

Cultural Diversity and Educationally Backward: The Case of Mexican Indigenous Population

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Abstract

From a systematic review of scientific publications and diverse research materials, this article identifies and characterizes the elements that affect in educationally backward of the Mexican indigenous population, showing the current scene that supports and prolongs the above mentioned problematic. In this way, it was found that the Mexican indigenous population has remarkable disadvantages in contrast to the non-indigenous national population in what concerns the rate of educationally backward and his components: the poverty, the monolingualism, the discrimination, the bad quality in the indigenous education and the geographical distribution of the scholar centers. Consequently, each one of these elements constitutes a strong problematic, shaping and perpetuating the circle of indigenous educationally backward who is supported by a series of public policies that commit an outrage against the cultural diversity and evidence a model assimilationist of national education, demonstrating in real terms that Mexico is not a multicultural country because it doesn't promote either the valuation or the knowledge of indigenous peoples, besides the existence of an evident relation of symbolic domination between the stakeholders of the Mexican indigenous population and those of the non-indigenous national population.

Keywords

Cultural Diversity, Educationally Backward, Indigenous Education, Racial Discrimination, Symbolic Domination

1. Introduction

In Mexico, according to the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Computer Science (known by its Spanish acronym INEGI, 2011a), 6.7% of the population is indigenous, which is equivalent to 6,695,228 per-

sons in 78 indigenous groups (Zolla & Zolla, 2004) and they have a linguistic variety integrated by 89 indigenous languages (INEGI, 2011b). Nevertheless, in spite of the enormous wealth and cultural diversity that the indigenous peoples contribute to the nation, the above mentioned population has lived historically in disadvantage in contrast with the non-indigenous national population and this has been increasing to our days, as it is showed by the comparative of the national and international indicators (Guzmán-Rosas & Kleiche-Dray, 2015).

The education subject is not the exception, in spite of the United Nations (UN), in her United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2008), and the International Labour Organization (ILO), in her Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (1989), known as the Convention 169, have established that States will guarantee the possibility for indigenous peoples to accede to the different educational levels offered in their native countries, in the same conditions and magnitudes that the rest of the national population. In Mexico there has been a constitutional appropriation of the previous thing, however a notable inequality exists in the access to the education for the indigenous population.

In this regard, the National Council of Population (known by its Spanish acronym CONAPO) has indicated (2011) that in the 15-year-old population or older, only 5.1% of the non-indigenous population is illiterate, in contrast with 13.9% that the indigenous population reaches in the above mentioned condition, overcoming the national indicator of 6.7%. According to the above mentioned Council, this limits the personal, social and familiar development of the affected population and, in addition, as it advances the level of instruction, the gap of the educational inequality becomes bigger between both populations, so that while 18.1% of the indigenous population did not conclude the elementary school level, only 11.6% of the non-indigenous population is in such a situation; when continues the analysis only 50.7% of the indigenous population reaches the middle school level, in contrast with 66.7% of the non-indigenous population; whereas for the high school level the attendance rate in indigenous population reaches 35.5%, against 42.1% of the non-indigenous population.

For this part, the National Council of Evaluation of the Policy of Social Development (known by its Spanish acronym CONEVAL) has indicated (2011) that only 1% of the indigenous young persons enter to the higher education, in contrast with 28% of the non-indigenous population. It would be necessary to contemplate that probably the last indicator is very low for graduated indigenous students in the higher education. On the other hand, for the postgraduate level, the indicators are sparse, but in agreement to the previous trend, it might be supposed to be the existence of a notable difference between both populations.

The previous indicators demonstrate a gap in the access to the education for indigenous population and for this reason the above mentioned population is characterized by living in conditions of educationally backward, understanding this concepts as the condition in which a person of 15-year-old or older has not finished his basic education (Núñez, 2006). According to the *Constitution of the United States of Mexico*, the basic education includes the pre-school, elementary school and middle school levels, and certainly is mandatory.

In this regard, the National Institute for the Education of the Adults (known by its Spanish acronym INEA, 2015) estimates that in Mexico the educationally backward in general, as it was defined in the previous paragraph, reached 36.75% during the year 2014 and this rate has been diminishing about a percentage point per year since 1999 (Figure 1). According to Hernández et al. (2012), the rate of educationally backward for the indigenous population is 73.2% and this universe, by age cohorts, reaches the following dimensions: 93.35% in historical educationally backward (which includes the indigenous born population before 1960), 80.3% in transitional educationally backward (which includes the indigenous born persons between 1960 and 1974) and 60% in recently educationally backward (which includes the indigenous born persons between 1975 and 1995).

In this way, as Llorente (2013) notes, about 5.4 million Mexicans are illiterate, but in this universe 27.77% is indigenous, besides in the above mentioned population group it is where the reduction of the problematic has been a lower, because actually the country has the same indicators that it was registering for the indigenous population at least four decades ago: today as in 1970 (one of every four indigenous is illiterate [against one of every 20 Spanish speakers] and one of every three indigenous women is illiterate [against one of every 16 Spanish speakers women]). As well as, even being present at the school, the indigenous children has an educationally backward in consistent literacy (Schmelkes, 2013) and in addition, 20% of indigenous population is completely excluded from any school circuit (CONEVAL quoting in CONEVAL, 2011).

As Gallart and Henríquez (2006) showed, the elements that influence in the educationally backward on indigenous population are: the poverty, the bad educational quality of the school previous levels, the geographical distance of the educational centers, as well as the cultural barriers and the discrimination. The above mentioned

