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Research Stay Report

**Craftsmanship and Health: The Use of Handcrafted Objects in
Indigenous Medicine**

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Abstract

This report examines the foundational role of Indigenous crafts and medicine in the social and cultural life of Indigenous peoples, with a focus on the P'urhépecha people of Michoacán (Mexico). Based on a critical review of scientific and ethnographic literature published between 2004 and 2025, the study analyzes how these practices constitute complex systems of meaning, identity, and collective well-being. The analysis is based on fifty publications from international databases and was conducted using thematic coding to identify the relationships between culture, ancestral knowledge, and community continuity. The results show that P'urhépecha craftsmanship transcends its productive or aesthetic function to serve as a vehicle for the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, social cohesion, identity affirmation, and local economic development. At the same time, Indigenous medicine emerges as a holistic health system based on the balance between the physical, spiritual, social, and territorial dimensions of life. It also constitutes a form of cultural resistance against biomedical hegemony and a space for the reproduction of ancestral knowledge. The analysis highlights that Indigenous crafts and medicine are not distinct domains, but interdependent dimensions of the same cultural fabric. Together, they contribute to maintaining cultural continuity, strengthening community bonds, and supporting Indigenous conceptions of collective well-being.

Introduction

This paper is part of a research project aimed at understanding the structuring role played by Indigenous craftsmanship and medicine in the social and cultural life of Indigenous peoples, with a particular emphasis on the P'urhépecha people of Michoacán. In contemporary contexts marked by processes of modernization, cultural homogenization, and biomedical hegemony, these practices are often reduced to folkloric expressions or residual forms of knowledge. However, the scientific literature indicates that both practices constitute complex systems of meaning, identity, and collective well-being.

Based on a critical review of academic and ethnographic literature, this report aims to understand how Indigenous craftsmanship and medicine function as practices that sustain cultural continuity and community well-being. Rather than addressing them as separate or isolated domains, the report proposes to analyze them as interconnected expressions of a shared epistemological matrix, in which territory, memory, spirituality, and community are articulated as inseparable dimensions.

To this end, the text is organized around two main thematic lines. The first, P'urhépecha Craftsmanship: Worldview, Heritage, and Cultural Continuity, examines craftsmanship as a material expression of the Indigenous worldview. Each piece produced condenses spiritual, territorial, and identity meanings that extend far beyond its utilitarian function. This section analyzes its role as a vector of social cohesion, its contribution to the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, its symbolic and identity value, as well as its economic relevance and its contribution to community well-being within a holistic conception of health.

The second thematic line, Indigenous Medicine as a Holistic Health System and Intergenerational Transmission, addresses the specific forms of care developed by Indigenous peoples. Indigenous medicine is analyzed as a practice of cultural continuity and resistance in the face of historical processes of colonization and biomedical dominance; as an expression of a worldview that conceives health as a dynamic balance between physical, spiritual, emotional, community, and territorial dimensions; and as a body of ancestral knowledge transmitted intergenerationally. This section also examines the contemporary threats facing these knowledge systems and highlights the importance of their recognition, protection, and cultural safeguarding.

Overall, the report seeks to demonstrate that Indigenous craftsmanship and medicine are not separate spheres, but rather interdependent dimensions of the same cultural fabric, oriented toward sustaining community life, preserving collective knowledge, and reproducing shared frameworks of meaning.

1. Methodology

A critical review of interpretive literature was conducted, focusing on the conceptual and empirical analysis of Indigenous crafts, cultural heritage, and Indigenous medicine in Mexico and Latin America, with particular emphasis on the P'urhépecha context of Michoacán. The objective was not to achieve statistical exhaustiveness or to produce a quantifiable synthesis of results, but rather to identify discursive regularities, analytical convergences, and conceptual tensions surrounding the relationship between culture, care, and community continuity. In this sense, the review was oriented less toward measuring the frequency of certain findings than toward understanding the meanings that the literature assigns to these practices. This approach proved to be the most appropriate for the study's objective, as it allowed the researchers to interpret how the literature constructs links between craftsmanship, Indigenous medicine, cultural continuity, and community well-being, beyond a simple descriptive identification of recurring themes.

1.1 Search strategy and document selection

The search strategy was structured around four main thematic blocks: craftsmanship and cultural production; heritage, worldview, and identity; Indigenous medicine, health, and healing; and geographic and cultural delimitation. The terms were formulated in Spanish and English and were combined using Boolean operators.

Table 1. Search strategy.

Databases	Search Terms
Web of Science, Scopus, PubMed, Érudit, Google Scholar	<p>Search Terms (English)</p> <p>((("indigenous crafts" OR handicraft* OR "handcrafted objects" OR "traditional art" OR "artisanal production") AND ("cultural heritage" OR "intangible heritage" OR "biocultural heritage" OR worldview OR identity OR "intergenerational transmission" OR memory) AND ("indigenous medicine" OR "traditional medicine" OR "traditional knowledge" OR "healing practices" OR health OR wellbeing OR well-being) AND ("indigenous peoples" OR "native peoples" OR P'urhépecha OR Purépecha OR Tarascan OR Michoacán OR Mexico OR "Latin America"))</p> <hr/> <p>((artesan* OR "artesanías indígenas" OR "objetos artesanales" OR "arte tradicional") AND ("patrimonio cultural" OR "patrimonio intangible" OR "patrimonio biocultural" OR cosmovisión OR identidad OR "transmisión intergeneracional" OR memoria) AND ("medicina indígena" OR "medicina tradicional" OR "conocimiento tradicional" OR "prácticas de sanación" OR salud OR bienestar)</p>

AND ("pueblos indígenas" OR "pueblos originarios" OR P'urhépecha OR Purépecha OR Tarasco OR Michoacán OR México OR "América Latina"))

Source: Own elaboration.

In the first stage, potentially relevant works were identified; subsequently, titles, abstracts, and, when necessary, the full text were reviewed to verify their suitability for the study's objective.

A total of fifty publications that met the established criteria were examined. Research focused on Indigenous peoples, especially in the P'urhépecha context, was included, as well as studies that analyzed Indigenous crafts and/or medicine as sociocultural, symbolic, or health-related practices. Non-academic texts without methodological support or with little analytical relevance were excluded.

1.2 Data analysis

The thematic analysis was carried out using a systematic process of open and axial coding, aimed at identifying emerging categories and conceptual relationships between them (Labra et al., 2020). In the first phase, an exhaustive reading of the corpus was carried out, which allowed the identification of categories such as: ancestral craftsmanship; worldview; social cohesion; identity; economy; well-being; medicine as resistance; holism; intergenerational transmission; and contemporary threats.

These categories were then compared and reorganized into two broad interpretive axes that structured the analysis of the report: craftsmanship as an element of worldview and cultural continuity, and Indigenous medicine as a holistic system of health and intergenerational transmission. This process allowed the researchers not only to classify the information, but also to understand the interrelationships between cultural practices, identity, and well-being. The organization and systematization of the material were supported by the NVivo 15 software, which facilitated analytical traceability and consistency in thematic grouping.

For additional details on the selected studies, see Table 2.

1.3 Limitations

Given its interpretive nature, this review does not aim to exhaustively cover all available literature, but rather to identify relevant analytical trends and patterns of meaning in the literature reviewed.

