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Manizales as an *Edutropolis* from the Implementation of the Educating City Model, with an Urban Governance Approach*

⌈*English version*⌉

Manizales como *Edutrópolis* desde la implementación del modelo de ciudad educadora, con enfoque de gobernanza urbana

Manizales como *Edutrópolis* desde a implementação do modelo de cidade educadora, com enfoque de governança urbana

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Abstract

Objective: This article aims to explore the importance of citizen participation in urban governance, specifically for Manizales (Colombia) joining the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) and fulfilling the associated commitments. **Methodology**: A documentary review was conducted, followed by a mapping of stakeholders who are involved or could potentially be involved in the city model/project/initiative. Based on this mapping, 9 shared diagnostics were carried out using a methodological instrument designed with inspiration from the Methodological Guide provided by the IAEC. Finally, recommendations were generated from an urban governance perspective. **Results**: The recommendations generated will aid in the effective management of the city project from a perspective that engages potential beneficiaries. It is evident that civil society, local universities, and the public sector have established and can establish synergies around the commitments resulting from Manizales' adhesion to the IAEC. **Conclusions**: Manizales' membership in the IAEC represents a significant achievement in urban governance and city diplomacy. Manizales can be configured as an *Edutropolis* through the implementation of the Educating City model.

Keywords: Educating City; Edutropolis; urban governance; citizen participation; quality of life (obtained from UNESCO and ERIC thesauri).

Resumen

Objetivo: en este artículo se pretende explorar la importancia de la participación ciudadana en la gobernanza urbana, para la adhesión de Manizales (Colombia) a la Asociación Internacional de Ciudades Educadoras (AICE), y el cumplimiento de los compromisos que se derivan. **Metodología**: se llevó a cabo una revisión documental y,

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posteriormente, se efectuó un mapeo de actores que confluyen, o pueden confluir, en torno al modelo/proyecto/apuesta de ciudad. Al tenor de este mapeo, se realizaron 9 diagnósticos compartidos, para lo cual, se implementó un instrumento metodológico, cuyo diseño se inspiró en la *Guía Metodológica* proporcionada por la AICE. Finalmente, se generaron recomendaciones desde un enfoque de gobernanza urbana. **Resultados**: las recomendaciones generadas, servirán para una correcta gestión del proyecto de ciudad, desde un enfoque que vincule a los potencialmente beneficiados. Se evidencia que la sociedad civil, las universidades locales, y el sector público, han establecido y pueden establecer sinergias en torno a los compromisos que se derivan de la adhesión de Manizales a la AICE. **Conclusiones**: la adhesión de Manizales a la AICE representa un gran logro en materia de gobernanza urbana y diplomacia de ciudad. Manizales se puede configurar como una *Edutrópolis* a partir de la implementación del modelo de Ciudad Educadora.

Palabras clave: Ciudad Educadora; Edutrópolis; gobernanza urbana; participación ciudadana; calidad de vida (obtenidos del tesauro UNESCO y ERIC).

Resumo

Objetivo: este artigo visa explorar a importância da participação cidadã na governança urbana para a adesão de Manizales (Colômbia) à Associação Internacional de Cidades Educadoras (AICE) e o cumprimento dos compromissos que dela decorrem. **Metodologia**: foi realizada uma revisão documental e, posteriormente, um mapeamento dos atores que convergem, ou podem convergir, em torno do modelo/projeto/aposta de cidade. Com base nesse mapeamento, foram elaborados 9 diagnósticos compartilhados, utilizando um instrumento metodológico cujo design se inspirou na Guia Metodológica fornecida pela AICE. Por fim, foram geradas recomendações a partir de um enfoque de governança urbana. **Resultados**: as recomendações geradas servirão para uma gestão adequada do projeto de cidade, com um enfoque que envolva os potenciais beneficiados. Evidencia-se que a sociedade civil, as universidades locais e o setor público têm estabelecido e podem estabelecer sinergias em torno dos compromissos decorrentes da adesão de Manizales à AICE. **Conclusões**: a adesão de Manizales à AICE representa uma grande conquista em termos de governança urbana e diplomacia de cidade. Manizales pode se configurar como uma Edutrópolis a partir da implementação do modelo de Cidade Educadora.

Palavras-chave: Cidade Educadora; Edutrópolis; governança urbana; participação cidadã; qualidade de vida (obtidos do tesauro UNESCO e ERIC).

Introduction

In the 1990s, the concept of "Educating Cities" (Faure, 1974) was adopted by the cities attending the 1st International Congress of Educating Cities, which was held in Barcelona (Spain). This concept was championed by the *Educating Cities* movement, consolidated in 1994 as the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) within the framework of the III Congress held in Bologna (Italy). This gave rise to *Charter[1] of Educating Cities*, whose purpose is to place education at the center of the public agenda of cities that embrace its principles (International Association of Educating Cities, 2020).

Since then, Educating Cities has been essentially characterized by leading strategies aimed at improving the quality of life in cities (Rodríguez, 2007) through networked governance. This implies that strategic, synergistic, collaborative, and/or cooperative relationships are established to facilitate dialogue between local government, civil society, and the cities that make up the IAEC.

The "Educating City" project places education at the center of a city's physical, economic, social, and cultural development. In line with the above, Educating Cities leads strategies addressing urbanism, environment, mobility, culture, sport, health, etc. It is a question of each Educating City addressing these, or other topics, from an endogenous vision (International Association of Educating Cities, 2023a), which allows adapting the strategies to the idiosyncrasy and cultural heritage of each city and, therefore, to the realities of the cities and those who inhabit them (Bryon and Gaona, 2005).