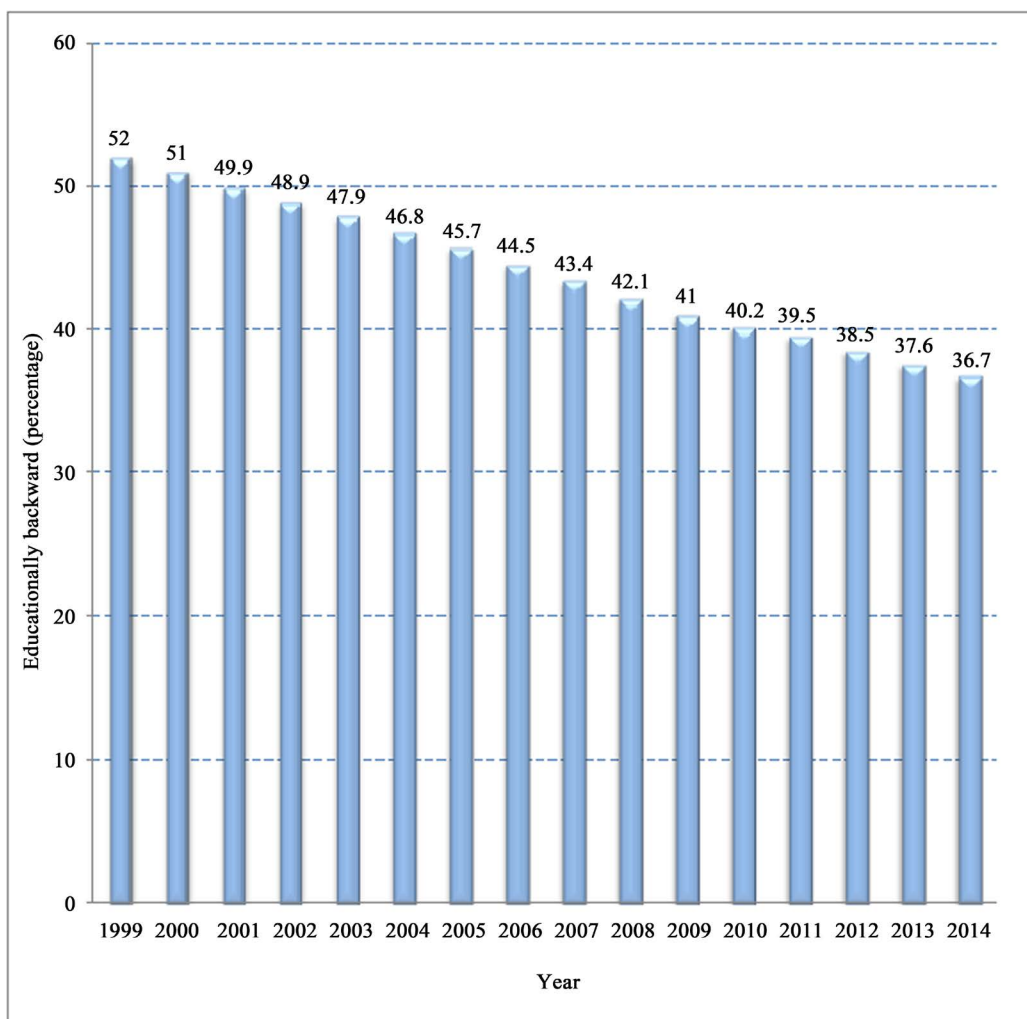


Figure 1. Rate of educationally backward in Mexico, 1999-2014. Source: Own elaboration, based in INEA (2015).

authorresses explain, in a very succinct way and of qualitative form, each of these elements for the case of the higher education. Nevertheless, this document considers important to develop them to detail for the case of the Mexican basic education.

From the aforementioned, this work realized a systematic review of scientific publications and diverse research works on the above mentioned thematic axes, with the objective to characterize quantitatively and qualitatively each of the elements that influence in educationally backward of the indigenous Mexican population, and to show the context that gives existence to the above mentioned problematic. The relevancy of this analysis is that a series of characterizations assemble on diverse topics that affect in educationally backward of indigenous Mexican population, introducing them in a critical way, updated and detailed for, in the second time, to measure the contrasts between the indigenous Mexican population and the non-indigenous national population on the studied subject.

2. Methods

With the purpose to identify and characterize the elements that affect in the educationally backward of the Mexican indigenous population, and during the period March-June 2015, an exploratory study was realized about the scientific production and materials of research that explain the subject, analyzing the contributions that each of them has done for the understanding the above topic.

In a first phase, there were realized searches of articles and reports of research published in Spanish language

about the general topic of educationally backward in the Mexican indigenous population, in the *Redalyc database* and in the *Google search engine*, using as keywords: *indigenous educationally backward* and *indigenous education* in combination with the keyword *Mexico*, without any restriction on the knowledge area or kind of article. With it there was obtained a diversity of documents that in different measure were explaining the subject. After his reading, there were selected those that were containing useful information to show a general panorama on the current status of educationally backward in the Mexican indigenous population, besides those that were integrating useful information to contrast the topic with the non-indigenous Mexican population. In this way, a global panorama was building about the subject, and later the attention was focused in the elucidation of the authors about the elements that affect in the educationally backward of the Mexican indigenous population, choosing the paper of [Gallart and Henríquez \(2006\)](#) for being the one that, though for the case of the higher education, it was including in specific way a series of subjects and circumstances that from his own perspective come together in order that the Mexican indigenous population meets affected for the educationally backward.

In a second phase, already identified the elements that affect in the indigenous educationally backward, according to [Gallart and Henríquez \(2006\)](#), a second search has been realized in Spanish language of articles, reports of research and diverse materials published about the above mentioned elements in the *Redalyc database* and the *Google search engine*, using as key words to each of the above mentioned elements: *indigenous poverty*, *indigenous educational quality*, *geographical distribution of indigenous educational centers*, *cultural barriers* and *discrimination in the indigenous population*, in combination with the key word *Mexico* and without any restriction on the knowledge area or kind of article. It with the purpose of realizing a current characterization on the condition of the above mentioned elements in the Mexican indigenous population and later to determine, how from his qualitative and quantitative indicators, these subjects influence or not the current prevalence of the educationally backward in the Mexican indigenous population.

The analysis of data was focused in the national information and the statistical reports about the Mexican indigenous population and the Mexican non-indigenous population, besides the factors of qualitative nature that allow explaining each of the above mentioned subjects.

With the purpose to compare the situation in the Mexican indigenous population, in contrast with the situation in the Mexican non-indigenous population, it was used the Pan-American Health Organization ([PAHO, 2012](#)) methodology to generate comparative analyses and absolute differences between two population groups, one of ethnic origin and other of reference; in this case the first one is constituted by the indigenous national population located in the states with the higher indigenous concentration, whereas the second one for the non-indigenous national population, having as reference to the Mexico City for being the capital of the country and an the state with scanty indigenous population; in this way the absolute differences are obtained of reducing the value of any indicator presents for the state with high indigenous population to the value that for the same indicator presents the Mexico City.

