Rural Education in Peru: A study of its performance, physical and digital infrastructure, gender, linguistic, and social and cultural development

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Rural Education in Peru:
A study of its performance, physical and digital infrastructure, gender, linguistic, and social and cultural development

A Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Liberal Studies

by

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Abstract

Rural and indigenous education in Peru significantly differs from its urban counterparts. The physical and digital infrastructure, gender-based education, linguistic neglect, and sociocultural discrimination that rural and indigenous communities’ education receive profoundly affect performance. This thesis aims to showcase these characteristics through case studies, comparing different government and community projects to understand their development in these areas. These cases explore different aspects of the educational situation of the Huallatiri, San Antonio de Cusicancha, and Quispicanchi communities in the Southern Peruvian Andes. Through these analyses, this study portrays the intersectional characteristics of educational development in rural and indigenous communities and how they become successful as they incorporate an inclusive pedagogical and methodological approach.
Acknowledgments

This thesis was made possible by my family and community’s help, inspiration, and love. First, I dedicate this to my parents, Giuliana and Claudio. Their love is my primary motivation, and their sensibility and wit are my best inheritance. To my siblings, Amirah and Fahed, for keeping me in constant awe and admiration of the people they have become. To my grandparents, Consuelo and Jorge, your love and wisdom created my earliest memories of Peruvian and Latin American pride, becoming the cornerstone of my cultural understanding. This is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother, María Olinda. I dedicate this project to my families: the Foreros, the Buchelis, the Loras, and the del Aguilas. Their love and protection, in Lima and Orlando, guide me. Moreover, I want to thank my friends, especially Nicolás, Santos, Pialuz, Emma, Matías, and Chewie, for loving me so deeply that I could never feel alone, not even while half the world away. Lastly, I especially want to thank my partner, Victoria, who became my new home and whose love and patience centered me through this process.

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Esta tesis solamente ha sido posible con la ayuda, inspiración y amor de mi familia y comunidad. Esto va dedicado a mis padres, Giuliana y Claudio. Su amor es mi principal motivación, y su sensibilidad e inteligencia mi mejor herencia. Para mis hermanos, Fahed y Amirah, quienes constantemente me sorprenden por su calidad y desarrollo como personas. Para mis abuelos, Consuelo y Jorge, por inculcar en mí el amor al Perú y a Latinoamérica con su amor e inteligencia desde sus historias. Ustedes han forjado mi manera de entender a mi cultura. Este proyecto va dedicado a la memoria de mi abuela, María Olinda. Quiero agradecer a mis familias: los Forero, los Bucheli, los Lora, y los del Aguila. Su amor y protección, en Lima y en Orlando, me guían. Además, quiero agradecer a mis amigos, sobre todo a Nicolás, Santos, Pialuz, Emma, Matías, y Chewie, por encontrar formas de amarme y acompañarme a medio mundo de distancia. Por último, quiero agradecer a mi novia, Victoria, quien se convirtió en mi nuevo hogar y cuya paciencia y amor me centraron a lo largo de este camino.

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Introduction

My initial understanding of the differences in education in Peru came from the stories shared by my family members who have worked as teachers and professors in various schools and universities in Lima. My maternal grandmother was a primary school teacher and a college professor in the public sector until the 1980s. On the other hand, my mother is a preschool teacher and a college professor in a private college, and my father is a professor at a private college. Similarly, on my paternal side, my late grandfather was a college professor at a public university. According to their stories, the lack of resources and methodological support defined their experiences in public education. In contrast, the education they could impart in the private sector was met with the characteristics necessary to create a thriving environment.

However, as I started to meet people from rural and indigenous backgrounds, I realized that additional setbacks separated education in Lima from other places in Peru. As a profoundly centralized country, Peru is full of stark contrasts and opposing identities. Life on the Peruvian coast, especially in metropolitan Lima, in predominantly Spanish-speaking and affluent white and mestizo communities, is the hegemonic ideal after which educational plans and objectives are set. Contrarily, rural communities in the Andes and Amazon, especially those with indigenous heritage and in underdeveloped conditions, become disenfranchised by this system. Moreover, the rampant racism of Peruvian culture, especially in Lima, usually scorns the culture of socially indigenous peoples, even though it is a large part of its national imaginary and historical heritage. In this context, rural and indigenous communities were never fully incorporated into the national education project, creating more significant gaps in their development. Thus, the
inspiration for this thesis came from understanding how this cultural context influences their access to education and how things can improve.

Initially, this thesis aimed to define how the Peruvian government and society were purposefully failing rural indigenous education through a malicious lack of investment or outdated methodologies. However, further research indicated that plans to address these problems were not only being currently implemented but that an intercultural and bilingual perspective has been a priority for decades. While the historical inequality afflicting indigenous and rural education is still present, many small victories are reasons to be hopeful for a future in which indigenous languages are preserved, rural education serves indigenous peoples within their cultural context, and equality for intersectional identities is attained. Thus, the focus of this project shifted to understanding its development from five main characteristics: performance, physical and digital infrastructure, gender, language, and society and culture. To this end, this thesis presents different cases to explain this historical evolution, including the Kukama Kukamiria people in Loreto and the communities of Lampián and Huayopampa in Lima. In addition, more comprehensive studies on the communities of Huallatiri in Puno, San Antonio de Cusicancha in Huancavelica, and Quispicanchi in Cusco are at the core of this project. These cases illustrate the development of specific problems with rural education, their causes, the community efforts to overcome them, and the results of these projects. Implementing these projects was mainly the labor of rural and indigenous communities. However, the methodological, resource, pedagogical, and organizational support of the
government, primarily through the Ministry of Education, and of independent researchers and educators were also vital.¹

The first segment of the thesis, a study of the state of modern education in rural Peru, starts by defining the institutional differences between rural and urban education in the country and the current guidelines by which rural and indigenous education is imparted to address this issue. Subsequently, it establishes the performance differences between rural and urban education, accounting for intersectional ethnic and gender identities to establish the need for a dedicated study of rural and indigenous education. This is followed by proposing an expanded definition of infrastructure that understands the need to consider digital and communication technologies as enablers of the spaces for education. To continue, the study establishes the gender-specific sociocultural struggles of rural women when pursuing education. After, the thesis explores the need for a pedagogical methodology and perspective inclusive of indigenous languages and considers them at the core of culturally inclusive education, understanding them to be alive cultures beyond a historical heritage. Lastly, the first section of this project establishes the sociocultural importance of education in rural and indigenous societies as a means of communal development and cultural preservation, challenging its original ethos of submission to a hegemonic ideal to understand education as a tool for ethnic preservation and resistance.

¹ The case studies in this thesis owes much to the experiential research and first-person interactions of Nataly Yamilé Carreón Cuba and Elva Luz Cornejo Falcón, who explored the case of Huallatiri, Carlos Enrique Huarcaya Pasache, who worked in San Antonio de Cusicancha, and Rosa María Mujica, who was involved in Quispicanchi. The theoretical and project-based studies of the Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, specifically those contributed by Patricia Ames and Carmen Montero, were also vital in understanding the situation of rural education in Peru.
The second section of this thesis is devoted to laying the groundwork to understand the case studies’ political, cultural, and geographical context. All the cases are located in the Southern Peruvian Andes, a region where rural and indigenous ethnicities and communities are prominent, especially Quechua and Aymara. The first case, the Huallatiri Rural Educational Network, takes place in Moho, in Southern Puno, a region comprised mainly of Aymara speakers. The second case, San Antonio de Cusicancha, is located in the Southern part of the Huaytará province in Huancavelica. Lastly, the third case, Quispicanchi, is an impoverished community located in Eastern Cuzco.

In the third chapter, three cases—Huallatiri, Cusicancha, and Quispicanchi—are studied based on their performance, physical and digital infrastructure, gender, linguistic, and social and cultural traits. In Huallatiri, the study of pedagogical performance and indigenous language-inclusive education showcases the inherent relationship between pedagogical linguistic approaches and results. The imposition of a language not understood by the community results in poor educational performance. In Cusicancha, the relationship between social appreciation for education, dedicated spaces, and technological resources is tight. As students, teachers, and parents create spaces to participate in education, they become closely appreciative of it. Lastly, the study of a gender-inclusive educational approach in Quispicanchi highlights the meaningful ways in which pedagogical changes can influence female students, and teachers, to become more participative in education and society at large.

There should be as many iterations of projects for relevant intercultural and bilingual education in rural and indigenous communities as there are indigenous communities in the country. The linguistic and cultural diversity of Peru, a country with
forty-five recognized indigenous languages, begs for a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the rural communities it aims to serve. The needs and characteristics of a Quechua-inclusive educational plan, a language with significant national and international presence, will differ from those of the Kukama Kukamiria community, a language struggling to survive in the upcoming generation. Thus, the study of rural and indigenous languages presented in this thesis is limited to a generalizing understanding of the issues they endure, grouping these diverse communities under a more understandable and representative indigenous identity. While the author could not communicate with rural and indigenous communities during this study, the plentiful literature was essential in overcoming this limitation.

Rural education can be a significant development tool for indigenous communities when designed within their worldview instead of being an imposed project based on hegemonic perspectives. To further develop this idea, this thesis aims to comprehensively understand rural education in specific communities, including its context, implementation, philosophy, and methodology. By analyzing the national state of rural education, including its physical and digital infrastructure, gender, linguistic, social, and cultural contexts, a panoramic overview of its historical development is presented to provide insight into specific cases. The study focuses on Huallatiri, Cusicancha, and Quispicanchi communities and highlights how sociocultural differences are essential to understanding their educational development and perceptions. For example, communities that have managed to become a part of a network count with different resources than those who attempted to implement new changes in perspective on their own. Similarly, schools that have focused on gender-inclusive and indigenous
language-centered education have seen a more homogenous development of their educational system.

Promoting a hegemonic interpretation of rural education from a detached point of view is unproductive and destructive. Instead, I argue for alternative pedagogical plans based on community intervention and inclusive perspectives, which can catalyze positive change in the educational realm and within the economic, social, cultural, and linguistic development of rural and indigenous communities. The insertion of a perspective aligned with the community can make implementing new education systems a smooth and appreciated process since the social struggle between formal education and rural communities lies primarily in the lack of common goals. Therefore, the relevance of this thesis lies in its integration of the history, theory, and reality of rural indigenous education to understand how current plans can address these issues and how future projects can work with them effectively.
1. **Education in Contemporary Rural Peru**

Peruvian education is considered to be in a developing stage. Contemporary efforts to close the gap in access to formal education and achieve universal reach and literacy have been comprehensive and fruitful yet unfinished. Still, they have historically lacked the vigor, resources, and methodology to prevent rural communities and poor students from being left behind. In this sense, defining factors to equal quality education, such as performance, physical and digital infrastructure, gender-inclusive perspective, linguistic diversity, and sociocultural relevance, still primarily affect negatively historically disadvantaged and oppressed communities.

Regional divisions become an accurate predictor of the disadvantageous factors that hinder access to quality education in historically oppressed communities. The geographical and political context of urban and cosmopolitan cities helped develop more expansive and better-funded educational networks than those mainly composed of rural, poor, and indigenous communities. This situation further deepens the personal and communal economic divide that exists between the urban and rural world, Lima and other regions, and indigenous and *mestizo* cultures. While the lack of quality and equal access to education is a main concern historically addressed that attained progress on a national scale, the specific situation of rural, indigenous, and non-Spanish speaking students and student-age people is still at a disadvantage. Pedagogical, methodological, linguistic, and funding issues became representative of rural education, and efforts to solve these problems usually lack a culturally nuanced perspective to become relevant within the communities they are proposed for. Moreover, given the expectations for women in rural
communities and their vulnerability against different types of violence in this context, rural women are significantly affected by the gaps in the educational system.

Constitutionally, the Peruvian education system aims to be universal. The Ministry of Education, or MINEDU, ensures that every citizen can access compulsory education and strives to provide it at no cost, also overseeing cultural, recreational, and athletic programs to aid in the growth and development of Peruvian youth.² The current general guideline MINEDU has proposed is the National Educational Project (PEN or Proyecto Educativo Nacional), which has different regional adaptations considering the country’s social and economic disparities. There are two iterations of the program. The original, promoted during the presidency of Alan García, was projected to function between 2007 and 2021. The updated plan, promoted during the presidency of Martín Vizcarra, was designed to set the guidelines for Peruvian education until 2036.³ The new plan focused on the perspective of community-based education as a citizen-building mechanism instead of an instructive model, the incorporation of new technologies in pedagogical methodology, and the key relevance of community and family actors in educational development.⁴ Given the community-oriented perspective of the plan, the

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Ministry of Education delegates regional and local governments the responsibility of adapting, promoting, and implementing this plan. Nonetheless, this objective is still far from being accomplished in terms of its universal reach and equal educational and infrastructural quality, gaps that are mainly represented in the situation of rural and indigenous language-speaking women.

The educational system in Peru can be divided into urban and rural depending on the characteristics of the localities they serve. Rural schools are those located in towns with less than 2,000 residents and a distance of more than 30 minutes to reach the CPC (Capital Provincial más Cercana in Spanish, nearest provincial capital in English, which are communities with more than 2,000 residents); any school in a town with more than 2,000 residents and closer than 30 minutes away from a CPC is considered urban. Other interpretations of the definition of rurality in the Peruvian context define rural populated centers as those where there are no more than 100 adjacent households and that are not the capital of a district. However, communities of over 100 households can still be considered rural if they are dispersed and do not form blocks. The groups defined by both definitions almost completely overlap, but the first definition is mostly used for educational and social studies contexts, while the second one defines rural communities in political and formal classifications. Both understandings of rurality present that Peruvian education majorly happens in rural institutions. By 2015, rural schools represent

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5 Claudia Felipe and Lucía Vargas, “Caracterización de las escuelas primarias multigrado castellanohablantes en zonas rurales del Perú,” Aportes para el diálogo y la acción (Lima, Perú: Grupo de Análisis para el Desarrollo, 2020), http://www.grade.org.pe/creer/archivos/Art%C3%ADculo-Caracterizaci%C3%B3n-CREER-Final.pdf.

6 According to Montero and Uccelli, this distinction is used in administrative settings to avoid overestimating the quantity of rural communities in the country. Carmen Montero and Francesca Uccelli, “Ruralidad y Educación en el Perú” (Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia, y la Cultura (UNESCO), 2020), https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223(pf)0000374789 : 5.
64.6% of basic educational institutions in the country; while urban schools, on the other hand, only represent 35.4%. However, the distribution between urban and rural schools in different parts of the country is unequal, as it represents the disparities in economic funding and development between regions and mimics these problematics.

The largest concentration of urban schools in Peru can be found in Metropolitan Lima, one of the largest cities in Latin America and the country’s political and economic capital, at 98.8% and Callao, the largest port city in the country and one of the largest in South America, at 100%. On the other hand, the distribution of urban and rural schools in the provinces of the region of Lima, is 61% versus 39%, respectively. Similarly, Loreto has one of the largest concentrations of rural schools in the country with 77.6%, second only to Huancavelica with 78.4%, and it is also the region with the lowest percentage of educational coverage at 66.8% at all levels and one of the highest percentages of livability in areas of difficult access. It is no surprise that Lima, including Callao, is considered the most economically competent region of the country; while Huancavelica and Loreto are the least competitive, including the lowest scores in economic and infrastructure competencies according to the Peruvian Institute of Economy in 2021.

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8 Lima is both the name of the largest city in the country and the region that includes it. The provinces of Lima are comprised of newer districts outside of the capital and historically rural poor communities characterized for their up-and-coming economies and subpar infrastructure development. This study was conducted in 2015. Other results Piura and Lambayeque having the most proportionate division with less than 2.5% difference between rural and urban schools. Aníbal Sánchez Aguilar, “Principales Resultados de la Encuesta Nacional a Instituciones Educativas de Nivel Inicial, Primaria y Secundaria, 2015” (Lima, Perú: Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, August 2016), https://www.inei.gob.pe/media/MenuRecursivo/publicaciones_digitales/Est/Lib1392/libro.pdf : 123, 124.
10 Different studies may consider Metropolitan Lima, the Provinces of Lima, and the Constitutional Region of Callao as different items of study, while some others, including this, might merge them as one region or
Additionally, as of 2022, Huancavelica and Loreto are included in the group of regions with the largest percentage of monetary poverty, as 41.3% of their residents lived below the poverty line and 36.5% of them are considered to be vulnerable non-poor, which means that lack economic safety and could be included within the poor population during negative economic cycles or because of personal factors such as illness or unemployment.\textsuperscript{11}

The correlation between economic development and the presence of rural education also relates to the type and level of education a person can attain in rural areas and poor regions. Rural schools have a larger institutional presence throughout the country but, individually, they each serve a more reduced number of students. In this sense, in impoverished areas, alternative systems of education become more prominent due to financial constraints. The most popular of these systems is multigrade teaching, which involves a single teacher serving multiple grades simultaneously, resulting in classrooms with students of different grades. This situation can be attributed to infrastructure limitations, the pedagogical distribution of classrooms in multigrade settings, and the population density of the school’s locations. Regarding the level of education, preschool, and primary education schools are better represented in rural areas, while secondary education is primarily present in urban areas.\textsuperscript{12} This means that urban


\textsuperscript{12} Basic educational institutions include pre-school, primary, or secondary education, or a combination of them. Peru’s compulsory education system has two stages: Primary (6-11 years) and Secondary (12-16
areas have disproportionately more access to specialized higher levels of education. At the same time, it becomes more difficult for rural students to pursue a complete education within their communities. Rural students' possibilities of reaching complete levels of education are greatly increased if they migrate to urban settings. Since education is one of the defining factors for economic production and labor placements, this situation enforces the cycle of economic underdevelopment for rural students and, especially, their communities. Therefore, the urbanity or rurality of the student’s context and the infrastructure education is imparted in heavily influence the prospect of providing quality education.

Disparities in pedagogical services are still detrimental to access to education for rural communities, but the efforts to provide universal services have accomplished positive results. High school enrollment increased 11.9% between 2001 and 2012. During the same period, access to pre-school education, fundamental for the social development of children, saw an even higher increase of 21.1%. While sustaining a moderate increase of 0.2%, the study establishes that 92.9% of children that should be in primary education were enrolled in it, the largest coverage of the three groups nationwide. However, these efforts are far from reaching every prospective student in the country. Especially, students from indigenous, non-Spanish speaking, rural, and poor communities are in disproportionately disadvantageous positions regarding access to formal education when compared to the national average. The socioeconomic divide is especially prevalent, with

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13 By 2012, 80.7% of children in secondary education age and 74.6% in preschool age were enrolled. Jopen, Gomez, and Olivera: 21.
only 54% of poor people reaching secondary education by 2012 compared to 80% of their non-poor counterparts. Similarly, only 64% of indigenous non-Spanish speakers attended kindergarten, compared to roughly 75% of the total, which would put Spanish-speaking children at an advantage, especially in social competencies.\textsuperscript{14} In Peru, these communities widely overlap, and the intersectional disadvantages presented to them become more prevalent as they identify with more than one of these identities. Considering the prospect of labor development and social capital provided by education in the Peruvian context, this situation further widens the economic and social gaps that rural and poor students, their families, and their communities are subjected to.

