

Effectiveness of an intervention based on traditional stories for identity formation in secondary school students in Huánuco, Peru

Efectividad de una intervención basada en relatos tradicionales sobre formación de la identidad de estudiantes de secundaria en Huánuco, Perú

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ABSTRACT

Objective. To determine the influence of traditional stories from Huánuco on the formation of regional identity among secondary school students in Huánuco, Peru. **Methods.** A quantitative, applied study with a quasi-experimental design was conducted. The population consisted of 81 secondary school students, and the sample included 56 participants divided into two groups: an experimental group (n = 28) and a control group (n = 28). Ten sessions were conducted with the experimental group. Both groups completed pretest and posttest assessments using a questionnaire developed according to the dimensions and indicators of the dependent variable. Student's t-test for paired samples was used for hypothesis testing. **Results.** In the "cultural identity" dimension, the pretest showed that 100% of students in the experimental group exhibited low identity, while in the control group, 96.4% exhibited low identity and 3.6% had no identity. In the "historical identity" dimension, 96.4% of the experimental group showed no identity and 3.6% showed low identity; in the control group, 100% exhibited no identity. For the "civic-patriotic identity" dimension, 100% of students in the experimental group and 96.4% in the control group exhibited low identity. The Student's t-test showed a p -value = 0.001 < 0.05, indicating a statistically significant effect. **Conclusion.** Traditional stories from Huánuco positively influence the formation of regional identity in secondary school students.

Keywords: traditional stories; cultural identity; historical identity; regional identity; civic-patriotic identity.

RESUMEN

Objetivo. Determinar la influencia de los relatos tradicionales huanuqueños en la formación de la identidad regional de los estudiantes de secundaria, Huánuco (Perú). **Métodos.** Estudio de enfoque cuantitativo, tipo aplicado y diseño cuasiexperimental. Se contó con una población de 81 estudiantes del nivel secundaria y la muestra estuvo compuesta por 56 divididos en dos grupos: grupo experimental (28) y grupo control (28). En el grupo experimental fueron realizadas 10 sesiones. Para ambos grupos fue realizada la prueba de pretest y posttest, para lo cual se empleó un cuestionario como instrumento, que fue elaborado de acuerdo con las dimensiones e indicadores de la variable dependiente. Para el contraste de hipótesis se utilizó el estadígrafo t de Student para muestras relacionadas. **Resultados.** Para la dimensión "identidad cultural", en el pretest del grupo experimental se observa que el 100 % de los estudiantes tenían poca identidad, mientras que en el grupo control el 96,4 % evidenció poca identidad y el 3,6 % no tenían identidad. En cuanto a la "identidad histórica", en el pretest del grupo experimental se observa que el 96,4 % no tenían identidad y el 3,6 % tenían poca identidad; en cuanto al grupo control, el 100 % evidenció no tener este tipo de identidad. En la "identidad cívica patriótica", se observa que el 100 % de los estudiantes del grupo experimental tenían poca identidad y en el grupo control el 96,4 % de los estudiantes tenían poca identidad. El estadístico t de Student presentó un p -valor = 0,001 < 0,05, siendo por tanto significativo. **Conclusión.** Los relatos tradicionales huanuqueños influyen positivamente en la formación de la identidad regional de los estudiantes del nivel secundario.

Palabras clave: relatos tradicionales; identidad cultural; identidad histórica; identidad cívico patriótica.

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INTRODUCCION

The traditional stories of Huánuco consist of numerous narratives that contain reliable accounts of the region's historical processes. These stories portray the origins of our cultural customs, which distinguish us from other regions and countries (Barthes, 1966).

According to Tesen (2022), an individual develops a national identity when they recognize the customs and traditions of their country as their own—that is, when they feel part of the cultural practices that differentiate their nation from others. Today in Peru, there is a noticeable weakening of cultural diversity due to the homogenizing influence that threatens our traditions, as they gradually succumb to the imposition of “Western culture” as the “ideal” way of life. At the regional level, this issue persists due to several causes, such as the negative influence of mass media and the limited knowledge of regional history and local customs, which are integral to our identity.

The gradual loss of national identity arises from various reasons, including the influence of media and social networks, where there is a growing admiration for foreign cultures and a progressive abandonment of our own traditions (Giménez, 2005). However, it is our responsibility as educators to promote and preserve our customs, especially since this identity decline is evident among students who do not value their traditions—not because they dislike them, but because they are unfamiliar with them. Moreover, Chávez et al. (2021) note a lack of social and historical awareness, social and cultural identity, and theoretical and practical understanding of the social sciences. Consequently, the content of education remains uniform, superficial, and disconnected from real-world issues.