The IAEC makes it possible to exchange experiences, which is why it facilitates cultural exchange between different cities worldwide (Iglesias, 2019). Given that cities and their inhabitants face global challenges, Educating Cities' experiences can inspire those who make up the Association (Sassen, 2011), even those who are not part of it. However, the cities that make up the IAEC can lead strategies that reflect the realities of the territory and its inhabitants by the principles of the *Carta de Ciudades Educadoras* [Charter of Educating Cities]. This invites Educating Cities to place themselves in the principles that the Charter brings together to address the challenges that concern each city and its inhabitants, jointly or between different actors (civil society, local universities, and the public/private sector).

The transformation of cities has meant a remarkable change in how the urban environment is conceived and managed (Jacobs, 2020). The concept of

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1 This roadmap for Educating Cities has been subject to changes to adapt its approaches to current and, why not, future global challenges and social realities. This is why it has been reviewed on various occasions, such as at the III International Congress (Bologna, 1994), at the VIII Congress (Genoa, 2004), and in 2020.

"urban governance" has transformed beyond simple resource administration and political management (Gehl, 2013). Now, it incorporates cultural, social, and educational elements in the configuration of contemporary cities, which reflects a more integral and holistic paradigm in the development and maintenance of urban spaces.

This perspective of urban governance converges with the emergence of an increasingly relevant term: *"Edutropolis"* (Bellet & Ganau, 2006). This concept represents a fundamental transition in the way contemporary cities approach educating. Edutropolis goes beyond being a conglomerate of educational institutions (Landry, 2012); it is an urban approach that merges education in all aspects of urban life. This comprehensive perspective recognizes education as a central axis that permeates the daily life of citizens, fostering continuous learning and a culture of innovation, which contributes to the city's sustainable, cultural, and socio-economic development.

In this context, the Educating City model is developed (Rodríguez, 2007). These cities are understood as innovative projects that go beyond formal educating centers/institutions; they aspire to become ecosystems that promote intellectual curiosity, creativity (Ramos & López, 2013), and social inclusion (Cabezudo, 2015). The strategic intertwining of urban spaces such as parks, libraries, museums, and community centers forms a network (Barran, 2009) where knowledge flows freely and transforms the city into a living teaching and learning laboratory. This commitment to the Educating City represents a conscious effort to consider urban space as a place of continuous education and citizen participation (IDB, 2022).

A progressive movement towards this new paradigm is observed in the current state of the art (Collet & Humet, 2016; Rodríguez, 1999; Harvey, 2013). Cities worldwide are adopting approaches that embrace education as a vital component of their identity. Barcelona (Spain), Rosario (Argentina), and Bologna (Italy) are exponents of cities that have embraced the Educating Cities approach, promoting an environment of teaching and collaboration among all age and population groups (López & Cruz, 2003).

The intersection between urban governance, the concept of *"Edutropolis"* and the Educating City represents a significant evolution in the development of modern cities. Beyond urban conglomerates or receptacles of inhabitants, these cities are becoming environments where education and knowledge are fundamental pillars that shape collective identity and social progress (Villanueva, 2006).

From the agora of Athens (Rodríguez, 2007), urban spaces offer a meeting point where education and knowledge transcend the walls of the classrooms and become issues of interest to citizens who, through activities such as walking the city, discussing/dialoguing, and reflecting on such varied or diverse problems,

manage to impact the quality of life of urbanites in terms of urban services, democracy, economy, etc.

Today, modern cities (with their idiosyncrasies and cultural heritage) continue to be benchmarks for experiences that tend towards best practices, such as citizen participation in urban governance (International Association of Educating Cities, 2009, 2023b) and the linking of plural actors in city diplomacy (Zeraoui & Villar, 2016).

Given the factors that lead people to settle (or not) in cities (see Figure 1), different actors (civil society, universities, public sector, and private sector) are destined to converge to participate in urban governance strategies (Medina, 2013) and city diplomacy.

Source	General Information
World Bank	More than 50% of the world's population is urban (resides in cities); more than 80% of global GDP is generated in cities (cities generate significant economic revenues); cities are responsible for two-thirds of energy consumption, and more than 70% of greenhouse gas emissions (cities are an anthropic footprint/generate an anthropic footprint in the environment).
NASA, National Aeronautics and Space Administration	In recent years, there have been historical records of the increase in the temperature of our planet; 2023 was the hottest year on record. This exponential trend, caused by human activities (greenhouse gas emissions: use of fossil fuels, among others), requires total integrity and rigor and the confluence of all actors (civil society, universities, public and private sector) to face the challenges that concern us as a species.

Figure 1. *Challenges that concern us as a species.*

Source: Own elaboration, according to information from the World Bank (2023); NASA (2024).

The urban population (inhabitants of cities) and the planet's temperature (product of human activities) tend to increase. This should be a reason for reflection, discussion, and action for cities. Urban leaders can undertake timely and necessary efforts to improve urban life, act in the face of the climate crisis, marginality, access to (more and better) urban services, etc.

The COVID-19 pandemic (2020) taught us the importance and need to make informed decisions in the public sector (as well as in the everyday environment in which citizens operate or are immersed). This implies that intellectual, scientific, and/or academic thinking is considered in the public agenda (Rodríguez, 2007)

and that civil society, among other actors/stakeholders, recognizes the educational character of the methodological and research activities (on the occasion of the Educating City model).

Inside cities, decisions are made daily. Informed choices, whether made by a citizen (civil society) or a local/regional government (public sector), impact the quality of life of city people. Universities, students, and graduates not only generate economic benefits for cities; these actors/stakeholders also play a significant role in the physical, financial, social, and cultural development of cities (where their university and post-university life takes place), from intellectual, scientific, and academic activities. Issues of public interest, such as the labor market, urban mobility, or mental health (to name a few), can be addressed through teaching, research, and community service.

The articulated work between cities and universities and the knowledge products financed by these cities (to improve the quality of urban life) ratify the importance and need to make informed decisions from the public sector (see Figure 2).

"Misinformation/disinformation is the most significant short-term risk, while the environment dominates longer-term concerns (...)"

Figure 2. *Disinformation is a global risk.*

Source: Own elaboration, according to information from the World Economic Forum (Global Risk Perception Survey 2023 – 2024).

