational problems, it is also proposed to construct and validate the information collected, through the ethnographic method, since according to Rodríguez et al. (1996), this method offers the possibility of constructing a real or authentic description of the meanings that occur in social events, that is, through this method we will try to explain the various realities immersed in the daily lives of the subjects of study, in order to conceptualize the various conditions of educability that then give rise to the educational problem of this community. On the other hand, through the technique of the semi-structured interview, and the tool of the interview guide, it is intended to obtain information from the subjects of study (indigenous Otomi children of male and female seo, and their guardians), through a series of questions in an atmosphere of cordiality and respect that can validate what has already been investigated.

CONCLUSIONS

The economic condition (poverty) in which the indigenous population lives, and specifically, the indigenous Otomi population who attend primary school in the community of San Andrés Tianguistengo, may be the main factor that causes Otomi children to face educational barriers such as access and permanence.

It is anticipated that other social factors will also be present, such as the inherent worldview of this community, which may contribute not only to the origin and establishment of the educational problem, but also to its continuation.

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Conflicts of Interest:

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

Author Contributions:

Irvin Ebed Ponce-Valdez: Conceptualization, data curation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, supervision, validation, visualization, writing – original draft, and writing, review, and editing.