Although education has almost achieved universal coverage, especially at its most basic levels, there remains a persistent issue of school dropouts due to socioeconomic and cultural factors. School desertion is more common in rural and low-income families, further limiting the possibility of education for people from these backgrounds. For almost half of the dropouts, economic problems were the main reason for school desertion in 2015. Other prominent issues were a hostile family environment, household responsibilities such as unpaid labor, and lack of motivation.\textsuperscript{15} This situation affects a higher percentage of students from low-income households, rural students, and expecting teen mothers. It is essential to consider that rural female students are the largest group of

\textsuperscript{14} The poverty line, the amount of money a person needs to cover their basic needs monthly, was stated as 303 PEN as of 2014. Anyone who earns or is attributed more than that amount of money monthly was considered non-poor. The poverty line varies between regions, and urban and rural areas. As of 2022, the poverty line increased to 415 due to inflation and the cost of living. Carhuavilca Bonett, Abad Altamirano, and Huertas Chumbes, “Evolución de la pobreza monetaria 2011-2022.”: 52; Jopen, Gomez, and Olivera: 21.

dropouts as the issues that cause school desertion still have a gendered, social, and economic nature.\textsuperscript{16} Hence, while the gender and level of urbanization gap regarding access to education has been steadily closing, the disproportionate distribution of people without access to education is still a work in progress.

There are many reasons for the unequal access to education, especially the lack of economic investment in rural communities, the technical and structural difficulties in building secure infrastructure outside of Lima and the Peruvian coast, and the Lima-centered perspective on education and social development. But, in every iteration of this narrative, rural indigenous non-Spanish speaking children end up with the shorter end of the stick, having their possibility of accessing education hindered by the lack of support from the system. Thus, in the following subsections, I will study the different aspects of contemporary Peruvian education to understand rural children's systematic struggles when accessing education.

1.1. Performance

The differences in infrastructure, gender, language, and social traits in Peruvian education create performance disparities for individuals with diverse intersecting identities. The \textit{Programme for International Student Assessment} (PISA) becomes a rich tool for understanding how the context and identities of students influence their education. While Peruvian education's overall performance is poor, rural communities' performance is particularly underwhelming. Even though progress in access to education has been positive, the difference between urban and rural communities' educational performance is more pronounced than the international average. Similar teacher

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certification processes in disadvantaged and advantaged communities indicate that other critical factors contribute to the disparity in educational quality. For instance, the lack of pedagogical and methodological support for the multigrade structure in rural communities exacerbates the situation. Students in rural schools often have fewer teachers, which affects their learning environment, as they lack the same support as their urban peers.

Furthermore, students from indigenous language-speaking communities and backgrounds, especially those who are raised in Quechua-speaking communities, face unfavorable educational circumstances and conditions, as well as the lack of social and political support to receive relevant education to become competent in the pedagogical skills required at their age. Consequently, they become more likely to be illiterate than speakers of other languages, especially Spanish, which further hinders their educational opportunities and development in higher stages of education. Despite these challenges, Peruvian children value education and engage in healthy social and pedagogical habits, which hints at political and communal failures in structuring education as the main reason behind their poor performance.

Peruvian education is consistently ranked among the lower-scoring countries of the OECD members and partners under the international evaluation PISA.\textsuperscript{17} This


It is important to consider that students in Peruvian schools do not always reach secondary education and are not always in the school grade corresponding to their age. Therefore, the study of the proficiency level of students based on their age will reflect these circumstances. Jopen, Gomez, and Olivera, Sistema Educativo Peruano: Balance y Agenda Pendiente: 21.
evaluation provides a comprehensive overview of the education system in 79 countries. The assessment takes into account a minimum of 150 schools with 4,000 to 8,000 students aged 15 years old or above from each country. In 2018, PISA analyzed the results of 6,086 students from 342 schools in Peru, considering both rural and urban areas as well as various socioeconomic levels, which they categorized as advantaged and disadvantaged. Peru scored around 80 points lower than the average in reading, mathematics, and science, failing to reach average scores in all categories, especially in the percentage of top performers. Albeit underwhelming, PISA 2018 results show significant progress for Peruvian students compared to their performance in 2009. The average scores have risen from 370 to 401 points in reading, from 365 to 400 points in mathematics, and from 369 to 404 points in science. In this regard, the results of Peruvian education within PISA become a tool to highlight the performance failures of education from an urban and socioeconomic perspective and understand the gap between rural and urban students.

The impact of the progress of Peruvian education has improved the conditions of students across all demographics, but not equitably. The socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds of the students correlate to the significant gaps in access to quality education. In Peru, students from socioeconomically advantaged backgrounds outperform

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18 In the reading category, only 46% of Peruvian students reached or exceeded Level 2, which is 31% lower than the international average. Moreover, the percentage of top performers, those who reached Level 5 or 6, is only 1%, significantly lower than the OECD average of 9%. Only 40% of Peruvian students have a Level 2 or higher proficiency in math, compared to the OECD average of 76%. Additionally, only 1% of Peruvians attained Level 5 or 6, while the average for top performers is 11%. In science, compared to the average proficiency level of 78%, only 46% of students in Peru have at least Level 2 proficiency. Additionally, while the top performers percentage in the OECD is 7%, the number of Peruvians who achieved Level 5 or 6 is negligible. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development et al., “Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Results from PISA 2018 - Country Note for Peru,” Result Summary, Results from PISA 2018 (Paris, France: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2019), https://www.oecd.org/pisa/publications/PISA2018_CN_PER.pdf : 1 - 3.
students from disadvantaged families by 110 points on average across all categories, while the average across OECD countries is 89 points.\textsuperscript{19} Regarding reading proficiency, 3\% of students from privileged backgrounds attained Levels 5 and 6, while a negligible margin of students from underprivileged backgrounds reached this level. Furthermore, there was a notable 20\% gap in mathematics performance between students from socioeconomically advantaged and disadvantaged families, surpassing the average discrepancy of 14\% observed in OECD countries.\textsuperscript{20}

While students from advantaged backgrounds are consistently better performers across all studied countries, the difference in the distribution of Peruvian students’ performance exceeds the international average, showing significantly worse performance by rural students and students from underprivileged backgrounds. This study's outcome presents a glimpse of the consequences of the significant disparity in the availability of formal quality education. An amalgam of factors can be attributed to the unequal results of educational development, such as socio-economic status, geographic location, and the availability of educational resources.

A crucial factor that underprivileged and privileged students share is the quality of education their teachers receive. Surprisingly, only 72\% of teachers in schools located in

\textsuperscript{19} “Students are considered socio-economically advantaged if they are amongst the 25\% of students with the highest values in the ESCS (economic, social and cultural status) index in their country or economy; students are classified as socio-economically disadvantaged if their values in the index are amongst the bottom 25\% within their country or economy. Students whose values in the ESCS index are in the middle 50\% within their country or economy are classified as having average socio-economic status. Following the same logic, schools are classified as socio-economically advantaged, disadvantaged or average within each country or economy, based on their students’ mean values in the ESCS index.” Angel Gurría and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, \textit{PISA 2018 Results (Volume II): Where All Students Can Succeed} (Paris, France, 2019), https://doi.org/10.1787/b5fd1bb8-en: 55.

\textsuperscript{20} Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development et al., “Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Results from PISA 2018 - Country Note for Peru.”: 2, 4.
advantaged communities are fully certified, while 89% of teachers in underprivileged communities are. Moreover, both types of schools have a similar percentage of teachers with at least five years of professional experience, 72% in underprivileged communities and 81% in privileged communities.\(^{21}\) Hence, the difference in academic performance between disadvantaged and advantaged students can be more accurately explained by factors other than the quality of the teacher’s education. For instance, 26% of students in underprivileged schools attend institutions where the principal reported that the lack of teachers is hindering the school’s ability to provide quality education. On the other hand, only 9% of advantaged students attend such schools.\(^{22}\) Therefore, it can be inferred that the inability to offer quality education to students from underprivileged backgrounds can be attributed primarily to socioeconomic factors and not the teaching staff’s training level.

The 2015 educational census conducted by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics found that there is a significant difference in the number of schools with one teacher, multigrade teachers, and at least one teacher per grade in rural and urban areas. Urban areas have 25.1% of the schools, with 79% having at least one teacher per grade, while 25.1% of educational institutions in rural areas have at least one teacher per grade. This indicates that urban areas have better access to quality education compared to rural areas.

\(^{21}\) “Certified teachers are those licensed to teach in a school based on the standards defined by national or local institutions. The goal of teacher certification is to guarantee that schools are staffed with quality teachers; but critics argue that certification might be ineffective or impose burdensome requirements. In general, research finds a positive association between teacher certification and student achievement”. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, “Chapter 4. Teachers and Support Staff,” in *PISA 2018 Results: Effective Policies, Successful Schools.*, vol. 5 (Paris, France: OECD Publishing, 2020), https://doi.org/10.1787/ca768d40-en : 92.

The study did not provide conclusive information on why there are more fully certified teachers in rural communities than in urban communities, or about why the percentage of teachers with at least five years of experience is higher in urban communities. Nonetheless, it is possible to extrapolate through this data that teacher’s qualifications are not a critical cause for differences in educational performance in urban and rural communities.

\(^{22}\) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development et al., “Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Results from PISA 2018 - Country Note for Peru.”: 5
while only 0.5% of schools in urban areas have just one teacher, and 16.4% have multigrade teachers. In contrast, 74.9% of schools in the country are in rural areas, with only 36.4% having at least one teacher per grade. Most rural schools, 51.1%, are multigrade, while 6.9% have at least one teacher per grade. Since there are three times more rural schools than urban, most schools with just one teacher (99.6%) and multigrade teachers (90.3%) are in rural areas, while most schools (79.3%) with at least one teacher per grade are in urban areas.23

The popularity of multigrade education in rural communities can be attributed to the lack of educational centers and professionals in those areas. Urban communities have a higher density of student-age residents and, therefore, can justify the presence of more teachers in their more populated schools. Contrarily, it is difficult to argue for the need for a teacher for every grade in rural communities due to the lower number of school-age children and residents and the distance between rural towns and more densely populated areas, where teachers are mainly located. Additionally, teachers are not encouraged to become employed in rural communities. Reduced wages, limited mobilization, lack of institutional support, and sociocultural discrimination against rurality make it unattractive for teachers to migrate to rural areas for work, further worsening that problem. Therefore, the potential of rural education is not completely explored in the rural context given the socioeconomic, pedagogical, and administrative constraints.24 Although teachers in urban

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23 Sánchez Aguilar and Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, “Principales Resultados de la Encuesta Nacional a Instituciones Educativas de Nivel Inicial, Primaria y Secundaria, 2015.”: 127
24 According to Eleanore Hargreaves and Carmen Montero, “in the Peruvian case, multigrade teaching is closely associated with an impoverished educational service, of poor quality, with deficient resources and lacking a capacity to promote learning.” Moreover, “self-instruction and guided learning are not encouraged, mainly because of the lack of pedagogical materials to support such learning. Peer-tutoring is not encouraged either, and teachers seem to miss opportunities to utilise the range of abilities present in any one classroom.” E Hargreaves et al., “Multigrade Teaching in Peru, Sri Lanka and Vietnam: An
and rural areas have similar levels of certification, the system schools use to assign teachers, whether by design or necessity, is a better indicator of student progress.

Besides the level of rurality of their communities and economical and institutional constrains, indigenous rural that speak languages such as Quechua and Aymara face significant additional educational challenges related to their linguistic heritage. Private schools, which are predominantly Spanish-speaking and may even offer bilingual instruction in foreign languages, show that 76.8% of students can read at a 4th-grade level. In contrast, only 8.5% of students in Aymara schools, 5.7% in schools that teach other languages and dialects, and a mere 0.3% in Quechua schools can reach this level on their own language. Furthermore, only 12.8% of students in multigrade schools, a common system in rural areas and Quechua-speaking communities, can achieve this literacy level. Traditionally, literacy in the Peruvian context has been linked to Spanish proficiency, but numerous factors other than the lack of political and pedagogical

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27 According to Alberto Escobar, founding member of the Institute of Peruvian Studies (IEP, *Instituto de Estudios Peruanos*), and Jose Matos Mar, the founder and former director of the Institute of Peruvian Studies, “Spanish was the language used in government-related activities and, as a consequence, it was also the language in which the schooling system was imparted, since it transmitted the consecrated values of the Spanish-speaking groups. It could be added that the traditional condition of citizenship could have only be acquired only after accrediting one’s literacy in Spanish. There was no system of regular
attention can explain the disparate literacy levels. Given the close relationship between rurality and indigenous culture in Peru, rural education challenges majorly overlap with the struggles of indigenous communities, especially those that predominantly speak Quechua.

Despite general underperformance, underdevelopment, and inequality, education is well-perceived by urban and rural students alike. Students' perspectives on bullying, misconduct, schoolmate cooperation, and loneliness are either on par or better than the OECD average. However, tardiness and absences are 28% and 14% higher than the OECD average respectively. Instead of an attitude issue, this might be related to out-of-school economic responsibilities and family situations. Nevertheless, students' perceptions of satisfaction with their lives, perceived teachers' enjoyment of their jobs, and attitudes toward resilience and growth are better than the OECD average. Students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds still consider education essential, even if they are deprived of quality opportunities. Therefore, personal interest is not a factor to justify their poor performance but a catalyst for resilience despite it.

In conclusion, Peruvian education has distinct features depending on whether it is from a rural or urban background. Despite overall progress in education, the gap between access and quality of education in urban and rural areas continues to widen. Although the teacher certification process is similar in disadvantaged and advantaged communities, education conducted in another language and the few experiments of bilingual education were just exceptions that were planned from the experience of the Spanish-speaking world. They had the final goal of transferring the indigenous language speakers into the general education system that was taught in Spanish, the official language. Alberto Escobar, José Matos Mar, and Giorgio Alberti, Perú país bilingüe?, 1st ed., Peru Problema 13 (Lima, Perú: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1975), https://repositorio.iep.org.pe/bitstream/handle/IEP/678/peruproblema13.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y: 54.

other factors contribute to the disparity in education. The distribution of teachers in rural areas plays a more critical role in providing an appropriate learning environment. Students in rural schools often have fewer teachers in their classrooms. In addition, students from indigenous language-speaking backgrounds, particularly those who speak Quechua, are more vulnerable to unfavorable educational circumstances and are less likely to be literate than other language demographics. Despite these challenges, Peruvian children still value education and engage in healthy social and pedagogical habits. Therefore, the poor performance of Peruvian students can be attributed mainly to socioeconomic factors.

1.2. Physical and Digital Infrastructure

Peruvian educational infrastructure is in a constant state of crisis. Numerous schools are located in old buildings made of unstable materials, which poses a severe threat to the safety and well-being of students. Unfortunately, the current level of investment is insufficient to address the problem, which means it could take up to two decades\textsuperscript{29} to solve this issue. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent national lockdown highlighted the importance of communication services as part of educational infrastructure, presenting difficulties in ensuring access to education. With schools closed, distance learning became the new normal, emphasizing the need for reliable internet connection and communication systems, currently unavailable for most students, especially those in rural and indigenous communities.

The Ministry of Education recognizes the need for immediate solutions to address the infrastructure crisis, particularly in rural areas. They propose that multicultural,

gender-sensitive, and sustainable environments are essential to establishing proper pedagogical infrastructure. To tackle this issue, the Ministry of Education has implemented various initiatives, including building new schools, rehabilitating existing facilities, and installing new technology. These solutions follow a perspective that recognizes indigenous educational spaces’ environmental, geographical, and sociocultural characteristics. Moreover, this approach brings an inclusive perspective on urban and architectural design that adapts to different realities and understands the role of the school as a point of social convergence. This situation was transferred to the digital realm during the pandemic, and implementing communication technology and infrastructure poised to respond to similar needs became imperative. These efforts aim to provide students with safe, modern learning environments that support their academic growth and development.

The lifespan and materials of educational buildings hinder students’ safe access to education. In 2015, 46.1% of educational institutions buildings were 21 years old or older, while only 30.8% of schools were built within the last decade. In urban areas, 23.8% of schools were built in the last decade, while 34.3% of schools in rural areas were built in the same timeframe.30 Only 58% of schools had walls predominantly made from brick or cement, while the rest were made of wood or sun-dried mud bricks (adobe). This percentage varied regionally, as 81.3% of urban schools had brick or cement walls, compared to 46.6% of rural schools.31 The quality and durability of educational buildings vary based on the architectural technologies and materials used, which are determined by

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30 Sánchez Aguilar and Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, “Principales Resultados de la Encuesta Nacional a Instituciones Educativas de Nivel Inicial, Primaria y Secundaria, 2015.”: 135
31 Sánchez Aguilar and Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática: 137.
the climate and soil types mandated by Peruvian laws. However, it could also indicate a
negligible allocation of resources for educational infrastructure.

As of 2022, 76% of the 54,800 schools in Peru require structural rebuilds or
demolition, and 21,100 of these are considered an extreme risk to students. Aside from
the inadequate infrastructure, the lack of access to usable water (40%) and electricity
(36%) also poses a significant obstacle to imparting quality and safe education. Experts
estimate that an investment of 110 billion Peruvian soles (PEN) (almost 30 billion USD
as of October 2023) would be necessary to address this situation. However, it would take
twenty years to fund the existing schools to function appropriately at the current annual
investment rate of 5.4 billion PEN (about 1.5 billion USD as of October 2023). In light
of these challenges, it is crucial for the central government and regional communities to
prioritize education infrastructure investment and consider upcoming social challenges
and their impact on educational infrastructure and services.

While physical infrastructure is a vital need for educational development,
technological advances demand a broader understanding of what infrastructure entails in
the pedagogical context. Especially, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance
of internet access as a critical educational service and infrastructure. The situation of Peru
regarding the pandemic was grim, as Peru's per capita death rate from COVID-19 was the
highest globally, worsening an already critical economic recession. The pandemic
forced educational development to halt from 2020 to 2022. Access to the Internet and up-

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32 Giese, “Infraestructura educativa, la otra pandemia del Perú.”
33 Jason Beaubien, “Peru Has the World’s Highest COVID Death Rate. Here’s Why,” NPR Goats and Soda,
to-date electronics and software became crucial in determining which students could receive a proper education and which would lose two to three years of formal education. According to OSIPTEL, 58.3% of rural households in Peru have no internet access, and 33.5% only have access through cell phones. Therefore, around 92% of rural households cannot fully support online education for children. The government has plans to address the lack of internet connection in rural areas by promoting the National Dorsal Fiber Optic Network. However, only five regions (Lambayeque, Apurímac, Huancavelica, Ayacucho, and Cuzco) obtained or used the necessary funding to expand the network.34 The situation described indicates that only 8% of children could continue their education under exceptional circumstances. Additionally, this means that, under normal conditions, only the same groups can use technology such as computers and the Internet for homework and additional learning. While the problem with physical infrastructure is urgent, the inability to access the Internet for classes is a detrimental situation that most students currently face.