Among the other potential causes of this cultural, historical, and civic phenomenon observed among secondary-level students is cultural alienation. According to Rodrigo and Bolívar (1994), cultural alienation refers to the spontaneous or induced internalization, by a community, of the consciousness and ideology of another culture, which becomes perceived as a foreign reality. Another related phenomenon is transculturation, defined by the Real Academia Española (RAE, 2014) as the adoption by a community or social group of a different culture that nearly replaces their own. This means that the acceptance and assimilation of new customs different from our own begin to take root in daily life, potentially replacing native cultural practices. Furthermore, the media and social networks are primary agents of transmission for these foreign cultures.

It is essential for teaching to encourage reflection among today's adolescents, as the teacher's role is crucial in reshaping these perceptions. Previous studies have shown that regional identity can be significantly improved. For instance, research conducted in Apurímac by Escalante and Hanco (2022) concluded that Apurímac literature enhances cultural identity among students. Similarly, Gallardo (2021), in a study conducted in Huacho, found that the use of folk tales can improve or foster cultural identity in students. Robles (2021), also in Huacho, demonstrated that showing videos contributes to developing students' cultural identity.

At the local level, Ponce and Zevallos (2018) pointed out that youth and the general population are more inclined to reproduce customs from other countries rather than their own, neglecting their true cultural roots. Such situations are evident among secondary students in the city of Huánuco (Peru), where many express indifference toward cultural, historical, and social issues. They neither value local customs and traditions nor recognize or appreciate notable Huánuco figures and heroes. Additionally, some students exhibit discriminatory behaviors toward peers from highland and jungle regions of Huánuco.

Given the issues mentioned above, the purpose of this study was to determine the influence of traditional Huánuco stories on the formation of regional identity among secondary-level students. The aim was to foster cultural, historical, and civic-patriotic identity among adolescents, as they are increasingly influenced by foreign cultures through social media and, without realizing it, are losing their personal, regional, and national identity—sometimes even feeling ashamed of their roots, history, and culture.

METHODS

Study type and area

This was a quantitative study of applied type, employing a quasi-experimental design with two groups: a control group and an experimental group. The study was conducted at the Institución Educativa Particular Von Neumann, located in the district, province, and department of Huánuco, during the 2023 academic year.

Population and sample

The population consisted of 81 fifth-year secondary school students. The sample included 56 students, selected through the finite population formula. These

were divided into two groups: the experimental group (28) and the control group (28), meeting the following inclusion criteria: students who participated in the pre-test and completed the experimental sessions. Students who did not attend all planned sessions were excluded. The sampling method was non-probabilistic and intentional.

Variable and data collection instruments

The independent variable was “traditional Huánuco stories”, implemented through educational sessions featuring ten stories: 1) analysis of the “Pillco Mozo” tale, 2) analysis of the “Sleeping Beauty” tale, 3) exploration of *Kotosh* culture, 4) analysis of the “Man with the Flag” tale, 5) analysis of the tale of Inca Illatupac, 6) analysis of the story of “La Perricholi”, 7) exploration of the origin of the “Negritos” dance, 8) analysis of the origin of the Huánuco Carnival, 9) review of events involving Huánuco native Mariano Ignacio Prado, and 10) reappraisal of the actions of Huánuco’s notable figures.

The dependent variable was “regional identity of Huánuco.” The technique used was a survey, and the instrument was a questionnaire administered collectively to the selected sample. The questionnaire was self-developed and consisted of 19 questions distributed across three dimensions: a) cultural identity (8 items), b) historical identity (5 items), and c) civic-patriotic identity (6 items). Each item offered three response options: yes (2 points), somewhat (1 point), and no (0 points), with a maximum total score of 36 points and a minimum of 0 points. The instrument was validated by five expert judges, and its reliability was measured using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient, which yielded an excellent result (0.903).

Data collection technique and procedures

The study followed an experimental plan detailing the activities, including pre-test application, session

implementation, and posttest application. Each participant signed an informed consent form prior to participation. Both experimental and control groups completed the pre-test. Then, the ten sessions were delivered exclusively to the experimental group (the control group continued with regular activities), following the planned schedule. Each session lasted 90 minutes. After the final session, the posttest was administered to both groups.

Data analysis

After data collection, tabulation was carried out using tables and figures showing frequencies and percentages. The Shapiro-Wilk test was applied to assess normality, resulting in a statistic of 0.927 and a significance level of $p = 0.051$, indicating that the data followed a normal distribution. For hypothesis testing, the Student’s t-test for independent samples was used. The statistical software employed was SPSS version 25.