2. P'urhépecha craftsmanship: worldview, heritage, and cultural continuity

Craftsmanship occupies a central place as an ancestral component within the cultural life of the P'urhépecha people. Various studies indicate that craftsmanship is not only a productive activity, but also a vehicle for the intergenerational transmission of knowledge,

values, and worldviews that have accompanied this people since ancient times. Aceves (2025) and Torres and Leco (2018), based on work with cardboard and plant fiber artisans in Pátzcuaro, show that artisans safeguard cultural elements directly inherited from previous generations, becoming living custodians of collective memory.

Craftsmanship maintains a close relationship with the community and its symbolic fabric. Trejo and González (2024) and Voscoboinik (2021) highlight that craft trades allow community ties to be strengthened through religious symbols and ritual practices, while also constituting a source of economic sustenance. Thus, handcrafted pieces are material testimonies of ancestral experiences, reflecting a harmonious relationship with nature and the responsible use of local resources (Sánchez, 2019). From this perspective, Izquierdo and Salas (2025) point out that craftsmanship acquires its full meaning only within the cultural and social dynamics of the community that produces it.

The scientific literature agrees that craftsmanship is hereditary in nature, being transmitted through daily coexistence and direct practice. This process fosters close relationships between generations and allows the learning of the craft to retain its empirical essence. According to Neri and Mena (2024) and Benedetti (2012), craft knowledge is transmitted through family socialization, where young people learn from their elders in domestic and community contexts. Crafts are thus perceived as carriers of implicit knowledge, which is fundamental to cultural continuity (Aceves et al., 2025; Gómez, 2019; Trejo and González, 2024).

In this regard, Mendoza and Hernández (2024) and Malatesta (2013) note that craftsmanship preserves knowledge necessary for the social, spiritual, and material life of communities, which is why this knowledge must be transmitted from generation to generation within the same community in order to guarantee its permanence. Each piece of craftsmanship embodies a set of symbolic meanings linked to the Indigenous worldview that go beyond its aesthetic or utilitarian function (Barbosa, 2005). In this way, crafts are material expressions of a people's cultural and spiritual identity.

The transmission of craft knowledge occurs through direct experiences and continuous practice, which gives the objects both tangible and intangible value specific to each community. Aguilar (2010) and Aceves et al. (2025) explain that this process gives the pieces a spiritual character, linked to collective history and recognized by the community. Mendoza and Hernández (2024), in studying artisans in several states of Mexico, show that children are introduced to the craft by their parents, who present it not only as a source of livelihood but also as a source of family and community pride.

From this perspective, craftsmanship is an essential part of intergenerational knowledge and helps preserve the customs, traditions, and practices passed down by ancestors. Protecting it is essential to ensure its transmission to present and future generations (Briones et al., 2021; Gómez, 2019; Rivas, 2018). A country's cultural heritage is reflected

in this ancestral knowledge, which is significant not only for communities but also for humanity, as it enriches cultural diversity and promotes dialogue (Villamizar, 2022).

Finally, Malatesta (2013) warns that the continuity of the craft sector is at risk due to global dynamics that have led to a decline in the transmission of knowledge. The devaluation of craftsmanship and the low demand for certain pieces mean that new generations may be less interested in continuing these trades. As a result, much of the technical knowledge remains solely with older artisans (Chávez et al., 2018; García, 2019; Sosa, 2015). This fragility underscores the urgency of recognizing craftsmanship as an essential ancestral component, the preservation of which is fundamental to the cultural continuity of the P'urhépecha people.

The review shows that craftsmanship occupies a structuring place in P'urhépecha cultural continuity, not only as a productive activity, but also as a space for memory, identity, cohesion, and well-being.

2.1 Indigenous craftsmanship as an expression of worldview

Craftsmanship is a privileged means of understanding the worldview of Indigenous peoples, as each piece produced contains profound meanings linked to memory, identity, and ways of interpreting the world. Corina (2025), as well as Del Carpio and Freitag (2013), show that crafts can be conceived as a direct reflection of the artisans' worldview, allowing them to evoke family memory and maintain the continuity of traditional craft practices. Their research with Tsotsil artisans and potters in Chiapas and Jalisco reveals that craftsmanship is based on a symbolic heritage that is passed down from generation to generation and, at the same time, leaves room for each artisan to develop a personal experience within the craft.

From this perspective, Del Carpio and Freitag (2013) and Castillo (2018) argue that understanding craftsmanship also involves understanding the underlying motivations that lead Indigenous communities to preserve their crafts. There is a collective memory that sustains artisanal persistence, but this coexists with the individual trajectories of each artisan. Thus, artisanal pieces are transformed into cultural objects that express the worldview of those who produce them, allowing us to understand how crafts continue to endure within communities.

Indigenous craftsmanship has great symbolic, cultural, and communicative significance, closely linked to the worldview, identity, and history of peoples (Aceves et al., 2025; Barbosa, 2005; Sánchez, 2019). Because crafts contain knowledge and techniques passed down from generation to generation, their analysis cannot be limited to their utilitarian or ornamental function. These pieces are part of a broader cultural fabric and constitute expressions of the community's worldview, as they emerge directly from the spiritual,

social, and territorial world from which they originate (Corina, 2025; Sánchez, 2019; Sekik, 2016).

In summary, the literature reviewed allows us to understand that crafts not only represent culturally valuable objects, but also material forms through which a shared community worldview is expressed and reproduced.

2.2 Craftsmanship as a source of community social cohesion

Craftsmanship plays a central role as a force for unity and social cohesion in many Indigenous and traditional communities. Beyond its productive dimension, it constitutes a space where collective bonds are strengthened, shared identity is reproduced, and cultural memory is sustained. Islas Trejo and Hurtado González (2024), based on their study of artisans working with plant fibers and cardboard in Querétaro and Guanajuato, show that craftsmanship arises from within the community itself and yields benefits that transcend the economic sphere. Craft work allows people to recognize themselves as members of a collective, reaffirm their identity, and engage in acts of cultural resistance against the outside world.

Along the same lines, Pérez and Uribe (2025), as well as Voscoboinik (2021), argue that crafts fulfill a social function that far exceeds their commercial value. For these authors, craftsmanship acts as a unifying element capable of bringing the community together around common knowledge, shared practices, and meanings that reaffirm a sense of belonging to the group.

The cultural heritage to which crafts are a fundamental part has the capacity to generate social cohesion, preserving historical memory and reinforcing collective identity (Rodríguez and Rodríguez, 2025). Neri and Mena (2024), together with Aceves et al. (2025) and Torres et al. (), explain that artisans are bearers of knowledge and skills that form the basis of cultural heritage, and that their preservation is essential given the role they play in shaping identity. Through their pieces, artisans express their creativity, their worldview, and their everyday and symbolic relationships with the community.

Torres et al. (2023), in their study of the Saraguro people of Ecuador, highlight that craftsmanship functions as an internal channel of continuity and memory. As living cultural heritage, crafts contain the very essence of Indigenous communities and become a means of expressing who they are, both internally and externally. Mendoza and Hernández (2024), Gasca and Guevara (2022), and Maldonado (2018) emphasize that these pieces allow a community to be identified and distinguished, constituting symbols that condense history, identity, and belonging.

Indigenous communities express themselves through specific forms of art, including crafts, which become a form of intergenerational cultural survival (Voscoboinik, 2021). Sánchez (2019) points out that craft production serves multiple functions: utilitarian, ceremonial,

ornamental, ritual, and festive. Each piece is part of a broader cultural fabric that unites the community around shared ancestral practices. In addition, handcrafted objects can serve as bridges between different social groups, even at the international level, promoting cultural dialogue and bringing diverse societies closer together (Ramos, 2004). This potential for connection further underscores their unifying character.

