Characterization of pedagogical models in basic Social Studies education

Caracterización de los modelos pedagógicos en la enseñanza básica de Estudios Sociales

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Abstract

Over the years, pedagogical models have guided the teaching process in the area of Social Studies, through dynamic environments to transmit scientific knowledge effectively. The main objective of the present study was to characterize the use of pedagogical models in the basic teaching of Social Studies. The methodology employed was of mixed approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods in data collection. The population selected for the study included 50 teachers from four types of educational institutions. Survey and interview techniques were used, in this sense, quantitative data were analyzed through the application of descriptive statistics and for the interview data, qualitative coding was used. The results revealed deficiencies in the application of a standardized pedagogical model adapted to the current generation of students. The teachers expressed their interest in acquiring new teaching methods to improve the learning of their subject, however, they considered that the humanistic model needs to be worked on with the students. To conclude, the detailed characterization of the importance, characteristics and timely application of the pedagogical models was fundamental for the strengthening of knowledge in teachers and students.

Keywords: Educational models; teaching practice; basic education; social studies.

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Resumen

A lo largo de los años, los modelos pedagógicos han orientado el proceso de enseñanza en el área de Estudios Sociales, a través de ambientes dinámicos para transmitir el conocimiento científico de forma efectiva. El objetivo principal del presente estudio fue caracterizar el uso de modelos pedagógicos en la enseñanza básica de Estudios Sociales. La metodología empleada fue de abordaje mixto, combinando métodos cuantitativos y cualitativos en la recolección de datos. La población seleccionada para el estudio incluyó 50 profesores de cuatro tipos de instituciones educativas. Se utilizaron técnicas de encuesta y entrevista, en este sentido, los datos cuantitativos se analizaron mediante la aplicación de estadística descriptiva y para los datos de la entrevista se utilizó codificación cualitativa. Los resultados revelaron deficiencias en la aplicación de un modelo pedagógico estandarizado y adaptado a la actual generación de estudiantes. Los profesores manifestaron su interés en adquirir nuevos métodos de enseñanza para mejorar el aprendizaje de su asignatura, sin embargo, consideraron que el modelo humanista necesita ser trabajado con los alumnos. En conclusión, la caracterización detallada de la importancia, características y aplicación oportuna de los modelos pedagógicos fue fundamental para el fortalecimiento del conocimiento en docentes y estudiantes.

Palabras clave: Modelos pedagógicos; práctica docente; educación básica; estudios sociales.

Introduction

Pedagogical models play a crucial role in contemporary education, preparing students to develop competencies and skills that transform them into thinking, active, and creative individuals, thus facilitating harmonious coexistence within the educational context (Salazar et al., 2020). These models are not exclusionary and can adapt to interdisciplinary methodologies, varying based on learning objectives, school environment, and available resources (Ocaña, 2013; Correa and Pérez, 2022; Barahona et al., 2024).

The teaching of Social Studies in basic education is essential for forming critically engaged students within society. Evaluating and understanding the pedagogical models used in the classroom, such as constructivist, cognitive, social, humanistic, behaviorist, and traditional models, is fundamental to achieving this goal (Cantor and Altavaz, 2019; Miranda and Medina, 2020; Pereira et al., 2024).

Dávila (2017), highlights that in Ecuador, the digital age provides a suitable environment for incorporating new pedagogical models, preparing future professionals to meet the demands of contemporary society. While constructivism, cognitivism, and connectivism are considered foundational to innovative models, the Ecuadorian educational model strives to improve the quality of the teaching-learning process, strengthening education at all levels and promoting new didactic strategies (Morán, 2022).

Arroyo (2021), notes that the model applied in Ecuador is based on traditional and behaviorist characteristics, which has limited the evolution of educational practices and their impact on current students. The selection of a pedagogical model can either enhance or limit student participation and motivation. The constructivist model, for instance, is based on the idea that learning is an active process where students create their own knowledge through socialization and reflection on their experiences (Vergara and Cuentas, 2015).

The cognitive model focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and cognitive understanding, stimulating the student's mind through memory, attention, and thought, emphasizing structured instruction and metacognition (Monterroza, 2014; Franco et al., 2017). The social model, based on social learning theory, asserts that students acquire knowledge through social interaction and observation (Úsuga, 2017).