This is where the integration of these two concepts, "Educating City" and "*Edutropolis,*" becomes more relevant. Both allude to the strategic/intentional relationship (city-educating) to improve the quality of urban life, among other things. In essence, the two concepts refer to synergies between various actors/stakeholders for such purposes (community service).

Education is often related to formal educational institutions' teaching and learning process. However, educating (championed by educating cities) goes beyond the classroom and/or schooling (without distancing, ignoring, or omitting its importance). Educating cities is characterized by leading strategies to improve the quality of urban life through formal, non-formal, and informal education.

The social and economic impacts[2] generated by the symbiosis between the city and educating and, particularly, from the synergistic/collaborative/cooperative relationships that are established (and/or that can be established between actors/stakeholders) correspond to the conditions that illustrate the phenomenon called "*Edutropolis.*" In Manizales's specific case, the Educating City model includes basic, secondary, higher, technical, and technological education, among other things.

The implementation of the Educating City model in Manizales and, therefore, the configuration of Manizales as an *Edutropolis* allow basic, secondary, higher, technical, and technological education to be brought closer to the territory through intellectual, scientific, and/or academic activities (International Association of Educating Cities, 2019b). This is to improve the quality of life of people through teaching, research, and service to the community.

For a long time, Manizales has been considered the principal educational center of the region and one of the most weighted at the national level (Acebedo, 2011; Rodríguez, 2007, 2008). In 2019, this city joined the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) through Municipal Agreement No. 1040 of November 19, 2019, which was motivated by civil society, the Institute of Research in Social and Human Sciences – ICSH/University of Caldas, and the local government of the time.

Since the incorporation of Manizales into the IAEC (2019), civil society, local universities, and the public sector have exercised laudable leadership around this city project (Molina, 2007) since they have deepened in academic terms and have participated as protagonists of the decisions that are taken around it from the public agenda.

The participation of civil society and local universities (Pérez et al., 2018) in the public agenda has facilitated dialogue between plural actors to highlight the different commitments[3]. It needs to assist Manizales as an Educating City, such as compliance with the precepts that arise from incorporating the city into the IAEC.

This participation translates into the leadership exercised around the city model and includes both Manizales' accession to the IAEC and the fulfillment of the commitments that derive from it. These commitments obey the precepts issued, defined -or promulgated- by the municipality and the IAEC.

The IAEC promotes and disseminates the concept of "Educating City" as "[…] the backbone of democracy and citizenship" (Barcelona City Council, 2023).

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2 Social and economic income/benefits.

3 Compliance with *Municipal Agreement No. 1040 of November 19, 2019*: payment of annual fees before the IAEC; implementation of the Educating City model in Manizales.

Its objective is for Educating Cities to lead strategies and/or activities that tend to improve people's quality of life.

During the second half of 2023, methodological and research activities were carried out (within the framework of implementing the Educating City model in Manizales) to contribute to the correct management of the city project.

This article addresses the importance of citizen participation in urban governance for the accession of Manizales (Colombia) to the International Association of Educating Cities and fulfilling the commitments derived from the city's incorporation into this Association.

Methodology

The research has a qualitative methodological approach, which was based on the three elements that make up the university, according to the phenomenon or factor known as "*Edutropolis*": Teaching, research, and service to the community (Dober, 2000), to guide methodological and research activities.

We initially proceeded with the review of documents derived from Manizales' accession to the IAEC in 2019. This involved the prior definition of criteria and the prioritization of documents and information relevant to the research.

The above allowed for identifying the precepts issued by the IAEC and the municipality, as well as the academic and/or scientific documents that derive from Manizales' membership in the Association (between 2019 and 2023). In the same way, scientific literature was reviewed in databases on *Edutropolis* and urban governance as documents of particular interest for analysis.

Subsequently, a mapping and/or identification of actors/stakeholders that converge, or may converge, around Manizales as an Educating City was initiated (see Figure 3). For this, the academic documents generated and/or produced in Manizales (since 2021) were taken into account on the occasion of the Educating City model.
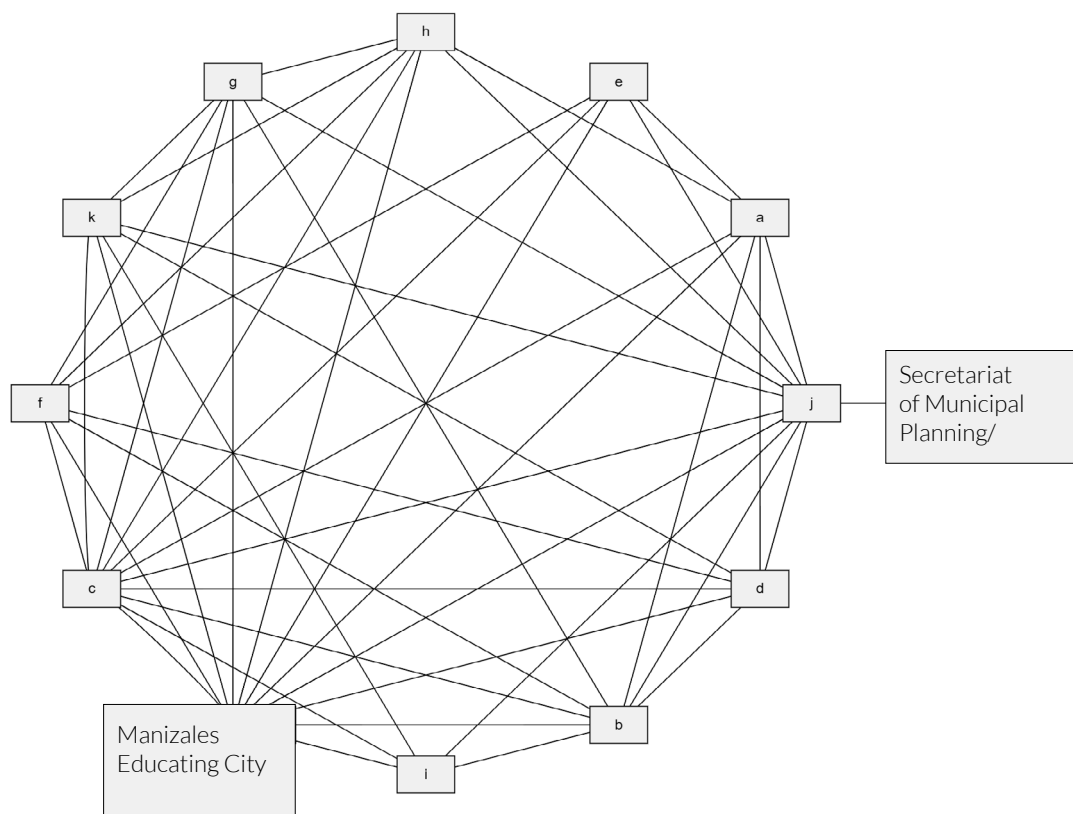
Figure 3. *Stakeholder mapping.*