Rodríguez and Rodríguez (2025) and Maldonado (2018) agree that the responsibility for safeguarding cultural heritage lies with the bearers of ancestral knowledge, which requires a community-based and collaborative approach. In this regard, Bastidas et al. (2024), in their research with filigree jewelry artisans in Colombia, show that artisanal practice promotes social cohesion through collaboration among members of the same community, mutual recognition, and the transmission of techniques between generations. This process strengthens cultural heritage and consolidates the social ties that sustain community life.

2.3 Craftsmanship and Territorial and Symbolic Anchoring

In addition to being a means of transmitting ancestral knowledge and an element of social cohesion, craftsmanship is a bearer of symbolic value that reflects the worldview, identity, and history of Indigenous communities. Del Carpio-Ovando and Freitag (2013), in their study of Tsotsil artisans and potters from Tonalá (Chiapas and Jalisco), highlight that the diversity of artisan products ranges from utilitarian and ornamental objects to pieces with deep symbolic or ritual value, demonstrating that each artisanal creation has multiple layers of meaning. Handcrafted objects can serve domestic, ornamental, ceremonial, or ritual functions, depending on the artisan's intention and community tradition (Aceves et al., 2025). Aguilar (2010) and Zamacona and Barajas (2022) point out that, although handicrafts respond to practical needs, functional, aesthetic, and symbolic values coexist in each piece, showing how culture, history, and identity are materialized through artisanal practices.

The connection between the community and its environment is reflected in craft practices, as Indigenous peoples conceive of the territory as a living entity with which they maintain an ancestral bond. This relationship is expressed through rituals, symbolism, and cultural manifestations that find in craft production a means of tangibly expressing worldview and historical memory (Torres et al., 2023). Sánchez (2019) emphasizes that craftsmanship integrates economic, identity, aesthetic, historical, technological, and geographical dimensions, but it is the sociocultural and symbolic dimensions that ultimately give it meaning and value within the community.

In this context, the symbolic value of craftsmanship not only strengthens cultural identity and collective memory, but also acts as a bridge between generations, supporting the continuity of craft traditions and reinforcing social cohesion and community pride. In this way, each handcrafted piece is a living testimony to worldview, ancestral knowledge, and

the interconnections between community, culture, and territory, consolidating its relevance beyond its utilitarian or aesthetic function.

2.4 Craftsmanship as a source of community identity

Several studies have demonstrated the close relationship between craftsmanship and cultural identity. Del Carpio and Freitag (2012), in their research with Tsotsil artisans and potters from Tonalá in Chiapas and Jalisco, show that a people's craftsmanship is deeply linked to their identity, since the way it is produced reflects elements rooted in collective history, such as techniques, knowledge, and designs transmitted from generation to generation. Along the same lines, Leco and Torres (2018) and Rincón (2022) argue that craftsmanship is a popular expression that strengthens both community and national identity.

From this perspective, the scientific literature allows us to understand the craft sector as a means of cultural expression that plays a central role in the construction of the social identity of the communities in which it is embedded. Crafts, as part of cultural heritage, not only respond to everyday needs, but also acquire meaning both within and outside the spaces in which they are produced, reinforcing the social recognition of those who make them (Amaya, 2017; Freitag, 2014; Voscoiboinik, 2021). In this sense, Pérez and Uribe (2025) argue that cultural heritage functions as a testimony to the cultural diversity within a country, constituting a reference point for identity. Similarly, Aceves et al. (2025) emphasize that cultural heritage must be protected, as it provides identity to peoples, expresses their creative capacity, and reflects their ways of life and coexistence with other social groups. Likewise, Muirhead and De Leeuw (2013) highlight that creative expression reinforces the sense of belonging and strengthens community ties within Indigenous peoples.

The relationship between craftsmanship and identity is also evident in its link to the natural environment and historical memory. Benedetti (2012), in his study of the community of Chane (Campo Durán), points out that the craft sector has a direct relationship with cultural identity and the natural environment in which the community lives, thus strengthening their traditions. In turn, Rodríguez and Rodríguez (2025) indicate that the study of cultural heritage, including craftsmanship, allows us to understand how it influences the structuring of cultural identities within society. Along these lines, Gámez (2012) and Mendoza and Hernández (2024) argue that artisanal creations express the cultural identity of the people and the place from which they emerge, constituting material expressions of inherited cultural practices.

The connections between craftsmanship and identity are further consolidated through intergenerational processes that shape feelings of belonging and collective memory. Handcrafted pieces evoke their place of origin and allow certain objects to be associated with specific communities, becoming living reflections of their history and culture (Arvizu

et al., 2023; Pérez and Vargas, 2009; Torres et al., 2023). In this way, craftsmanship can be understood as part of the living collective memory of a community.

Finally, the symbolic dimension of craftsmanship further deepens its role in the construction of identity. Barbosa (2005), in his study on Nahua craftsmanship, shows that craft aesthetics contain symbolism directly linked to the philosophical vision of the people, integrating utilitarian, ornamental, religious, and identity functions. These pieces evoke the historical and cultural context in which they originated and allow us to understand the factors that shape community identity. Consequently, although crafts belong to the artistic sphere, they also enable the continuity of inherited customs and traditions, which is why their protection is essential for the preservation of cultural identity (Sosa, 2015).

Taken together, these contributions show that crafts strengthen community identity not only because they refer to the past, but also because they continue to organize current forms of belonging, memory, and collective recognition.

2.5 Crafts as a driver of local economic development

Del Carpio and Freitag (2013), in their study conducted in Chiapas and Jalisco with pottery artisans from Tonalá and Tsotsil artisans, point out that the craft sector is a fundamental source of income for Indigenous communities where traditional crafts are still practiced. In this vein, the scientific literature highlights that artisanal crafts are part of the community's economic sphere, insofar as their importance can be compared to other income-generating activities. Thus, artisanal production can be understood as a viable strategy for capital accumulation for families engaged in these trades (Ramos, 2004; Rivas, 2018; Voscoboinik, 2021).

According to Acosta and Del Carpio (2017) and Aceves et al. (2025), the artisanal sector articulates historical, social, cultural, and identity dimensions that are central to community life. Within this articulation, craftsmanship also operates within the economic sphere, as it contributes directly to the family economy of artisans and, by extension, to the economic well-being of the entire community. In addition, crafts offer opportunities for social development thanks to their creative and integrative capacities, which generate new perspectives for analyzing and understanding culture.

From their perspective, Martínez et al. (2022) argue that the incorporation of the craft sector into the cultural industry represents an important benefit for communities, as it strengthens local economic development. When artisans receive remuneration for the sale of their pieces, craft production becomes economically sustainable, which favors both its continuity and cultural preservation (Sosa, 2015). In this sense, each time a person purchases a handicraft, they directly support the producer and, consequently, the local economy, which has a positive impact on community economic development (Santos, 2023, cited in Mendoza and Hernández, 2024).

In line with the above, Mendoza and Hernández (2024) and Navarro and Cabrera (2022) affirm that the production of handicrafts constitutes not only a manifestation of cultural identity, but also a source of income and a form of economic entrepreneurship. Thanks to this, ancestral cultural practices have managed to endure over time, sustained by relatively self-sufficient economic models based on the responsible use of natural resources.