The humanistic model centers on personal growth and individual development, promoting optimal learning when students feel valued and motivated (Mora and Villegas, 2019). The behaviorist model focuses on the observation of stimuli and responses, seeking behavior modification through reinforcement and punishment (Posso et al., 2020). Finally, the traditional model is characterized by hierarchical, teacher-centered instruction, with unidirectional knowledge transmission (Arroyo, 2021).

The development of Social Studies education from a constructivist, social, or cognitive model fosters the formation of citizens who understand their sociopolitical and cultural environment. Úsuga (2017), mentions that the social pedagogical model aims to form autonomous and critical young people aware of their active role in society, based on reflection and creativity.

In the teaching-learning process of Social Studies at the Basic Middle level, teachers should develop classes in the most interactive way possible, bringing theory into practice to capture students' attention. The socialization of scientific content and the interaction between the teacher and students are pedagogical strategies that enable significant learning (Osorio et al., 2021).

Learning Social Studies ensures understanding of appropriate social interaction forms, respect for diverse cultural expressions, and social discovery of the world. In this context, the objective of this research was to characterize the use of pedagogical models in basic Social Studies education, gathering data from various educational institutions.

Metodología

The research was framed within Critical Theory using a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative elements to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the most utilized pedagogical models in the educational field (Hernández et al., 2014).

The quantitative approach was employed for the statistical analysis of data collected through a survey. This normative research seeks to establish general laws related to the group, considering the study object as "external" to achieve maximum objectivity (Salgado, 2018).

The qualitative approach was used for interviews. Schettini and Cortazzo (2015), indicate that analyzing qualitative data involves both academic and ideological stances, facing challenges inherent to its nature. The vast amount of information, the uniqueness of phenomena, and its proximity to common sense are some of these challenges.

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The research had a descriptive scope to characterize the most used pedagogical models in the educational field. According to Arias (2020), most studies with this scope include only one research variable, although two variables can be proposed without being correlational.

The study population included 50 teachers and four directors from different types of educational institutions: Private Educational Institution (PEI), Public Educational Institution (PBI), Religious Educational Institution (REI), and Single-Teacher Educational Institution (STEI). The entire population was selected intentionally to obtain a suitable representation of different contexts and perspectives.

Data collection focused on analyzing pedagogical models in basic Social Studies education. A four-question survey was applied to teachers using a Google form, and a semi-structured interview with five open-ended questions was conducted with the directors. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics with absolute frequencies and percentage calculations, while qualitative data were analyzed through manual coding. Table 1 presents the instruments used in the research:

Table 1. Quantitative and qualitative instruments

Quantitative instrument	Qualitative instrument
1. Pedagogical model characterizing humanization training.	1. Teachers' predisposed to utilizing contemporary pedagogical models.
2. Predisposition to contemporary pedagogical models.	2. Pedagogical model characterizes the humanization and dynamics in students.
3. Aspects in the teaching-learning process of Social Studies.	3. Pedagogical model prioritized in educational institution.
4. Influence of pedagogical models on society.	4. Influence of pedagogical models on contemporary society.
	5. Aspects related to pedagogical models should be considered.

Source: own elaboration

The reliability of the instruments developed by the authors of the research was obtained using Cronbach's alpha. The alpha ranges from 0 to 1 and can be measured according to decision criteria indicating that instruments with a value above 0.7 are reliable (Palella and Martins, 2012). In this regard, the survey achieved a reliability of 0.85, and the interview guide achieved a reliability of 0.88. Based on these results, the instruments are viable for application.

Finally, informed consent was obtained from all participants, allowing for a complete and detailed view of pedagogical models in the educational field, as well as the perceptions of directors and teachers regarding their impact and relevance.

Results

The quantitative survey results provided essential information for characterizing the application of pedagogical models in educational institutions. Table 1 presents the main variable of the research, focusing on the models applied in the educational field:

Table 2. Pedagogical model characterizing humanization training

Pedagogical models	Fa	Fr	%
Cognitive model	3	0,06	6
Constructivist model	24	0,48	48
Humanist model	15	0,30	30
Social model	5	0,10	10
Behaviorist model	1	0,02	2
Traditional model	2	0,04	4
Total	50	1	100

Source: own elaboration

According to the results in Table 2, 48% (24 teachers) stated that the pedagogical model that best characterizes humanization training and student dynamics is the constructivist model. Additionally, 30% (15 teachers) indicated a preference for the humanist model. These results clearly show that the majority of teachers opt for these models due to their constructive epistemology in the field of Social Studies.