The government has proposed several solutions to address the country’s need for more quality pedagogical infrastructure that considered economic constraints of rural communities. MINEDU has been committed to closing the gap by implementing Educational Institutions and Resource Centers in Rural Areas, known as Escuelas Marca Perú, since 2011.35 Escuelas Marca Perú aims to change the paradigms surrounding rural

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34 OSIPTEL, the Spanish acronym for the Supervising Organism for Private Investment in Telecommunications, is the governmental agency designated to oversee projects related to internet connection across the country. Humberto Campodónico, “El que no estudia, ¿triunfa?,” La República, October 7, 2020, https://larepublica.pe/opinion/2020/10/07/el-que-no-estudia-triunfa-por-humberto-campodonico.

35 Oficina de Infraestructura Educativa, Iván Jimy La Rosa Tong, and César Pereyra Chávez, Lineamientos Generales de Programación y Diseño Arquitectónico para Instituciones Educativas y Centros de Recursos
and indigenous education by focusing on new means of student-centered learning, designing educational systems and infrastructure from the material conditions of the communities, training teachers in multicultural and bilingual learning, and proposing new educational regulations that are open to different means of learning in diverse communities. In this sense, Escuelas Marca Perú becomes an infrastructural and methodological realization of the Intercultural Bilingual Education ethos that the Ministry of Education follows. One of the main focuses of this plan is to aid the pedagogical processes of schools with only one educator and multigrade schools. In some cases, this perspective is implemented by promoting collaboration through rural education networks and resource centers to function as hubs of administrative support. The shared cultural and linguistic heritage can become a means to incorporate common infrastructural resources for larger community networks while incorporating the community in developing these projects.

Escuelas Marca Perú establishes a relationship with the community surrounding the school through a diverse range of complimentary services. In infrastructure, it promotes designs considering topological, architectural, and climatological traits to

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ensure schools’ access to natural environments, accounting for their different soil and weather conditions. It also incorporates culturally appropriate designs for indigenous groups to develop effective educational programs and systems. Escuelas Marca Perú are proposed as intercultural, bilingual, gender-sensitive, and sustainable development spaces. The proposed approach establishes local environments where cultural characteristics, social structures, and economic constraints do not impede children from receiving quality education but become pedagogical spaces’ architectural and urban cornerstones. The Ministry of Education appropriately approaches the lack of educational infrastructure to ensure that these spaces are designed within native understanding and practices.

In conclusion, the current state of pedagogical buildings is not only an inappropriate space for optimal learning but also a hazard to the safety of the students, for which addressing educational infrastructure as essential for pedagogical development becomes imperative. Guaranteeing the correct function of electrical, sanitary, and internet services is essential to determine the habitability of educational infrastructure. Moreover, ensuring access to the Internet at school and home became a crucial part of pedagogical infrastructure. In this sense, Escuelas Marca Perú have exemplified the economic, social, and cultural comprehensive solutions needed to address the infrastructural problem of education. However, updated understandings of this issue after the COVID-19 crisis must include access to the Internet at school and home as a crucial part of pedagogical infrastructure.

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1.3. Gender

Since the 1960s, labor, pedagogical, and social modernization processes in Latin America have propelled the role of women outside of the family core and into the political and economic realm, broadening their access to health and education services. However, a social change regarding gender has reached more slowly, if at all, women from rural and indigenous communities. While women in urban areas reached an average of 8.4 years of school, women in rural areas only averaged 4.4 years. Similarly, while 6% of Spanish-speaking women lacked formal education, this percentage rose to 27% in Quechua-speaking women. This situation also intersects with socioeconomic status, as rural people are three times more likely to be considered poor than urban citizens. Thus, an intersectional feminist perspective of this issue shines a light on the disparate access to education, and the uses it has in different communities.

Part of this problem can derive from systemic differences in educational support, infrastructure, and quality in rural areas. However, while these differences can be the leading indicator for a person’s access to education, rural education is a fundamentally different experience for male and female students. The value of education in women's personal and public life is inherently intertwined with their rural and indigenous identities. Even when they find in education a means to escape situations of poverty or migrate to urban areas for better opportunities, their overlapping identities of indigenous women can be detrimental to their complete integration into this new society. Therefore, rural and indigenous women, especially native speakers of indigenous languages, are caught between a plethora of setbacks related to these intersecting identities. However,

40 This information refers to the 2007 Census. Ames, ¿Construyendo nuevas identidades?: 8 - 9
paradigm change in the perspective of rural women in education can bring positive results that promote their development within their communities.

Not all rural education is imparted equally, as gender is critical in determining the quality and possibility of education in the rural world. While most children between 6 and 11 years old are enrolled in school, the quality and accessibility of education widely vary by gender, resulting in many female students being deprived of a complete and quality education.\footnote{Patricia Ames and Carmen Montero, \textit{Las brechas invisibles: Desafíos para una equidad de género en la educación}, 1st ed. (Lima, Perú: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2006): 203.} Moreover, rural female children partake in a vicious cycle where the education they receive is interrupted by family and social life, depriving upcoming generations within their families of secure education. Historically, this is especially true for rural female children caught in a vicious cycle where their education is constantly interrupted by family and social life, depriving the next generation within their families of a secure education. Sociocultural expectations in rural and indigenous communities about the interconnectedness of the value of education within labor create a gap that excludes rural females from receiving a quality education compared to their urban counterparts.\footnote{According to a study conducted by Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, urban women have the largest amount of years in school in two out of the four age groups studied (12 to 14 years old and 18 to 24 years old), the same amount as urban men in one group (15 to 17 years old), and slightly less in one group (25 to 29 years old). Ames and Montero: 211.} Rural females have historically faced harsher setbacks in obtaining education and other fundamental rights, such as the lack of sexual education that results in teenage pregnancies, sexual violence at the hands of State agents,\footnote{During the government of Alberto Fujimori, thousands of expecting rural women were forcibly sterilized illegally and without their consent as a governmental plan to limit the population growth of indigenous, rural, and poor people. Some of these women were also sexually assaulted and even raped by members of State-sponsored paramilitary groups. (Ames and Montero, \textit{Las brechas invisibles}: 204.)} domestic and
sexual violence, assaults, and even feminicide.44 Therefore, the drive to receive education for rural women not only relates to economic expectations but also aims to break free from gender discrimination and oppressive dynamics that stem from family projects and intergenerational systems.45

Certain factors in rural education can motivate young women’s participation and enhance their educational development. These include physical proximity to school, attending preschool, being in the appropriate age grade, avoiding grade repetition and, most importantly, having no out-of-school financial or family responsibilities that would cause them to work or remain at home for domestic labor.46 The perspective of rural families and communities on female roles and the importance of education are other crucial factors that affect the participation of rural women in education. For rural women, education can provide opportunities for social interaction not available to the uneducated, which can redefine their family and community roles.47 Even if educated parents prioritize their family's education, the community's assigned roles for rural young men and women can affect their access to education and employment opportunities.48

The gendered perspective on education can be exemplified in implementing literacy as a skill devoted to rural public and private life for men and women, respectively. On the one hand, men are expected to apply literacy in communal organizations as a tool to be politically active, both by presenting demands to the community and by serving in the public offices that work on these issues. On the other
hand, women are expected to apply literacy in homely matters, especially helping children with their homework, even though they are also part of the agricultural work. This dynamic stems from, and further develops into, a gendered ambiance of school teaching and non-teaching spaces and activities, where male characters personify manual and political labor. At the same time, women are not represented in the productive force and are mainly relegated to secondary roles within the social, familiar, and religious.⁴⁹

Schools become a practicing playground for children to familiarize themselves with social dynamics and stereotypes, establishing who should wield positions of power and who should be subdued by them from the start. These dynamics do not only replicate gender interactions but also help to establish class and economic dominance, for which rural parents can become at the same time resistant to formally educating their children and encouraged to participate in their education.⁵⁰ Rural communities have developed, perhaps by necessity and without a theoretical catalyst, into societies of democratized labor imparted regardless of gender. Still, rural communities’ educational systems diverge from this reality, further expanding the socioeconomic gap between rural men and women and reproducing a differentiated system of domestic labor that primarily becomes women’s responsibility.

In rural communities, education is often viewed as a way to escape the rural lifestyle. Rural jobs are primarily related to agriculture, fishing, and farming, so educated rural people often become overqualified for positions in their hometowns and are encouraged to move to larger cities. Additionally, rural areas overcome a productive

⁴⁹ Ames and Montero: 257, 262 - 264, 267, 268, 272, 276, 277.
⁵⁰ Ames, ¿Construyendo nuevas identidades?: 27
diversification process that elicits economic and industry changes. As a result, roughly half of the country's rural families economically depend on agricultural and non-agricultural activities. Given these economic circumstances, even when considering the social, institutional, and cultural setbacks it is still advantageous for rural young people to migrate. Those who move to cities face discrimination, unequal treatment and wages, and gender-based violence. Rural students, especially females, are faced with a difficult choice: to abandon their indigenous cultural, linguistic, and ethnic roots and pursue new economic opportunities or to remain loyal to their cultural heritage. In both cases, they become vulnerable to the dangers of being a women in a patriarchal society. However, in rural communities they are further oppressed by the lack of economic independence, while cities they become victims of sociocultural and ethnic discrimination. Thus, formal education often requires female rural students to refrain from incorporating these aspects of otherness into the homogeneous educational environment.

Since the rural world has a unique perspective on gender, homogenization also means that educated rural females must give up their cultural performance of

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51 Ames.: 28.
52 While studying the Chilean case of domestic laborers, also known as *empleadas*, Elizabeth Quay Hutchison found that young rural women would migrate to the city to turn their unpaid domestic labor into a source of income. In the city, the domestic services they provided to middle- and upper-class families were similar to those they would perform in their own family's household, and the *empleadas* would be treated as “part of the family.” However, class and ethnic differences made rural women vulnerable to violence in their workplace, especially sexual assaults. Gender and sexual violence were also common in the rural world. However, the lack of communal support and the sociocultural power imbalance in the city isolated rural women to a reduced number of possibilities to address this issue. In this sense, the dichotomic options of urban and rural domestic labor for rural women can elicit similar concerns and become similarly dangerous for them, with different layers of discrimination and vulnerability in urban settings but a greater chance of economic independence. Elizabeth Quay Hutchison, *Workers Like All the Rest of Them: Domestic Service and the Rights of Labor in Twentieth-Century Chile* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2021), https://library.oapen.org/viewer/web/viewer.html?file=/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/51208/9781478022183.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y : 1 - 14.
womanhood. Therefore, rural parents may be suspicious of formal education and regard it as a form of surrendering to urban hegemony. Nevertheless, parents, students, and communities can find educational value beyond socioeconomic mobility. They perceive it as a means of gender liberation and creating new gender identities for rural women. These aspirations can become central to developing the family core, the community, and a network of shared responsibilities. Where education is implemented with a culturally focused perspective and aimed at community development rather than individual, it is not seen as indoctrination against their heritage but as a means of developing modern dynamics within the rural world to achieve economic and social progress.

In conclusion, the Latin American process of gender liberation has not yet reached rural women to the same extent as their urban counterparts, and there are still many institutional and cultural obstacles to their education. The traditional role of rural women in the family and their communities imposes responsibilities that often clash with their academic development. Consequently, the perspectives of rural families and communities on education can significantly impact rural women's participation. The education gap also affects rural women's political and personal lives. Schools are the places where these relationships are first formed, and parents may hesitate to send their female children to school as a result. These issues persist even after education, as rural women face discrimination and gender-based violence, forcing them to downplay their cultural heritage. However, an education system that is sensitive to gender and ethnicity can positively influence rural women's development both within and beyond school.

54 Ames: 29, 30.
1.4. Language

Rural education faces a problem of language diversity. The supremacy of Spanish is a colonial remnant that still holds the socioeconomic signifiers that benefited Spaniards, *criollos*, and *mestizos*. Indigenous languages are still subdued to the hegemonic dominance of Spanish, especially in education. Indigenous people are coerced into forfeiting their language to ensure a smoother insertion in the urban world as Spanish speakers, which poses a threat to conserving indigenous languages and regional variations. However, indigenous languages are granted legal protection to ensure their continuity as cultural heritage and means of development, primarily through a constitutional article that recognizes them as official means of communication. Besides legal recognition, preserving indigenous languages has also been attempted from an economical-productive and sociocultural standpoint. In this sense, efforts to promote the

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55 Spanish has been the language of dominant sectors since colonial times because of the linguistic politics of the Spaniards and *criollos*, and it is still regarded as above indigenous. This system poses indigenous languages as “oppressed,” deeming their speakers as “backwards,” producing a state of diglossia: a situation of coexistence of various languages under different social status, as one of them is perceived as more prestigious against the other, that ends up being relegated. Marco Antonio Lovón-Cueva and Alexandra Paola Quispe-Lacma, “¿Quién tiene derecho a opinar sobre política lingüística en Perú? Un análisis crítico del discurso,” *Ikala, Revista de Lengua y Cultura, Universidad de Antioquia* 25, no. 3 (December 2020): 733–51.

56 Article 48 of the Constitution indicates that: “Spanish and, in places where they are predominant, Quechua, Aymara, and other indigenous languages are official languages according to the law.” (“Son idiomas oficiales el castellano y, en las zonas donde predominen, también lo son el quechua, el aimara y las demás lenguas aborígenes, según la ley.”) Oficialía Mayor del Congreso, “Constitución Política del Perú” (Dirección General Parlamentaria del Departamento de Relatoría, Agenda y Actas del Congreso de la República del Perú, September 17, 2018), cdn.www.gob.pe/uploads/document/file/198518/Constitucion_Politica_del_Peru_1993.pdf?v=1594239946.

Previous to the Constitution of 1993, Quechua became recognized as an official language of Peru by President Juan Velasco Alvarado in 1975. This decree aimed to “elevate the life quality of underdeveloped communities, promote national consciousness and integration, preserve the cultural ancestral legacy of the language, and inform indigenous people about their rights.” Since many Quechua speakers in 1975 were related to agriculture, this law would expand the reach of Velasco’s Agrarian Reform. Juan Velasco Alvarado, “Decreto Ley No. 21156 que reconoce el quechua como lengua oficial de la República” (Presidencia de la República del Perú, May 27, 1975), https://docs.peru.justia.com/federales/decretos-leyes/21156-may-27-1975.pdf.
preservation of indigenous languages in education have been fruitful, as languages like Quechua and Aymara have begun to be established in formal education systems up to higher education.

Bilingualism in Quechua and Spanish has historically provided lucrative opportunities for creating commerce channels between the Quechua and Hispanic worlds, particularly for rural indigenous workers and white landowners. Before the Agrarian Reform of 1969, being an indigenous Quechua-Spanish bilingual in some rural areas meant having the ability to be economically active without the interference of *mistis* - the bilingual *criollo* and white landlords that ruled over non-independent rural areas as owners of the haciendas.\(^57\) The bilingualism of this position rapidly attracted rural indigenous away from agricultural roles and into urban positions. While initially profitable for bilinguals in rural areas, leaving for urban areas reduced their chances of owning agricultural land and diminished their economic power for future generations.\(^58\) Bilingualism provided rural men with the possibility of urban development, but their position in urban contexts was not necessarily as lucrative or comfortable as their rural life.

Nonetheless, during this era, education was considered a gateway for rural men to escape the rural world and introduce themselves to the more economically competitive Spanish-speaking cities. Besides economic development, participation in urban social and cultural life granted previously indigenous and rural people access to different circles and


\(^{58}\) Cotler and Alberti: 61, 62, 68.
political, sociocultural, and educational benefits. It was not uncommon for rural indigenous Quechua speakers to seize the economic opportunities that using Spanish brought, for which the use of their original language became obsolete in the following generations. In this context, the promotion of economic activities that require cultural and linguistic adaptation to the hegemonic culture started a process of cultural diminishment and linguistic diversity endangerment.

Nowadays, education in Spanish, the hegemonic urban language, and Quechua, the most spoken indigenous language, present various social, cultural, and political differences. Historically, Peruvian education systems consider literacy as the ability to read and write Spanish. In this sense, Quechua-speaking communities, the second largest in the country after Spanish-speaking communities, are isolated outside the systems of urban education, law, consumption, and institutional participation. Even though Peru recognizes all indigenous languages as official, the universalization of literacy has historically comprised mainly teaching written Spanish to speakers of indigenous languages in a process of adapting to the hegemonic language. This process

59 Cotler and Alberti: 17.
60 Escobar, Matos Mar, and Alberti, Perú ¿país bilingüe?: 54
61 “Up until the 1980s, bilingual education had the objective of taking the student in a process of effective castellanización (i.e., to teach them Spanish, also known as Castillian for its place of provenance, the region of Castille), using indigenous languages during their first years of education to that end. The transition from the indigenous language to Spanish aimed to displace their mother tongue for a hegemonic and official language. While the weight of the educational activity focused on linguistics, the reason was related to cultural assimilation and even a process of evangelization.” Luis Enrique López and Ingrė Sichra, “La educación en áreas indígenas de América Latina: balances y perspectivas,” in Educación

Literacy, as the use of a logographic and phonographic system for linguistic reproduction and decoding, is not a universal requirement for language development. Until the conquest and evangelization, Quechua, Aymara, and other Peruvian indigenous languages developed as oral communication. Contemporary written Quechua and Aymara are adaptations of their phonetics into the Latin alphabet started by Spanish chroniclers and evangelists. Thus, the imposition of an alphabetical understanding of language to indigenous language speakers becomes a form of symbolic oppression. Peter C. Browning, “The Problem of Defining ‘Indigenous Literacy:’ Lessons from the Andes,” Íkala, Revista de Lengua y Cultura, Universidad de Antioquia 21, no. 3 (December 2016): 303–5, https://doi.org/10.17533.
historically excluded literacy in indigenous languages as a valid form of oral and written tradition, further endangering languages already at risk of being lost.\textsuperscript{62} In this way, most legal, political, and educational contexts use Spanish as the de facto language for official communication.

Nonetheless, indigenous languages are a vital part of rural education. In rural areas and indigenous communities, indigenous languages like Quechua, spoken primarily in the Andes, and Aymara, spoken mainly in the Amazon region and Southern Andes, are still widely used and legally recognized as fundamental parts of social and cultural life at any level of education. Besides Quechua and Aymara, forty-five other indigenous languages are still being spoken, albeit to a lesser extent, for which many are at risk of endangerment and extinction.\textsuperscript{63} By 2015, Quechua was the mother tongue of 9.9\%, 13.6\%, and 14.8\% of teachers in kindergarten, primary, and secondary education,
respectively. This number increased to 19.2%, 18.5%, and 19.6%, respectively, when considering only rural areas and decreased to 5.7%, 7.7%, and 12.3% respectively when considering only urban areas. Similarly, teachers with Aymara and other Amazonian languages as their mother tongue reached 3.6%, 6.1%, and 3.3%, respectively, in kindergarten, primary, and secondary education. This number rose to 9%, 9.9%, and 5.3%, respectively, when considering only rural areas and decreased to 1.1%, 1.4%, and 2.2%, respectively, when considering only urban areas. Nowdays, implementing indigenous languages in educational spaces is a legal measurement of cultural accommodation, mainly in rural areas where most people speak it. Although the percentage of people speaking indigenous languages natively is not majoritarian, having bilingual speakers is typical for rural areas and small cities in the Andes and Amazon.