All this will allow understanding how the above mentioned thematic axes related to each other, interweaving an educational problematic interlaced with others of social and political nature.

3. Characterization of Indigenous Educationally Backward Elements

Of 6,695,228 indigenous persons in Mexico ([INEGI, 2011a](#)), 81.23% are located in ten of the Mexican states ([Table 1](#)), for this reason, the behavior in the above mentioned states is representative for the rest of states that concentrate only 18.77% of the indigenous population. So already it has been said, by the kind of opposing indicators (disintegrated or without disintegrating), the [PAHO \(2012\)](#) methodology is used for comparing what happens in the above mentioned ten states with the higher proportion of indigenous population and the Mexico City, with the objective to obtain absolute differences that allow to measure the level of inequality and educational inequity.

In this way, analyzing the rates of education in the states with higher proportion of indigenous population, in comparison with the Mexico City, is observed that Chiapas has 13.8 more percentage points of population without escolar instruction, Guerrero 12.6, Oaxaca 11.1 and Veracruz 7.9 percentage points more, respectively ([Table 2](#)).

On the other hand, the difference in the school non-attendance by age group, among the states with higher proportion of indigenous population and the Mexico City, accents notably in the population who is located between 15 - 24-year-old, followed by that one who is between 3 - 5-year-old and older and finally for that one

Table 1. States with higher proportion of indigenous population¹ in Mexico, 2010.

State	Total indigenous population		
	Amount	Percentage	National Proportion
Oaxaca	1,165,186	34.2%	17.40%
Yucatán	537,516	30.3%	8.02%
Chiapas	1,141,499	27.2%	17.04%
Quintana Roo	196,060	16.7%	2.92%
Guerrero	456,774	15.1%	6.82%
Hidalgo	359,972	15.1%	5.37%
Campeche	91,094	12.0%	1.36%
Puebla	601,680	11.7%	8.98%
San Luis Potosí	248,196	10.7%	3.70%
Veracruz	644,559	9.4%	9.62%
Subtotal	5,442,536	-	81.23%
Mexico City	122,411	1.5%	1.82%

Source: Own elaboration, based in INEGI (2011a). ¹Population aged five years-old or older that speaks indigenous language.

Table 2. Rate of education in Mexican states with higher proportion of indigenous population, 2010.

State	Educative level					
	Without instruction	Basic	Technical or commercial with Elementary school	High School	Higher Education	Not specified information
Oaxaca	13.8%	61.6%	0.1%	14.2%	9.9%	0.4%
Yucatán	7.4%	58.2%	0.4%	18.1%	15.3%	0.6%
Chiapas	16.5%	59.6%	0.1%	13.7%	9.8%	0.3%
Quintana Roo	4.9%	54.4%	0.4%	22.8%	16.0%	1.5%
Guerrero	15.3%	55.5%	0.2%	16.6%	11.7%	0.7%
Hidalgo	9.0%	59.2%	0.4%	18.0%	12.9%	0.5%
Campeche	8.0%	55.5%	0.4%	18.2%	17.4%	0.5%
Puebla	9.3%	59.2%	0.3%	16.2%	14.6%	0.4%
San Luis Potosí	7.8%	59.2%	0.4%	17.2%	15.0%	0.4%
Veracruz	10.6%	57.9%	0.3%	17.0%	13.8%	0.4%
Mexico City	2.7%	42.8%	0.9%	25.2%	27.8%	0.6%
National	6.9%	56.1%	0.6%	19.3%	16.5%	0.6%

Source: Own elaboration, based in INEGI (2011a).

that is between 6 - 11-year-old. This suggests that the educational level with larger attendance frequency in the indigenous population is the elementary school level, followed by the middle school level and finally the ones of minor frequency are de high school and the higher education (**Table 3**). Comparing the states of Veracruz, Quintana Roo and Chiapas against the Mexico City, the absolute difference in indicators for non-attendance in the age of pre-school (3 - 5-year-old) is 14.2, 13.1 and 10.5 percentage points more, respectively; whereas for the age of the middle school level (12 - 14-year-old) and the higher education (15 - 24-year-old) the absolute differences most raised in school non-attendance are concentrated in Chiapas, Quintana Roo and Oaxaca with 17.9, 16.5 and 14.9 percentage points more, respectively.

3.1. The Indigenous Poverty

For the current measurement of the poverty, it is considered a multidimensional subject, and integrates by the dimensions of the social rights, the economic well-being and the territoriality, qualifying like moderated when a

person has at least a social lack and his revenue is minor to the line of well-being or when the above mentioned person has from one to two social lacks and his revenue is minor to the line of minimal well-being, or like extreme when there exist three or more social lacks and a the revenue is lower than the line of minimal well-being (CONEVAL, 2012a). In this subject can be appreciated that the indicators for indigenous population seem to have evolved positively during the period 2008-2012 (Table 4), while this one diminished 3.4 percentage points among the first one and last year of the above mentioned period. By kind of poverty, extreme poverty reduced 8.6 percentage points in the above mentioned period, and the moderate poverty increased 5.2 percentage points, whereas the condition of vulnerability increased lightly for the social lacks (0.3%) and for the revenue perceived (1.0%). Nevertheless, the rate of 72.3% during 2012 in multidimensional poverty for the indigenous population is very high, particularly if it is compared with 45.5% that for the same year reached the non-indigenous population in the above mentioned situation, which gives a difference of 26.8 percentage points to the detriment of the indigenous population.

An interesting element, is that educationally backward is considered to be one of the entities of the multidimensional poverty classified as one of the social rights, so analyzing the subject in the indigenous Mexican population is observed that this one has changed from 49.9% in 2008 to 34.1% in 2012, diminishing 15.8 percentage points between the first one and last year of the above mentioned period (Table 5). In the same way, for 2012 74.5% of the indigenous population could not cover with his revenue his food requirements, but neither the not food requirements, whereas 42.4% of the above mentioned population could not acquire a basic food basket

Table 3. Rate of school non-attendance in Mexican states with higher proportion of indigenous population, 2010.

