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for a healthy and sustainable future”

Traditional Ecological Knowledge Transmission. New Agricultures, New Religions, New Education

HELGA GRUBERG^{1,2}, JOOST DESSEIN², JEAN PAUL BENAVIDES¹, ALBA ELIANA¹, MARIJKE
D'HAESE²

¹*Universidad Católica Boliviana San Pablo, Centro de Investigación en Ciencias Exactas e Ingenierías,
Bolivia*

²*Ghent University, Dept. of Agricultural Economics, Belgium*

Abstract

There is a growing interest in the study of traditional ecological knowledge due to its great capacity to contribute to the resilience of rural communities in the face of socio-ecological changes. The international academic community urge us to study the ways this knowledge is transmitted, transformed, and eroded in order to contribute to its revitalisation in favour of resilience. This knowledge is closely linked to indigenous peoples' worldviews and it is experienced and reproduced through practices and rites. This is the case of weather forecasting through the observation of natural indicators: phyto-indicators, zoo indicators, astronomical and atmospheric indicators. This study explores the transmission of this knowledge and the main socio-ecological factors that affect it. We present a case study in a rural municipality of Bolivia (Plurinational State) where data was collected during the period 2017–2021 through a series of transdisciplinary action-research experiences. The study followed a mixed methods approach with a combination of qualitative methods (i.e., participant observation, in-depth interviews, participatory community mapping and analysis of stories, myths, and narratives) and quantitative methods (surveys). Although technical reports argue that natural indicators are no longer used due to extreme climate variability from climate change, results show that there are other main factors affecting the transmission of knowledge: migration, education, agricultural restructuring, and politicisation of agrarian unions. Although the general outlook is discouraging, there are various revaluation actions in Bolivia that strengthen the bridges for the transmission of knowledge and aim to increase the resilience of rural communities, which can be used as a reference for other scenarios.

Keywords: Andes, hybrid knowledge, revitalisation, socio-ecological systems, TEK, transmission