Historically, sociocultural and economic discrimination has hindered the use of indigenous languages. Younger generations of indigenous people living in rural areas are less likely to grow up speaking their native tongue, as they hope to assimilate culturally into urban areas and gain greater economic opportunities. Linguistic discrimination poses a significant deterrent for indigenous language speakers to use their language in public spaces and pass it down to future generations. In this sense, one of the main solutions to the looming threat of extinction for indigenous languages is a new inclusive social understanding of them.

This is the case of the Kukama Kukamiria community in Loreto. For three generations, native speakers of their namesake language have steadily declined. They cite social discrimination as one of the main factors for this loss. In Iquitos, near the Kukama

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64 Sánchez Aguilar and Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, “Principales Resultados de la Encuesta Nacional a Instituciones Educativas de Nivel Inicial, Primaria y Secundaria, 2015.” : 129
Kukamiria’s communities, Spanish speakers derogatorily referred to indigenous people as “indios Cocama” (indio referring to Indian, and Cocama being a mispronunciation of Kukama). In previous generations, native speakers were physically abused to prevent them from using their language, so they stopped teaching it to younger people and started using it clandestinely. By 2017, less than 12% of the community had their native language as their mother tongue. This community's linguistic issues worsened due to contamination of nearby rivers Marañón, Tigre, Urituyacu, and Huallaga. However, there has been a growing appreciation for indigenous languages' historical, cultural, and educational significance as an integral part of indigenous societies. It is now understood that speaking their native language would greatly benefit indigenous people for social, communal, and familial reasons. Introducing indigenous languages in rural areas would also bridge the gap between older monolingual generations and their younger successors, who are likely to speak Spanish before any other language.

In this context, rural communities found in indigenous languages a powerful social and political tool to resist adverse situations. The Kukama Kukamiria community strengthened its social network as a countertactic to prevent environmental damages to the Amazon, and implemented their language in the political conversation that propelled this momentum. After the internal organization process, the community pledged to the normalization and recognition of their alphabet by the Ministry of Education in 2015. The

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community worked closely with other indigenous communities, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Culture, and are now represented by seven translators and interpreters registered in the Ministry of Culture. These newfound relationships gave them a better footing to start negotiations in new environmental disputes, such as the projects for the hydrocarbon lots 164 and 165, and the Amazon waterway.67

According to Kukama activist Maritza Ramírez Tamani, the political process of linguistic recognition created a sense of belonging to the Peruvian nation at large within the community. Moreover, it represents a renewed relationship between the community and their ancestral culture, as its new state of protection guarantees that they are safe to use it in public and private spaces and reproduce it to new generations.68 The recognition of their language and the tangible benefits of organization within a network gave the Kukama Kukamiria community a reinvigorated pride and understanding of the importance of their linguistic and cultural heritage. Moreover, it presented them with socioeconomic benefits to creating this network and political avenues to guarantee the development of their community.

Educational barriers to learning indigenous languages are still high, as teachers lack the formal education and pedagogical support to include indigenous language literacy in their curricula. However, social and academic efforts by students and professors alike to incorporate Quechua and Aymara into higher education and academia at large ignited a newfound interest in institutionalizing indigenous languages. In the last

68 Maritza Ramírez Tamani, “Contra El Silencio.”: 69 – 70.
decade, taking university classes and presenting theses in indigenous languages became possible at undergraduate and graduate levels of education. In 2017, Vicente Alanoca Arocutipa, a professor at the Universidad Nacional del Altiplano in Puno, defended what is recognized as the first doctoral thesis in Aymara, *Los aymaras de Ilave* (Perú), at the Universidad Pablo de Olavide in Spain. ⁶⁹ Similarly, in 2019, Roxana Quispe defended the first doctoral thesis in Quechua ever accepted by the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, *Yawar Para, Kilku Warak’aq, pa harawin pachapi, Qosqomanta runasimipi harawi t’ikrachisqa, ch’ullanchasqa kayninpi*, a study of the poem compilation *Yawar Para* (Rain of Blood) by Andrés Alencastre Gutiérrez, also known as Kilky Warak’aq. ⁷⁰

In both cases, using indigenous languages became an effective praxis to promote a nuanced and immersive understanding of indigenous cultures in higher education, elevating their status as a cultural framework for generating knowledge beyond their common perception as a mere subject of study. When scholars engage academically in indigenous languages, they promote the viability of an education system that recognizes indigenous knowledge as academically valid and acknowledges the relevance of indigenous culture to academic development as equal to Spanish.

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⁷⁰ The original title of the thesis can be translated to Rain of Blood, transfiguration and singularity in the poetic Quechua of Cusco-Harawi’s Kilku Warak’aq. José Vadillo, “El quechua se reivindica y alcanza el doctorado en histórica Universidad San Marcos,” *Andina Noticias*, October 16, 2019, https://andina.pe/agencia/noticia-el-quechua-se-reivindica-y-alcanza-doctorado-historica-universidad-san-marcos-769876.aspx. Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos is the oldest and longest continuously functioning official university in the continent, earning it the alias of *Decana de America*, or Dean of America in English. It is continuously considered one of the best universities in Peru.
In conclusion, the dominance of Spanish prevails in cultural and academic spaces to an extent that endangers the survival of indigenous languages in education. To indigenous and rural communities, bilingualism is vital for cultural and economic development, as it has historically advantaged indigenous communities in participating in businesses between indigenous and non-indigenous parties. Communication in Spanish became a way to access national social and political spaces unavailable in indigenous languages. The unequal footing in which indigenous languages stand, and the poor economic development of rural areas, have forced bilingual indigenous people to migrate to urban settings, where they raise their children in majorly Spanish-speaking communities. To guarantee their full citizenship, indigenous parents may opt out of communicating with their children in their original languages, leading to a cultural and linguistic generational divide. However, this adverse situation is currently being challenged by a strengthened relationship between indigenous languages, cultures, and sociopolitical organization.

While still on a minimal scale compared to the Spanish hegemony in education, indigenous languages became a prominent part of the pedagogical curricula in all stages of education. In this context, younger generations lead the efforts to bridge the linguistic gap and reconnect with their communities through their language. Success cases, such as the Kukama Kukamiria community and the indigenous-language theses in higher education, demonstrate the potential for an academic environment that includes and benefits from indigenous languages. Moreover, it is a consequence of the sociopolitical relevance that indigenous languages have in indigenous communities. Therefore, the
urgent need for a diverse educational plan to prioritize linguistic diversity becomes instrumental in developing indigenous communities and preserving their culture.

1.5. Society and culture

The complexities of rural education in Peru are multifaceted. Rural education becomes defined by the socioeconomic, political, geographical, cultural, and pedagogical characteristics of rural and indigenous communities. Formal education can be a positive experience from an individual perspective but can impair rural communities at the same time. Rural education's methodology is rarely optimized to serve the children from within their communities' culture, language, and needs, leading to parental hesitation about pursuing education for their children. Additionally, formally educated rural people encounter social and cultural setbacks that hinder their development; they can be neither entirely accepted in an urban setting compared to their urban-educated counterparts nor fully realized while engaging in labor they are overqualified for in a rural setting. However, a comprehensive and culturally sensitive community-based pedagogical perspective can diminish these setbacks while providing a space for rurally educated students to develop within their communities.

The development cases through education of Lampián and Huayopampa in Lima illustrate how an education based on local culture can elicit sustainable development. Lampián demonstrated that rural education and urban work experiences can help develop and reorganize a community, albeit by creating a privileged social segment. Huayopampa, on the other hand, showcased an example of equal development, where a comprehensive educational program boosted the cultural and economic evolution of the entire community and diversified labor roles in a rural environment, creating a cycle of
pedagogical participation where previous students became teachers for future
generations. In both cases, comprehensive pedagogical plans explored universally
beneficial growth through education by implementing culturally, linguistically, and socially comprehensive pedagogical plans.

Culture and community values are defining factors in pursuing education in Peru. The achievement of educational goals is influenced by four main factors, all related to the student's family and community: the family's educational background, the mother tongue of the student and community, the socioeconomic status of the household, and the current educational situation of the student. These factors interact with three main components of educational institutions: infrastructure; institutionalism, pedagogical plan, administration, and extracurricular activities; and teachers. While these factors are prevalent throughout all Peruvian students, sociocultural identities are necessary for an intersectional understanding of education enrollment and success.

Access to education can vary significantly between urban and rural communities. Historically, educational opportunities have been focused on urban development, leading to a concentration of resources and institutions in urban areas. In this context, the private educational market that boomed in urban communities in the 1990s has not reached the rural context to the same extent, limiting the parent’s ability to choose the educational institutions their children should attend. Moreover, access to alternative types of

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72 According to Montero and Uccelli, as of 2019, almost all schools (99%) in rural areas are public, whereas in urban areas, a considerable number of primary schools (53%) and secondary schools (49%) are private. It's important to note that the quality of private education is not necessarily superior to that of public education. Instead, the disparity in these statistics demonstrates the extent of private investment in
education is less common in rural areas, making education focused on learning disabilities and adult schooling almost exclusive to urban areas.\textsuperscript{73} Thus, education became a means to replicate socioeconomic divisions that disadvantage rural and indigenous communities and prevent them from developing with the same opportunities as their urban counterparts.

In rural areas, parental expectations about school tend to be simpler than those in urban areas. Rural parents decide whether to send their children to school based on the school’s ability to teach literacy, particularly in Spanish, and the availability of teachers during that school year. If these conditions are not met, parents may choose not to educate their children formally at all. Rural communities that fail to provide an environment where education can be considered the best option for parents tend to rely on informal means and spaces of education, especially based on experiential learning that would aid them into becoming productive members of their community, such as housekeeping, agricultural and farming activities, and social activities with other community members.\textsuperscript{74}

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\textsuperscript{73} Carmen Montero and Francesca Uccelli, \textit{De ilusiones, conquistas y olvidos: La educación rural en el Perú}, First, Perú Problema 72 (Lima, Perú: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2023): 79.
Rural schools often struggle to provide the necessary resources and environment for the success of young rural students due to their social and familial environment. These institutions frequently lack safe and engaging infrastructure, adequate educational materials and equipment, trained educators, culturally diverse curricula, up-to-date teaching methods, and pedagogical planning for multigrade teaching, which became the norm in rural areas by necessity. Multigrade education, when employed through a pedagogical plan, can elicit plenty of cognitive and non-cognitive benefits for students. However, the lack of methodological institutionalization in rural educational institutions renders its use as a missed opportunity.

The methodological differences are not the only ways rural and urban education differ, as education plays different roles in their communities. Formal education has historically been a propaganda tool to maintain and propagate the existing social order in rural areas. The heavily stratified Peruvian society holds almost immutable categories that separate the rural and indigenous to a second class of citizenship, and glorifies urban and metropolitan culture over the rural and indigenous. These categories are defined by ethnic and racial constructs, intrinsically related to aspects of rurality and language, and mediate the social relationships, media, professions, and education of Peruvian

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76 Multigrade education can have a myriad of benefits for students. It can foster a sense of belonging, support, and confidence in the classroom. Additionally, it can promote the development of a balanced personality in students and encourage relationships of mentorship. Further, it can lead to a better and deeper connection between students and teachers. Multigrade classrooms can also reduce anxiety in students, as they become more familiar with their teacher and classmates. Finally, it can create spaces for cognitive stimulation, which can further enhance the learning experience for students. Simon Veenman, “Cognitive and Noncognitive Effects of Multigrade and Multi-Age Classes: A Best- Evidence Synthesis,” *Review of Educational Research* 65, no. 4 (1995): 321, 322.
communities.78 Thus, the aim of rural education is to prepare students to assume roles that perpetuate the sociopolitical system that subjugates them, not only through the subjects taught but also via the employed pedagogical techniques.79 When considering the flaws of rural education’s current perspective, ethos, and delivery, it becomes apparent that, for rural and indigenous students, becoming educated does not match the benefits of abstaining from doing so. For rural students, partaking in education is perceived to lead to a life of submission to urban and advantaged classes in which their mains of sustenance are disenfranchised and become a point of conflict.80 On the other hand, not participating in it can provide more time to develop their communities and families through labor. Therefore, creating an educational program that considers indigenous and rural people's social, cultural, and economic needs is necessary to make it more appealing to those communities.

For rural students, formal education can become a vehicle to displace them from their traditional cultural settings and position them at the bottom of historically oppressive systems based on colonialism. The perspective presented by formal education to rural students is a biased version of society's history, viewed through the lens of the dominant classes. For these students, the ultimate goal of formal education is often to attain power and status rather than to apply the acquired knowledge to benefit their rural communities. The educational framework also perpetuates the colonial distinction

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78 According to Flores Galindo: "Racism is more than contempt and marginalization. It is an ideological discourse that underpins social domination and accepts the existence of races and the hierarchical relationship among them. Racist discourse in Peru structured itself around the relationship between whites and Indians and then disseminated to other groups. Colonial domination was the source of this paradigm." Alberto Flores Galindo, In Search of an Inca, First in English (New York, USA: Cambridge University Press, 2010): 131, 132.

79 Cotler and Alberti, Aspectos sociales de la educación rural en el Perú: 16.

80 Cotler and Alberti: 17.
between the "critical thinking metropolitan citizen" and the "passive rural peasant," assigning negative connotations to life outside the city. Consequently, education becomes a tool to enforce and promote the colonial mindset that has historically oppressed rural and indigenous communities while indoctrinating rural students into its acceptance and exercise.

Nonetheless, the changing paradigm regarding the understanding of the rural through a comprehensive approach acknowledging its developing dynamism and vitality has provided new perspectives on education for rural students. In this process, access to education exposes rural students to perspectives and frameworks unavailable in their rural environment. These perspectives are characterized by an extensive system of social differentiation with a wide range of roles, functions, and occupational diversity typically found in urban societies. Formal education provides rural students with the practical tools to break through barriers and migrate into the urban world, opening up new opportunities for both economic and educational purposes. However, rural students may face social and cultural challenges that cannot be overcome through education alone, leading to a loss of their rural and indigenous identities as they transition into urban society.

Education encourages rural individuals' prominent participation in political, social, and economic urban spaces. However, a common rite of passage to become accepted into these spaces is the neglect of their cultural and communal rural and indigenous heritage. This process can lead to a conflict of values and customs,

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81 Cotler and Alberti: 15 - 17.
82 Montero and Uccelli, *De ilusiones, conquistas y olvidos*: 63.
83 Cotler and Alberti: 30, 69, 78.
particularly causing rural men to abandon agricultural and other community-based economic activities.\textsuperscript{84} Implementing formal education in the rural world seldom represents growth for rural communities, but it usually offers individual economic development for rural students outside of their indigenous paradigms and values as they assimilate into the cultural and economic patterns of the urban world. This process tends to create an environment where rural educated individuals move away from their communities towards urban centers, where they work to develop urban economic systems and adopt urban consumer patterns.\textsuperscript{85} The flight of educated productive rural people leads back to the lack of development in rural areas, deepening the overconcentration of economic and social power in urban centers.

Successful educational programs developed by and for the community can significantly contribute to rural areas’ economic and political development while maintaining their social and linguistic culture. In such contexts, rural teachers play a critical role in achieving two key objectives: ensuring a comprehensive and effective educational process and representing the figure of the non-agricultural person in the rural world.\textsuperscript{86} Rural education faces a challenge in that it often leads to educated rural individuals leaving their communities. However, by implementing comprehensive education programs that foster a sense of community, rural areas can encourage economic growth while retaining their educated residents.

The cases of Lampián and Huayopampa, two small rural towns in Lima’s provinces, exemplify the different iterations of this phenomenon. Both communities have

\textsuperscript{84} Cotler and Alberti: 39, 45.
\textsuperscript{85} Cotler and Alberti: 97.
\textsuperscript{86} Cotler and Alberti: 68.
developed educational projects encouraging younger generations of students to invest in the local community after they complete their studies, albeit to different results given the levels of equality of the educational process. The educational projects of both communities were defined by different social and political journeys, but the economic development in which the study concluded demonstrate the importance of retaining educated students for the community.

Lampián is a rural town located in the valley of Chancay, province of Canta in Lima. Until 1930, the community functioned through global organization and service reciprocity, similar to the Inca labor systems. However, the subdivision of communal lands created political and social unrest in the community. Before this point, everyone had access to the community lands. However, new geographical denominations brought a new sense of ownership that would exclude future generations from the right to land ownership their parents had. Around this time, the Male Educational Center of the town appointed a new principal. He held the office from 1927 to 1937 and influenced the students to combine theories and manual labor, applying the learned knowledge to their everyday lives. This educational perspective reframed and enhanced their perspectives about their community and rural life from an educated standpoint. Influenced by this new perspective, a group of young students fought against the new parceling system.

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87 Cotler and Alberti: 97.
88 The Inca society did not exercise private property, and labor was comprised by systems of works for the State, mita, and for the community and ayllu (extended family and household), minka and ayni. These systems are still prevalent in some indigenous and rural communities. Fernando Belaúnde Terry, “El Mestizaje de la Economía,” Journal of Inter-American Studies 5, no. 4 (October 1963): 545–49, https://doi.org/10.2307/165176 : 546 - 547.
Unfortunately, the community did not receive their political gestures well and expelled these students from Lampián.89

During their expulsion, the students from Lampián had the opportunity to further their education in nearby cities, supported by government grants. They also became part of metropolitan networks that helped them secure lucrative artisan jobs and work in agricultural jobs, where they learned new techniques and got familiarized with new machinery.90 Meanwhile, Lampián was undergoing an economic recession. The community leaders pleaded for the educated students’ support. They offered them the town's main administrative and political roles to gain their favor, breaking the tradition of age succession into a technocracy led by the formerly expelled educated class. This new administration became instrumental in tackling intercommunal conflicts and the internal economic crisis, moving Lampián into an era of dynamic implementation of services, such as education, infrastructure, mobility, and sports services.

However, their development also deepened decades-old social inequalities through sectorized technological projects, the monopolization of internal resources, and the trades of private commerce in the capital.91 In the case of Lampián, the value of education is presented as the possibility for development. Nonetheless, the fundamental importance of equal education is unveiled when not all groups are educated equally. The educated group of students who went on to attain administrative positions were in an educationally advantaged situation against the older population from before the era of development of the 1930s and the younger population who endured the crisis. In this

89 Cotler and Alberti, Aspectos sociales de la educación rural en el Perú: 97 - 108.
90 Cotler and Alberti: 102.
91 Cotler and Alberti: 97 - 108.
case, disparate access to quality education can simultaneously provide communal benefits based on the technical expertise of the educated elite while also creating a stratified, unequal technocratic society.

In Huayopampa, a rural community in Huaral, Lima, education became a significant factor in driving community development ever since the implementation of their first school in 1888, built only with communal labor and resources. Education has strengthened their traditional governance structures, encouraging the community to reinvest in educational processes, equipment, and facilities. Education and labor are equally valued, as communal labor, solidarity, and collaboration are crucial educational goals. Local teachers believe that knowledge comes from intellectual and physical work, which are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, students should be prepared to engage in academic and labor activities.

