

***Actividades educativas para el cuidado del medio ambiente en la
comunidad La Obra de Baitiquirí
Educational activities for the care of the ambient midway in the
community La Obra de Baitiquirí***

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Resumen

Los cambios educativos que se exige a la escuela cubana en la actualidad, requieren de una mayor eficiencia en el papel socializador que le corresponde en la interacción escuela-comunidad. Para la realización del estudio diagnóstico se emplearon métodos de investigación del nivel teórico, empíricos y técnicas de análisis porcentual, que permitieron evaluar las potencialidades y principales debilidades para la educación de la comunidad en el cuidado del medio ambiente. El diagnóstico realizado en la comunidad La Obra de Baitiquirí, manifiesta un deterioro de la conducta social y cultural de sus miembros, así como en la calidad del proceso pedagógico de la escuela primaria. La aplicación de la propuesta favorece el perfeccionamiento de la relación escuela-comunidad en la formación de una educación ambiental, al establecerse entre los implicados un mayor nivel de compromiso y sensibilidad con el medio. El trabajo tiene como objetivo: Elaborar actividades educativas que contribuyan al cuidado del medio ambiente en el contexto comunitario La Obra de Baitiquirí desde la escuela.

Palabras clave: Escuela; Comunidad; Trabajo comunitario; Educación ambiental

Summary

The educational changes that are currently required of the Cuban school require greater efficiency in the socializing role that corresponds to it in its school-community interaction. To carry out the diagnostic study, theoretical and empirical research methods and percentage analysis techniques were used, which made it possible to evaluate the potential and main weaknesses for the education of the community in caring for the environment. The diagnosis carried out in the La Obra de Baitiquirí community shows a deterioration in the social and cultural behavior of its members, as well as in the quality of the primary school pedagogical process. The application of the proposal favors the improvement of the school-community relationship in the formation of environmental education, by establishing among those involved a higher level of commitment and sensitivity to the environment. The work aims to: Develop educational activities that contribute to the care of the environment in the community context La Obra de Baitiquirí from the school.

Keywords: School; Community; Community work; Environmental education.

Introduction

The problems that currently affect the environment on the planet are increasingly serious and cause concern to all humanity. Cuba's presence in the main world meetings to agree on criteria and actions for community environmental development is demonstrated by its participation, for example, in the Conference on Human Resources - Sweden (1972); the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) - Rio de Janeiro, (1992), the Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island States - Barbados (1994) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development - Johannesburg (2002).

In the same sense, in the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba; the new environmental law; the ordering and completion of environmental legislation; the institutional strengthening for the systematic and rational attention to the environment in the communities; the inclusion of the environmental theme in the Branch Programs of education; the scientific-technical research and the improvement of the policy and instruments of environmental management and education, among other examples, reflect a national task oriented to the development of environmental education in the economic and social development of the country.

Community education from the school should be characterized by respect for the autonomy of the diversity of cultural traditions, translated into the determination of their own needs or ways to solve their problems. These educational influences must have a conscious character, an adequate orientation of the objectives, as well as an environmental perspective that has at its core the motivation and commitment to the community.

The efforts to achieve the transformation of the educational system in Cuba constitute a paradigm concretized according to the conditions of each community. The school possesses conditions to create a network of multipliers in the transformation of the community, where interests are expressed and where it promotes participation and the search for new methods of creation, starting from its own efforts and generating the will to change in communities with environmental problems.

The development of community environmental education at the international level has been addressed by different authors, among which stand out: (Gutiérrez, 1997; UNESCO, 2003; FAO 2016; Hancock, 2019).

In Cuba, some authors such as: (Castro, 1992; CITMA, 2001; Beltré, 2003; Portuondo, 2010; Fernandez, 2000), have also conducted studies regarding community environmental education. In Guantánamo province, research by (Relaño, 2011; Fernandez, 2013), among others, that address Environmental Education from the different levels of education, starting from the development of the student's initial and permanent training process, stand out. However, there is still insufficient work being done for environmental education in the communities, especially in the so-called vulnerable ones.