2.6 Craftsmanship as a practice of community well-being

Craft work has a positive impact on the health of those who practice it, as traditional crafts can help alleviate family concerns and everyday tensions. Several studies indicate that craftsmanship has favorable effects on individual and collective well-being, while strengthening community ties (Islas, 2024; Islas and González, 2024; Rusiñol et al., 2017). From this perspective, health is not reduced to the absence of disease, but is understood as a holistic state that articulates emotional, social, and cultural dimensions. Along the same lines, Aguilar (2010) argues that once learned, craft trades become deeply integrated into the lives of those who practice them, generating feelings of pride, satisfaction, and belonging. More than just productive activities or pastimes, they can be considered practices with therapeutic benefits, as they offer spaces for expression, concentration, and connection with tradition.

For their part, Muirhead and De Leeuw (2013) argue that crafts are a privileged means of expression for Indigenous peoples and play an important role in community healing processes. Through the creative arts, people not only reproduce cultural knowledge, but also express emotions, process experiences, and strengthen their sense of identity. In this sense, cultural revitalization can be supported by craft practices as strategies that contribute to collective well-being and the restoration of social bonds.

Taken together, the literature reviewed allows us to understand that craftsmanship is not only a productive or aesthetic practice, but also a form of cultural organization that articulates memory, territory, knowledge transmission, and social cohesion. These elements shape a comprehensive vision of community well-being, in which material production is intertwined with symbolic and relational processes.

3. Indigenous medicine as a holistic health system and a form of intergenerational transmission

Indigenous medicine is a central field for understanding the unique forms of care, knowledge, and social organization of life among Indigenous peoples. Rather than being a scattered set of therapeutic practices, the literature presents it as a culturally situated system that articulates knowledge, rituals, community ties, and specific ways of interpreting health, illness, and life balance (Cardona, 2013; Menéndez, 2022; Pérez and Uribe, 2025). In this framework, analyzing Indigenous medicine implies recognizing that care is not limited to interventions on the body, but refers to a relational understanding of existence,

where community, spirituality, territory, and memory are integral parts of the therapeutic process (Álvarez and Vides, 2013; Hernández and Méndez, 2006; König, 2011).

From this perspective, this section examines Indigenous medicine, first, as a practice of cultural resistance, insofar as its historical persistence expresses the capacity of Indigenous peoples to safeguard and update their own frameworks of knowledge in the face of biomedical hegemony. Second, it is approached as an expression of a worldview that conceives health as a dynamic balance between physical, emotional, spiritual, social, and territorial dimensions. Finally, its intergenerational transmission and the contemporary threats it faces are analyzed, showing that its weakening implies not only the loss of healing techniques, but also the weakening of a particular way of conceiving well-being and organizing community life.

3.1 Indigenous Medicine as a Form of Cultural Resistance

Barragán (2016), based on an ethnographic study of a midwife in the community of Capula (Michoacán), shows that the memory of traditional medicine is much more than a reservoir of healing knowledge: it functions as a foundation for cultural continuity and as a space of resistance against historical forms of epistemic subordination. In this sense, the preservation of medicinal knowledge cannot be understood solely as the persistence of ancient practices, but also as an active process of safeguarding community frameworks for interpreting the body, illness, and healing.

The literature reviewed suggests that the validity of Indigenous medicine depends not only on its therapeutic usefulness, but also on its ability to respond to cultural, spiritual, and relational needs that biomedical models do not always incorporate. Therefore, its continuity can be read as an expression of cultural resistance: not in a strictly confrontational sense, but rather as the everyday affirmation of Indigenous forms of knowledge and care. From this perspective, Indigenous medicine appears less as a residual vestige and more as a living practice through which communities preserve symbolic autonomy and historical continuity (Aparicio, 2005; Cardona, 2013; Menéndez, 2022).

Menéndez (2022) emphasize that Indigenous peoples are the heirs and guardians of a diverse cultural heritage whose vitality is reaffirmed as a form of resistance in the face of the historical and social processes they have experienced. Indigenous medicine remains relevant because it constitutes shared knowledge, in constant circulation within the community, and responds directly to the cultural and spiritual needs of the community as a whole (Aparicio, 2005; Chifa, 2010; Jiménez et al., 2015). Thus, Indigenous medicine appears in the literature not as a vestige of the past, but as a living practice of continuity and cultural resistance.

3.2 Indigenous Medicine as an Expression of Indigenous Worldview

Worldview is a central component in understanding Indigenous medicine, as it is interwoven into the daily life of Indigenous peoples and is expressed, in particular, in their healing practices (Hernández and Méndez, 2006). For Álvarez and Vides (2013) and Chifa (2010), the concepts of health and illness in Indigenous medicine are based on worldview, from which the meanings that allow therapeutic practices to be interpreted and legitimized emerge. Communities also reproduce and transmit this knowledge as an essential part of their daily lives and as a legacy to be preserved and transmitted to future generations.

Indigenous medicine should be understood as a symbolic framework whose comprehension requires situating it within the cultural context in which it acquires meaning. Through this practice, individuals interpret the world and construct explanations about their own existence and the reality in which they coexist with other communities and societies (Hernández and Méndez, 2006).

In his research on a midwife in Capula, Barragán (2023) highlights the close relationship between Indigenous medicine and spirituality. The traditional healer becomes a key agent in strengthening these practices through her participation in rituals, community festivities, and social activities that reinforce identity bonds. This articulation between the spiritual, the natural, and the social reflects the notion of integrality characteristic of the Indigenous worldview (Barragán, 2023; Cardona, 2012; Montiel, 2019). In turn, Morales (2015), through a study conducted in the Muisca community of Cota (Bogotá), demonstrates that the practice of childbirth has a deeply symbolic and cosmogonic meaning for those involved.

Cardona (2013) and Vallejo (2006) affirm that the analysis and, where appropriate, the revitalization of Indigenous medicine require an understanding of the particular reality of each community, its worldview, and the healing practices employed by traditional healers. These practices must be analyzed within the social and cultural context that gives them meaning, as their *raison d'être* arises from within the community itself. The worldview fulfills essential explanatory functions and is transmitted primarily through traditional healers (Menéndez, 2022).

Achig (2015) argues that worldview constitutes the central axis of Indigenous medicine, as it articulates knowledge that explains health processes in terms of harmony between material, spiritual, and social elements. From this perspective, Indigenous medicine represents a tangible manifestation of community identity and its particular way of understanding the world (Araújo et al., 2024). The literature agrees that Indigenous medicine cannot be understood outside the worldview that underpins it. This means that health, illness, body, and healing do not refer solely to biological states, but to culturally situated ways of interpreting the balance between the individual, the community, nature,

and the spiritual world. Consequently, healing practices should not be analyzed as isolated techniques, but as expressions of a broader relational framework of knowledge and care.

3.3 Indigenous Medicine as a Holistic Health System

Cardona (2013), Gutiérrez and Rondón (2022), and Zolla (2005) argue that Indigenous health systems should be approached from the perspective of the interconnection between physical, historical, social, environmental, and spiritual dimensions. Rather than simply adding multiple factors to an expanded definition of health, this perspective shifts the very way in which health is conceived: illness is no longer understood as an exclusively physical event but is instead interpreted as an expression of a relational imbalance. Within this framework, Indigenous medicine does not operate as an “alternative” medicine, but as a coherent system of care based on a different epistemological logic.

Armenta et al. (2025) argue that Indigenous medicine offers new perspectives for health promotion by including both physical and emotional aspects, thereby generating trust, security, and a higher quality of life. According to these authors, Indigenous medicine strengthens self-esteem and self-care and can reduce the harm associated with illness or the use of medications. Martínez et al. (2022), in a study conducted with traditional Zapotec, Mixe, and Ikoots healers, emphasize that Indigenous medicine should be understood as an articulated system in which different elements, such as rituals, medicinal plants, words, community, and spirituality, function interdependently.