Ethical considerations

Informed consent was obtained from students, with parental authorization for participation. Anonymity of each student was respected. Furthermore, all data presented in this study are truthful and were not altered under any circumstances for the benefit of the researcher.

RESULTS

Regarding the variable “regional identity of Huánuco”, in the pretest it was observed that all students in the experimental group exhibited low identity. In the control group, 3.6% had no identity, and 96.4% had low identity of this type.

In contrast, the posttest results for the experimental group showed that all students exhibited strong

Table 1
Normality test

	Normality tests		
	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Control group pretest	0.927	28	0.051
Control group posttest	0.927	28	0.051
Experimental group pretest	0.927	28	0.051
Experimental group posttest	0.903	28	0.014

Table 2
Regional identity of Huánuco in secondary school students (pretest and posttest)

Regional identity	Experimental group				Control group			
	Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
	fi	%	fi	%	fi	%	fi	%
Yes	0	0.0	28	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
No	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.6	1	3.6
Low	28	100.0	0	0.0	27	96.4	27	96.4

regional identity, while 96.4% of the control group maintained the same lack of identity observed in the pretest (see Table 2).

In terms of the results by dimension for “cultural identity”, 100% of students in the experimental group showed low cultural identity; in the control group, 96.4% exhibited low identity and 3.6% had no cultural identity. For “historical identity”, 96.4% of the experimental group had no identity and 3.6% showed low identity. In the control group, 100% showed no historical identity. Regarding “civic identity”, 100% of the experimental group showed low civic-patriotic identity, while 96.4% of the control group showed low civic-patriotic identity (see Table 3).

Regarding the posttest results by dimension, for the “cultural identity” dimension, it was observed that 100% of the students in the experimental group did not exhibit cultural identity, while in the control group, 96.4% showed low identity and 3.6% had no cultural identity. Then, in the “historical identity” dimension, it was observed that 100% of the students in the experimental

group demonstrated historical identity, whereas in the control group, 100% lacked historical identity. Finally, for the “civic identity” dimension, the posttest showed that 85.7% of the students demonstrated civic identity and 14.3% had low civic-patriotic identity, while in the control group, 100% lacked civic-patriotic identity (see Table 4).

The following presents the inferential results for the hypothesis testing of the pretest, corresponding to the variable “regional identity,” where the experimental group obtained a mean score of 34.54 and a standard deviation of 1.835. Likewise, the control group obtained a mean score of 34.14 and a standard deviation of 1.799. For the decision-making process regarding the statistical analysis of the data, the result was $2.0049 > 0.809$ (that is, $t_0 = 0.809$ is less than the critical or theoretical value $t_{crit.} = 2.0049$); therefore, $p > \alpha$ (that is, $0.422 > 0.05$), and thus we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. There is no statistically significant difference between the scores obtained by students in the control and experimental groups on the pretest. Therefore, it is

Table 3
Characterization of regional identity in secondary school students (pretest)

Research group	n = 58											
	Experimental group						Control group					
	No		Low		Yes		No		Low		Yes	
	fi	%	fi	%	fi	%	fi	%	fi	%	fi	%
Cultural identity	0	0.0	28	100.0	0	0.0	1	3.6	27	96.4	0	0.0
Historical identity	27	96.4	1	3.6	0	0.0	28	100	0	0	0	0.0
Civic-patriotic identity	0	0	28	100	0	0.0	1	3.6	27	96.4	0	0.0

Table 4
 Characterization of regional identity in secondary school students (posttest)

Research group	n = 58											
	Experimental group						Control group					
	No		Low		Yes		No		Low		Yes	
	fi	%	fi	%	fi	%	fi	%	fi	%	fi	%
Cultural identity	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.6	27	96.4	0	0.0
Historical identity	0.0	0	0	0	28	100	28	100	0	0	0	0.0
Civic-patriotic identity	0.0	0	4	14.3	24	85.7	0	0	28	100.0	0	0.0

concluded that there are no differences between the two groups regarding the use of traditional stories from Huánuco (see Table 5).

Subsequently, the inferential results for testing the posttest hypothesis, corresponding to the variable "regional identity" in the experimental group, are presented. The experimental group obtained a mean score of 53.61 with a standard deviation of 0.737, while the control group had a mean score of 34.14 and a standard deviation of 1.799. For the decision-making process based on the statistical analysis of the data, the following was observed: $t_{crit.} 2.0049 < 53.489$; that is, $t_0 = 53.489$ is greater than the critical or theoretical value $t_{crit.} = 2.0049$. Additionally, the $p\text{-value} < \alpha$ (i.e.: $0.001 < 0.05$), leading us to accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there is a statistically significant difference between the means obtained by students in the control and experimental groups in the posttest. Consequently, we conclude that there are differences in the scores of both groups regarding the application of traditional stories from Huánuco (see Table 6).