	School non-attendance by age group			
	3 - 5 years old	6 - 11 years old	12 - 14 years old	15 - 24 years old
Oaxaca	47.0%	4.1%	9.6%	61.7%
Yucatán	39.0%	2.9%	6.6%	57.8%
Chiapas	48.3%	6.9%	14.0%	65.9%
Quintana Roo	50.9%	4.4%	7.3%	64.5%
Guerrero	40.8%	4.9%	10.7%	62.9%
Hidalgo	47.0%	2.5%	6.1%	59.8%
Campeche	42.1%	3.6%	8.6%	57.9%
Puebla	45.4%	4.0%	10.7%	60.6%
San Luis Potosí	36.5%	2.5%	6.6%	60.4%
Veracruz	52.0%	4.3%	9.5%	58.5%
Mexico City	37.8%	3.1%	4.8%	48.0%
National	47.7%	3.7%	8.5%	59.6%

Source: Own elaboration, based in INEGI (2011a).

Table 4. Evolution of multidimensional poverty in the Mexican indigenous population, 2008-2012.

Entities of multidimensional poverty	Attributes		
	Population per year		
	2008	2010	2012
Population in poverty	75.7%	79.6%	72.3%
Population in moderated poverty	36.5%	34.8%	41.7%
Population in extreme poverty	39.2%	44.7%	30.6%
Vulnerable population by social lacks	20.0%	16.7%	20.3%
Vulnerable population by the revenue	1.2%	0.7%	2.2%
Not poor and not vulnerable population	3.1%	3.0%	5.3%

Source: Own elaboration, based in CONEVAL (2010; 2012b; 2013).

Table 5. Evolution of social lacks in the multidimensional poverty system in the Mexican indigenous population, 2008-2012.

Entities of multidimensional poverty	Attributes		
	Population in lacks per year		
	2008	2010	2012
Social rights			
Educationally backward	49.9%	48.6%	34.1%
Access to health services	52.7%	37.3%	24.3%
Access to social care	85.8%	83.5%	81.0%
Quality and house spaces	50.8%	42.0%	34.3%
Access to basic house services	54.0%	74.4%	59.7%
Access to the food	42.1%	40.5%	34.4%
Economic well-being			
Monthly revenue (in Mexican pesos)	1244	1247	1683
A low revenue to LBM ¹ (Minimum well-being line)	Not specified	52.0%	42.4%
A low revenue to BM ¹ (Minimum well-being)	Not specified	80.3%	74.5%

Source: Own elaboration, based in [CONEVAL \(2010a; 2010b; 2012b; 2013\)](#).

although had used all his revenue.

Other indicators commonly used to measure of poverty, they are the available services in the house, and in this regard it was obtained ([INEE, 2008](#)) that in the students of indigenous elementary schools only 27.9% lives in a house with drainage (23 percentage points less than the students of public rural elementary schools and 62.1 percentage points below the students of urban elementary schools).

3.2. The Quality of the Indigenous Education

According to [Schmelkes \(2009\)](#), in Mexico exists a difference in the quality of the education offered between the indigenous elementary schools and the non-indigenous elementary schools, and the indigenous population is the one that has greater disadvantages; it is demonstrated by the gap in the capacity of both to retain and to promote his students, in this way the indigenous elementary schools have increased his disapproval index from 7.2 in 1997 to 10.7 for 2004, in contrast with non-indigenous people who diminished the above mentioned index of 6.8 in 1997 to 3.2 for the year 2004; in the same case, the general elementary schools increased his retention and approval index from 92.3 in 1997 to 95.7 for 2004, in contrast with the indigenous elementary schools which diminished the above mentioned index from 91.5 in 1997 to 87.0 in 2004.

For it, [Schmelkes \(2009\)](#) says that there is a lack in the quality and relevance in the indigenous schools, and those schools that are located in non-indigenous communities or with minor indigenous population they are in better conditions that the located ones in communities of high density of indigenous population, with independence to which the latter schools are indigenous or not.

On the other hand, the [Civil Observatory of the Education \(2008\)](#) shows that the achieving academically of indigenous students in elementary school it is significantly below the achieving academically in students of all the other kind of schools, that the indigenous schools are worse provided with infrastructure and didactic materials, and six of every ten indigenous students are present at schools with precarious infrastructure, whereas the indigenous teachers are contracted only with high school studies, so that today about 50% of them does not possess higher studies, and in synthesis the indigenous students are those who more need attention and quality education, but they are who less receive it. For this, the above mentioned observatory concludes that the bad quality in the indigenous education, quantified by the material and human resources that destine to they, is the second reason of the highest dropout rates, disapproval, and minor learning in the indigenous population.

In addition, the [INEE \(2008\)](#) indicates that the spaces existence index in the indigenous schools is distributed as continues: 95% for very down, 4% for down, 0.2% for medium, 0.8% for high and 0% for very high; whereas the resources of support for the educational work index in indigenous elementary school is 1.4 on 6 for equipment, 0.2 on 7 for support personnel and 1.7 on 4 for bibliography. On the characteristics of the teachers of elementary indigenous schools, the above mentioned source reports that 17.8% has middle school level or high

school level, 80.75% studied the Normal School or a higher education and 1.5% realized postgraduate studies; about the experience in the profession, 15% is in a range of 0 - 5 years, 53% between 6 - 20 years and 32% registers more than 20 years; whereas the stability in the school shows that 19.4% has one year or less working in his indigenous school, 37.6% from 2 to 5 years and 43% 6 years or more.

3.3. The Geographical Distance of the Educational Centers

According to a report of the Sector of Public Education of Mexico (known by its Spanish acronym SEP, 2014), in Mexico exist 166,969 schools of basic education, and of them 19,754 are indigenous schools, which is equivalent to 11.7% of the national schools of basic education. In this way, of the new universe that the indigenous schools shape, 11.38% corresponds to pre-school indigenous, 37.48% to pre-school indigenous multi-degree, 12.20% to indigenous elementary schools and 38.92% to indigenous elementary schools multi-degree. For the case of the middle school level, which it forms a part of the basic education in the Mexican constitutional mandate, there do not exist indigenous schools.