Pérez and Uribe (2025) affirm that Indigenous medicine constitutes a health system with its own methods of diagnosis and treatment, transmitted intergenerationally. In Latin America, Indigenous peoples share a holistic vision based on the connection between nature, the individual, and the community. Álvarez and Vides (2013) add that the concepts of health and illness must be understood in terms of the dynamic balance of cultural relationships, with spirituality serving as an integrating element of health-illness processes.

This holistic nature allows us to understand why therapeutic processes include medicinal plants, rituals, words, family ties, community practices, and spiritual mediations. These are not secondary elements, but interdependent components of the same therapeutic rationale. Thus, the literature reviewed suggests that Indigenous medicine broadens the notion of health by reinscribing it within the network of relationships that sustain community life. Its contribution, therefore, lies not only in offering specific healing resources, but also in sustaining a comprehensive conception of well-being that challenges the biomedical fragmentation of care.

3.4 Indigenous Medicine as Ancestral Knowledge Transmitted Intergenerationally

Martínez et al. (2022) show that Indigenous medicine is the product of a long historical process in which knowledge transmitted over centuries has been preserved. García and de la Cruz (2008), in a study with women from the Costa Chica (Guerrero), show that the

transmission of Indigenous medicine occurs mainly within the family through everyday empirical practices. König (2011) and Pérez and Uribe (2025) argue that, due to its unique methods of diagnosis and treatment, Indigenous medicine can be considered a fully fledged health system whose knowledge has been safeguarded for generations. Jiménez et al. (2015) and Jorand (2008) emphasize that this practice remains relevant in family and community life because it continues to be fundamental to everyday health care.

Hirose (2018), in collaboration with traditional Mayan healers, documents that certain knowledge is preserved on spiritual levels, such as dreams or the world of ancestors, and is transmitted when the appropriate moment arises. This type of transmission highlights the importance of valuing forms of knowledge that do not conform to Western epistemological frameworks. Ocampo (2022) points out that oral tradition plays a central role in the preservation of Indigenous medicine, making it an essential cultural expression. Along these lines, Bello and Salgado (2013) show that much of the knowledge about medicinal plants is not recorded in writing but is transmitted orally across generations.

3.5 Indigenous Medicine at Risk: Erosion and Generational Disruption

Bello and Salgado (2013), based on their study in Nuevo San Juan Parangaricutiro, report a considerable decline in the use of medicinal plants, because knowledge about their use is restricted to older generations. The lack of interest in oral transmission and the limited commitment of younger generations place the continuity of these practices at risk. The predominance of oral transmission makes it even more difficult to record this knowledge in written formats.

Jiménez et al. (2015) observe that, although Indigenous medicine continues to be part of community and family dynamics, the rapid pace of change and pressures from modern society have led to a gradual loss of ancestral knowledge. This erosion affects both practical and symbolic domains that have historically sustained community life.

Hirose (2018) and Araújo et al. (2024) highlight that various contemporary social phenomena create situations of vulnerability for Indigenous peoples, resulting in the slow and often imperceptible loss of ancestral worldviews, cultural diversity, and traditional knowledge. König (2011) warns that the future of these practices depends on support for their teaching and transmission, as well as respect for the cultural conditions in which traditional healers develop their knowledge and contribute to community well-being. Overall, the analysis of Indigenous medicine allows us to identify a logic similar to that observed in the field of craftsmanship: in both cases, the continuity of the practice depends on processes of intergenerational transmission, territorial anchoring, and the ability to reproduce collective frameworks of meaning. Both craftsmanship and Indigenous medicine thus operate as forms of cultural organization that extend beyond their immediate functions (productive in one case and therapeutic in the other) to become part of the same relational matrix of well-being. This convergence suggests that the care of community life, or

“collective well-being” in Indigenous contexts, is not distributed across separate spheres, but rather across interconnected practices that articulate memory, identity, spirituality, and cultural reproduction.

Conclusion

The analysis developed in this report allows us to affirm that Indigenous crafts and Indigenous medicine are not isolated practices or peripheral cultural expressions, but rather complex systems that organize the social, symbolic, and health-related life of Indigenous peoples. Both refer to a relational epistemological matrix in which territory, memory, spirituality, and community do not operate as external references, but as the very conditions for the production and reproduction of well-being.

The review shows that craftsmanship not only produces objects, but also materializes social ties, transmits knowledge, affirms belonging, and sustains local economies within specific cultural frameworks. Similarly, Indigenous medicine is not limited to treating illness, but expresses a comprehensive concept of care aimed at restoring the balance between the individual, the community, nature, and the spiritual world. In both cases, their strength lies in the fact that they simultaneously articulate identity, economic, therapeutic, and political functions.

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Appendices

Table 2. Summary of the 49 articles examined in the scoping review.

Title	Author and year	Topic	Study design	Techniques or models	Evaluation	Main results
Transmisión intergeneracional de conocimientos de técnicas artesanales de wixarikas radicados en Zona Metropolitana de Guadalajara	Aceves, Azcona & Sánchez (2025)	Indigenous crafts Indigenous health	Theoretical analysis	Theoretical-interpretative	Semi-structured interview	The intergenerational transmission of knowledge about craft techniques remains alive among the Wixarikas. And while there has been change, it has taken place in craft expressions, not in the identity of the people.
Interculturalidad y Cosmovisión Andina	Achig (2015)	Indigenous health	Theoretical analysis	Comprehensive health model	N/A	Medical systems are cultural constructs, that illness in the Andean worldview is a communal and energetic event, and that intercultural health requires recognizing and articulating ancestral knowledge with Western medicine, overcoming biomedical hegemony to build a comprehensive approach.
Salud ocupacional: Impacto del oficio artesanal en artífices que realizan su trabajo en bipedestación prolongada	Acosta & Del Carpio (2017)	Indigenous health	Quantitative-descriptive approach	Descriptive model of occupational health	Structured survey administered directly	This study establishes that there is a prevalence of pain, fatigue, and occupational risk due to prolonged standing among artisans who remain in this position for long periods of time.
Las artesanías en el contexto global	Aguilar (2010)	Indigenous crafts	Critical analysis	Theoretical-interpretative	N/A	Craftsmanship is a dynamic process that is constantly changing, and artisans are active social actors within cultural and economic processes.

Consumo simbólico de artesanía	Amaya (2017)	Indigenous crafts	Empirical quantitative design	N/A	Use of surveys	This study shows that the consumption of crafts (ceramics and basketry) is strongly associated with symbolic values such as identity, tradition, and cultural heritage, and that these objects contribute significantly to the construction of consumers' individual and national identity.
La medicina tradicional como medicina ecocultural	Aparicio (2005)	Indigenous health	Theoretical-conceptual analysis	Theoretical-interpretative	N/A	The text concludes that indigenous medicine is not limited to isolated healing practices, as it constitutes a system that integrates ancestral knowledge, the relationship with nature, worldview and spirituality, as well as social and cultural organization.
Análisis de la protección de medicinas tradicionales y saberes ancestrales a la luz de la bioética y el reconocimiento de las comunidades indígenas vulnerables en la Comunidad Andina	Araujo, Cerón, Verdival & Lage (2024)	Indigenous health	Theoretical analysis	N/A	N/A	This study argues that indigenous medicine and ancestral knowledge require comprehensive protection that goes beyond the purely economic approach to intellectual property, incorporating interethnic bioethics, indigenous autonomy, and collective recognition.
Experiencia del uso de medicina tradicional por profesionales de la	Armenta, Miranda, Heredia, Ortiz & Miranda (2025)	Indigenous health	Theoretical analysis	Systematic review	N/A	This study mentions that there is academic training available to provide indigenous medicine care, in addition to WHO strategies to reduce the

