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Weaving knowledge in the classroom: Intergenerational dialogues on obstetric violence and knowledge construction in community medicine

Short description / Abstract:

This paper presentation examines, from an intercultural, intersectional, and intergenerational perspective, how dialogues about Indigenous women's experiences of pregnancy and childbirth contribute to knowledge-making among community medicine students at an Intercultural University in the Montaña region of Guerrero, Mexico. The study was guided by the principles of the Cultivation and Nurturing of Wisdoms and Knowledges (Cultivo y Crianza de Sabidurías y Conocimientos, CCRISAC) and involved 36 first-year students from Me'phaa, Nahua, and Nuu Savi peoples, as well as mestizo students. They engaged in conversations with mothers, grandmothers, and aunts in their communities about their reproductive experiences. The accounts and reflections generated through these conversations were subsequently discussed and collectively analysed in the classroom.

The analysis identified four key themes: (1) institutional obstetric violence; (2) structural barriers and precarious access to healthcare; (3) situated knowledges and care practices associated with community midwifery; and (4) reproductive violence and male control over reproductive decision-making. Pedagogically, listening to these experiences enabled students to question conventional frameworks of medical education by bringing attention to the normalisation of mistreatment and biomedical authority, recognising inequalities structured by gender, ethnicity, and class, and valuing community-based knowledge related to childbirth care. The article concludes that intergenerational dialogue constitutes a potentially transformative pedagogical strategy for intercultural medical education by recognising women's knowledge as a legitimate source of knowledge and fostering a practice committed to bodily autonomy, care, dignity, and social justice.