Source: own work, based on the mapping/identification of stakeholders.

Actors/stakeholders

a. Civil society

b. Institute for Research in Social and Human Sciences (ICSH)

c. Local Universities

d. University students

e. Schools

f. Teachers

g. Alumni

h. SENA

i. Cultural events

j. Public sector

k. Private Sector

Likewise, a methodological instrument was adapted and implemented to allow shared diagnoses to jointly define the challenges and priorities for intervention in Manizales as an Educating City (with and from the previously identified actors/stakeholders).

This methodological instrument was inspired, fundamentally, by the Methodological Guide provided by the IAEC (International Association of Educating Cities, 2019a), but also by multiple triangulation and *Design Thinking* as methodological bets that allow linking those potentially benefited by this city project, as actors/stakeholders that converge or can converge around it (Ramírez, 2010).

Structure of the Methodological Instrument to Carry Out the Diagnoses

- What are the top 3 city challenges?

- How can we contribute to responding to them through lifelong learning and values educating?

- What municipal or civil society programs would you highlight to realize these challenges?

- Which entities could contribute to the achievement of these challenges?

- List/make a list of places you associate with an Educating City:

- Authorization to process personal data

- Stakeholder database;

All the information presented in this article conformed to the ethical and legally established parameters for the collection, storage, use, circulation, deletion, and, in general, processing of the personal data of the actors questioned during the investigation.

The Mayor's Office of Manizales is provided with all the information and documentation related to the participation of actors/stakeholders, which may be consulted within the framework of the methodological and research activities carried out during the second half of 2023, in connection with the implementation of the Educating City model in Manizales.

Nine shared diagnoses were made with the actors/stakeholders questioned during the research. These diagnoses were conducted in two phases: the first involved engaging the stakeholders to carry out a shared diagnosis with each of them; the second phase consisted of a virtual meeting, through which the actors/stakeholders could voluntarily participate to discuss the shared assessments, jointly define intervention priorities for building the Educating City in Manizales, and review the principles of the *Charter of Educating Cities*, among others. In this sense, the contributions derived from the interpellation of actors/stakeholders during the mapping and/or identification of the same were considered.

About Multiple Triangulation

Multiple triangulation (Betrián et al., 2013) allows one to adjust two or more methodological bets, both in the search and collection process and in the data/information analysis process. Triangulation is a diversification (previously defined) of sources, data/information, and methodological strategies (Forni & Grande, 2020).

The divergences or convergences that derive from the implementation of various methods (Aguilar & Barroso, 2015) allow us to take into account relevant information that could be ignored (or go unnoticed) if a methodological strategy does not have the possibility of being adjusted by the researchers, according to the particularities of each case. This methodological strategy offers a generous alternative. Thanks to the design and implementation of various methodological instruments, it can, among other things, highlight the perceptions of different actors/stakeholders.

About Design Thinking

Whether it is a citizen, a university, a local government, or the private sector, Design Thinking (IDB, 2022) is a methodological commitment that, due to its interest in the human being and its creative and innovative nature, allows:

- Manage an intergenerational and multidisciplinary dialogue within the framework of implementing the Educating City model in Manizales.

- Explore and adapt methodological instruments.

- Generate feedback/relevant information, which is input to make decisions about the city model.

- Put citizens at the center of reflection and actions.

- Identify challenges and commitments in the short, medium, and long term within the implementation framework, as well as validity and projection in the future of the city model.

- Ensure iteration and improvement of methodological activities.

- Promote the relationships that are established, or that can be established between actors/*stakeholders* and, therefore, strengthen urban governance within the framework of implementing the city model.

Likewise, a contrast and/or validation of a successful experience as an Educating City in Colombia was carried out (Correa, 2014), for which Medellín was chosen to occupy this place (International Association of Educating Cities, 2019b). The validation is relevant to the recommendations that were defined in favor of the implementation, validity, and projection in the future of Manizales as an Educating City from an urban governance approach to manage the city project correctly. This validation was carried out directly with stakeholders involved in fulfilling the commitments arising from Medellín's accession to the IAEC.

Finally, recommendations were generated from the documentary review, the mapping of actors/stakeholders, and the contrast and validation of a successful experience as an Educating City (in Colombia). These recommendations constitute significant inputs for correctly managing the city project (strategic and financial planning).

In this sense, the research seeks to raise the importance of citizen participation in urban governance for configuring Manizales as an *Edutropolis* within the implementation framework of the Educating City model.

This methodology adopted an approach that allowed linking those potentially benefiting from the city model/project/commitment while searching, collecting, and analyzing information (Molina, 2007). The focus consisted of a study on the Educating City, with and from some of the actors/stakeholders that, in the particular case of Manizales, converge, or may converge, around the city model, not as spectators of an Educating City that stands before them as one more imposition, but as protagonists and/or architects of it (Izquierdo, 2007).