Currently, the municipality of San Antonio del Sur is not exempt from problems (social, cultural, ecological, among others) that affect the sustainable development of the community environment and the quality of life of the population. This is the case, for example, in the community of the site of Baitiquirí, where there is an unfavorable environmental situation, mainly caused by salinization and indiscriminate tree felling. These environmental problems, together with the hygienic-sanitary and aesthetic ones, have repercussions on the environment from a socio-cultural perspective, since there is a deterioration in the social and cultural behavior of its members, as well as in the quality of the pedagogical process of the elementary school, starting from the inexistence of concrete actions to develop environmental education in the school environment.

Based on the problematic situation previously stated, the following objective is proposed: To elaborate educational activities that contribute to the care of the environment in the community context of The site of Baitiquirí from the school.

Development

The school, as a social institution, plays an important role as a socializing agency in the community, since it has ample possibilities to exert its educational influence on its members. Environmental education must be oriented towards the community. It should involve the individual in an active process to solve problems in the context of specific realities and should encourage initiative, a sense of responsibility and a commitment to build a better tomorrow.

In light of the third improvement of the National Education System, it is urgent to propose alternatives that promote environmental education for sustainable development, which is why Climate Change has been determined as a priority content in close relation to the problems of Danger, Vulnerability and Risk (PVR), all of which is updated based on the guidelines emanating from the State Plan for Confronting Climate Change (Vida Task, 2018). It also responds to the Resolution approved by the UN General Assembly on July 6, 2017 in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its goals 4 and 13, which state:

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, with an emphasis on the pedagogical training required to teach at each level in a given country; Goal 4.

Adopt urgent measures to combat climate change and its effects. Improve education, awareness and human and institutional capacity with respect to climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

The research assumed Relaño's definition that environmental education is a continuous and permanent process, which constitutes a dimension of the integral education of all citizens, oriented to harmonize relations among human beings and between them and the rest of society and nature, in the acquisition of knowledge, development of habits, skills, abilities and attitudes, and in the formation of values, in order to promote the orientation of economic, social and cultural processes towards sustainable development.

Likewise, it defined "School community environmental education as a systematic process, from the school for the improvement and transformation of the community considering its socio-cultural characteristics and directed towards local sustainable development". (Relaño, 2009, p. 9).

Currently, with the projection of broad social development policies, it is a matter of incorporating educational centers into the community, identified in the Cuban school model as one of its context of action. Based on these theoretical elements, some regularities are expressed regarding the school-community relationship, which facilitates the development of environmental education from the school to the community. These are the following:

- The different ways of working with the family, one of them, the family education school,
- The active character of the subjects that intervene in the process of formation of environmental education with a transforming character.

The relationship of the community with the school and with the rest of the social institutions is of great importance to make the environmental education work more efficient. In correspondence with the current needs and perspectives of Cuban society, the graduate in Pedagogy and Psychology is faced with various problems to which he/she must provide solutions, especially educational orientation and preventive work in the different contexts of professional performance: school, family, community and school group to favor the stimulation of individual and cooperative group work in the fulfillment of their functions.

To this end, it must design methods and techniques of comprehensive psycho-pedagogical diagnosis for educational work, the direction of the teaching-learning process, educational guidance and preventive work in the different contexts in which they work, as well as develop educational strategies in which they coherently use psycho-pedagogical methods to enhance professional guidance at different levels of education, "the stimulation of individual, group and cooperative work as an expression of social integration and the integral development of the personality of the subjects in the different contexts of action". (Rodríguez, 2022, p. 80).