The success of sustainable education in Huayopampa created a virtuous cycle of economic and pedagogical reciprocal investment. They reinvested their apple commerce profits into education to create a system that catered to rural life’s needs, resulting in generations of community teachers almost entirely comprised of previous students. In 25 years, Huayopampa reduced illiteracy rates from 6.3% to 1.1% and increased completion of primary education from 18.2% to 80.5%. This cycle created a social perspective of rural life beyond agriculture, as teachers represented engagement with the community from other positions. Moreover, educational development encouraged people to stay in the community instead of migrating. This success’ main characteristic is the social and

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92 Cotler and Alberti: 108 - 117.
93 Cotler and Alberti: 115.
community-oriented approach from which education is designed and promoted. Instead of focusing solely on uplifting individuals, this approach dignifies disenfranchised communities and promotes independent growth. Compared to the case of Lampián, Huayopampa's model has demonstrated the power of community-inspired equal and universal education and how it can propel a community's development.

To conclude, it is vital to recognize that socioeconomic, political, geographical, cultural, and pedagogical factors define rural education access and involvement. Formal education can bring positive results for educated rural students, but it can have detrimental consequences for rural communities. The methodology of rural education is not usually optimized to serve the children from within their communities' culture, language, and needs. Therefore, parents might even find it unnecessary. Moreover, formal education can promote harmful social and economic power relationships for rural people in urban settings. Thus, pursuing formal education represents a dilemma for rural individuals: should they venture into urbanity from a disadvantage or remain in a rural setting and engage in labor for which they are overqualified?

Rural educational programs have historically presented positive results for both the economic development and the cultural resilience of the rural and indigenous communities. Lampián demonstrated how rural education mixed with urban work can be a differentiating factor in establishing a developed class within a community. While educated people in administrative roles created socioeconomic differences, they became a beacon of modernity and development in the town. Huayopampa, another successful case, established an example of equal development. A comprehensive education program uplifted the community culturally and economically. It diversified roles in a rural setting,
creating a cycle of pedagogical participation. Previously benefited students became teachers for future generations. Culturally, linguistically, and socially inclusive pedagogical plans challenge the idea of formal education as a mere tool for ideological indoctrination. In these cases, integrating formative, productive, and inherently rural education becomes a propeller of culturally appropriate and sustainable development.

1.6. Closing Ideas on Contemporary Rural Education in Peru

To summarize, the shortcomings of the Peruvian education system are particularly pronounced in specific communities. While a continuously successful process, the almost universal reach of education lacks uniform development. As a result, the quality of education in rural communities, a group that broadly overlaps with economically disadvantaged, indigenous, and non-Spanish-speaking societies, is overwhelmingly lower than in urban, mestizo, and Spanish-speaking contexts. This disparity becomes exacerbated in historically disenfranchised regions of the country, such as the Southern Andes and the Amazon, which are home to a significant percentage of indigenous communities. These differences pose specific developmental challenges to education in rural communities, highlighted by disparate underperformance, and categorized in this thesis as digital and physical infrastructure, gender, language, and social and cultural issues.

The difference in quality between rural and urban education leads to performance issues, highlighting the disparity in the education system on a large scale. The comprehensive Programme for International Student Assessment describes Peruvian education as generally inadequate. Still, it clearly distinguishes the poor performance of rural and economically disadvantaged students compared to their urban and economically
developed counterparts. Although this trend was observed in all the countries studied, Peru exhibits wider gaps than the average, which is attributed to factors beyond the students' perception of education. In general, Peruvian students only excelled and demonstrated a reduced gap between students from different backgrounds in PISA regarding their attitudes toward education. Therefore, understanding the infrastructure, gender, language, and sociocultural characteristics of rural education is an essential means of explaining this situation.

The first factor to consider is the difference in physical infrastructure. Unlike urban educational infrastructure, infrastructure in rural communities is unsafe, incomplete, and insufficient. However, educational infrastructure's architectural and urbanistic design must be understood outside a city-centered perspective. Rural schools need to be designed to meet the spatial needs of their community and the material capabilities of their environment. For example, while using bricks and mortar is considered the standard for schools based on their relevance in Lima, its use would be environmentally detrimental and spatially hazardous in Amazon communities. This is because of the different insulation of the materials, levels of concentrations of people, modes of transportation, and spatial requirements. Additionally, representative infrastructure requires a gender-inclusive design perspective on access and use, as indigenous women face additional problems than men in their relationship to their spatial environment.

Digital and communication networks and technology are now deemed as crucial educational infrastructure. Despite the political and economic setbacks towards global connectivity, their importance became evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. As social
distancing became the norm, many rural communities lacked the digital infrastructure to engage in the mandated social isolation and continue their educational plans simultaneously. Since access to the internet, television, and radio was scarce, implementing government alternatives became impossible for many rural communities. Moreover, the government’s attempts to continue education via mass communication were shaped by a hegemonic ideal of the educational model, i.e., an urban perspective representative of Lima. Thus, rural communities, especially those majorly indigenous language-speaking, found those plans irrelevant and unhelpful. In this sense, implementing digital and communication infrastructure from a culturally inclusive perspective became imperative.

The struggles of female students are perpendicularly present across different socioeconomic strata, ethnic communities, and urban and rural settings. Nonetheless, an intersectional understanding unveils the particularities of education for rural women, as cultural, linguistic, and racial identities influence access to education and success in that realm. The role of rural women in their communities holds a double nature as a producer and nurturer. Rural women are expected to participate in socioeconomic activities related to agriculture and farming while still being almost entirely responsible for raising their offspring and, sometimes, even siblings and keeping up with unpaid household labor. In these communities, teenage pregnancy became a deterrent to access to education, and rural women are the group with poorer access to education nationally.

For rural women, access to education can become a beacon of hope that enables them to access less restrictive roles outside their communities. However, this situation often brings different setbacks, as rural women may face linguistic, ethnic, and cultural
discrimination in the cities. To fully incorporate themselves in the city, rural women are coerced into abandoning their indigenousness and adopting the language and culture of the city. This situation means that, under the current model, female students can never be women and indigenous successfully at the same time, as these identities become conflicting. However, feminist educational projects in rural communities successfully broke through this narrative to create empowering spaces for women within their rural communities. Educated female students became less prone to teenage pregnancies, which lowered their dropout rate. These plans encouraged rural families and communities to support female education as a means to develop the community as a whole and promote their full access to citizenship. Thus, ethnic and gender-inclusive education for female rural students became a means to assert their womanhood and indigenousness healthily.

The last two characteristics of rural education studied for this section are closely interrelated: language and sociocultural language. The language of the dominant classes in Peru is Spanish, and it has also become the lingua franca for political participation, social recognition, and educational development. For the longest time, literacy was inherently related to the ability to read and write in Spanish. Besides the language in itself, this system also perpetuated the cultural, moral, and social values of the dominant community and subjugated the ethnically disenfranchised indigenous and rural communities. In this context, various indigenous languages have become extinct or endangered, and the population of native speakers of the two most prominent indigenous languages, Quechua and Aymara, is shrinking with each passing generation. The loss of these languages also signifies the endangerment of the culture that carried them, as sociocultural traits of indigenous communities are encoded in their languages.
Currently, the hegemonic pedagogical context develops in Spanish. It is devoted to promoting the dominant urban and *mestizo* culture of Lima, leaving rural and indigenous students with the need to adapt to these circumstances when attempting to pursue education. However, sociopolitical revolutions made it a prominent matter to preserve, protect, and promote indigenous languages and cultures in the last half-century. This context enabled the creation of pedagogical methodologies that stem from the culture they serve. The Ministry of Education started to design and promote plans to make education relevant to indigenous communities and to serve their need for cultural reproduction to remarkable success. Still, this process is a work in progress that requires a comprehensive implementation addressing the performance, infrastructure, and gender issues previously discussed. The following sections will analyze real-life cases of rural and indigenous communities to determine the context, reasons, and projects related to the successes and failures of these educational plans.
2. Cases

This section will delve into three cases that showcase the institutional performance, digital and physical infrastructure, gender, language, and society and culture challenges that rural indigenous education is poised to overcome. The communities studied are located in Puno, Huancavelica, and Cuzco, in the Southern Andes, a representative region of the indigenous populations’ struggle for inclusive education. These cases will showcase attempted solutions to develop intercultural education in rural Peru and the diverse possibilities that stem from those projects.

The growth of Spanish in these communities can be attributed to sociocultural, economic, and political incentives. Indigenous people are encouraged, and often coerced, to learn Spanish to avoid discrimination, develop economically, and participate politically. Thus, implementing Intercultural Bilingual Education (EIB, Spanish for Educación Intercultural Bilingüe) aims to protect the communities’ heritage, promote development within their cultural environment, and preserve indigenous languages.

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94 Refer to figures 1 – 5 for information on geographical location.
95 57% of people in Puno, 80.8% in Huancavelica, and 74.7% in Cuzco identify as Quechua. In Puno, 33.7% of people identify themselves as Aymara, whereas in Huancavelica and Cuzco, only 0.1% and 0.4% do, respectively. Therefore, the overwhelming majority of their population, 90.7% of people in Puno, 80.8% in Huancavelica, and 75.1% in Puno, identify themselves as indigenous. Considering those identifying as mestizo (5.5% of people in Puno, 14.6% in Huancavelica, and 18.7% in Cuzco), which indicates being partly indigenous, the indigenous cultural hegemony in these regions becomes almost absolute. Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática and Francisco Costa Aponte, “Perú: Perfil Sociodemográfico. Informe Nacional,” Censos Nacionales 2017: XII de Población, VII de Vivienda y III de Comunidades Indígenas (Lima, Perú: Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, August 2018).
96 Bolivian scholar Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, after studying the former Incan empire areas of Northern Bolivia and Southern Peru, regards the “modernization of the indigenous” as a process of recolonization. Modernization incorporates indigenous people into the outskirts of society, but coerce them into leaving out their indigenous culture, signs, and languages. In response, she proposes that Andean societies must recognize their ch’ixi nature, their state as a space of superposing societies instead of an homogeneous melting pot. Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, Ch’ixinakax utxiwa: Una reflexión sobre prácticas y discursos descolonizadores, (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Tinta Limón, 2010): 5 - 8, 53 - 55, https://chixinakax.files.wordpress.com/2010/07/silvia-rivera-cusicanqui.pdf.
The cases presented will be understood from the perspective of EIB, the political realization of the diversity ethos the Ministry of Education holds currently. It promotes culturally relevant educational development within indigenous communities and guarantees quality education and training by setting diverse parameters according to their ethnic and cultural context. The government offers services, materials, and training incorporating modalities designed to close the pedagogical gap affecting historically excluded ethnic groups. The cases studied applied EIB policies to define different versions of pedagogical materials, curricula, and classroom spaces suited to the needs of the indigenous communities they served. Similarly, they develop additional adjustments to their methodologies and procedures to incorporate gender-inclusive perspectives, COVID-19-responsive emergency systems, and programs inspired by the socioeconomic rural and indigenous context. In this sense, implementing EIB into education becomes the framework of representative education in indigenous and rural communities.

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97 Schooling has been considered a “factory of citizens” during the last couple of centuries, aimed to reduce the multiplicity of Peruvian identities into a masculine, white, land-owning, literate, and modern ideal model. Eventually, these paradigms were challenged by the implementation of EIB in Latin America in the 30s, having Peru, Mexico, and Ecuador at the forefront of this sea change, but still maintaining the remnant of Spanish hegemony at its core. However, in the last three decades, these policies became institutionalized in the Peruvian case defined by a more critical political support for the preservation of indigenous language and culture. Zúñiga, *La Educación Intercultural Bilingüe: El Caso Peruano*; Sección de Educación de la Oficina Regional de UNICEF para América Latina y el Caribe, Margarete Sachs-Israel, and Cynthia Brizuela, “Educación Intercultural Bilingüe en América Latina: Avances y retrocesos en el marco de la pandemia de la COVID-19” (Panama City, Panama: Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia (UNICEF), 2021), https://www.unicef.org/la/media/22251/file/EIB-AMERICA-LATINA-SPA.pdf: 8.

98 The Document for the National Plan for 2021 establishes that: "From a pedagogical perspective, EIB seeks to guarantee the right of every person to education under their culture and in their mother tongue when this is a native language and the right of students from native and indigenous peoples to revitalize their heritage language. The development of EIB as a public policy seeks to guarantee a quality educational service that allows all Peruvian students to have the opportunity to build themselves as people and citizens from their own roots and cultural heritage, as well as from the recognition and appreciation of different cultures, allowing the affirmation of a national, Latin American and global identity. At the same time, it contributes to the construction of an intercultural citizenship in which all Peruvians can dialogue under conditions of equality and reciprocal respect and appreciation." Ministerio de Educación, "Plan Nacional de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe al 2021” (Ministerio de Educación, December 14, 2016): 4.

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Geographer Javier Pulgar Vidal determined the classification of Peruvian natural regions into eight regions, and it is considered a more comprehensive classification than the usual three-region system of Costa, Sierra, and Selva. His original thesis was presented in 1938, and a plethora of studies on the subject followed. For more information, refer to Beraún Chaca and Villanueva Fernández. John James Beraún Chaca and Helen Shirley Villanueva Fernández, “Clasificaciónde las regiones naturales del Perú,” Bulletin (Lima, Perú: Colegio de Geógrafos del Perú, 2016), https://cgp.org.pe/publicaciones/boletin3/83-09.pdf.
2.1. Huallatiri Rural Educational Network, Puno

The first case explores the pedagogical and linguistic situation of the Huallatiri Rural Educational Network (RER, *Red de Educación Rural* in Spanish) in Puno from 2011 to 2015.\textsuperscript{101} Puno has a unique linguistic situation that deviates from the national average. As of 1993, Puno was the region with the largest percentage of indigenous-language speakers in the country, with Quechua (43.2\%) and Aymara (32.6\%) as the most widely spoken languages. The region of Moho, where the Huallatiri RER is located, presented the largest percentage of Aymara speakers, 86.4\%.

However, the decreasing interest in Quechua and Aymara provides an insight into a generational shift. By 1993, considering all age groups above 5 years old, 75.8\% of the population were native speakers of Quechua and Aymara, while a mere 23.3\% were native Spanish speakers. However, the percentage of indigenous language speakers in these communities was not as high when only considering the youngest age groups. For people between 5 and 14 years old, the percentage of Quechua and Aymara native speakers decreased to 65.4\%, while the percentage of Spanish speakers rises to 33.6\%.\textsuperscript{102} This situation alerts that younger generations would not be able to speak indigenous languages as their mother tongue in the same rate as their parents.

\textsuperscript{101}This thesis, presented by Nataly Yamilé Carreón Cuba and Elva Luz Cornejo Falcón to opt for the title of Masters in Social Administration, is based on primary and secondary qualitative sources. The researchers interviewed faculty, staff, students, and family members of the community, and provided information from the Ministry of Education and related entities. Carreón Cuba and Elva Luz Cornejo Falcón, “Implementación de la Política en Educación Intercultural Bilingüe a través de Redes Educativas Rurales, periodo 2011 a 2015. La experiencia de la Red Educativa Rural Huallatiri, Puno - Perú” (Lima, Perú, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 2017), https://tesis.pucp.edu.pe/repositorio/handle/20.500.12404/8977: 73 - 79.

\textsuperscript{102}Andrés Chirinos Rivera, *Atlas Lingüístico del Perú* (Cuzco, Perú: Centro Bartolomé de las Casas del Ministerio de Educación, 2001): 149 - 151. In the region of Moho, the difference is not as pronounced but it still shows a decline of Indigenous language native speakers in the younger age group. In this context, 82.3\% of people from 5 to 14 years old are native Aymara speakers, a decline of 4.1\%, but still a strong majority. Chirinos Rivera: 151.
Similarly, the 2007 Census showed that, although the percentage of native Quechua and Aymara speakers in Puno remained high, native Spanish speakers had increased by 11.5% in just six years, representing 33.8% of Puneños. As a result, the percentage of native Quechua speakers decreased to 38.5%, and the percentage of native Aymara speakers decreased to 27.5%. This situation alerts of a declining trend in the region that can have a significant social, cultural and economic impact on indigenous rural communities like Huallatiri. As Spanish continues to spread, especially in urban areas, the gap between urban centers and rural communities that speak an indigenous language will become a more pressing matter, especially in the educational sphere.

By 2011, 17 schools were considered to be a part of the Huallatiri RER. In these centers, 46 teachers were assigned to 571 students. Eight of these schools were single-teacher schools, six were multigrade schools, and three were assigned at least one teacher per grade. Beyond the linguistic decline, this group of schools faces the challenges of managing a very limited number of resources to be able to impart quality education. Given this situation, this thesis proposes a methodological program for an educational network instead of a specific school, presenting comparable data within the same system. Additionally, the thesis explores the situation of the Aymara-speaking national minority in an environment where their language is the most spoken.

104 The Huallatiri RER comprises the communities of Altos Huayrapata, Collorani, Huallatiri, Huaranca, Sullca, Totorani, Quequerana, and Ninantaya in Moho and Huayrapata districts near Lake Titicaca, bordering with Bolivia. Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón: 62 - 68.
105 In the most imbalanced case, a sole teacher was responsible for 19 children at the Preschool Huallatiri Educational Institute in Huayrapata. Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón: 68.
Figure 3: Political map of Puno, including the province of Moho, where the Huallatiri Rural Education Network is. The province is located in the Eastern central part of the department, bordering Bolivia and Lake Titicaca.106

2.2. San Antonio de Cusicancha, Huancavelica

The case of San Antonio de Cusicancha in Huancavelica studies the influence of socio-pedagogical relationships in academic development during the COVID-19 pandemic. While it affected most of the country, rural communities faced additional setbacks related to the lack of professional support and infrastructure, access to up-to-date information, the impossibility of remote work, and financial disparities. In education, to compensate for the lost time out of school, the Ministry of Education created at home educational support plans. One of the most popular ones was giving classes through the show Aprendo en Casa (I Learn at Home), transmitted through the open-signal public government channel TV Perú. The show was a success, and it managed to provide lessons for different levels in Spanish and indigenous languages across the country. Similarly, schools and communities adopted complementary strategies, such as classes in video and text through WhatsApp group chats.

107 This thesis, presented by Carlos Enrique Huarcaya Pasache to opt for the title of Master in Anthropology and Andean Studies, is based on primary and secondary qualitative sources. The researchers interviewed both on-site and remote faculty, staff, students, and family members of the community, and provided information from the Ministry of Education and related entities. Additionally, Huarcaya Pasache became briefly a teacher in a classroom to better understand the pedagogical and family relationships of the students. The school is unnamed, but it is referred to by the name of the town it is located throughout Huarcaya Pasache’s thesis. Carlos Enrique Huarcaya Pasache, “Afecto y participación en la relación familia-escuela en tiempos de la COVID-19: El caso de un aula multigrado en la comunidad campesina ‘San Antonio de Cusicancha’” (Masters, Lima, Perú, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 2021), https://tesis.pucp.edu.pe/repositorio/handle/20.500.12404/19067: 42 - 49.