Results

The recommendations generated by this research are obtained from the activities led in Manizales (Colombia) within the framework of implementing the Educating City model (2023). These recommendations will serve as input for correctly managing the city project (in the short, medium, and long term), using an approach that links potential beneficiaries (Molina, 2007).

It can be established that the methodological and research activities carried out on the occasion of the Educating City model in Manizales contribute to the exercise of the three elements that make up the university, according to the phenomenon or factor is known as "*Edutropolis*": Teaching, research, and service to the community (Dober, 2000).

In this sense, for Manizales to be configured as an Edutropolis and, therefore, as a city that meets the conditions that illustrate this phenomenon, it is essential that the methodological and research activities that are led, based on the implementation of the Educating City model, are oriented in the light of teaching, research, and service to the community.

The knowledge ecosystem in Manizales is presented as a fertile field for its production. Among others, the city has research institutes and groups recognized by Minciencias. These contribute to the production, dissemination, transfer, and social appropriation of knowledge:

Table 1. *Research groups endorsed by Minciencias in Manizales (2021).*

Due to the large area of knowledge of the OECD	
Social science	52
Engineering and technology	32
Natural sciences	20
Humanities	20
Medical and Life Sciences	18
Agronomy	14
By University	
Universidad de Caldas	70
Universidad Nacional de Colombia based in Manizales	44
Universidad de Manizales	16
Universidad Autónoma de Manizales	15
Universidad Católica de Manizales	11
Total	156

Source: Minciencias.

Deepening in academic terms around implementing the Educating City model in Manizales means moving from rhetoric to scholarly debate (International Association of Educating Cities, 2019b). This allows us to understand the potential of the city model/project/commitment.

Implementing the Educating City model in Manizales can strengthen the confluence between actors/stakeholders at the local, national, and international levels (see Figure 4), according to the fulfillment of the commitments that derive from the cities' adhesion to the IAEC.

LOCAL/REGIONAL   **NATIONAL**   **INTERNATIONAL**

Cities Adhering to the IAEC
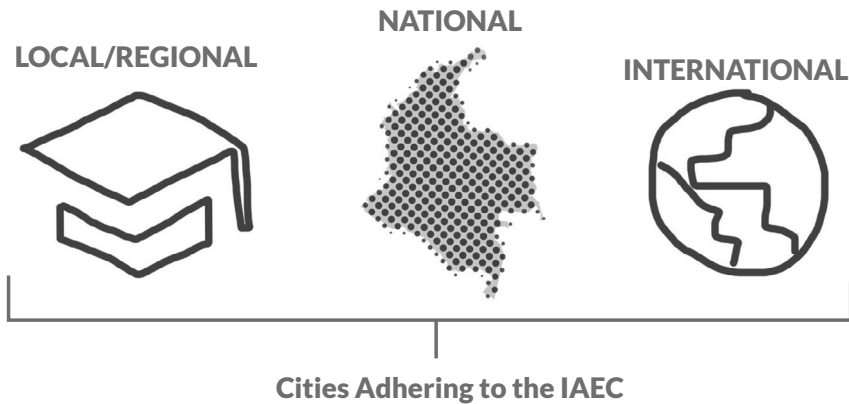
Figure 4. *Confluence between actors/stakeholders (civil society, universities, public/private sector).*

Source: own elaboration, according to the adhesion of Manizales to the IAEC and the implementation of the Educating City model.

Correctly managing the city project depends on fulfilling commitments (Centelles, 2009). These derive from Manizales's adhesion to the IAEC within the framework of the precepts issued by the Association and the municipality.

A Municipal Agreement and the Manizales Land Management Plan support the Educating City model:

- Municipal Agreement No. 1040 of November 19, 2019.

- Manizales Land Management Plan (2017–2031); numeral 1.1.2.1.2 of the General Component of the Technical Support Document, section "Manizales Campus"; Educating City Model.

The Manizales Land Management Plan (Alcaldía de Manizales, 2017) is a planning instrument that conceives educating as a central axis[4] for the physical, economic, social, and cultural development of the city:

"Manizales is widely recognized as a city with a high level of education, culture and university vocation, which needs to be consolidated under a spatial approach, and articulated with territorial planning" (p. 19).

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4 Educating is a central element for the long-term vision and the territory's occupation model.

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"Hence the principles of the Educating City Model [...]" (p. 19).

"[...] structuring, articulating and driving axis of sustainable human development" (p. 20).

[...] that, together with culture, innovation, entrepreneurship, and technology, will contribute to the knowledge and higher education economy, the well-being of its inhabitants, and the development and competitiveness of Manizales and the region (p. 20).

The Manizales Land Management Plan emphasizes the synergies that must be established between the city and the (local) Higher Educating Institutions to supply and guarantee the interests and needs of university students and graduates:

The city must work with universities and educational centers to meet students' needs and ensure Manizales is positioned as a city of knowledge and one of the primary destinations for higher education students nationally and internationally (p. 20).

As Table 2 shows, a detailed framework is necessary for the strategic and financial planning of Manizales as an Educating City, highlighting the integration of different municipal plans and budgets. Instruments such as the Land Management Plan (POT, for its Spanish acronym), the Municipal Development Plan, and the Annual Operational Investment Plan, among others, are essential to prioritize and allocate resources efficiently, ensuring proper management of the Educating City project. Including a medium-term fiscal framework and an annual program highlights the importance of rigorous and sustainable financial planning. These elements facilitate a cohesive strategy that links territorial, socio-economic, and financial planning and promotes comprehensive urban governance, which supports the Educating City model in Manizales.

Table 2. *Elements for Strategic and Financial Planning.*

Territory planning	Socio-economic planning	Financial Planning
Land Management Plan	Municipal development plan	Annual Investment Operating Plan
	Action plans	General budget of the municipality
	Indicative plan	Medium-Term Budgetary Fiscal Framework
	Sector plans	Annual, monthly cash program

Likewise, the research results underline the need for strategic and financial planning that involves all potentially benefited actors (see Figure 5). To ensure the project's success, citizen participation and collaboration between civil society, universities, and the public sector is emphasized. The recommendations also emphasize creating meeting spaces and consultation mechanisms to identify challenges and define intervention priorities, ensuring management based on synergies and cooperation between the various actors involved.