Table 3. Predisposition to contemporary pedagogical models

Options	Fa	Fr	%
Always	16	0,32	32
Almost always	21	0,42	42
Sometimes	12	0,24	24
Rarely	1	0,02	2
Never	0	0	0
Total	50	1	100

Source: own elaboration

According to Table 3, concerning the predisposition to using contemporary pedagogical models for teaching Social Studies, 42% (21 teachers) indicated that they almost always have this predisposition, while 32% (16 teachers) responded that they always use them. These data reveal a notable predisposition among Social Studies teachers to apply integrative and formative pedagogical models, highlighting the need to understand the advantages and disadvantages of each model.

Table 4. Aspects in the teaching-learning process of Social Studies

Aspects	Fa	Fr	%
Affective	2	0,04	4
Cognitive	3	0,06	6
Cultural	25	0,50	50
Social	20	0,40	40
Total	50	1	100

Source: own elaboration

Based on the results in Table 4, which mentions the aspects that students should develop in the teaching-learning process of the Social Studies subject in the 21st century, 50% (25 teachers) stated that the cultural aspect should be developed. Meanwhile, 40% (20 teachers) mentioned that the social aspect should be emphasized. These results underscore the importance of Social Studies education in equipping students with skills and abilities for recognizing sociocultural learning patterns in their environment.

Table 5. Influence of pedagogical models on society

Influence	Fa	Fr	%
Influence the structure of a functioning group	17	0,34	34
Influence the solution of specific student problems	1	0,02	2
Guide student behavior according to the model's ideal	1	0,02	2
Aim to solve local, regional, and national problems	31	0,62	62
Total	50	1	100

Source: own elaboration

According to the results in Table 5 on the influence of pedagogical models in contemporary society, 62% (31 teachers) indicated that these models "aim to solve local, regional, and national problems." Additionally, 34% (17 teachers) stated that these models "influence the structure of a functioning group." These percentages show that Social Studies teachers have a clear perspective on the subject's focus, which is based on students' local situations, enabling them to develop critical thinking and deduction skills at regional and national levels.

Furthermore, Table 6 presents the qualitative results obtained through semi-structured interviews with the directors of the educational institutions. The table includes the base question, their responses, and the corresponding codifications.

Table 6. *Qualitative results obtained through semi-structured interviews*

Q. 1: Do you believe that your teachers are predisposed to utilizing contemporary pedagogical models in the teaching of Social Studies?		
L.	Analysis unit	Codes
1	PEI: "If we focus on sparking students' interest based on	Interest [INT]; L: 1.
2	experiences and reinforcing the content."	Experiences [EXP]; L: 2.
3	PBI: "If there is predisposition, teachers strive to deliver	Predisposition [PRE]; L: 3.
4	their classes in the most timely manner."	Innovating [INN]; L: 5.
5	REI: "Of course, we are always innovating. But we adhere to	Textbooks [TEX]; L: 6.
6	government textbooks."	Predisposition [PRE]; L: 7.
7	STEI: "Yes, I believe there is predisposition because we are	Interest [INT]; L: 8.
8	interested in students understanding their environment, the	Place [PLA]; L: 8-9.
9	place they live, and exploring maps."	Exploring [EXP]; L: 9.
Q. 2: In your opinion, what pedagogical model characterizes the humanization and dynamics training of students?		

10	PEI: "It is the Constructivist model. Students start from a	Constructivist [CONS]; L:
11	background of experience, supported by social networks	10.
12	and the internet, which helps with dynamics and social	Experience [EXP]; L: 11.
13	interaction."	Social interaction [S-INT];
14	PBI: "The Cognitive model. Because it allows students to	L: 12-13.
15	experiment, discover, and evolve towards more elaborate	Cognitive [COG]; L: 14.
16	knowledge."	Knowledge [KNO]: L: 16.
17	REI: "One of the most used models is the Constructivist.	Constructivist [CONS]; L:
18	Because it allows students to analyze, reflect, and construct	17.
19	concepts according to their own criteria."	Concepts [CON]; L: 19.
20	STEI: "In my opinion, it is Humanism. This model guides	Humanism [HUM]; L: 20.
21	students to be more human and aware of the world they live	
22	in."	