Taking into account the above, "it is assumed that community orientation is a process of systematic, gradual and premeditated help so that the subjects learn a way of acting from the use of their personal potentialities and the educational potentialities" offered by the community, which results in a better social integration to the different groups in which they live. (Fernández, 2000. P. 83)

The research was carried out in the community of the site of Baitiquirí, located in the south of Guantánamo Province. It is located south of the municipality of San Antonio del Sur, 60 km from the provincial capital, it is linked through the Guantánamo-Baracoa highway. It has an elementary school, a rustic video room with capacity for seventy people, its cultural level is medium, its main production

is agriculture, it has an intensive orchard that is also a source of self-consumption. It also has a CITMA experimental station that has favored employment for the community.

We worked with the entire (100%) population of the community, taking into account that it is composed of 520 people, including students, parents and teachers of the "Patricio Sierra Alta Martinez" elementary school. The following strengths were identified:

- Among the inhabitants of the community there is a sense of belonging and identity.
- The teachers have the elementary school model that includes environmental education among its formative objectives, which justifies the development of educational activities from the school to the community.

As a result of the evaluation methods, techniques and instruments applied, it was found that even though in the community studied there are elements that can contribute to the environmental education of its members, and the exploratory analysis of the reality has allowed summarizing the following problems:

- Insufficient knowledge of environmental terms such as: environment, environmental education and community environmental education.
- The presence of environmental deterioration in terms of:
 - Decrease of green areas.
 - Poor management and disposal of solid waste; presence of dumps, some of them around the school.
 - Inadequate social behavior in environmental sanitary hygiene.
- Insufficient level of information of the pedagogical collective about the environmental problems that affect the community and how to work on community environmental education from the school.
- There are insufficient work projections, participation and methodological conceptions of the school in its link with the community, in terms of improving or solving the environmental problems existing in the environment and developing community environmental education.
- The school does not take advantage of the potentialities that the School Council can offer as a dynamizing element in the community participation in the formation of a community environmental education from its environmental problems.
- The family education school is not used as a way to prepare the family to deal with environmental education in the community.

- The school plans few non-formal educational activities of community environmental education to improve the school-community link.

The analysis of the problem at the theoretical and empirical levels points to the possibility and necessity of designing educational activities to promote environmental education in schoolchildren, in the preparation of teachers and in the community, based on the difficulties identified that need to be solved.

It is taken into account that in the semi-urban elementary school of the community of Baitiquirí, a system of socio-educational influences is established that go beyond the school premises to relate actively and systematically in a planned, organized and controlled way with the family, the community and the social factors of its environment; the school "Patricio Sierra Alta Martinez" has the leading role and the socio-educational direction of the work of community environmental education.

The educational activities are based on the following basic principles: Relationship between the cognitive and the affective: the cognitive is elaborated from the meanings and experiences that the subject has lived and experienced in his performance at school and with the family. The exercise of positive behavioral modes that operates both, at the cognitive level and at the instrumental-procedural level transcends the cognitive-operational and penetrates into the sphere of sense, of meanings. In an integral way, the activities have the following characteristics due to their pedagogical content:

- Formative: by involving in its conception the formation of habits, skills, norms of social relations and forms values that identify the conduct with the modes of action before the tasks related to the subject.
- Personalized: For putting in its center personalized components of the pedagogical process where the diagnosis of each student is a fundamental element for the planning of the activities to be carried out in the development of the selected topics.
- Objective: It was projected to execute and control from the real possibilities of the students, the school and the preparation of the teacher to develop the activities.
- Preventive: It offers timely assistance to students and parents to avoid failure in complying with the schedule to be undertaken in the development of activities.
- educational: When it is able to contribute to strengthen positive behaviors that lead to educate the student in appropriate ways of acting in school and outside of it as a way to achieve a future adolescent and young person capable of behaving appropriately in social life with an

environmental culture capable of contributing to the care of the environment in the place where he/she is.

The elaboration of the proposal of educational activities is conceived according to the needs and potentialities of the school and the community, reflected in the diagnosis stage. In addition, the socio-cultural characteristics of the community and the main environmental problems existing in the community were taken into account.