108 Arachu Castro, Director of UNDP’s Collaborative Group for Health Equity in Latin America, explains that “In poor rural communities [...], the difficulties differ from those of crowded urban-marginal areas. On the one hand, they are more distant from public services, particularly health facilities equipped to care for people who develop complications from COVID-19. On the other hand, [...] the poorest rural areas may be populated by indigenous communities whose rights are systematically violated, both in terms of access to opportunities and discrimination in health facilities.” Arachu Castro, “Respuesta a la pandemia de COVID-19 en poblaciones urbano-marginales y rurales en América Latina,” United Nations Development Programme (Latin America) (blog), April 15, 2020, https://www.undp.org/es/latin-america/blog/respuesta-la-pandemia-de-covid-19-en-poblaciones-urbano-marginales-y-rurales-en-america-latina.

San Antonio de Cusicancha is a small rural community that suffers from a limited access to technology, infrastructure, and connectivity. In 2017, the district had a population of 1665 residents, of which 400 lived in the namesake community. Their population and technological development have steadily declined since the mid-1980s due to Sendero Luminoso and State-sponsored acts of violence, including the assassination of citizens and political figures.\(^{110}\) Although some families returned after the attacks ceased, others migrated due to poor economic development, a crisis only worsened by the pandemic in later years.

The community relies on the Rumichaca River to connect with neighboring communities such as Tambo de Cusicancha and Santa Rosa de Rumichaca, agricultural sustenance, and open-air and domestic farming. Lack of technical support has limited the community's ability to use modern agriculture and farming techniques, resulting in outdated methods. Moreover, the impact of climate change has further affected their capacity, leading to their economic isolation from the rest of the region and deepening their technological gap.\(^{111}\) The broadening disconnection from nearby towns has limited the ability of Cusicancha to become part of rural economic and social networks. As educational infrastructure is already insufficient in the community, their means of pedagogical development during the pandemic were rudimentary and insubstantial.

\(^{110}\) In January 1985, Sendero Luminoso took over San Antonio de Cusicancha. They assassinated the community's president and a council member and tortured their families. They also destroyed technological equipment of the community's Development Corporation. Área de Gobernabilidad y Derechos Humanos - Instituto de Defensa Legal, El Umbral de La Memoria: Pasado, Presente y Futuro En Las Memorias de La Violencia En Huancavelica, First (Lima, Perú: Instituto de Defensa Legal, 2007), https://lum.cultura.pe/cdi/sites/default/files/libro/pdf/UMBRAL%20MEMORIA%20huancavelica%20IDL_0.pdf : 62, 63, 195, 286.

San Antonio de Cusicancha, as many other communities, could not get the full benefits from this program, as access to electricity, television, smartphones, and the internet was minimal and, in some cases, non-existent. This adverse situation prompted planned collaborative efforts between the community, teachers, students, and parents to provide education outside the traditional infrastructure. This process improved the relationship between families and educators, who were led to understand each other’s positions on content and methodology, thus subverting their previously estranged relationship. The pandemic-inspired educational policies coincided with the first stages of the project CREER. The program, based on a multigrade methodology, implements formative evaluation and efficient use of materials. Moreover, the project redefines students’ interactions from a gender-inclusive perspective, promotes integral sexual education, and trains educators through workshops and publications. In this context, education in San Antonio de Cusicancha underwent a complicated but innovative process of redefining its relationship with the community and educational infrastructure.

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112 Huarcaya Pasache: 1 - 6.
113 CREER is an acronym for Creciendo con las Escuelas Rurales Multigrado. It also serves as a wordplay of the word “believe” in Spanish. This is a project planned by Grupo de Análisis para el Desarrollo (GRADE, Development Analysis Group in English) in collaboration with Old Dart Foundation. Huarcaya Pasache: 2.
114 Grupo de Análisis para el Desarrollo, “El Proyecto CREER,” Institutional, CREER - Creciendo con las Escuelas Rurales Multigrado del Perú, 2022, https://www.grade.org.pe/creer/el-proyecto/#collapse6. Implementing a gender-based educational approach in rural areas is essential, as geographic location, rurality, and poverty can increase the likelihood of teenage pregnancies. In Huancavelica, the rate of adolescent motherhood and pregnancies among girls aged 15 to 19 increased from 14.5% to 15.1% in 2017, while in Metropolitan Lima, it increased from 6.2% to 9.6%. Moreover, the percentage of teenagers who get pregnant in rural areas is 23%, more than double the 11% rate in urban areas. Additionally, while only 4% of non-poor teenagers get pregnant, the rate jumps to 24% for their poor counterparts. Fondo de Población de las Naciones Unidas (UNFPA) and Instituto Peruano de Paternidad Responsable (INPPARES), “Embarazo en adolescentes y niñas en el Perú: Un problema de salud pública, derechos y oportunidades para las mujeres,” Seguimiento Concertado entre Estado y Sociedad Civil/MCLCP, Sub grupo de trabajo “Prevención del embarazo en adolescentes” (Lima, Perú: Fondo de Población de las Naciones Unidas (UNFPA) & Instituto Peruano de Paternidad Responsable (INPPARES), August 2018), https://peru.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Alerta%20embarazo%20en%20adolescentes%20y%20niñas%20en%20el%20Perú.pdf: 4 - 7.
Figure 4: Political map of Huancavelica. Huaytará, the district San Antonio de Cusichanca is located in, is in the South, bordering Ayacucho and Ica.115

2.3. Quispicanchi, Cuzco

Quispicanchi, in Cuzco, faces significant economic challenges that disadvantage the educational development of female students. Only 27.52% of the population is economically active, and most people engaged in agriculture earn a monthly income of 45.11 PEN (less than 12 dollars as of October 2023). Access to basic necessities is scarce, with only 17.44% of homes having running water and 30% having electricity. Lack of services and underdevelopment reached the tragic conclusion of child mortality rates of 113.41 per thousand.\textsuperscript{116} Comparing this rate to the national average of 15 dead children per thousand under the age of one,\textsuperscript{117} highlights the disadvantageous environment in which Quispicanchi’s children are raised and the challenges they may face. Investment in pedagogical development is not a priority compared to survival, creating a cycle of a deficient education system that influences impecunious life conditions. Consequently, 62.2% of the community is illiterate; a gendered issue considering that 20% of men in the community are illiterate versus 55.2% of women. Furthermore, 51.46% of people have not completed primary school, leading to 92.05% of pure and functional illiteracy.\textsuperscript{118} In these circumstances, the youth of Quispicanchi, especially the girls in the community, are unlikely to receive quality education and succeed in it.


\textsuperscript{117} Child mortality was higher in rural areas at 22 per thousand, compared to urban areas’ 13 per thousand. The mother’s education level impacted the chance of child mortality, as those who had only completed primary education had a rate of 22 per thousand, while those with secondary education had a rate of 15 per thousand. However, this difference could be explained by socioeconomic factors. José García Zanabria and Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, “Mortalidad Infantil y en la Niñez,” Demographic Report, Encuesta Demográfica y de Salud Familiar 2018 (Lima, Perú: Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, 2019), https://www.inei.gob.pe/media/MenuRecursivo/publicaciones_digitales/Est/Lib1656/pdf/cap007.pdf : 159, 160.

\textsuperscript{118} Mujica, “La promoción de la equidad de género en las escuelas rurales de Quispicanchi, Cusco.”: 288.
While the need for education institutions is urgent, the community lacks educational staff and relevant methodologies and content to bridge the gap. Of thirty schools studied, 20% had at least one teacher per grade, 30% had only one teacher, and 50% were multigrade. The schools’ methodology is unsuitable for the community’s needs, as the imposition of a written Spanish pedagogical system onto an oral Quechua culture creates a barrier to significant learning. In a community where the overwhelming majority has Quechua as their mother tongue (82%), and 100% of the people in bordering communities are native Quechua speakers, language barriers and the lack of programs in native languages become an obstacle to succeed in education.

Mujica’s study focuses on the impact of female students and how their educational development is impacted by their environment and vice versa. This study considered the Quispicanchi’s sociocultural, economic, and linguistic traits to understand their role in the educational development of the community’s girls, or lack thereof. They discovered that, out of 472 girls who started in the first grade of primary education, only 36 made it to the final year of secondary education. Additionally, most students are not in

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119 In schools with only one teacher and many multigrade schools, the teachers are also responsible for administrative tasks beyond their educational functions. Mujica: 288, 289.

120 Mujica: 289.

Colonial Spanish-speaking systems institutionalized Quechua by adapting it to an alphabetical codex. However, the original means of cultural reproduction of the language happened orally historically. Spaniards imposed literacy in Quechua to understand the indigenous. Currently, this linguistic blend creates bridges of communication and translation between two languages that do not share the same roots and means of codification. To understand the nature of Quechua, it is necessary to define linguistic reproduction as the sets of rites, representations, and traditions encompassing a practice of communication codification. Through this expanded perspective, literacy is not the ultimate evolution of a language but just one of the possible ways of its development. This framework deconstructs the idea of cultural supremacy of Spanish to propose Quechua, in its original orality, as a similarly fully fleshed language. Maria Teresa de la Piedra, “Hybrid Literacies: The Case of a Quechua Community in the Andes,” Anthropology & Education Quarterly, Indigenous Education from a Latin American Perspective, 40, no. 2 (June 2009): 111–12, https://doi.org/10.1111.

the corresponding grade to their age. Only 49.58% of female students were in the correct grade for their age in primary education's first grade, and that number diminished to 8.4% in the last year of secondary education. All of these factors create a perfect storm of disadvantaging identities for the poor rural female students of Quispicanchi, making it difficult for them to stay in school, succeed, finish, and progress afterward.

Figure 5: Political map of Cuzco, including the province of Quispicanchi at the center East, bordering Puno and Madre de Dios.  

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122 Ames and Montero: 290.  
3. Study of the cases

These cases are relevant for their conjoined understanding of education, society, and culture in rural, indigenous and impoverished communities. Education development succeeds through independent and government projects in these cases. Puno, Huancavelica, and Cuzco, as part of the Southern Andes, have a tumultuous history that still affects its development, as it has been severely affected by the violence of Shining Path and the State during the Internal Armed Conflict. Even before the conflict, indigenous people in these communities lacked political representation, economic development, and social integration with the rest of the country. The disconnection that stemmed from this situation isolated indigenous culture and languages, forging a cohesive cultural imaginary of the indigenous present as a society of resistance.

The region still faces ongoing sociopolitical discrimination, environmental challenges, and economic underdevelopment. In the past, social integration initiatives and educational projects have been considered methods for assimilating indigenous people into becoming oppressed by the dominant system, disregarding their unique cultural heritage. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of pedagogy through an indigenous-based perspective, especially under Integral Bilingual Education, can promote the development and conscious integration of the region to the social, cultural, and economic status quo on an equal standing, where formal education becomes a tool to preserve, enhance, and celebrate indigenous history and values.

125 Flores Galindo, *In Search of an Inca*: 205 - 216.
126 Rivera Cusicanqui, *Ch’ixinakax utxiwa: Una reflexión sobre prácticas y discursos descolonizadores*: 56, 57.
3.1 Educational Performance in Huallatiri

The lack of an indigenous-centered pedagogical plan was the main deterrent for Huallatiri RER’s performance. Before implementing the Bilingual Integral Education (EIB) system, there was a language disconnection between Aymara-speaking students and Spanish-taught classes in the Huallatiri Rural Educational Network. Teachers would give classes in Spanish and, instead of learning about the subject, students would spend their time learning the language. Teachers knew that this process would cause students to fall behind during the first year of education, but the system was never challenged. They lacked the administrative support to address the situation accordingly because they operated disjointedly from nearby communities in similar situations, thus suffering from a shortage of human and educational resources, such as teachers who know how to teach in Aymara and materials to provide a bilingual educational plan.

The EIB system addressed the sociocultural, linguistic, administrative, and methodological issues that caused deficient performance in the community. Firstly, students began to be taught subjects in their own language, and transposing that knowledge to Spanish became a secondary objective.\(^\text{127}\) Revindicating indigenous languages paved the way for creating curricula based on indigenous knowledge, which became another factor for performance development. Considering the limitations of these schools, this process was supported by culturally inclusive educational materials designed for multigrade learning in indigenous languages, such as books, class guidelines, and activities, which helped to make learning a more meaningful and relatable experience.\(^\text{128}\)

\(^{127}\) Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón: 93 - 100.

\(^{128}\) "Children [...] belonging to indigenous peoples learn better if they do so from their own cultural and linguistic references, ensuring their access to other socio-cultural scenarios, learning Spanish as a language for national communication, and learning a foreign language for communication in broader
Learning Spanish as a second language was no longer considered the main focus of indigenous education for the Aymara-speaking communities, but generating knowledge that applied to their context became the ultimate goal of their education.

The EIB model helped bridge the linguistic gap that had previously prevented students from being fluent in both their indigenous language and Spanish. This, in turn, helped guide them towards proficiency and literacy in both languages. By valuing and incorporating indigenous languages and culture into the educational process, the EIB model also promoted a greater appreciation for the heritage and community ties associated with the language. Moreover, it promoted a critical thinking approach to understanding social relationships with other rural and indigenous communities and with the larger national context, creating a cultural baggage that allowed the students to understand their society with more nuance.129

Additionally, building a network allowed teachers to engage academically from their own cultural perspective with like-minded educators to build similar curricula for students from similar backgrounds, resulting in beneficial learning outcomes. The process encouraged teachers to reach out to other educators in nearby communities, transcending the original theoretical goal of building a common set of pedagogical guidelines for the network into a fully developed social community. This network empowered teachers’ educational efforts in disenfranchised communities and gave them a space to share their processes, materials, and goals.130 According to the teachers, it became easier to

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129 Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón, “La experiencia de la Red Educativa Rural Huallatiri, Puno - Perú.”: 95.

130 Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón: 94.
incorporate the EIB methodologies as more teachers became part of the program, as peer support was instrumental to the planning and implementation processes.\textsuperscript{131} In this sense, developing a methodological inclusive educational perspective and network became a catalyst for bettering the educational processes and institutionalization of indigenous knowledge into education.

A key element for the success of this program was the implementation of ASPIs,\textsuperscript{132} nexuses between the Ministry of Education, DRE, UGEL, and the schools in the community.\textsuperscript{133} Having dedicated liaisons who understood the community’s cultural, social, and educational context and needs helped create a relevant pedagogical plan, as ASPIs guaranteed that EIB materials and curricula were properly modified to fit the sociocultural needs of the community. Generally, implementing a network to articulate all these parties proved to be a successful trait of the program that enhanced the reach of the Ministry of Education towards decentralization.

According to the Ministry of Education, EIB has not only benefited students, but the updated and customized management model and the intercommunal network it created also impacted indigenous families and rural schools’ teachers and administrative staff positively.\textsuperscript{134} However, the greatest success of this program is the change of

\textsuperscript{131} Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón: 97.
\textsuperscript{132} Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón.: 100.
\textsuperscript{133} ASPIs are the Intercultural Pedagogical Support Assistant, Asistente de Soporte Pedagógico Intercultural in Spanish. DRE is a Regional Educational Management Office, Dirección Regional de Educación in Spanish. UGEL is a Local Educational Management Entity, Unidad de Gestión Educativa Local in Spanish. Ministerio de Educación, “Plan Nacional de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe al 2021” (Ministerio de Educación, December 14, 2016): 3.
\textsuperscript{134} “Educational networks for rural areas is a functional and successful proposal. The main characteristic of rural schools is that they are small, multigrade, or comprised of only one teacher. There is not much to do with such small schools. But if they are organized in networks they work synergistically and are stronger in planning, training, and overall management.” Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón, “La experiencia de la Red Educativa Rural Huallatiri, Puno - Perú.”: 90.
perspective on education and indigenous languages in rural communities. On the one hand, parents are more inclined to support their children’s education if it is significant within their context. Similarly, teachers appreciate an intercultural approach that connects them to their students and other students, often collaborating with other teachers in the network. Moreover, students are encouraged to participate in an education that represents them, and students from Quechua, Aymara, and Auajún speaking backgrounds are among the greater beneficiaries of this program.  

This process created a divide between the rural indigenous communities that enjoyed a newfound cultural self-esteem and conservative teachers that resisted this change. Mostly, teachers and students found themselves comfortable in using indigenous languages both inside and outside of the classroom, incorporating it in public and private spaces. This process challenged the social stigma of speaking in indigenous languages, further developing safe spaces for cultural recognition, celebration, and conservation. Beyond the sociocultural importance of this transition, it ignited an appreciation for teachers’ and students’ cultural and family heritage on a personal level. Contrarily, teachers instructed within the Westernized educational model previous to EIB believed that an intercultural education was detrimental to the development of the rural individual because it separated them from the hegemonic global context. They believed that rural and indigenous students who developed in an intercultural context would not have the same abilities as city students, as educational institutions do not offer education in Quechua and Aymara. These teachers announce a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure:

135 Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón.: 93 - 95
136 Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón: 99, 100.
indigenous knowledge is not represented in academia, so it is not worth learning from it or teaching it to children; at the same time, indigenous knowledge lacks representation because people do not care to institutionalize it and recognize its worth, which pushes the political agenda against it. While these teachers were a minority, they exemplified the need for the program as a means to deconstruct the perception of rural and indigenous education in their own communities.

In conclusion, the performance development in the Huallatiri community was inherently related to a methodological and pedagogical restructuring of the importance of the indigenous language, culture, educational frameworks, and social relationships. The implementation of EIB proved to be a successful institutionalization of rural and indigenous knowledge beyond the performance improvements, as it strengthened sociocultural relationships within the community and with other communities with similar backgrounds. While the system was met with some resistance, the overwhelming support of the system and the level of participation from the community and the teachers became a testament to its ultimate relevance in developing the educational institutions and methodologies of Huallatiri.

3.2 Physical and Digital Infrastructure for Education in San Antonio de Cusicancha

The study of the San Antonio de Cusicancha case requires a more expansive definition of infrastructure. In today’s highly digital world, infrastructure encompasses not only the physical buildings where activities happen but also the digital spaces in which things take place and the services and equipment that enable it. Moreover, this new definition is especially important for communities that relied on technological
communication during the pandemic to continue previously in-person interactions.

Therefore, educational infrastructure now includes the networks that connect users to the internet, the devices that enable that connection, and the physical spaces where students engage with this system. Rural communities in Peru face economic and political challenges that restrict their access to these technological services. As a result, they become vulnerable to being isolated from any services that stem from technological and communication infrastructure, such as education during the pandemic.

San Antonio de Cusicancha, a technologically underdeveloped community, lacked the infrastructure to provide the same education during the pandemic as the country’s urbanized parts did. Children were unable to fully participate in government-mandated alternatives to in-person education during the pandemic, which heavily relied on television, radio, and the Internet.¹³⁷ Governmental projects to promote uninterrupted services during the quarantine, such as television and radio shows and websites, were a comprehensive plan that aimed to extend throughout the national territory. Still, its reach in rural communities like Cusicancha was limited. The community public institutions benefited to some extent from the resources of the urbanized Huaytará district, the province’s capital connected to the city of Ica. However, this network seldom benefited the community’s individual households.