	Q. 3: Please explain which pedagogical model is prioritized in your educational institution for delivering content in the subject of Social Studies?	
23	PEI: "Generally, in all subjects here, the Constructivist	Constructivist [CONS]; L:
24	model is prioritized."	23.
25	PBI: "The Traditional model is quite commonly applied.	Traditional [TRA]; L: 25.
26	However, the Cognitive Developmental model is also used."	Cognitive [COG]; L: 26.
27	REI: "The most commonly used model is the Constructivist	Constructivist [CONS]; L:
28	model because it allows us to receive the student's experien-	27.
29	ce as well as impart knowledge."	Experience [EXP]; L: 28.
30	STEI: "The prioritized models in this institution are the	Humanistic [HUM]; L: 31.
31	Humanistic and Social pedagogical models."	Social [SOC]; L: 31.

	Q. 4: In your opinion, what is the influence of pedagogical models on contemporary society?	
32	PEI: "The Constructivist model has greatly helped in all	Constructivist [CONS]; L:
33	subjects. It seeks to draw on the student's own experience,	32.
34	and the influence of social networks via the internet is not	Experience [EXP]; L: 33.
35	disregarded. Students consult online to learn more than	Understanding [UND]; L:
36	what the teacher teaches and to understand more broadly."	35-36.
37	PBI: "In my opinion, pedagogical models do not signifi-	
38	cantly influence contemporary society; there should be a	Not influence [N-INF]; L:
39	change."	38-39.
40	REI: "Pedagogical models positively influence both students	
41	and teachers. Previously, students were not allowed to	Positively influence [P-INF];
42	express their opinions. Now, learning comes from both the	L: 41.
43	teacher's information and the student's contributions."	Shared learning [S-LEA]; L:
44	STEI: "In my opinion, it is about being practical. It in-	43-44.
45	fluences students to work more with materials from their	Practical [PRA]; L: 45.
46	environment. However, in this context, parents do not adapt	Environmental resources
47	to the reality of new models. We teach in one way, and they	[E-RS]; L: 46-47.
48	see it differently. When we emphasize practical applica-	Not adaptation [N-AD]; L:
49	tions, they do not consider it necessary, but I believe that if	47-48.
50	we relate teaching to the environment we live in, students	Practical applications [PAP];
51	understand it better."	L: 49.

	Q. 5: What other aspects related to pedagogical models should be considered?	
52	PEI: "Today, students learn in a more didactic way. It is no	Didactic way [DWY]; L:
53	longer the same as before; now students contribute their	52.
54	own opinions and perspectives. We need to find the most	Perspectives [PER]; L: 54.
55	practical methods for students to learn quickly and conci-	Practical methods [PME];
56	sely."	L: 54-55.
57	PBI: "From my point of view, it is important to instill more	Self-confidence [SCO]; L:
58	self-confidence in students."	57.
59	REI: "I believe that schools should implement a culture of	Culture of peace [COP]; L:
60	peace to address the issues arising in society, perhaps due to	58-59.
61	failures in home upbringing. A program should be imple-	Coexist peacefully [CPE];
62	mented where students learn to be tolerant and to coexist	L: 62.
63	peacefully."	Projects [PRO]; L: 63.
64	STEI: "I think we need to focus more on projects. Children	Understanding [UND]; L:
65	rely more on this approach rather than textual learning	65.
66	alone. They need to understand the concept and then apply	Unknowledge [UKN]; L:
67	it in practice. For example, in Social Studies, many children	67-68.
68	do not know their own canton. It is important for them to	
69	visit and recognize their parish, canton, etc."	

Source: own elaboration

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Summary of Interviews

The collected opinions reveal both convergences and divergences among the educational directors. These perspectives were coded, resulting in the saturation of codes and theorization. Concerning the use of contemporary pedagogical models, there is confirmed interest in applying them through timely and contextually relevant classes. Emphasizing experiences and innovation, teachers go beyond the use of government textbooks. The humanization aspect of pedagogical models is based on students' experiences, which are focused and oriented through critical and reflective analysis during the teaching-learning process.

Another notable factor in current pedagogical models is the introduction of technological tools and constant use of the web, allowing students and teachers to expand their knowledge without educational boundaries. The prioritization of pedagogical models in educational institutions is directed towards constructivism, humanism, and social pedagogy. However, traces of a traditional model still persist in some institutions, potentially indicating a lack of updated pedagogical knowledge.

These models positively influence students' experiences and understanding, the environment, social networks, and social learning. Consequently, pedagogical models foster didactic and practical learning, boosting students' confidence and promoting a culture of peace. These interpretations were developed through the saturation of codes such as interest [INT], experiences [EXP], predisposition [PRE], constructivism [CONS], and practical [PRA], which were confirmed among the directors' various opinions and analysis units.