Likewise, in the mentioned source, comparing the periods 2003-2004 and 2012-2014, there was obtained that the matriculation of indigenous students attended increased 11.52%, which is equivalent to 131,248 indigenous students, so that in the last decade the average of annual growth of the indigenous matriculation in basic education courts 1%.

For his part, the INEGI (2013) indicates that in the states with higher proportion of indigenous population, Oaxaca, Yucatan and Puebla they have larger percentages of schools indigenous to pre-school level, with 26.6%, 20.9% and 18.8% respectively; whereas Oaxaca, Hidalgo and Chiapas have larger percentages of indigenous schools to elementary school level, with 25.9%, 18.6% and 17.4% respectively (Table 6).

Likewise, the states that concentrate larger averages of indigenous students are Yucatan, Quintana Roo and Puebla, for the pre-school level with 20.3%, 18.2% and 17.5% respectively; whereas Puebla, Guerrero, and Yucatan concentrate larger average of indigenous students for the elementary school level, with 18.8%, 17.1% and 15.5% respectively (Table 7).

An indicator that is considered to be more representative for the geographical distribution of the school centers in the educationally backward of indigenous population, is the isolation condition (Table 8), same that shows a distribution of 35.6% rural indigenous schools of pre-school isolated and 48.8% only near to a road; whereas for the elementary school level 43.21% of the rural indigenous schools are isolated and 42.5% only near to a road.

In this logic, the matriculation of the rural indigenous schools (Table 9) for the pre-school level shows that the school attendance centers notably in the schools near to road (48.09%) and in those that are isolated (35.69%),

Table 6. Distribution of indigenous schools to basic education in Mexican states with higher proportion of indigenous population, 2013.

State	Indigenous schools by educative level			
	Indigenous population	Pre-school education	Elementary school	Middle school
Oaxaca	34.2%	26.6%	25.9%	0%
Yucatán	30.3%	20.9%	11.4%	0%
Chiapas	27.2%	11.1%	17.4%	0%
Quintana Roo	16.7%	13.0%	8.6%	0%
Guerrero	15.1%	17.1%	15.7%	0%
Hidalgo	15.1%	14.6%	18.6%	0%
Campeche	12.0%	16.3%	6.5%	0%
Puebla	11.7%	18.8%	15.5%	0%
San Luis Potosí	10.7%	13.0%	10.1%	0%
Veracruz	9.4%	14.3%	10.1%	0%
Mexico City	1.5%	0.0%	0.2%	0%
National	6.7%	8.1%	7.5%	0%

Source: Own elaboration, based in INEGI (2013).

Table 7. Average of indigenous students by group in the basic education in the Mexican states with higher proportion of indigenous population, 2013.

State	Average of indigenous students (for group) by educative level			
	Indigenous population	Pre-school education	Elementary school	Middle school
Oaxaca	34.2%	12.7%	11.6%	Does not apply
Yucatán	30.3%	20.3%	15.5%	Does not apply
Chiapas	27.2%	13.3%	13.9%	Does not apply
Quintana Roo	16.7%	18.2%	13.2%	Does not apply
Guerrero	15.1%	16.8%	17.1%	Does not apply
Hidalgo	15.1%	16.6%	15.2%	Does not apply
Campeche	12.0%	13.6%	9.2%	Does not apply
Puebla	11.7%	17.5%	18.8%	Does not apply
San Luis Potosí	10.7%	12.8%	13.8%	Does not apply
Veracruz	9.4%	11.2%	12.8%	Does not apply
Mexico City	1.5%	0.0%	24.1%	Does not apply
National	6.7%	14.9%	14.6%	Does not apply

Source: Own elaboration, based in INEGI (2011a; 2015).

Table 8. Rural indigenous schools to basic education by isolation condition of his locality, 2005.

Condition	Schools by level			
	Pre-school		Elementary school	
	Amount	Percentage	Amount	Percentage
Isolated	2881	35.6%	3908	43.21%
Near to a road	4011	48.8%	3848	42.54%
Near to a population center	720	8.76%	682	7.54%
Near to a City	422	5.13%	333	3.68%
Not specified information	182	2.21%	273	3.01%
Total	8216	100%	9044	100%

Source: Own elaboration, based in INEE (2008).

Table 9. Matriculation of rural indigenous schools to basic education by isolation condition of his locality, 2005.

Condition	Schools by level			
	Pre-school		Elementary school	
	Amount	Percentage	Amount	Percentage
Isolated	101,774	35.69%	302,706	43.35%
Near to a road	137,111	48.09%	299,790	42.93%
Near to a population center	24,417	8.56%	52,816	7.56%
Near to a City	16,145	5.66%	26,590	3.80%
Not specified information	5702	2.00%	16,479	2.36%
Total	285,104	100%	698,247	100%

Source: Own elaboration, based in INEE (2008).

whereas for the elementary school level the matriculation centers in schools isolated (43.35 %) and near to road (42.93%).

3.4. The Cultural Barriers

The condition of indigenous monolingualism (that alludes to persons who speak an original language but do not

speak Spanish) is a factor associated to educationally backward, being considered the principal barrier cultural that the above mentioned population faces to access to the basic education, in the measure in which this one is offered for the most part in Spanish. This has been documented by the INEGI (2009), showing that the population that is not a speaker of indigenous language in Mexico is the one that registers better rates of school attendance, of literacy and of education average years, adding that the larger number of monolingual indigenous centers are in the states with higher proportion of indigenous population and this one is a condition that affects for the most part the indigenous woman to all the federative entities.

According to the INEGI (2011b), in Mexico about 89 autochthonous languages are spoken, being the *náhuatl*, the *Maya*, the *mixtecas* and the *tzeltal* the original languages of larger presence in the speech of the indigenous population, between them they add 50% of the above mentioned population; likewise 62% of the indigenous population who speaks an original indigenous language lives in communities with a population less than 2500.

