

Statement of Astronomy Education in Chile

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MOTIVATION

The exceptional conditions of the Chilean sky for astronomy have allowed it to be an undisputed leader concentrating 70% of world capacities (1).

However, Astronomical Education in Chile is not a developed area. In primary education, astronomy occupies only 6.25% of the topics in the Natural Sciences area.

OBJECTIVE

The aim is to develop a state of art of astronomical education in Chile, for this reason meetings and focus groups were held with science teachers of primary and secondary education.

METHODOLOGY

This research is explorative, using data collection with qualitative analysis techniques. The data collection was carried out through surveys and virtual meetings with teachers from different regions throughout Chile. In total, 256 people interested in astronomical education in Chile participated.

RESULTS

- We identify some weaknesses in the teacher training about astronomy education.
- The activities and resources most used in class are videos and models, and the least frequent are observations of the sky with their students in class.
- In the scholar programs, there is a discontinuity of astronomy from the third to the ninth year of schooling (9 years old to 15 years old).
- From this there is consensus in the interest to expand the astronomy contents incorporated in the curriculum, and connect astronomy with other areas of knowledge, such as mathematics, history, arts, etc., as a multidisciplinary science.

Conclusion

With this review it was possible to characterize the experience of teachers on Astronomy Education in Chile and identify the challenges faced by teachers to teach astronomy at different educational levels

Lines of action for future investigations are proposed according to the findings like:

1. Establish a link between program experts and work with the local educational community to modify the curricula.
2. Organize teacher training events and developing educational material adapted to the needs of our country.
3. How to promote astronomy in an integral way in the school program.

Reference:

1) Reaching for the Stars, Alcanzando las Estrellas: Hallazgos de las Cumbres Chileno-Estadounidenses de Educación y Difusión de la Astronomía Santiago de Chile, noviembre de 2016