Discussion

The data aligns with the research by Vergara and Cuentas (2015), which states that "different strands conceptualize and contribute to pedagogical models that have served and continue to serve as references for carrying out various educational processes, some adopting new models while others remain attached to traditional models" (p. 916). Similarly, Orozco (2015), emphasizes that no single model is superior to others. It is recommended to use each model carefully, with critical evaluation, adaptability, and specific educational objectives to address the challenges faced by society.

However, the results of this research differ from the analysis by López and González (2018), regarding the diversity of pedagogical models. They argue for establishing a single pedagogical model without falling into the trap of adopting educational methodologies solely out of tradition or excessive innovation. There is a need for common pedagogical lines in educational centers to avoid diverse methodologies based on teachers' interests, beliefs, concerns, or levels of commitment, ensuring greater coherence and consistency in education (Forbes et al., 2024).

Pedagogy and basic Social Studies education aim to educate individuals to become civilized beings who promote respect among their peers and all living beings and the surrounding envi-

ronment. From this perspective, Valencia (2004), mentions that: "The teaching of social sciences should occur in learning environments where students test their constructed understandings, refine, transform, or replace them to understand the surrounding world with increasing complexity and depth" (p. 93).

Pedagogy in Social Studies teaching should be interactive and dynamic. Long content often becomes boring and tedious, hindering the understanding of the topics covered. Abreu et al. (2021), mention that "pedagogy expresses the internal, essential, and stable connection of components where students' interactions with reality and other people are organized in interdependent stages and phases according to social needs" (p. 135). Human beings are sociable by nature, highlighting the importance of understanding Social Sciences from early education.

Pedagogical models in Social Studies guide students in the teaching-learning process, allowing them to delve into understanding life in society, politics, religion, established boundaries worldwide, historical trajectories of peoples, etc. Jiménez (2020), emphasizes that "Modern pedagogy organized the results of its studies into a unitary knowledge system, constituting its epistemological base and, indeed, its own objective theories" (p. 14). Today, pedagogical models are more interactive, utilizing various technological tools.

Pedagogical models will remain relevant in the teaching-learning process, always considering all models. Emphasis is placed on one model based on what is being taught and the type of students. Constructivism is the most utilized model today, aligning best with the formation processes and aiming to foster intellectual development for a thinking, creative, and innovative society (Gutiérrez et al., 2024; Hewko, 2024).

Conclusion

The research revealed significant findings related to the application of pedagogical models in Social Studies teaching. Most surveyed teachers believe that the pedagogical model characterizing humanization training and student dynamics is the constructivist model. This indicates a preference for educational approaches that promote active knowledge construction by students.

The cultural aspect was highlighted by many teachers, who believe it should be actively addressed in Social Studies. This underscores the importance of fostering cultural and societal understanding in the educational process. Additionally, opinions were divided regarding the influence of pedagogical models on contemporary society. These models impact group dynamics and seek to address local, regional, and national issues.

Regarding interview results, some directors mentioned applying the Constructivist model for humanization training. Others use the Cognitive model, focusing on evolving students' knowledge. The Humanist model, which fosters humanization and global awareness, is also applied in education. Constructivist models, in particular, are effective at these stages as they promote disco-

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very and curiosity, helping students to form foundational understandings of community, culture, and civic roles.

Pedagogical models positively impact learning and formation. Directors shared diverse ideas, such as the need for innovation to facilitate quick and concise learning, fostering students' self-confidence, implementing programs promoting a culture of peace and tolerance, and emphasizing project-based learning to help students understand their environment.

The teaching of Social Studies in basic education has significantly evolved through various pedagogical models, which aim not only to transmit knowledge but also to foster civic, critical, and participatory competencies among students. In the current educational context, traditional approaches centered on the memorization of historical and geographical facts are being replaced by constructivist and participatory models. These promote active learning, where students build their own knowledge through interaction with their environment, critical reflection, and collaboration in group projects.

Pedagogical models in the classroom has facilitated the creation of more dynamic, interactive, and adaptive learning environments, catering to diverse learning paces and styles. These changes reflect a shift towards a more inclusive education, focused on the holistic development of students. The application of pedagogical models in Social Studies varies across different sublevels of basic education, adapting to the developmental needs and cognitive capacities of students.

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Statement