In the same way, according to the INEGI (2011b), inside the indigenous population the monolingual groups with larger population are the children between 5 - 9-year-old (36.9%) and the elders (23%), followed by the 10 - 14-year-old children (15.5%), then for the teenagers of 15 to the 29-year-old young persons (6.8%) and finally for the young adults of 30 to the 64 year-old adults (12.5%). Being Chiapas, Guerrero and Oaxaca the states that concentrate major indigenous monolingual population (Table 10) with 32.5%, 29.5% and 16.2%, respectively, whereas in more developed states, as in the Mexico City, the indigenous bilingual population (that they are those who besides his indigenous language speak Spanish) reaches practically the total of this population who lives there.

The INEE (2008) indicates that 46.9% of indigenous students in elementary school level speaks diary an indigenous language. Whereas, the Civil observatory of the education (2008) says that in the majority of the indigenous schools in Mexico it predominates over the direct Hispanicization (what means that only 63% of the indigenous teachers speaks an indigenous language), beside there being a linguistic not location near to 20% (what means that teachers are working in communities where one speaks another indigenous language different from the one that they speak) or of the prevalence of an instrumental use of the indigenous language (what means that only one speaks the above mentioned language while the students learn sufficient Spanish as to take the classes in this second language).

For it, the speech of a language different from the Spanish is one of the reasons that the INEGI (2004) reports for educationally backward in the indigenous population, indicating that departs from the lag in the infantile population it is because in the first years they learn fundamentally the Spanish language and then they begin with the processes of reading and writing, particularly in the regions where there are no didactic available materials for the school training.

Table 10. Mexican states with higher proportion of indigenous population¹ and kind of spoken language, 2010.

State	Percentage of indigenous population		
	Total	Bilingual	Monolingual
Oaxaca	34.2%	83.8%	16.2%
Yucatán	30.3%	92.5%	7.5%
Chiapas	27.2%	67.5%	32.5%
Quintana Roo	16.7%	95.5%	4.5%
Guerrero	15.1%	70.5%	29.5%
Hidalgo	15.1%	87.8%	12.2%
Campeche	12.0%	96.8%	3.2%
Puebla	11.7%	90.4%	9.6%
San Luis Potosí	10.7%	92.2%	7.8%
Veracruz	9.4%	89.7%	10.3%
Mexico City	1.5%	99.5%	0.5%
National	6.7%	85.3%	14.7%

Source: Own elaboration, based in INEGI (2011a). ¹Population aged five years-old or older that speaks indigenous language.

3.5. The Discrimination

The discrimination alludes to the policy and practices that damage a group and his members, this one can be a discrimination of fact when the practices do not have legal support, discrimination of jure when the practices form a part of the legality, discrimination attitudinal when it is exercised towards the members of a group for being prejudiced towards them or institutional discrimination when the programs, policy and institutional positioning deny the equality of opportunities and rights to the members of a group or damage them in a differential way (Kottak, 1997). The discrimination against the indigenous population, as it has indicated the [Committee for the Elimination of the Racial Discrimination of the United Nations \(2009\)](#), constitutes a racial discrimination.

In this logic, from a study on the discrimination, the National Council against the Discrimination, known by its Spanish acronym [CONAPRED \(2011b\)](#) indicates that in Mexico this one is a very daily practice and is exercised of way underlined against the indigenous population, particularly in the access to the public services. In the above mentioned study it makes clear that practically seven million of indigenous who live in the country are exposed to the marginalization, the mistreatment and the rejection for his physical appearance, his skin color and his origin ethnic, and during generations they have suffered poverty, abuses and an unequal unjustified treatment, but that this is an established enclosed phenomenon to institutional level and that it is reflected in the obstacles that the persons find to accede to the health and education services; besides the social practices that affect in the contracting and the employment; in this way, 54.8% of the population thinks that the persons get insults in the street for his skin color, whereas 15% declares that his rights have not been respected due to his skin color. For the quoting source, the fact that in Mexico only 27% of the indigenous population can read and only 47.2% of the 12-year-old indigenous and older persons has an occupation, besides the rest of the socioeconomic negative indicators that they present, it shows clearly the discrimination that the above mentioned groups suffer. But in spite of being the most discriminated population, only 1% of the affected indigenous denounces ([CONAPRED quoting in EL UNIVERSAL, 2015](#)).

In addition, according to the [CONAPRED \(2011a\)](#), the main problem that the ethnic minorities perceive in Mexico is the discrimination (19.5%), followed by the poverty (9.4%), the lack of governmental support (8.8%), his original language (6.8%), the unemployment (4.9%), the lack of respect to his customs (4.9%), the nonchalance (3.8%), and any other problems; and in the same logic, the above mentioned peoples think that they don't have the same opportunities that other groups to obtain work (39.1%), to receive governmental supports (33.0%), to be attended in the health services (27.1%) and to receive education (26.2%).

On the other hand, Vázquez (quoting in [SIN EMBARGO MX, 2014](#)) says that in Mexico there is a pigmentocracia (pigmentocracy), as well the social hierarchies are defined by the skin color, and it derives in situations of poverty and inequality that turn into a vicious circle difficult to win, adding that the discrimination towards the indigenous peoples is a challenge that the Mexican state has evaded confronting.

4. Discussion

The INEE (quoting in [Salmerón and Porras, 2010](#)) coincides with [Gallart and Henríquez \(2006\)](#) about that the elements that affect in indigenous educationally backward it is the poverty, the discrimination, the monolingualism, the location of the school centers and the bad quality of the education for the indigenous population, only it adds to these the topic of the education of the parents as a factor that delimits the possibilities of access and achievement in the basic education of the indigenous Mexican population.

As have been showed, the indigenous Mexican population lives in conditions of disadvantage before the non-indigenous national population, it is showed for example by the indicators of multidimensional poverty (that indicates 26.8 percentage points to the detriment of the indigenous population), illiteracy (with 8.8 more percentage points for the indigenous population), dropout rates (with 6.5 more percentage points for the indigenous population), the disapproval index in elementary indigenous schools (with 7.5 more percentage points and with a trend that goes to the rise), to have an age superior to the regulation (with a range of 15.3 - 24.2 more percentage points for the indigenous population depending on the type of school with the one that is compared), to have a mother with studies of middle school or more (with a range 15.8 - 47.3 percentage points less for the indigenous Mexican population depending on the type of school with the one that is compared) and the rate of 73.2% of educationally backward (with about 35 percentage points to the detriment of the indigenous Mexican population).