salud: Revisión sistemática						challenges faced by professionals in providing it.
Marcas Colectivas de la Artesanía en México	Arvizu, Enciso, Zepeda & Fonseca (2023)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical analysis	Theoretical-legal-cultural model	N/A	Mexican crafts face fierce competition and commercial exploitation without adequate protection for artisans, which affects both their income and their cultural identity. Collective trademarks are identified as a key tool for legally protecting artisanal production, strengthening marketing, and preserving cultural roots.
La medicina tradicional como un modelo de atención integral en salud	Álvarez & Vides (2013)	Indigenous health	Theoretical-conceptual analysis	Comprehensive health model	N/A	Indigenous medicine can be structured as a comprehensive healthcare model, with a holistic vision that integrates biological, social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions.
Artesanías indígenas mexicanas: funciones económicas y culturales	Barbosa (2005)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical-analytical analysis	Analytical	N/A	Indigenous crafts have both an economic and a cultural function. They are a source of income for communities and also serve as a vehicle for cultural identity.
La partería: un caso en Capula, Michoacán	Barragan A. (2023)	Indigenous health	Qualitative, descriptive-interpretative analysis	Qualitative-interpretative	Semi-structured interview	Midwifery continues to be an ancestral knowledge that is still relevant today, reinterpreted and adapted, preserving physical practices, rituals, and herbal remedies that are fundamental to the care of pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period.

Joyería en filigrana artesanal: entretejiendo hilos de tradición	Bastidas, Ascuntar & Bastidas (2024)	Indigenous crafts	Qualitative	Collaborative	Observation of the learning process	The effective transfer of traditional knowledge is possible and occurs through the revitalization of a technique at risk of disappearing.
Plantas medicinales de la comunidad indígena Nuevo San Juan Parangaricutiro, Michoacán, México	Bello & Salgado (2013)	Indigenous health	Descriptive-interpretative	Theoretical-interpretative	Use of semi-structured interviews	This study shows a high diversity of medicinal plants that remain in use in the community as part of the health system and evidence the progressive loss of traditional knowledge.
Producción artesanal indígena y comercialización: entre los “buenitos” y los “barateros”	Benedetti (2012)	Indigenous crafts	Descriptive-interpretative	Theoretical-interpretative	Use of semi-structured interviews	Crafts serve as a complementary economic strategy for the community, demonstrating the prevalence of crafts in the community and emphasizing that they are no longer ritual objects but have become commodities with decorative and tourist value.
Salud y cosmovisión indígena: un derecho colectivo en construcción	Bournissent (2014)	Indigenous health	Critical analysis	Interpretive theory	Open interviews	Recognition of health as a collective right conceives indigenous health from a comprehensive and community-based perspective. It highlights the holistic nature of health within the indigenous worldview.
Saberes ancestrales: una revisión para fomentar el rescate y revalorización en las comunidades indígenas del Ecuador	Briones, Muñoz, Patiño & Moreira (2021)	Comprehensive health	Descriptive-interpretative	Theoretical-interpretative	Use of semi-structured interviews	Defines indigenous medicine, the concept of health, illness, cure, and healing. Proposes a holistic conception of health and focuses on spirituality.

Sistema médico tradicional de comunidades indígenas Emberá-Chamí del Departamento de Caldas-Colombia	Cardona (2012)	Indigenous health	Descriptive-interpretative	Comprehensive health model	Use of semi-structured interviews	Presents the definition of indigenous medicine, health, illness, cure, and healing from a holistic conception of health, where health manifests itself through the balance of different dimensions. Mentions that the traditional medical system contributes key elements to interculturality in the field of health.
Vínculo entre mestizaje y salud en un sistema médico de una comunidad indígena colombiana	Cardona (2013)	Indigenous health	Theoretical-interpretative analysis	Comprehensive health model	Semi-structured interviews	The study concludes that miscegenation has led to a significant decline in the use of indigenous medicine in the Zenú indigenous community, especially among young people, which has affected cultural identity and ancestral knowledge of health.
Representaciones sociales sobre medicina tradicional y enfermedades foráneas en indígenas EmberaChamí de Colombia	Cardona & Rivera (2012)	Indigenous health	Interpretive-comprehensive	Comprehensive health model	Use of semi-structured interviews	Conceives health holistically, as a balance between physical, spiritual, social, and environmental dimensions, deeply linked to their worldview and territory. Indigenous medicine is organized around ancestral knowledge, ritual practices, and the use of medicinal plants
Cosmovisión entretejida: un reconocimiento al patrimonio inmaterial	Castillo (2018)	Indigenous crafts	Critical analysis	Interpretive-ethnographic model	Use of guided interviews	The study shows that weaving is not only a productive activity, but also a symbolic language that transmits memory, values, spirituality, and ways of

de las artesanas tejedoras de Sutatausa						understanding time, territory, and community, constituting a central axis of the worldview and intangible cultural heritage of the artisans.
La perspectiva social de la medicina tradicional	Chifa (2010)	Indigenous health	Theoretical analysis	Theoretical-interpretative	N/A	The study argues that indigenous medicine is a comprehensive sociocultural system linked to the worldview, history, and community life of indigenous peoples, and that it has been marginalized by the hegemonic biomedical model despite its widespread use and cultural effectiveness.
La importancia de la transmisión de saberes ancestrales para conservar la cultura	Corina (2025)	Indigenous crafts	Critical analysis	Interpretive	Use of semi-structured interviews	The study shows that the transmission of ancestral knowledge is central to the preservation of Salteña culture, as it sustains identity, family organization, and the continuity of craft enterprises.
Motivos para seguir haciendo artesanías en México: convergencias y diferencias del contexto artesanal de Chiapas y Jalisco	Del Carpio & Freitag (2013)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical-interpretative analysis	Qualitative-interpretative	Use of semi-structured interviews	The results show that the permanence of the craft trade can be explained by a combination of cultural, identity, and economic factors. Crafts represent a cultural necessity, a means of preserving tradition and collective memory, and a source of income.
La artesanía como una práctica cultural configuradora de procesos	Gámez (2012)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical analysis	Sociocultural model	N/A	This study shows that basketry in Las Tunas is a key component of traditional popular culture, passed down from generation to generation, which has been

socioculturales: la cestería en Las Tunas en la actualidad						deeply influenced by cultural institutionalization.
Transformaciones en la transmisión del conocimiento tradicional de los artesanos de Santa María Atzompa, Oaxaca	García (2019)	Indigenous crafts	Critical analysis	Socio-cultural model	Use of in-depth interviews	The study shows that pottery is central to the identity and symbolic life of the families of Santa María Atzompa, although it is no longer their only source of income, confirming multiple activities as a survival strategy.
Biodiversidad y artesanías de México	Gasca & Guevara (2022)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical analysis	Biocultural model	N/A	This study shows that crafts in Mexico are deeply dependent on local biodiversity and traditional knowledge, but increased demand has led to overexploitation of natural resources, highlighting the need for sustainable craft production models.
La artesanía como imaginario social representativo de la herencia cultural del estado Lara	Gómez (2019)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical analysis	Theoretical-interpretative model	N/A	The study concludes that the crafts of Lara state constitute a social imaginary that expresses and preserves the cultural heritage, identity, and collective memory of the community, and that craft production is understood as a living cultural heritage transmitted between generations.
Pensamiento Complejo en la Medicina Tradicional	Gutiérrez & Rondón (2022)	Indigenous health	Theoretical analysis	Comprehensive health model	N/A	This study concludes that ancestral and traditional medicine is best understood from the paradigm of complex thinking, as it integrates physical,