Cusicancha’s school principal tackled the pandemic by promoting government-mandated educational resources. However, since those efforts relied on means of communication unable to the community, they were futile. As an additional measurement, the principal created a WhatsApp group to communicate with teachers and

¹³⁷ Only 2.0% of homes have a landline phone, 4.9% have internet, 7.2% have cable TV, and 68.2% have a cellphone. 31.5% of the community lacks any technological communication device. Huarcaya Pasache: 40.
parents and share home-school materials and directions. Unfortunately, due to technical limitations and pandemic-related financial constraints, most parents lacked the equipment and connectivity to be added to the group chat, resulting in poor outcomes. After these failures, grassroots plans promoted by the students and families were less reliant on their own communication technology as they looked for communal spaces and hands-on teacher participation to bridge this gap.

The plans to access the internet required the physical use of the urban space, as students walked for about half an hour to the area covered by an antenna to access their teacher’s classes and materials. While some students attempted those journeys recurrently, it is essential to consider that accessibility, safety, and labor are still influential when interacting with this type of limited communicational technology in the space. Students with physical disabilities might have been deterred from navigating through unpaved terrain to reach the area covered by internet signal, just as younger and female students may not feel safe through the path to attempt it, and students that had economic and household responsibilities might not have had the time to do it. In this sense, an intersectional approach to infrastructure and space becomes crucial, even when considering digital space and the technologies they are based on. The access to physical and digital spatial resources mimics the disparities of the system that oppress predominantly female, disabled, and economically disadvantaged people.

This plan proved to be successful, and it influenced Cusicancha’s school principal’s institutional approach to mixed meetings and mindful implementation of

138 Over 40% of households lacked cell phones, over 95% lacked internet connections, and many households with cell phones did not have smartphones to access WhatsApp. Huarcaya Pasache: 40.
139 Huarcaya Pasache: 51.
technology to impart classes during the pandemic. The principal held face-to-face meetings between parents, students, and teachers to maintain regular instruction schedule that would train the parents into educating their children while adhering to social distancing recommendations. These guidelines, especially those regarding social distancing, were increasingly important in rural communities, as they responded to their risk levels specifically. While the community’s isolation from cities and densely populated areas kept contagion risk low, the limited healthcare infrastructure demanded zero risk tolerance. In this context, rural communities had the possibility, and constraint, to explore alternative plans to provide education during the pandemic.

The meetings became a safe and healthy space to pursue a mixed mode of education that relied on the use of physical and urban infrastructure while benefitting from digital resources. Students’ participation in these meetings started and ended outside the space of the meetings, thus making it crucial to understand the urban context and mobility methods that connected their households with these spaces as interweaving connecting threads. Children would walk for over 30 minutes to reach the principal’s house carrying questions in between the meetings, promoting a continuous model of education that retained its collaborative nature. The safety of the children during this process was closely monitored, as their journeys were coordinated and overseen via phone calls and SMS. This approach minimized the dangers of the children’s’ journeys.

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140 Cáceres Cabana et al. study on the case of Arequipa, in the Southern Andes, illustrates the typical development of the COVID-19 crisis in the Peruvian rural context. Her research showcased that, at the beginning of the pandemic, most contagion cases were concentrated in the city of Arequipa. Smaller rural areas became less prone to COVID contagion as they were further away from metropolitan centers. Yezelia Danira Cáceres Cabana et al., “Pandemic Response in Rural Peru: Multi-Scale Institutional Analysis of the COVID-19 Crisis,” Applied Geography 134 (July 17, 2021): 3–5, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apgeog.2021.102519.

141 Huarcaya Pasache: 53 - 54.
to internet-accessible areas, as it involved the community as a whole in the supervision and care of the children.

Moreover, this approach facilitated solutions beyond infrastructural constraints of the community. Firstly, it proved to be a welcomed method for teachers who were not trained in newer technologies, helping them incorporate technology on their educational plans at a more progressive pace.\footnote{Across the country, most teachers lack the necessary training to effectively use technology in the classroom. The Ministry of Education reported that, in 2019, only 29.2\% of preschool teachers in urban areas had participated in a digital technology program within the last year, while the percentage was even lower for those in rural areas, at 17.1\%. Similarly, for teachers between primary education’s second and fourth year, 30.8\% of urban teachers had participated in similar programs, in contrast to only 14.3\% of rural teachers who had. Lastly, 38.7\% of urban school teachers from secondary education’s second to fifth year had participated in these programs, while only 24.3\% of those in rural areas had. Therefore, it is evident that most teachers were not adequately prepared for the digital demands of the COVID-19 pandemic, which required heavy reliance on communication and technology. Ministerio de Educación, “Plan de Cierre de Brecha Digital” (Ministerio de Educación, October 17, 2022), https://repositorio.minedu.gob.pe/bitstream/handle/20.500.12799/8622/Plan%20de%20cierre%20digital.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y : 5.} An incremental plan of technological incorporation also helped the students develop a more engaging relationship with asynchronous communication, as they worked on acquiring new understandings of responsibility when their lessons were not supervised by the teachers as they happened. This dynamic interaction also prompted parents to better understand their new responsibilities within their children’s education and become students as well, since they started to learn the pedagogical techniques necessary to accompany their children during homework and lessons. Additionally, it eased the financial toll of access to communication technology for teachers and parents alike, as using PDF documents and video streaming proved to be

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\item [\textbullet{}] An incremental plan of technological incorporation also helped the students develop a more engaging relationship with asynchronous communication, as they worked on acquiring new understandings of responsibility when their lessons were not supervised by the teachers as they happened. This dynamic interaction also prompted parents to better understand their new responsibilities within their children’s education and become students as well, since they started to learn the pedagogical techniques necessary to accompany their children during homework and lessons. Additionally, it eased the financial toll of access to communication technology for teachers and parents alike, as using PDF documents and video streaming proved to be
a heavy data-consuming activity for children to engage with regularly.\textsuperscript{143} This progressive approach helped transform the community’s perspective on communication technology-assisted education from an uncanny unattainable imposed government plan into a helpful resource born out of the community to assist the teachers’ labor instead of replacing it.

In conclusion, the original preoccupations surrounding the new pedagogical plans began to disappear as the Cusicancha community started adapting it to their infrastructural capabilities. The expanded definition of infrastructure creates an inclusive understanding of the current lack of resources in rural communities, and these needs become more imperative when also considering their indigenous heritage. Government plans to promote safe educational spaces during the pandemic failed to account for these cultural and infrastructural differences. On the one hand, establishing internet spaces dominated by the Spanish language to promote education in rural areas replicates the colonial perspectives of linguistic imposition that can be detrimental to language preservation. On the other hand, the technological requirements to access these spaces became logistical setbacks for communities that did not have the material needs to engage with communication technology. The need to revisit and reformulate the myriad of failed government plans devoted to digitally connecting rural areas becomes apparent in this context.\textsuperscript{144}

Nonetheless, the community of Cusicancha successfully adapted the government’s plans to the rural context. Implementing communication resources was not

\textsuperscript{143} Huarcaya Pasache, “Afecto y participación en la relación familia-escuela en tiempos de la COVID-19.”: 57.
\textsuperscript{144} Campodónico, “El que no estudia, ¿triunfa?”
their main plan to address the lack of educational infrastructure, since the region's economic resources were especially limited during the pandemic. Instead, San Antonio de Cusicancha established adapting the existing resources to spaces to follow the COVID-19 guidelines as the main goal. This perspective became essential in creating inclusive spaces that function within the resources available in rural communities. Students, parents, and teachers alike became more prone to understanding the incremental use of communication technology and participating in its implementation, and the community became more open to the use of these resources in educational spaces.

### 3.3 Gender and Education in Quispicanchi

According to Rosa María Mujica, institutional problems with the methodologies and subjects of pedagogy are exacerbated in Quispicanchi due to the community's conservative values and the lack of up-to-date educational materials and curricula. She proposes that rural schools, infrastructurally and pedagogically, are designed toward the development of the male student, disregarding the needs of female students. In the same vein, rural schools that have not undergone an EIB methodological shift continue to reproduce an urban-centric system that does not allow for educational development within rural cultures, heritage, languages, economic capabilities, and historical needs.

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145 Mujica has worked in more than thirty schools in the Quispicanchi community in Cuzco. This case was part of a study conducted by the Peruvian Institute of Education in Human Rights and Peace in collaboration with Fe y Alegría. This international educational movement, present in over 20 countries, started operations in Peru in 1966. Rosa María Mujica, “La promoción de la equidad de género en las escuelas rurales de Quispicanchi, Cusco,” in Las Brechas Invisibles, 1st ed. (Lima, Perú: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2006): 287; Fe y Alegría, “Fe y Alegría - ¿Dónde estamos?,” Institutional, Fe y Alegría, 2023, https://www.feyalegria.org/donde-estamos/.

146 Mujica, “La promoción de la equidad de género en las escuelas rurales de Quispicanchi, Cusco.”: 291.
In this sense, female students become caught between an education system that does not represent them and a social system that further oppresses them.

To develop the educational mindset of the community, the author established some holistic approaches to challenge the status quo. First, she found that it is imperative to include parents in the conversation in their native languages and that by creating bilingual materials that connected the students with both their academic setting and the community at large, she was able to introduce the conversation to the student's families. Additionally, she communicated with parents to deconstruct the notion of the lack of payoff for education in girls, focusing on matters of reproductive health, as teenage pregnancies are not uncommon and can destabilize family finances. Finally, she brought this new paradigm to the schools, primarily working on the mental health, self-esteem, and gender awareness of female students.¹⁴⁷

This perspective was fully implemented by classes, workshops, extracurricular homework, production of materials, classroom work, and continuous evaluation of the teachers’ educational processes. For example, teachers incorporated workshops about human rights, including children's and women’s rights, bringing awareness surrounding gender equality, self-esteem, and democratic resolution of conflicts.¹⁴⁸ The conversations surrounding these subjects invited the children to actively participate in environments of equality curated by the new ideas proposed by the professors. Moreover, these methodological changes did not require major economic investment, as they were based on staff training, who would later transfer that knowledge to the students. Implementing a

¹⁴⁷ Mujica: 291, 292.
¹⁴⁸ Mujica: 294.
gender-sensitive perspective in Quispicanchi demonstrated that methodological and content revisions were fundamental in the socially egalitarian development of the community.

This experiment produced myriad radical changes in the perspective of gender-related educational issues from all parties involved. The research established that, with the implementation of gender-inclusive activities and pedagogical changes in the classroom, female teachers felt empowered in their jobs, physical and psychological punishment became obsolete in the classroom, female students participated more often and energetically in classes, teachers engaged with female students more often, language in class became gender-inclusive, and male and female children shared game-based activities in school and domestic tasks outside of the classroom. In this sense, the implementation of gender-inclusive activities in the classroom positively affected the community beyond the female students that directly benefited from it, redefining what it meant to be a woman in Quispicanchi.

This success is exemplified by the active participation of female students in class when their teachers verbally acknowledge them with gender-inclusive language. In Spanish, there are two different words for students: *alumnos* (male students) and *alumnas* (female students). However, the plural *alumnos* technically includes students from all genders, as it uses the masculine as a neutral basis. Contemporary academic spaces in Latin America pursue a deconstructive linguistic approach to separate the masculine from the normative and create spaces of inclusive recognition for all genders. As teachers in

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149 Mujica: 290, 291, 294 - 298.

150 Perspectives on inclusive language in Spanish are dependent on the geographical, social, and linguistic realities of the communities that work on implementing it. Generally, it is defined as a change of perspective that moves the status quo away from the hetero-patriarchal-based gendering of Spanish to
Quispicanchi adopted this new perspective on gendered language and started using inclusive language that addressed both male and female students, female students reportedly became more participative and expected to be included in all greetings, indications, and communications separate from their male counterparts.

For example, they would avoid responding to the phrase “Buenos días, niños” (Good morning, (male) children). Teachers would ask them why they were not responding, and the students would explain that by saying niños, they were not including the classroom's niñas (female students). When teachers corrected their sentence into “Buenos días, niños y niñas” (Good morning, (male) children and (female) children), female students were more likely to respond and engage in class activities.151 This verbal recognition extended into group projects, classroom activities, and fun learning, in which female students became more participative as teachers referred to them as the separate group of niñas.

After two years of research, Mujica expresses that the project achieved its objective because it was essential in closing the gap between female and male students’ school attendance and success. According to her report, the number of female students in the sixth grade of primary education increased from 164 in 2002 to 231 in 2004. Additionally, 87% of female students continued their education from third to fourth grade of secondary education, while 94% continued from fourth to fifth grade of secondary education.

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151 Mujica, “La promoción de la equidad de género en las escuelas rurales de Quispicanchi, Cusco.”: 297.
education.\textsuperscript{152} In the past, female students were often shy in public spaces and would hide their faces behind their uniforms while keeping their eyes fixed on the ground. However, as educational activities started to become more inclusive and gender-specific, they began to feel more enthusiastic and confident in social settings, leading to increased participation in the classroom, playground, and family settings. \textsuperscript{153} This situation exemplifies how the changes in the paradigm of female-inclusive education became a pillar for promoting formal education to female students and their families. Female students expressed new perspectives regarding their place in school and their community, and male students could recognize this change and accept it, incorporating female students in male-dominated recreational spaces.

Moreover, by making female students more active in their education, female teachers and community members found ways to extrapolate this perspective onto their own spaces. Female teachers reported incorporating their newfound value as women in the community into their family and love life. To translate this change of perspective into their work, they actively modified their curriculum, classroom activities, and pedagogical strategies to include gender-inclusive subjects and language and incorporate the parents in this process.\textsuperscript{154} Therefore, creating an inclusive education system for female students not only affects that specific group but also creates an integrative environment that defines male students’ perspective on gender relationships and retroactively influences the teachers and mothers they engage with.

\textsuperscript{152} Mujica: 296.
\textsuperscript{153} Mujica: 297, 298.
\textsuperscript{154} Teachers explained the new perspective to parents and developed materials to promote gender equality at home. Parents became able to recognize the potential and worth of their female children and started to mediate their children’s gender-specific relationships from a perspective of equality. Mujica: 297 - 299.
3.4 Language and Education in Huallatiri

Aymara is the predominant mother tongue in the Moho and Huayrapata districts, where the Huallatiri Rural Educational Network is located. By 2017, Aymara was the first language learned by 80.47% and 95.14% of the population of Moho and Huayrapata, respectively, while only 0.57% and 0.49% of people learned Quechua first and 18.6% and 3.96% learned Spanish first.155 The linguistic heritage of the area heavily influences its pedagogical, economic, and religious sociocultural environment. However, the education system in the community did not address this reality before implementing an EIB system. The formal education system promoted the hegemony of Spanish as the primary academic language, and teachers mainly used it for communication with students.

As students advance through their education, they are required to incorporate Spanish as their second language to meet academic requirements. Moreover, proficiency in Spanish becomes imperative to access secondary education in the Huallatiri community. However, Spanish becomes integral to the educational process before that stage. Although preschool and primary education teachers may use Aymara to give instructions, they primarily use Spanish during oral instructions and all written communication to deliver academic content.156 This situation creates a divide between the languages employed by the community in socioeconomic and cultural settings and the pedagogical proposal that carries an imperialist mindset that champions the use of Spanish as the goal of education. Nonetheless, the teachers and students of the Huallatiri

156 Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón: 95 – 96.
community recognize the flaws of this system and, with the logistical support of the Ministry of Education, implemented strategies to subvert it.

According to the researchers, the situation whereby Aymara is not used for pedagogical purposes has created negative consequences. Teachers found that the lack of use of their native language limits the scope of children's education, leading to declining communication abilities in educational and professional settings. Moreover, by losing the language that encodes their aptitudes and cultural framework, children do not access the full range of their cognitive abilities, resulting in poor academic performances. The children in the Huallatiri community grow up in a mostly Aymara-speaking society, and the use of the language becomes fundamental to the shaping of their worldview. While learning a second language can be beneficial when it is learned from a multicultural perspective, replacing their mother tongue can be detrimental to preserving their social, cultural, and developmental skills. In this sense, implementing EIB as an intercultural perspective to bilingual education presents Spanish as a socioeconomic safety net instead

157 Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón: 95. This situation can be explained by the environment of de facto subtractive multilingualism in which these children are. Situations where multiple languages coexist without a hierarchy, like Switzerland or Belgium, form an environment of additive multilingualism, in which proficiency in more than one language represents a cultural, social, and economic asset, which enhances the learning experience of both languages and influences other mental capabilities. An environment of subtractive multilingualism occurs when language is tied to sociocultural and ethnic discrimination, such as Quechua and Aymara speakers in Peru or Spanish speakers in the United States, students are discouraged from engaging in their mother tongue, limiting their cognitive development in other related areas. Allyssa McCabe and Catherine Tamis-LeMonda, “Multilingual Children: Beyond Myths and Toward Best Practices,” Society for Research in Child Development, Sharing child and youth development knowledge, 27, no. 4 (December 2013): 3, 4, https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2379-3988.2013.tb00077.x.

A subtractive multilingual environment stems from an assimilationist discourse that champions cultural and linguistic hegemony beyond tribal diversity to form or protect a nation-state. In this sense, diversity can be considered a hindrance, and using an official or hegemonic language is heavily promoted to access sociopolitical and economic life to its fullest. Ester de Jong, “Policy Discourses and U.S. Language in Education Policies,” Peabody Journal of Education, Contesting Equity in the Twenty-First Century, 88, no. 1 (2013): 100, 101, https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X2013.752310.
of a cultural erasure mechanism. The disconnection between the linguistic reality and the educational system in the Moho and Huayrapata districts became one of the main points addressed by the Ministry of Education in restructuring the Huallatiri RER.\(^{158}\)

The Ministry of Education’s proposal retained the use of Spanish as a lingua franca while promoting Aymara as the primary language for academic matters to promote the sociocultural preservation of the language. The first step of the plan was to identify, through the DIGEIBIRA,\(^{159}\) the social background and linguistic situations of rural and indigenous communities to group them in geographical and cultural categories.

Subsequently, local branches of the Ministry of Education would collaborate with rural educational institutions to design the pedagogical systems, methodologies, and guidelines to implement the EIB perspective. After this, teachers would be trained in the pedagogical use of indigenous languages and their importance and receive continuous support, evaluations, and training.\(^{160}\) This new system promoted the creation of multigrade and one-teacher schools’ networks that shared resources to incorporate methodological and pedagogical solutions to the lack of linguistically relevant education in the communities, such as training, workshops, joint planning, and materials.

While the community and teachers were receptive to implementing the RER and the EIB approach from the start, the Ministry of Education still implemented awareness plans to present the benefits of the new system and the lack of difficulty in implementing

\(^{158}\) Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón: 89 - 91.
\(^{160}\) Since 2013, teachers could apply for special scholarships dedicated to linguistic research and pedagogical theory, which also became an incentive for teachers to become interested in incorporating their institutions in RERs and implementing an EIB approach. Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón: 104 - 108.
it in the classroom. Integrating Huallatiri’s educational institutions into the RER network and the EIB perspective became a way to communicate the community’s socioeconomic and pedagogical lacks to higher authorities that were able to develop a comprehensive plan to effectively promote the shared heritage of the community by taking into account their linguistic and cultural needs.