According to the results, the rate of national decrease of general educationally backward reported by the

INEA (2015), which ranges 1% per year, does not coincide with an intensive reduction of educationally backward of 15.8 percentage points who reports the CONEVAL (2013) for the period 2008-2012, specially if it thinks that the average in the increase of indigenous matriculation reported by the SEP (2014) for the above mentioned period, which ranges 1% per year.

As Llorente (2013) ads, the educationally backward centers notably in the states like Chiapas, Puebla, Guerrero, Veracruz y Yucatán, same register 7 for each illiterate indigenous 10. All of them are states that shelter higher percentages of indigenous population. What confirms the usefulness and the validity of the PAHO (2012) methodology to confirm what happens in the states with higher proportion of indigenous population and the Mexico City for measure gaps and social inequities.

In this way, as Schmelkes (2009) shows, about the fact that schools in worse conditions are located in the places that concentrate high density of indigenous population, already be indigenous schools or not, it is possible to deduce that one of the reasons of educationally backward in the indigenous population there is that it exists a certain level of institutional discrimination that neglects the public educational policy in regions of high indigenous concentration. This coincides with found with a diagnosis on indigenous population and social inequities, where for the educational topic they appreciate notable gaps between the indigenous Mexican population and the non-indigenous national population (Guzmán-Rosas, 2015).

Of 10 states with higher indigenous population, Oaxaca is the one that concentrates larger number of pre-school and elementary indigenous schools, which coincides with the fact that this one is the entity with higher proportion of indigenous population and the one that better rate of education in basic education reaches. Nevertheless, this one also is the third entity that has the biggest rate of indigenous population without instruction and the penultimate one in the student's average by group in pre-school and elementary school. In the rest of entities, the indicators are not distributed proportionally to the population that they housing.

On the other hand, of the total indigenous schools, the majority they are of multi-degree type, which means that all his teachers attend to more than one degree school or only there is a teacher for all the degrees, in this way for the pre-school level the proportion of indigenous schools multi-degree is 76.70%, whereas for the elementary school level this it is 76.13%. What implies that the teachers have not the sufficient time to attend to every group, because they have to distribute it between several.

According to the Observatoriociudadano de la educación (2008), the indigenous culture is not present in the classrooms, besides which the bilingualism (that theoretically is the intention of the pre-school and elementary school indigenous system) has not been assumed as such by the indigenous teachers, which reverberates notably in educationally backward of the indigenous population (because for the students who do not speak the Spanish the education it becomes incomprehensible and his learnings are diminished, beside it policy commits and outrage against the linguistic and cultural diversity of the country. In addition, Salmerón and Porras (2010) notes that the educative indigenous policy, which appeared from the modernity up to the incipient models of the postmodern age, have not been achieved a substantial contribution to the autonomy or development of indigenous peoples, either to the strengthening, or their culture, language and identity.

Likewise, analyzing by age groups, is observed that the population between 30 - 64 years-old and that of 15 - 29 years-old is the one that Spanish speaks, which suggests that there is an element of labor insertion or interaction with the non-indigenous market and this has forced them to learn the Spanish as the second language. The previous thing can be verified in to say of Regino and Lorenzo (quoting in RT, 2015), both of which originated from an ethnic group, about the fact that one of the elements that make the indigenous population more vulnerable for the abuse and the discrimination is exactly that they does not speak Spanish or not to speak it correctly. What also confirms that the elements of educationally backward, here characterized, they interact interlacing to keep a problematic solid inside a more wide social context of inequities.

In addition, it was possible to observe, from the results of the CONAPRED, which the indigenous Mexican population locates perfectly how they are affected by each of one of their educationally backward elements, being the discrimination the problem that they recognize like priority, followed by the poverty, the monolingualism and the inequity in the access to the education.

From the aforementioned, the following scheme is proposed to show the interaction of the elements of educationally backward in the indigenous Mexican population (Figure 2), same that integrates the theoretical perspective, the findings of research and the perspective of the indigenous actors to explain how a few elements interlace and affect on others. In the above mentioned scheme it could be appreciated that the poverty is one of the conditions that characterize the indigenous Mexican population, as the monolingualism, producing both the