The workshops proposed for the preparation of teachers are aimed at: Training the members of the family education school on the environmental problems affecting their community, and the psycho-pedagogical treatment to the actions to be developed with the members of the community.

The workshop "is a form of organization of the teaching-learning process that agrees with the problematizing and developmental conception of education to the extent that it tries to bridge the dichotomy that occurs between theory-practice; production-transmission of knowledge, skills-habits, research-teaching. In other words, the workshop integrates all the functions of the rest of the forms of organization of teaching; the informative character of the lecture, the development of skills of the practical class and the deepening and discussion of the content of the seminar.

From the previous perspective, the sense and meaning of the workshop class is privileged due to its formative potential and the significance of the learning tasks-statements in terms of contributing to the preparation of teachers to develop their professional competences in the didactic field and to improve their communicative competences as a priority of the educational teaching process, and in this case for community environmental education.

Workshop 1: The community and its environmental problems: What can teachers and parents do?

This workshop should be developed based on the manual: Meetings with parents of the "Para la Vida" program, which offers very useful guidelines for the development of the workshop, in addition to elaborating problem situations for the analysis and proposal of solutions based on the joint experience. The essential thing is to reflect on the need for joint work between teachers and parents in the environmental transformation of the community.

Workshop 2: The School of Family Education, a way for the formation of a community environmental education

The following topics are proposed for the development of the School of Family Education:

#1 Fundamental theoretical aspect on environment and community environmental education

Concepts: Environment; Environmental Education; Health.

#2 Environmental problems of the community. Impact on community and family health, ways of solution

#3 Role of the community members in terms of: elements of coexistence, living habits and in community environmental education, through different artistic manifestations

#4 Methodological aspects for the treatment of community environmental education

#5 Community environmental education from the family. Techniques for working with the community and the family

#6 Types of activities to develop in the community (dissemination, training, artistic and social recreational activities) methodology for their development

Workshop 3: Social and environmental behavior in the community. Role of the school

It is recommended to use the booklet what happens between the school and the community? Of the For Life program, as well as the indications and guidelines given by MINED for preventive community work, the important thing is to analyze the social and environmental behavior that affects the community. Its causes and effects, as well as the possible actions that the school and parents can take together to improve the quality of life in the community.

Workshop 4 Methods and techniques to work in the community from the school

For the realization of this workshop we propose to use the booklet "Support for the Promoter's Manual", number 4. It contains techniques for working with the community, or other bibliography containing techniques for working with the community. The important thing is to discuss and reflect on the different techniques (animation, presentation, analysis and reflection) and how, when and why to use them.

Both workshops should insist on the leading role of fathers and mothers, not only with their children, but also with the community, and the need to understand the need to improve the link between the school and the community for the formation of a community environmental education.

Workshop 5: Weaknesses, threats and opportunities for the formation of environmental education in the community

For this workshop, problem situations can be elaborated taking into account the community reality and the workshops previously addressed, the important thing is to analyze and reflect on the different ways the school has to face the work with the community. It's weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Insist

on the importance of the school's environmental education collective in improving the link with the community as an essential way for transformation.

Workshop 6: What activities should be carried out in the community from the school to develop a community environmental education?

The last workshop will be dedicated to evaluation, using the indicators proposed in the program. The important thing is that in each action proposal the why, what for, where and how to apply it in the community should be taken into account.

Does the school contribute to eliminate this environmental situation? In what way?

What do you suggest to eliminate this environmental situation?

The training activities favored the acquisition of knowledge by the community members about the importance of caring for and protecting the environment. These activities are materialized in actions developed through:

Community workshops: six workshops were carried out where the broad participation of the community members was evidenced by their criteria and evaluations on environmental problems and the need for environmental education in the community.

In the first workshop, an exploratory diagnosis was carried out in which the community members addressed aspects related to the insufficient community environmental education from the school, as well as the need to prepare teachers for the development of these activities (Annex 27).