						emotional, mental, and spiritual dimensions of health, overcoming the reductionist approach of the biomedical model.
La cosmovisión indígena Tzotzil y Tzeltal a través de la relación salud-enfermedad en el contexto de la medicina tradicional indígena	Hernandez & Mendez (2006)	Indigenous health	Theoretical-interpretative analysis	Comprehensive health model	Use of semi-structured interviews	The study shows that for the Tzotzil and Tzeltal indigenous peoples, health and illness are understood from a holistic worldview, in which well-being depends on the balance between body, mind, spirit, community, and nature. Illness is conceived as a disruption of that balance, caused by natural, social, or supernatural factors.
La medicina tradicional maya: ¿Un saber en extinción?	Hirose (2018)	Indigenous health	Theoretical-interpretative analysis	Holistic health model	Use of open-ended interviews	but rather a living medical system that is maintained through its own forms of cultural transmission, such as ritual selection, dreams, and vocation.
Artesanía y bienestar: Análisis del Trabajo artesanal actual como forma de resistencia en el contexto contemporáneo	Islas (2024)	Indigenous craftsmanship	Critical interpretive analysis	Comprehensive health model	Use of semi-structured interviews	The study found that current craft work has direct positive effects on the comprehensive well-being of artisans, promoting physical, emotional, social, and spiritual health. Craft practice strengthens self-esteem, reduces stress, and improves community cohesion.
Estrategias de resistencia en el trabajo artesanal y sus conexiones con la salud ampliada, un	Islas & Gonzáles (2024)	Indigenous craftsmanship	Critical-interpretive analysis	Comprehensive health model	Use of in-depth and semi-structured interviews	The study shows that craftsmanship functions as a strategy of resistance against job insecurity and the neoliberal model, and contributes significantly to the overall health of artisans.

enfoque holístico sobre la salud						
Los saberes en medicina tradicional y su contribución al desarrollo rural: estudio de caso Región Totonaca, Veracruz	Jimenez, Hernandez, Espinosa, Mendoza & Torrijos (2015)	Indigenous health	Empirical analysis with a mixed approach	Comprehensive health model	Use of structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews	Demonstrates that indigenous medical knowledge continues to be fundamental in the Totonaca Region for primary health care and that knowledge is transmitted mainly within the family, especially from parents to children.
Formas de transformación del conocimiento de la medicina tradicional en los pueblos nahuas del municipio de Hueyapan, Sierra Norte de Puebla	Jorand (2008)	Indigenous health	Critical-interpretative analysis	Comprehensive health model	Use of open-ended interviews	The study shows that Nahua indigenous medicine continues to be a valid healthcare system based on a comprehensive concept of health (), but it is undergoing a process of transformation due to the influence of Western medicine.
Artesanía: lo sagrado y su trivialización en el mundo de hoy	Malatesta (2013)	Indigenous crafts	Critical analysis	Conceptual-interpretative	N/A	The text concludes that traditional crafts are deeply linked to the sacred, nature, and ancestral worldviews, but that in the contemporary world they have been progressively trivialized by consumption, speed, and the loss of cultural memory.
El diseño industrial, salvaguardia del patrimonio cultural inmaterial en México	Maldonado (2018)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical analysis	Theoretical-interpretative model	N/A	The study concludes that industrial design can be a key tool for safeguarding, documenting, valuing, and innovating traditional craft practices, provided that it is done collaboratively with communities, respecting their

						knowledge, identities, and cultural processes.
Protección sui generis y la propiedad intelectual de la medicina tradicional en Oaxaca, México	Martínez, Navarro & Sesia (2022)	Indigenous health	Critical-interpretative analysis	Comprehensive health model	Use of semi-structured interviews	The study shows that the Mexican legal framework is insufficient to protect indigenous medicine, which facilitates its appropriation and misuse. Based on ethnographic studies in Oaxaca, it is concluded that indigenous medicine is a comprehensive, collective, and dynamic system that requires legal protection.
La artesanía como elemento de identidad cultural local y su valoración turística	Mendoza & Hernandez (2024)	Indigenous crafts	Critical analysis	Descriptive-interpretative	Structured and semi-structured interviews	The study concludes that crafts are a central element of local cultural identity and a key resource for tourism, but their value is often reduced to commercial terms, leading to trivialization and a loss of symbolic meaning.
Salud intercultural: propuestas, acciones y fracasos	<i>Menéndez (2016)</i>	Indigenous health	Critical analysis	Critical-relational model of medical anthropology	N/A	The study concludes that most intercultural health proposals in Latin America have had limited impact or have failed because they were designed by institutions rather than communities, ignoring structural inequalities, racism, biomedical hegemony, and actual self-care processes.
De los usos pragmáticos de la medicina tradicional por parte del sector salud a las	<i>Menéndez (2022)</i>	Indigenous health	Critical analysis	Critical-relational	N/A	The study shows that indigenous medicine in Mexico has been used pragmatically and subordinately by the health sector to expand biomedical coverage, but has subsequently been

exclusiones ideológicas de las orientaciones antropológicas: el caso mexicano (1930-2022)						excluded and medicalized when it ceased to be functional to state objectives.
Espiritualidad de los outshii-médicos wayuu-y la medicina tradicional	Montiel (2019)	Indigenous health	Theoretical analysis	Comprehensive health model	N/A	The study shows that Wayuu indigenous medicine, practiced by the outshii, constitutes a comprehensive health system based on spirituality, the relationship with nature, and the ancestral worldview, capable of explaining and treating disease processes that biomedicine fails to understand in indigenous contexts.
Violencia cultural, colonialismo y reetnización; el sentido de las prácticas en salud desde el punto de vista indígena	Morales (2015)	Indigenous health	Critical-theoretical analysis	Comprehensive health model	N/A	Re-ethnicization allows for the recovery of ancestral memory and reframes health practices as comprehensive, performative, and symbolic processes that strengthen identity, community cohesion, and collective health, while also functioning as a political and cultural strategy of decolonization in the face of the hegemonic biomedical model.
Art et santé: L'importance de l'art pour la santé et la guérison des peuples autochtones	Muirhead & De Leeuw (2013)	Indigenous crafts	Critical analysis	N/A	Semi-structured interviews	There are relevant sustainable practices in both communities, as well as economic, cultural, and symbolic barriers to their adoption. The study mentions that it is necessary to balance the

						preservation of artisanal identity with technological innovation in order to protect the environment, the health of artisans, and the economic viability of craftsmanship.
Artesanía sostenible: comunidades alfareras de Ráquira (Colombia) y Santa María Atzompa (México)	Navarro (2022)	Indigenous crafts	Critical analysis	N/A	Semi-structured interviews	The study shows that artisanal pottery production faces a strong tension between cultural preservation and environmental sustainability, especially due to the use of lead and polluting practices that affect the health of artisans and their communities.
La herencia artesanal en la preservación del patrimonio cultural inmaterial en San Juan Calmecca 2023	Neri & Mena (2024)	Indigenous crafts	Descriptive-correlational	N/A	Use of direct interviews and semi-structured questionnaires	The main results show a moderate positive correlation between family craft heritage and the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, confirming that the intergenerational transmission of craft techniques contributes significantly to the conservation of intangible cultural heritage.
Transmisión de la medicina tradicional en El Carmen de Viboral	Ocampo (2022)	Indigenous health	Theoretical-interpretative analysis	Interpretative model	Use of interviews	The study shows that indigenous medicine in El Carmen de Viboral is transmitted mainly through oral tradition, observation, and family life, with older adults being the main bearers of knowledge.
La memoria colectiva en las comunidades indígenas, una estrategia para la	Pérez & Garduño (2009)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical analysis	Sociocultural model	Use of structured interviews	The study shows that collective memory, transmitted through festivals, rituals, language, clothing, and community practices, is a central element in the construction and