Recommendation 1
Promote and strengthen dialogue and social and political leadership in favor of the city model.

Recommendation 2
Recognize the leadership exercised by civil society and local universities/the Social and Human Sciences Research Institute (ICSH), among others, to establish bilateral communication between the parties.

Recommendation 3
Strengthen the dialogue/communication between the IAEC and Manizales, linking the potential beneficiaries of the projec.

Recommendation 4
To ensure bilateral communication between the IAEC and the Coordinating Board of Manizales as an educating city, recognizing the present knowledge product and, therefore, the actors/stakeholders and the previous work.

Recommendation 5
Ensure integrity and rigorousness from civil society, local universities, and the public/private sector regarding compliance with the precepts promulgated by the IAEC and by the municipality.

Recommendation 6
Follow-up and control from the public sector (commitments arising from Manizales' membership in the IAEC: annual dues; implementation of the city model).

Recommendation 7
The implementation of the Educating City model is based on precepts and knowledge products funded by the municipality for such purposes.

Recommendation 8
Ensure that methodological and research activities respond to the realities of the territory and its inhabitants (and to global challenges).

Recommendation 9
To guarantee the participation of plural actors in the methodological and research activities that will be carried out on the occasion of implementing the Educational City of Manizales model.

Recommendation 10
Strive for the proper management of the city project, in terms of strategic and financial planning (long -term), through activities of an intelectual, scientific, and/ or academic nature/metodological and research activities (short and medium- term).

Recommendation 11
Consider the consolidation of an entity similar too ACI Medellin (Colombia), ensuring proper management of the city project (in the medium and long term).

Recommendation 12
Facilitate and ensure access to information regarding Manizales as an Educating City, through physical and virtual means.

Recommendation 13
Recognizing the synergies between actors/stakeholders in an Educating City, or between Educating Cities (other actors/*stakeholders*), determines the potential of the City Model.

Recommendation 14
Leverage the IAEC Methodological Guide for the strategic planning of the Educating City.

Recommendation 15
Fulfill the commitments derived from Manizales' adherence to IAEC according to the precepts issued by the Association and the municipality.

Recommendation 16
Take this knowledge product (funded by municipality), among others, into account for the proper management of the city project (strategic and financial planning).

Figure 5. *Recommendations*

Source: Own elaboration, based on the recommendations for implementing the Educating City model in Manizales.

Finally, as can be seen in Figure 6, Manizales' accession to the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) and the implementation of the City model have involved a myriad of authors. This timeline highlights significant milestones from the incorporation of Manizales into the IAEC in 2019, to the

methodological and research activities carried out during the second half of 2023. It emphasizes, in particular, the active participation of various relevant actors, including civil society, local universities and the public sector.

2019
Adherence of Manizales to the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC); commitments that derive (precepts issued from the IAEC and the municipality); outstanding achievement in urban governance and city diplomacy.

2020
Updating of contact data between the municipality and the IAEC, for this purpose, the support/accompaniment of the *Personería de Manizales* (as Administrative and Disciplinary Control Body, and part of the Coordinating Board of Manizales as Educating City) was counted on; celebration of the International Day of the Educating City; the IAEC carried out the updating of the Charter; an Inter-administrative Agreement was envisaged between the Secretariat of Municipal Planning/ Mayor's Office of Manizales and the Institute of Research in Social and Human Sciences (ICSH)/University of Caldas.

2021
The Universidad de Caldas made a diagnosis regarding Manizales's status as an Educating City (member of the IAEC).

2022
The diagnosis (year 2021) is recognized as an outstanding work (from the Faculty of Legal and Social Sciences of the University of Caldas); the (initial) formation of the Coordinating Board of Manizales as an Educating City is carried out in the facilities of the Rogelio Salmona University Cultural Center; a document is filed in the Council of Manizales, within the framework of the city model/project/commitment; the allocation/approval of resources to irrigate methodological and research activities is achieved during the 2023 term.

2023
The Secretariat of Municipal Planning/ Mayor's Office of Manizales requested a proposal to sign an Inter-administrative Agreement (envisaged since 2020) between the office/State Entity and the Institute of Research in Social and Human Sciences (ICSH) of the Universidad de Caldas to implement the city model/project/commitment. This Inter-administrative Agreement is not signed, despite having everything for such purposes (there is a proposal and everything signed/ok from the different instances of the University of Caldas/Planning Office/ICSH to resume the matter at any time); from the office/the State Entity two contracts are signed for the provision of services, to carry out methodological and research activities, within the framework of the implementation process of the Educating City model in Manizales (knowledge products financed by the municipality, to make informed decisions from the public agenda, in favor of the strategic and financial planning that is necessary for the correct management of the city project).

Figure 6. *Timeline.*

Source: Own elaboration, according to the adhesion of Manizales to the IAEC and the implementation of the Educating City model.

Collaboration between these actors has been essential for the planning and executing strategies to improve urban governance and the quality of life in the city. The involvement of civil society has ensured that decisions and policies

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reflect the needs and aspirations of citizens. Local universities have contributed their knowledge and research capacity, providing a solid academic foundation for Educating City model initiatives. The public sector, for its part, has provided the resources and institutional framework necessary to implement and sustain these strategies.

Discussion

Knowledge and educating make up the imprint of Manizales (Puig, 2008), a city that concentrates its will and efforts so that development and the economy are based on knowledge (Calvo-Sotelo, 2017). The different university campuses built in the city and the relevance of educating in municipal agreements and planning instruments account for this. Educating (formal, non-formal, and informal) is the central axis of this city's physical, economic, social, and cultural development. According to the vision and/or projection in time of Manizales:

> Manizales, by 2032, will be positioned as the city with the best quality of life in Colombia [...] (Alcaldia de Manizales, 2017, p. 10).