The remaining workshops were developed in terms of the acquisition of environmental knowledge by the community members; as well as the education in values that not only favors the prevention and solution of environmental problems but also an adequate way of acting in the face of environmental problems in the community.

Workshops: sanitation, prevention and awareness-raising workshops were held in connection with historical dates and environmental commemorations. Community participation in these workshops ranged between 70% and 85%. During the development of each day there was evidence of an increase in community participation and willingness to participate in the different actions carried out. The presence of values such as hard work and responsibility of the community members and their commitment to the process of change and transformation in favor of the environment was evident.

Round table: six round tables were held (twice a month) where topics related to the environmental situation of the community were discussed from a global and local approach. These were exchange

activities with community members, where valuable criteria were presented, not only by members of the management group and agents of change, but also by pioneers, adolescents, young people and adults of the community, on the main actions to be taken for the immediate solution of the main environmental problems in the community. Also addressed were topics such as preparation to identify causes and those responsible for environmental problems in the community; skills to identify environmental problems in the community and their impact on the health of the community and the family; as well as ways to solve them.

Dissemination activities: Access to certain cultural assets that allowed the acquisition of knowledge and the systematic dissemination of topics related to community environmental education. These activities took the form of visits to the library and cultural activities where book readings were promoted and guided on topics related to environmental education; literary gatherings and exchanges were held to promote better action on environmental issues in the community.

Artistic activities: These were a way to stimulate and promote individual and collective creation in favor of environmental education. They were a way of reflecting the community's environmental problems. These activities took the form of artistic drawings, graphic posters, performing arts, literature, and video debates, all of which contributed to education in values and the development of skills to identify and reflect the main environmental problems affecting the community.

Two contests were developed for community pioneers with the following titles: "How would I like to see my community?" and "My community happy and beautiful," resulting in a significant number of works presented that represented environmental problems in their homes, the community and unfavorable modes of action for the development of environmental education in the community.

Scenic presentations were developed in the community, with the help of the art instructors and the cultural promoter, where situations and conflicts about environmental problems in the community were reflected.

Within the framework of the days and significant dates of environmental commemoration, graphic posters, poems, stories, compositions and video debates were developed, resulting in massive participation of the community and in particular of adolescent and young pioneers.

Social activities: Directly related to leisure, fun and recreational activities. In which attitudes, social and cultural behaviors of the community were expressed. These activities are materialized in actions developed through: community mobilizations, mural newspaper and graphic propaganda. Actions

developed in cultural activities were incorporated to promote analysis and reflection on environmental issues in the community.

The development of these activities constituted a propitious framework to stimulate the outstanding and motivate the community towards social interests for the environmental improvement of the community.

In general, all the activities contributed to the development of a community environmental education, reflected in the acquisition of knowledge, a way of acting in the face of the community's environmental problems and active participation (in each of the activities developed) for the environmental improvement of the community. This is shown in the results of self-evaluation of the community members, in the increased participation of the community members in each activity and in the evident results of the activities developed.

Conclusions

Environmental education is a continuous, permanent and systematic process of a social nature in which the school has an important role, given its characteristics and the place where it carries out its educational work; it is entrusted with the responsibility of preparing its students, family and community to promote the orientation of economic, social and cultural processes towards sustainable development. The diagnostic study carried out evidences insufficiencies that limit the treatment of community environmental education from the school, this is expressed in the methodological treatment, the perception and sensitivity of the population to the environmental problems that affect; the conception for its treatment in the community with an integral character to direct the process of implementation of environmental education. Objective conditions exist for the development of a community environmental education. In the structure and function of the school in its link with the community are present the potentialities to develop this proposal. The proposed activities are a way of solution and participation of the school in the community that favor an adequate community environmental education. The results achieved are favorable and satisfactory; the community members demonstrated new knowledge, participated and developed new actions based on their environmental and socio-cultural reality, observing changes in the environmental situation of the community.

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