

**Ancestral Knowledge and Living Environments as the Center of Human Development
In Indigenous Communities From an Ecological Perspective.**

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ABSTRACT

This review article critically analyzed the centrality of ancestral knowledge and living environments in the human development processes of Indigenous communities. The main objective of the study was to analyze ancestral knowledge and living environments as the center of human development in Indigenous communities from an ecological perspective. The research was qualitative and bibliographical, framed within the interpretive paradigm, based on the content analysis of a corpus of specialized sources. Using an analysis matrix, the contributions of key authors were categorized to contrast and synthesize perspectives from cultural ecology, decolonial studies, and intercultural education. The results demonstrate a robust articulation: Bronfenbrenner's model offers the structural framework for understanding the influence of environmental systems, while ancestral knowledge, understood as a relational epistemology and an ethic of mutual nurturing, provides the pedagogical content that energizes these systems. Living environments, far from being passive scenarios, are revealed as active pedagogical territories charged with cultural and spiritual meaning, where microsystems such as family-nature and mesosystems such as community-territory function as primary spaces for learning and socialization. It is concluded that human development in these contexts must be radically redefined as the harmonious flourishing of the indivisible relationship between the community and its territory. This requires abandoning universalist indicators and adopting parameters based on epistemic diversity, cultural vitality, and biocultural sustainability, advocating for development policies that strengthen self-determination and the life projects of Indigenous peoples.

Descriptors: Knowledge, ancestral, environments, vital, development, human, communities, Indigenous, ecological

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