> The country's University Capital of Knowledge, Entrepreneurship and Innovation […] (Alcadia de Manizales, 2017, p. 10).

Although there is a wide range of higher educating options, Manizales is one of the longest-lived cities in Colombia. This means that the city must define programs, projects, activities, and/or strategies aimed at improving the quality of life of older adults and young people (Sosa, 2015), assuming the latter as an economically active population that carries out undergraduate and postgraduate studies, among other activities, given the need to be inserted into the labor market, access the cultural offer, urban services, etc. (Cardona, 2019). This leads to generating better conditions that, based on this purpose, make the city a quality university center.

The Charter of Educating Cities (International Association of Educating Cities, 2020) highlights the importance of facilitating the integration of people into the labor market, according to principle 16 (*Guidance and inclusive labor insertion*):

In the connection between education and employment, there should be a close relationship between educational planning, the labor market's needs, and the community's needs [...] (p. 16).

The development of the city (based on knowledge) requires the intervention of the conditions of its production (Montero, 2009), and these allude to having a higher quality of life (see Figures 7 and 8). As far as a knowledge-based (and economic) city model (knowledge economy) is concerned, it does not only require the presence of universities or the production of knowledge *per se*. This ambitious and promising commitment involves intervening in the conditions in which knowledge is produced within the framework of the knowledge ecosystem as a reliable field for its production.
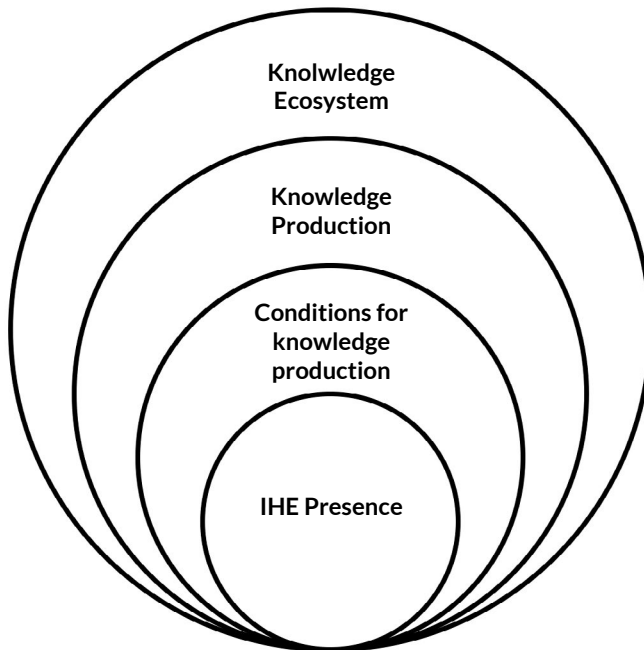

Figure 7. *Knowledge ecosystem.*

Source: own elaboration from the knowledge ecosystem in Manizales.

Category	Description
IHE Presence	Academic Offer.
Conditions for knowledge production	Quality of university and post-university life (work experience/labor market, mobility, access to information, cultural offer, sport, mental health, entrepreneurship, etc.).
Knowledge production	Activities of an intellectual, scientific, and/or academic nature; knowledge products.
Knowledge ecosystem	Disclosure/dissemination of knowledge/scientific journals; areas of knowledge according to the research groups recognized by Minciencias; research centers/institutes; seedbeds, among others.

Figure 8. *Categories.*

Source: Own elaboration from the knowledge ecosystem in Manizales.

Improving the conditions in which knowledge is generated in Manizales and, in this sense, contributing to improving the quality of university and post-university life (see Figure 9) could allow those potentially benefited to settle in the city in the best possible scenarios. Manizales needs students and graduates to carry out their life projects in the city (Cardona, 2019).

Model of educatingg city ⟩ **Knowledge based economic model** ⟩ **Correspondence between labor and academic supply** ⟩ **Urban upgrading improvement** ⟩ **Quality of university and postgraduate life**

Figure 9. *Manizales' Transition to a Knowledge-based Economic Model.*

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Manizales' membership in the IAEC and the implementation of the Educating City model.

Deepening in academic terms around Manizales as an Educating City has made understanding the city model's scope and sphere of influence possible. Once the potential of the Educating City model in Manizales is known, it is evident that, according to the city's characteristics and needs (physical, economic, social,

and cultural) (IDB, 2022), Manizales could meet the conditions that illustrate the factor or phenomenon called «*Edutropolis*» to develop the city based on knowledge (Aristizábal, 2012) and, in effect, favor a knowledge economy. According to Dober (2000):

> *Edutropolis* is a metropolitan network of post-secondary education centers that serves and supports many educational, social, economic, and cultural functions. Such roles include the traditional triad of teaching, research, community service, and, increasingly, community enhancement and enlargement, i.e., community development (p. 17).

This author argues that higher education institutions in the United States represent a central axis for the country's economic and cultural development. Over the past century, universities and other establishments of advanced education have become the primary engines of scientific and technological progress. This includes pure research and its practical application in industry, agriculture, transport, communications, and medicine sectors. Most Nobel laureates have ties to US universities or higher education institutions. Since the 1950s, these institutions have been cradles for prominent writers, musicians, artists, architects, and designers. In addition, university campuses have trained amateur and professional athletes who have achieved success in competitions worldwide (Dober, 2000).

The phenomenon known as *"Edutropolis"* is intentional, not fortuitous; therefore, it depends on the actors that make it possible. Among these actors are mainly universities, which play a remarkable leadership role in the cities' development (physical, economic, social/cultural), where this factor/phenomenon can be observed and analyzed.