construcción de identidad						reproduction of the P'urhépecha indigenous identity.
Inclusión y diversidad cultural, una apuesta social por el arte y las artesanías en Michoacán	Pérez & Uribe (2025)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical-critical analysis	N/A	N/A	Shows that the visual arts and crafts sector faces structural conditions of exclusion and precariousness, but has high creative, social, and economic potential which, if properly articulated with public policies and creative economy strategies, can promote social inclusion, the strengthening of cultural identities, and regional economic development.
Artesanas y artesanías: indígenas y mestizas de Chiapas construyendo espacios de cambio	Ramos (2004)	Indigenous crafts	Critical analysis	Critical socio-cultural	Use of semi-structured interviews	The study shows that artisanal production and commercialization in Chiapas has generated opportunities for social change for indigenous and mestizo women, allowing them greater economic autonomy, participation in family decision-making, and political and community presence.
Saberes y prácticas artesanales de talavera en San Pablo del Monte, Tlaxcala	Rincón (2022)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical analysis	Sociocultural model	Use of semi-structured interviews	They show that Talavera pottery in San Pablo del Monte is a key element of Mexican cultural identity, whose traditional knowledge and techniques remain alive thanks to family and community transmission, articulating with modern practices without losing their essence.

La artesanía: patrimonio e identidad cultural	Rivas (2018)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical analysis	Anthropological-cultural	N/A	The study concludes that crafts are a central element of cultural heritage and collective identity among peoples, as they transmit values, traditions, and knowledge from generation to generation.
Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial de las mujeres: una revisión de sus claves para la inclusión en educación primaria	Rodríguez & Rodríguez (2025)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical-critical analysis	Interpretative and critical approach	N/A	Intangible cultural heritage strengthens cultural identity, gender equality, and values education in primary school, but there is a lack of concrete pedagogical strategies to systematically integrate it into the curriculum.
Motivos, efectos y beneficios terapéuticos de la actividad de hacer punto: una revisión de la literatura	Rodríguez, Ramon & Rusiñol (2017)	Indigenous health	Theoretical analysis	Comprehensive health model	N/A	They show that craft activity is associated, from the perspective of those who practice it, with emotional, social, and psychological benefits such as stress reduction, increased well-being, and a strengthened sense of identity and belonging.
Artesanías indígenas mexicanas: funciones económicas y culturales	Sánchez (2005)	Indigenous crafts	Critical analysis	Socio-cultural	N/A	Demonstrates that indigenous crafts fulfill different economic and cultural functions depending on the context in which they circulate: within communities, they reinforce identity, worldview, and self-sufficiency (), while outside of them, they are subordinated to the logic of the capitalist market, where they are commodified, economically devalued, and symbolically re-

						signified by non-indigenous sectors.
Las artesanías y el saber hacer de las mujeres: memoria colectiva de Túnez	Sekik (2016)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical-critical analysis	N/A	N/A	This study shows that women artisans in Tunisia are fundamental to the preservation, transmission, and reinterpretation of traditional craft techniques, but that this heritage faces a serious risk of disappearing due to industrialization.
México, la artesanía frente al cambio y la construcción de verdaderas políticas públicas de protección	Sosa (2013)	Indigenous crafts	Critical analysis	Socio-historical model	N/A	The study concludes that public policies on crafts have been insufficient and fragmented, focusing more on the product than on the artisan, which has contributed to the precariousness of the sector and the risk to the craft heritage.
La perspectiva institucional del Conocimiento tradicional, el reto de la Artesanía en Riesgo	Sosa (2014)	Indigenous crafts	Critical-theoretical analysis	Critical-interpretative model	N/A	The study concludes that institutional policies in Mexico have reduced the protection of traditional knowledge to a commercial and ideological logic, prioritizing buying and selling and "traditional" aesthetics over the living transmission of craft knowledge.
Artesanía indígena como punto de partida para comprender la resistencia y pertenencia al lugar	Torres, Da Silva & Garcia (2023)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical analysis	Interpretive-socioeducational model	Use of semi-structured interviews	The study concludes that indigenous crafts function as an environmental and cultural educational process through which ancestral knowledge is transmitted, a sense of belonging to the place is strengthened, and

						a form of resistance to cultural homogenization and territorial dispossession is expressed.
Trabajo artesanal en las comunidades de la ribera del lago de Pátzcuaro	Torres & Leco (2018)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical-interpretative analysis	N/A	Use of structured interviews	The study concludes that craftsmanship continues to be a key source of income, identity, and social cohesion in the indigenous communities on the shores of Lake Pátzcuaro, despite facing poverty, marginalization, and a lack of effective institutional support.
Estrategias de resistencia en el trabajo artesanal y sus conexiones con la salud ampliada, un enfoque holístico sobre la salud	Trejo & Gonzáles (2024)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical-interpretative analysis	Comprehensive health model	Use of semi-structured interviews	The study shows that craftsmanship functions as a strategy for social and cultural resistance, contributes to the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of artisans, strengthens community identity, reduces stress and other social risk factors, and challenges hegemonic models of health.
Medicina indígena y salud mental	Vallejo (2006)	Indigenous health	Theoretical analysis	Comprehensive health model	N/A	Indigenous medicine offers a comprehensive understanding of mental health, centered on worldview, symbolic efficacy, and the sociocultural context, which can enrich Western medicine by overcoming the reductionist biomedical approach and promoting a notion of comprehensive and community-based health.

Preservación de la artesanía ancestral en estudiantes de la etnia Sikuani del Centro Educativo Internado Asocortomo, municipio de Cumaribo-Vichada	Villamizar (2022)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical analysis	Sociocultural-educational preservation of ancestral knowledge	N/A	The study concludes that the implementation of a playful-pedagogical strategy strengthens students' interest and motivation for ancestral crafts, promotes the participation of older adults as transmitters of knowledge, and contributes to the preservation of cultural identity.
Artesanías qom: una práctica colectiva y comunitaria	Voscoboinik (2021)	Indigenous crafts	Critical analysis	Socio-anthropological model	Use of semi-structured interviews	Qom crafts cannot be understood solely as an economic activity, as they function as a community practice that reproduces bonds of reciprocity, identity, memory, and spirituality, constituting both a subsistence strategy and a form of cultural resistance.
Dimensiones que motivan la compra de artesanías en México	Zamacona & Barajas (2022)	Indigenous crafts	Theoretical analysis	Theoretical-conceptual model	Use of surveys	This study shows that symbolic value is the factor that most influences the intention to purchase crafts, followed by artistic value and, to a lesser extent, commercial factors.
La medicina tradicional indígena en el México actual	Zolla (2005)	Indigenous health	Critical analysis	Comprehensive health model	Use of interviews and testimonies	The study shows that indigenous medicine has internal coherence, symbolic and practical efficacy from the perspective of the peoples' worldview, fulfills important preventive and curative functions, and faces processes of institutional delegitimization.