According to the teachers, it was a beneficial experience to become a part of a network because they identified with the problems, culture, and language of other teachers in the district. Teachers from multigrade schools also stated that, by participating in workshops promoted by larger institutions, they could learn from their success and extrapolate perspectives and methodologies to apply within their own context. From a social perspective, teachers recognized that, by becoming a part of a network, they were no longer alone in a system that promoted a language and culture from outside of their community, and they could recognize the possibilities and benefits of networking within their own culture.

Moreover, teachers who were not Aymara speakers became aware of the need to interact with students and fellow teachers in that language. Through the support of higher political instances and local educational networks, they could incorporate learning Aymara as part of their ongoing training and promote literacy in Aymara, Quechua, and Spanish for their students. The incorporation of indigenous languages in learning spaces also promoted indigenous family customs within educational institutions, such as the ceremony of the pakacha (return to the land), protecting endangered traditions dating

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161 Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón: 112, 113.
162 Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón: 102.
163 Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón: 102 - 104.
back to at least five generations. Learning Aymara became an experiential framework in which cultural and social traditions became integral to the pedagogical process. In this sense, incorporating the EIB approach revitalized the use of Aymara within the community by inspiring the teachers to socialize, learn, and communicate with their network. In a system that historically disenfranchises the learning of indigenous languages, empowering teachers to learn and employ Aymara becomes a tool for recognizing the relevance of rural and indigenous communities by engaging with those societies in their own language.

3.5 Society and Culture in San Antonio de Cusicancha

In San Antonio de Cusicancha and other rural communities, children’s agricultural and farming labor is both economic and sociocultural. The extra labor is beneficial for parents, especially when they own the land they work on. Moreover, labor is a social rite dating back to *minka* and *ayni*. These types of social interactions are pedagogical, making formal education additional to experiential learning. Thus, formal education is better received in communities where schools work around the farming calendar and offer day and night shifts, reduced schooling hours, socially relevant curricula, and self-instructed educational materials.

164 Carreón Cuba and Cornejo Falcón: 104.
Infant labor in rural communities, as a sociocultural need, can coexist with formal education through a new understanding influenced by socially relevant educational plans.\textsuperscript{167} Incorporating culturally inclusive educational programs creates a participatory environment in which children, parents, and teachers are present members. This perspective promotes the children’s educational and sociocultural development from mixed activities. However, this situation became estranged during the pandemic in San Antonio de Cusicancha. Children were required to stay at home with their parents and lost in-person contact with their teachers, creating a situation where formal education, now implemented by the parents, competed with labor-based experiential learning for schedules, spaces, and parental support.

Parents of San Antonio de Cusicancha were not satisfied by the transition to a remote, pandemic-inspired style of education. Schooling left the realm of the educational institution, and it became imperative that parents shared educational responsibilities with teachers. Nonetheless, communication between the two groups was not ideal given the lack of technological training in both camps. Parents grew dissatisfied with the lack of companionship teachers provided through pedagogical exercises and guidelines via WhatsApp and calls.\textsuperscript{168} Conversely, teachers were frustrated with parents not making the children do their homework. Considering that some parents have not even finished

\textsuperscript{167} In rural communities, work gives children a sense of dignity and character. It also facilitates their social integration as they learn skills for local economic activities. Montero et al: 54.

\textsuperscript{168} Huarcaya Pasache, “Afeto y participación en la relación familia-escuela en tiempos de la COVID-19.”: 54 – 62.
primary education, most parents rely on the teachers to be able to work around the teaching of their children not only content-wise but also methodologically.\textsuperscript{169}

Before the pandemic, teachers were responsible for the academic and social development and physical and mental health of the students, even forming relationships with them that mimicked the affection of extended family.\textsuperscript{170} However, the lack of direct communication estranged these relationships in quarantine. Some parents alluded that this situation happened due to the teachers’ lack of care. Still, some parents, and most teachers, recognized that the lack of technological integration into their communication with students difficulted to strengthen these relationships. However, teachers also recognize economic factors as impediments to checking on their students, as their data consumption and phone calls are non-reimbursed expenses.\textsuperscript{171} As a consequence, some teachers acknowledge that communication with parents became less significant as it became less frequent, highlighting the need for physical spaces where teachers and parents can talk.\textsuperscript{172}

Before the pandemic, parents were involved in the school’s cultural, social, pedagogical, religious, and maintenance events, including the annual religious celebration of San Antonio, the patron saint of the city, every June 14\textsuperscript{th}, and the anniversary of the political creation of the district every October 12\textsuperscript{th}.\textsuperscript{173} Besides this, the school organized community cleaning and maintenance events for the school, family reunions, and school

\textsuperscript{169} Since children assist their parents in agricultural and farming labor, the main concern of the parents during the pandemic was the lack of support they could give their children in teaching them about formal academic matters outside of labor-based knowledge. Huarcaya Pasache: 66 - 69.
\textsuperscript{170} Huarcaya Pasache: 59 - 60.
\textsuperscript{171} Huarcaya Pasache: 61.
\textsuperscript{172} Huarcaya Pasache: 72.
\textsuperscript{173} Huarcaya Pasache: 41.
meetings.\textsuperscript{174} Beyond educational activities, the school also provides lunches through the program Qali Warma in collaboration with the community’s self-managed mothers association, further enhancing the relationship between the school and the community. It is important to mention that the community built the school and continues to maintain the pipework for water access and provide aid during heavy rain seasons, so local labor was employed as a service to the community.\textsuperscript{175} In this sense, developing educational spaces and institutions was a priority for the community and became a central arena for social activities.

While no official organization exists for these activities, the community self-manages social work to support education. However, all these events stopped during the pandemic except for a yearly school meeting to discuss management and staffing issues. When the Ministry of Education gave schools permission to open, parents were eager to bring these activities back to life. While eager to return to work with the children, teachers were hesitant to return to work because of contagion risk.\textsuperscript{176} Parents were unhappy with the languardness of the progressive process of returning to classes, and teachers were wary of the precarious implementation of the process in the midst of the pandemic, exacerbating the conflict between the two groups.

While teachers and parents struggled to incorporate materials for formal education based on the Ministry of Education’s program, they excelled at sharing their local cultural and artistic heritage with students. The municipality of San Antonio de Cusicancha and the Ministry of Education collaborated on radio shows that featured local stories in

\textsuperscript{174} Huarcaya Pasache: 74.
\textsuperscript{175} Huarcaya Pasache: 78 - 80.
\textsuperscript{176} Huarcaya Pasache: 75.
Quechua and online competitions of indigenous dances and music, in which students shared videos of them dancing to earn prizes. While connectivity and communicational technology issues prevented these efforts from being universal, community efforts to amplify the message made it a successful plan. Before the pandemic, schools were the main space to share the history and culture of Cusicancha; however, during that time, that responsibility was given to the parents and became gradually present in online spaces. The community succeeded in developing asynchronous experiential learning based on their sociocultural heritage because it was participative for students and families alike and became an archival record of the community customs.

The community of San Antonio de Cusicancha struggled to find a middle ground to satisfy the needs of the parents and teachers of the younger students of the community at the same time. In a broad sense, the lack of access to tools, information, and methodology created a gap between the interests and resources of the two groups. Parents did not have the required knowledge to accompany and assist their children’s classes and lacked the technological support to contact the teachers and access the materials the Ministry of Education provided. Similarly, teachers did not have the necessary technology to provide quality education to their students and struggled to communicate with the parents to provide them with guidelines. However, an innovative approach of educating students through common cultural knowledge elicited a collaborative solution. Teachers and parents become able to work together in immersing their children in local cultural experiences, tapping into their historical indigenous heritage to create relevant and accessible education.

\[177\] Huarcaya Pasache: 81 - 85.
3.6 Closing ideas of case studies

The study of these cases individually helps craft a narrative that showcases specific failures and successes of the Peruvian rural education system. However, studying these cases through a multifocal perspective can provide a more nuanced understanding of the situations of these communities.

The Huallatiri Rural Educational Network case is a helpful example of how performance and language are related in rural education. Initially, formal education in Huallatiri was ineffective because it lacked a relevant methodology to the community's linguistic and cultural reality. As a result, students performed poorly. They were not able to learn a new language and new subjects at the same time. The immersive method that prioritized teaching Spanish as a means of individual development was ineffective because it lacked a pedagogical basis significant enough for the students. Instead, it attempted to generate knowledge tabula rasa.

However, students responded positively by introducing a new methodological approach, which included subjects relevant to the student's culture in their language. This approach motivated the students, teachers, and parents to become more involved in education because it involved their culture and language. Consequently, performance improved as the students became more familiar with the subjects they were learning. This situation reveals the social aspect of the relationship between performance and language. Education is culturally and socially important as long as it benefits the community. In rural communities, education from experiential activities is particularly relevant. Formal education competes with these social means of integration, and it needs to propose inherent benefits for students. In the case of Huallatiri, formal education became a social
asset, and performance improved because it incorporated elements of local culture and language.

San Antonio de Cusicancha presents an illustrative example of how pedagogical spaces can influence the community’s perspective on education and vice versa. The lack of digital infrastructure, essential during the COVID-19 lockdown, prompted solutions parallel to the government’s recommendations. Cusicancha had the challenge of reappropriating their learning spaces to compensate for the lack of technological support while still fending for their health and well-being amid the pandemic. The lack of usable educational spaces disconnected parents, students, teachers, and academic staff since they could not compensate for the lost spaces. The widening divide between the means of the teachers and the demands of the parents and students exacerbated the community’s aversion towards formal education.

Formal education competed with the times, spaces, and resources of farming and agricultural labor, disregarding its importance in the community. The pandemic only exacerbated this situation, as parents became responsible for the formal education of their children. The lack of educational spaces made various opposing activities happen in the same spaces, conflicting and making communities choose where to allocate those resources. Cusicancha found ways in which digital and physical infrastructure could coexist with the other social needs of the community, thus promoting a new social understanding of the value of education. However, the study of this case lacked information on how gender impacted the use of infrastructure and mobility to make up for the loss of dedicated spaces in education. Even though female children are at particular risk of violence across the country, the study does not address if gender
impacted their ability to access the new educational spaces, such as areas with internet connection, the roads taken to access them, and the teachers’ houses. In this sense, while infrastructure and social appreciation of education are intertwined, it is necessary to understand them through a gender perspective to reach a genuinely equitable educational development.

The case of Quispicanchi focused on the gender-based development of rural education. Out of the three studies, only this one establishes metrics of gender-based development in education and provides solutions focused on a gender-inclusive perspective. The studies of Huallatiri and Cusicancha concentrate on developing rural education as a general unifying identity, but they lack the specificity of understanding the inherently female struggles of rural education. Contrarily, the study of Quispicanchi is conspicuous in finding the social problems of female education through their appreciation and participation in education. Beyond statistical analyses, the study on Quispicanchi establishes specific attitudes related to the lack of involvement with formal education. For example, the study found that female students regularly showcased low self-esteem and were adamant about verbally participating in class.

In this sense, the case of Quispicanchi highlights the intersectional analysis of the problem of perception of formal education that female students face. The solutions proposed were relatively simple, as they were directed towards implementing gender-inclusive perspectives on teachers through workshops and conversations. For example, teachers adapted their language and the activities they proposed in the classroom to include female students explicitly. These perspective changes influenced female students' perspectives on education and male students' perspectives on female students. Female
and male students started sharing spaces and responsibilities that were highly gendered before. For example, male students invited female students into games previously dominated by them during recess, and male students participated in household chores. Eventually, this change strengthened the community's appreciation for formal education as a path toward social development for female students. Ultimately, the community became more accepting of female education and redefined rural and indigenous womanhood in Cusicanchi from a more inclusive perspective.
4. Closing ideas: What have we learned about rural education?

This thesis establishes that performance problems with rural education develop from many intersecting problems. The difference in educational performance between rural and urban communities is undeniably linked to political and economic causes. As expected, similarly to other countries, students with identities championed by the Peruvian system succeeded at a higher rate than their underprivileged counterparts. This data is widely considered conclusive, and the differences in rural and urban education are disregarded as a default flaw of the unequal system. Consequently, political plans for developing rural education propose throwing money at the problem and one-size-fits-all reforms. However, a more comprehensive understanding of other causes can provide insight into factors that can inspire feasible solutions from within rural and indigenous communities. Thus, studying the physical and digital infrastructure, gender, linguistic, and social and cultural context of rural communities as factors that make them especially vulnerable to unfavorable performances helps recognize new opportunities in bettering rural and indigenous education.

Physical and digital infrastructure is extensively related to economic development. Rural communities often lack the resources to invest in implementing these resources, which can be detrimental to providing quality and safe formal education. Moreover, the state does not steadily provide financial support for implementing basic infrastructure, making rural schools unsafe and unsuitable for children's development. Even where infrastructure is developed in rural communities, it often mimics coastal cities’ building styles and materials, disconnecting itself from its socio-urban indigenous environment. Thus, educational infrastructure in rural communities often lacks the safety
regulations to be useful and the character to be impactful. However, community-based projects can successfully find alternatives to spaces and services through networks of teachers, parents, and community members. An expansive understanding of educational infrastructure incorporates elements outside the dedicated educational spaces as possible solutions to the lack of safe and suitable buildings. In this sense, while educational infrastructure and technological support are essential in providing quality education, and the State should be accountable for this lack of support, rural communities can design alternative educational spaces outside of the classroom by accommodating and adapting spaces of mobility and socialization as multi-use educational areas. Community participation and methodological adaptation are vital in incorporating education in the private and public spheres.

Another crucial aspect of rural education is the different expectations imposed on students regarding their gender. Some rural communities that function through heavily gendered roles disregard the importance of formal education for female students. Female students face specific setbacks that education can help solve individually. Consequently, a communal reevaluation of the role of female students, and women in general, becomes necessary to create lasting changes. To this end, it is not necessary to implement the Westernized perspective of feminist liberation in indigenous communities but to carve ideals, theories, and praxis from the experience of rural and indigenous women that relate to the unique development of female students in their community. Through this understanding, a liberating performance of femininity does not have to clash with a decolonial engagement with indigenous society and culture. This applied perspective can
trigger a virtuous cycle in which women in the community with different roles can become inspired by the equal relationships boys and girls form in the classroom.

Rural and indigenous communities have endured over centuries institutional discriminatory projects of sociocultural erasure. However, in this day and age, they are progressively being challenged by a more nuanced and inclusive perspective of rurality and indigenous ethnocultural heritage. Understanding indigenous culture without considering indigenous languages at their core is impossible. Thus, preserving indigenous cultures and languages is one of the main goals of the contemporary Peruvian educational system. To this end, rural education became mindful of the social structures of the rural and indigenous world. Indigenous communities, aided by the government, participated in formulating, designing, and implementing relevant educational plans and became part of networks that amplified their influence. One of the core elements of these plans is imparting education in indigenous languages because they encode their ancestral cultural knowledge. In this sense, rural education can be a significant development tool for indigenous communities when designed within their worldview instead of being an imposed project based on hegemonic perspectives.

Before explaining the case studies at the project’s core, it is important to establish the limitations of this thesis. While this thesis comprehensively explains rural indigenous education’s contexts, projects, and results, the complexity of these problems requires further investigation for a holistic understanding. Firstly, it would be beneficial to research how rural indigenous education developed in different governments led by diverse political ideologies. Some politicians, such as Juan Velasco Alvarado and Hilaria Supa Huamán, championed the development of the indigenous peoples of Peru. In
contrast, others, such as Alberto Fujimori and Martha Hildebrandt, became infamous for their disdain of indigenous and rural cultures, societies, and languages.

Moreover, understanding the economic context of the indigenous communities with deficient educational performances is vital, broadly overlapping with their political and ecological context. Some rural and indigenous communities are settled in environments of significant economic capital but do not benefit economically from these natural resources’ extraction, industry, and development. Moreover, rural and indigenous communities often clash with political and economic groups that attempt to misuse the environmental resources of their areas. In this sense, an ecological understanding of indigenous communities can become a helpful tool in understanding their educational needs and development.

It would also be beneficial to understand how other indigenous communities in the region are managing to solve similar issues. The relationship between state hegemonic powers and indigenous populations is diverse throughout the region. Communities from Quechua heritage expand throughout the Andes, reaching Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina, countries with a different relationship with their indigenous populations. While indigenous people in Bolivia are a majority with politically solid representation, their presence is less potent in places like Argentina. This diversity also translates to the use of language, as countries like Paraguay have a larger population of Guaraní speakers, their indigenous population, than Spanish.

Moreover, studying these communities at an international and regional level would have been favorable. Some indigenous communities in Peru are part of nations that expand beyond Peruvian borders, and a regional understanding of their connections can
provide a more comprehensive insight into their educational development. For example, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, and Brazil share the Amazon with Peru, and many communities exist in various countries simultaneously. Their struggle relates to environmental protection, so accounting for their political presence is vital. In conclusion, further research on this subject can lead to a more robust understanding of indigenous peoples' economic, political, and international development to understand their educational journeys.

However, the main limitation of this project was the lack of in-person interactions with indigenous communities conducted during this research. Fortunately, comprehensive studies on rural communities and their educational development provided insight into how the infrastructural, gender, linguistic, and social characteristics of rural education influence communities on a case-by-case basis. The cases of Huallatiri, San Antonio de Cusicancha, and Quispicanchi in the Southern Peruvian Andes expand on the unique interpretations of the intercultural bilingual education model, developing the ideas explored in the first chapter into fully fleshed-out studies. These cases demonstrate that an intersectional perspective of the proposed solutions' impact is necessary to understand rural education issues. For example, implementing inclusive linguistic policies impacts the performance attained directly, and the rethinking of infrastructure influences how indigenous communities socially perceive education.

Nonetheless, some prevalent issues and shared successes overlap in all the cases. Pedagogical planning can only be successfully implemented from within the community, meaning it has to function within the capabilities and goals of each indigenous community, even when it may not fit into the hegemonic perspectives on education.
Moreover, the need for educational development within the language of the community is necessary to tap into its cultural heritage. Language encodes social and cultural traits that would get lost if indigenous languages become extinct. Children who do not learn from within their languages are prone to have subpar performances. Furthermore, while it would seem valuable to impose progressive metropolitan ideas on issues like gender and child labor in rural communities, understanding that they can reconfigure their social codes and interactions would be essential. Collaboration with governmental agencies can propose new understandings of these issues, but they need to stem from the perspective and culture of indigenous communities to avoid falling into paternalistic tendencies.

Thus, the core idea of this thesis becomes apparent through the study of the cases: to design and implement rural indigenous education, it is necessary to do so from a rural indigenous perspective and with rural indigenous communities. Communal participation is essential to creating impactful educational experiences that can enhance a community’s appreciation and understanding of their indigenous heritage, and elicit a larger incorporation of indigenous languages, culture, and history into the Peruvian national imaginary and identity.
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