An "Educating City" is conceived as a city project that is also not fortuitous or capricious. On the contrary, as in the case of Manizales, it is understood as a city model/project/commitment that represents a remarkable achievement in urban governance and city diplomacy. This, currently, is in force, has a basis in a municipal agreement and a planning instrument, and has the potential to establish synergies between actors/stakeholders (civil society, universities, public and private sector) in the glocal sphere, as well as to improve -gradually, and among other things- the quality of university and post-university life, from strengthening and generating the necessary conditions for there to be correspondence between the labor supply and the academic offer.

The Educating Cities are mainly governed by the precepts issued by the IAEC (*Charter of Educating Cities*, statutes, internal regulations, among others). In the case of Manizales, the municipality issues precepts, a municipal agreement, and a planning instrument.

Both the phenomenon or factor called "*Edutropolis"* and the Manizales Land Management Plan emphasizes the synergies that must be established between universities to contribute to the physical, economic, social, and cultural development of the city and, therefore, around the social, cultural and economic dynamics in which citizens are inserted. However, it is necessary to make explicit that, within the framework of the conditions that illustrate an *Edutropolis*, synergistic/cooperative relationships are not established only or hermetic between universities.

Various actors (civil society, universities, and public/private sector) are immersed in the dynamics related to the educational, social, economic, and cultural functions that are promoted, supported, and led from the potential exercised by universities and, therefore, from the potential exercised by students, teachers, and graduates; as living forces that make up universities, and acquire capacities to produce knowledge and lead projects to improve the quality of life in the city (Gaete, 2015).

The development or progress of a city, from the leadership exercised by the universities, present in it (Bellet & Ganau, 2006), refers to a city model where teaching, research, and service to the community guide the confluence between actors/stakeholders, the definition of purposes or challenges, and the relationships that are established or that can be established around them (see figure 10).
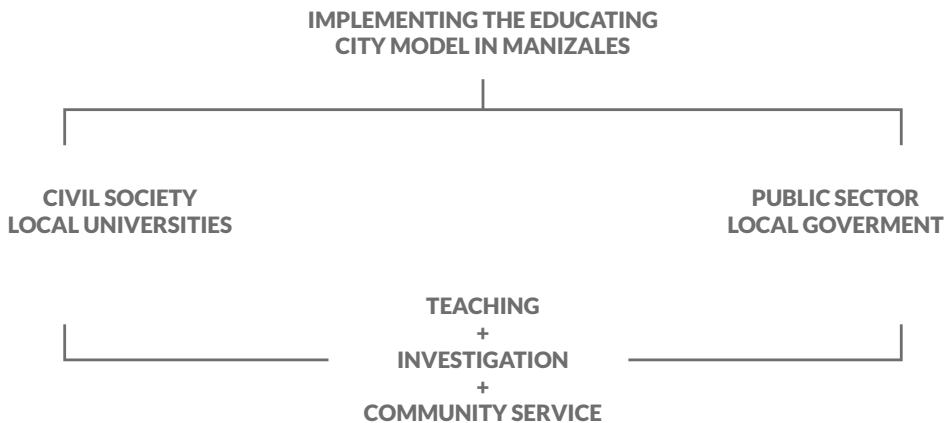
IMPLEMENTING THE EDUCATING CITY MODEL IN MANIZALES

CIVIL SOCIETY LOCAL UNIVERSITIES

PUBLIC SECTOR LOCAL GOVERMENT

TEACHING + INVESTIGATION + COMMUNITY SERVICE

Figure 10. *Implementing the City Model/Project/Commitment.*

Source: own elaboration, according to the adhesion of Manizales to the IAEC and the implementation of the Educating City model.

The configuration of Manizales as an *Edutropolis*, within the framework of implementing the Educating City model, is not possible if only synergistic relationships between universities are subscribed to. The leadership universities can exercise regarding the realities of the territory and its inhabitants depends on the relationships established with the actors linked to it. These actors converge or may converge around the Educating City model, potentially benefiting.

The construction of the Educating City means strengthening the conjunction of actors around the purposes pursued. This governance includes civil society, higher educating institutions, and the public/private sector, and it is based on networked governance and cooperation/synergies between actors. Networking facilitates the joint definition of strengths, challenges, and actions, creating alliances and increasing co-responsibility.

The assortment of actors and their diversity makes it necessary to enable scenarios where the values of the Educating City are reflected. This suggests managing meeting spaces and consultation mechanisms (physical and virtual) that allow the identification of the challenges/needs of the municipality, as well as the definition of intervention priorities. "In this work, it is advisable to have the collaboration of universities and experts, since this helps to systematize the analysis of realities and to guide short, medium and long-term goals [...]" (International Association of Educating Cities, 2019a, p. 18).

Conclusions

The accession of Manizales to the IAEC represents an outstanding achievement in urban governance and city diplomacy. It connotes Manizales as an *Edutropolis* based on implementing the Educating City model. This implementation refers to the aspects derived from this distinction, such as compliance with the precepts and commitments that arise from the city's incorporation into the IAEC through intellectual, scientific, and academic activities.

Citizen participation in urban governance allows the strategies and/or activities led, within the framework of implementing the Educating City model in Manizales, to respond to the realities of the territory and its inhabitants. The actors collaborating in implementing the city model contribute significantly to fulfilling the commitments from the city's accession to the IAEC. They also manage meeting spaces and consultation mechanisms to promote and strengthen the confluence between them.

Re
search

Proper city project management (strategic and financial planning) depends on compliance with the commitments derived from Manizales' incorporation into the IAEC. This requires greater public and local government responsibility to ensure compliance with administrative acts, municipal agreements, and planning instruments. The methodological and research activities make it possible to comply with these commitments and carry out the planning necessary for the correct management of the city project in the short, medium, and long term.

The Educating City model can improve the quality of university and post-university life by putting the knowledge generated and/or produced at the city's and its inhabitants' service. Teaching, research, and community service motivate the confluence between actors and the definition of standard purposes, establishing strategic and collaborative relationships at the global level and projecting Manizales as an Educating City in the future.

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