Subsequently, the significant difference between the pre-test and posttest is observed. In the pre-test,

the two-tailed significance value was 0.422, which is therefore greater than 0.05. In the posttest, the obtained two-tailed significance value was 0.001, indicating a significant difference of 0.421. These findings support acceptance of the research hypothesis in the posttest (see Table 7).

DISCUSSION

According to the results mentioned, it was found that the influence of traditional stories has a positive effect on the formation of regional identity in the experimental group. There are previous studies that support these findings, such as the research conducted by Escalante and Hanco (2022), who demonstrated that the use of contemporary literature from Apurímac region in the classroom significantly contributes to strengthening students' cultural identity. This supports the present results, as stories are a form of literature, and through their use, Apurímac regional identity was reinforced.

In contrast, in the study by Solange (2022), it was found that students lacked cultural identity due to the absence of content or projects in the classroom aimed

Table 5
 Inferential results of pretest hypothesis testing

Independent samples test							
Variable	Research group	n	Mean	Standard deviation	SE mean	t-Student	Sig. (2-tailed)
Regional identity	Experimental group	28	34.54	1.835	0.347	0.809	54
	Control group	28	34.14	1.799	0.340		

Note. Degrees of freedom = $n_1 + n_2 - 2 = 54$. From the t-distribution table with $\alpha = 0.05_{2\text{-tailed}}$, the critical value is: $t_{crit.} = 2.0049$.

Table 6
 Inferential results of posttest hypothesis testing

Independent samples test							
Variable	Research group	n	Mean	Standard deviation	SE mean	t-Student	Sig. (2-tailed)
Regional identity	Experimental group	28	53.61	0.737	0.139	53.489	54
	Control group	28	34.14	1.799	0.336		

Note. Degrees of freedom = $n_1 + n_2 - 2 = 54$. From the t-distribution table with $\alpha = 0.05_{2\text{-tailed}}$, the critical value is $t_{crit.} = 2.0049$.

Table 7.
Significant difference between the pre-test and posttest

Variable Y	Pretest					Posttest							
	Mean	SD	SE mean	t-Student	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	SD	SE mean	t-Student	Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig. difference (2-tailed)		
Control group	34.54	1.835	0.347			53.61	0.737	0.139					
	_____				0.809	0.422	_____				53.489	0.001	0.421
Experimental group	34.14	1.799	0.349			34.14	1.799	0.336					

at strengthening such identity, leading students to adopt foreign cultures instead.

Additionally, Gallardo (2021) found that ancestral folktales told by grandparents or relatives and shared in classrooms strengthened students’ cultural connection with their region and roots, nurturing in them a sense of love for their homeland. Since folktales are a form of literature, closely related to traditional stories, this aligns with the findings of the present study, where stories from Huánuco reinforce our cultural identity, even in the face of displacement by technology and social media. Vega Olivos et al. (2021) confirmed that students had a low level of cultural identity, which led them to propose methodological guidelines that produced positive results—coinciding with the methodology of the present research, where educational sessions using traditional stories helped strengthen students’ regional cultural identity.

Amado (2020) also showed that there is a significant relationship between the teaching of social sciences and identity formation. It can be stated that developing the social sciences area involves using historical narratives that take us back to our societal past, shaping our cultural identity. This research supports this study by demonstrating that teaching social sciences contributes to the formation of cultural identity in today’s youth. Similarly, Silva (2019) found a significant relationship between local history and the strengthening of regional identity, reaffirming that historical stories form and reinforce our cultural identity.

One of the limitations of the study was that the sample may not be fully representative of all secondary students in Huánuco due to its small size. Additionally, younger students might be less exposed to or interested in traditional stories because of the influence of globalization and technology, which could reduce the impact of these stories on regional identity.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this research determine that traditional stories from Huánuco influence the formation of regional identity in secondary school students. This allows us to raise awareness among teachers about the importance of using traditional stories as a tool to strengthen regional identity. Furthermore, students became aware of the importance of recognizing and valuing their own cultures.

Recommendation

It is recommended that teachers from both public and private educational institutions incorporate stories from Huánuco and other traditional narratives from across the country to strengthen regional and national identity. Additionally, teachers of social sciences and communication should use a variety of literature from Huánuco—such as stories and folktales—to enhance regional identity and foster reading habits. Lastly, it is recommended that teachers of social sciences, history, geography, and civics carry out experiential sessions through visits to local tourist sites, to awaken interest in regional history and culture, thus shaping students’ historical, cultural, and civic-patriotic identity.

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Conflict of interest statement

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