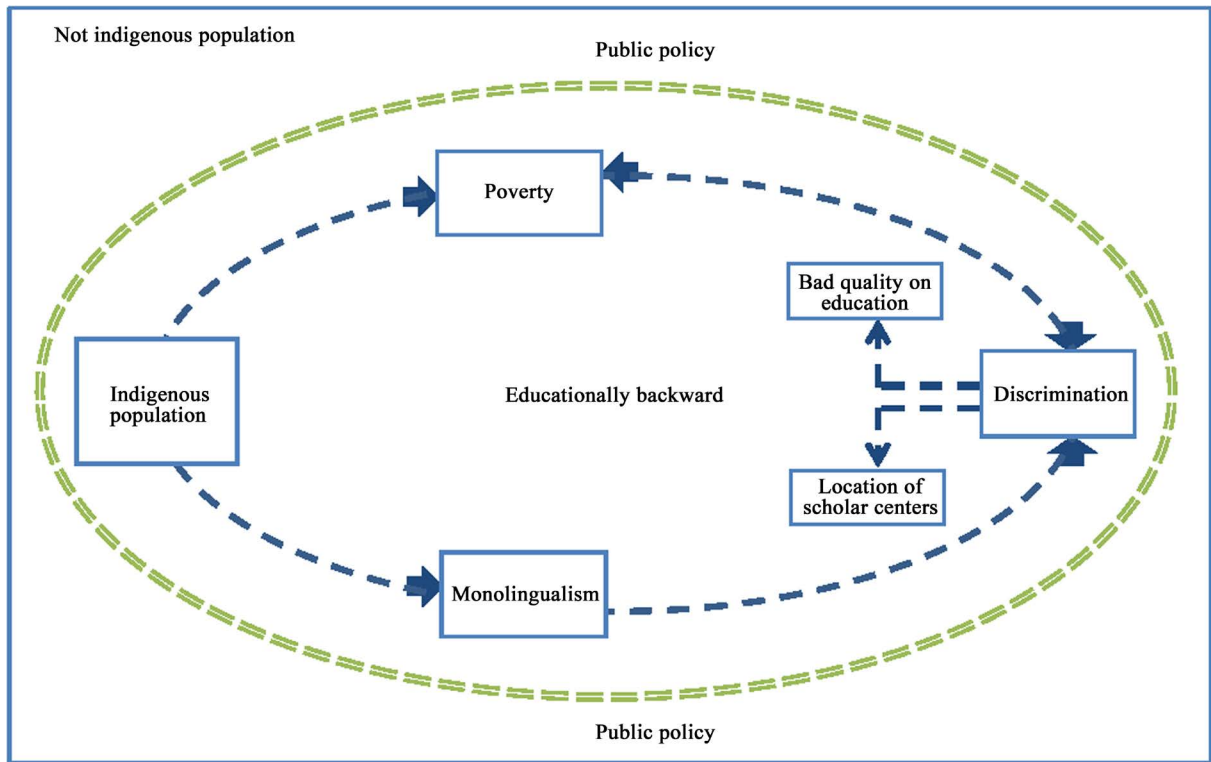


Figure 2. The educationally backward circle in the Mexican indigenous population. Source: Own elaboration, based in INEA (2015).

discrimination by the non-indigenous Mexican population against the national indigenous peoples, but once produced the discrimination this one returning to interweave with the poverty, reinforcing it, while it is the discrimination who generates the exclusion of the indigenous population of social, political, cultural, labor and economic spaces that might diminish their poverty conditions; in this way, the institutional discrimination propitious slope the bad quality of education in the indigenous population and their difficulties to access to the school centers due to their location. So that the poverty, the monolingualism and the discrimination are elements that interlace in a very strong way to generate conditions that inhibit the assistance or the educative achievement in the indigenous Mexican population, which supports the circle of educationally backward in the above mentioned population and, as you can see, this circle only can occur in the middle of very particular public policy designed and executed by the stakeholders of the non-indigenous Mexican population.

5. Conclusion

In all the thematic axes analyzed, unfavorable indicators exist for the indigenous Mexican population, so that each one of them constitutes a strong problematic. In addition, once joined these forms and extend a series of inequities in the educational area for the above mentioned population. So that the prevalence of educationally backward in the Mexican indigenous population explains fundamentally why the Mexican public policy about topics related to the education, but not specifically on education, have not increased the social development of this population, allowing that the poverty, the marginalization and the isolation, the monolingualism and the discrimination add and structuring a social problematic of inequities that is reflected in the educational area, and as [Llorente \(2013\)](#) indicated: the lag in this topic is such that Mexico has the same indicators of the decade of 1970.

In this way, a correspondence is observed between the presence of indigenous population in the states and the prevalence of negative indicators on educationally backward. For example, the indigenous schools possess neither sufficient spaces, nor the personnel of support, nor the equipment, nor the bibliographical material, nor the teachers necessary for the basic education. All this alludes to the bad quality of the schools, while this one measures up for the spaces and the material and human resources of those who arrange the educational centers.

So that it shows a lack of investment of the educational public expenditure needed for the development in the above mentioned entities.

In addition, the majority of the indigenous schools are in isolated communities or near to a road, which corresponds with the matriculations registered for every case, so that the indigenous students difficultly can attendance to schools that are near to a center of population or near to any city, since they have neither the economic resources nor the means of transport needed for it.

Neither exist indigenous middle schools, this reinforces the previous statement about public expenditure, showing at the same time an educational policy that promotes a break in academic trajectories of the indigenous students who finish elementary school. In this way, in Mexico, there is a model of assimilation in the education for the indigenous population, because there are no sufficient specific spaces for them, and those who exist do not go beyond the elementary school level, the idea is that the indigenous study in the not indigenous schools, with the implicit consequence of they leave their language, traditions and cultural values, adopting those of the not indigenous population. This suggests an underlying policy that commits an outrage against the cultural diversity.

So that it is possible to speak about a discrimination against the indigenous peoples, in three classifications: 1) of fact, because the discriminatory practices do not have legal support, on the contrary the national and international normative frame on the recognition of the indigenous right is very favorable; 2) attitudinal, because the discrimination is motivated by a series of prejudices and stereotypes that circulate in the imaginary Mexican on the indigenous thing and this could be observed in the fact that the indigenous word can be considered a way for insult; 3) institutional, because the public policy implemented historically by the Mexican government has helped to increase the gaps of the inequities in the above mentioned population.

According to the analyzed information and the already notable indicators, particularly those who allude to the discrimination of the indigenous peoples, it is possible to conclude that in general Mexico is not a multiculturalist society, due to in the daily experience the cultural diversity is not considered to be anything well, or appraised, on the contrary, like it has been showed, to be indigenous people and to speak an indigenous language implies to suffer the discrimination in the worst of her facets. Another element that shows the absence of the multiculturalism in Mexico is that the members of the non-indigenous Mexican population are not socialized in the cultural diversity, in the basic education of the latter population group they are not included officially, and in a global way, elements that promote the appraisal and the knowledge of the indigenous peoples, as for example in the learning of at minimum an indigenous language to regional use.

As Regino and Lorenzo mentioned (quoting in [RT, 2015](#)), both of which originated from an ethnic group, about of the indigenous monolingualism and the consequently experience of discrimination, it is possible to conclude that the elements of educationally backward here analyzed, they are strongly linked, affecting some in others and interweaving a problematic to the point of perpetuating it with the help of educative public policy that are slightly effective and very discriminatory in front the cultural diversity.

On the other hand, the subject of monolingualism in the indigenous Mexican population has showed to be a key factor in the prevalence of educationally backward, so that the public policy in educational subject for the above mentioned group should have a strong component on the above mentioned topic in order to be effective in the combat to such problematic, and it might be organized in three key elements in the following order of priority: 1) teachers' training in the speak indigenous language of his students, and then a appropriate distribution of this teachers, 2) elaboration and significant distribution of didactic materials in indigenous language for the educative indigenous centers and those in the centers who attend the above mentioned population without they are considered indigenous centers and 3) a program of reevaluation of the indigenous original languages and his speaking groups inside the non-indigenous national population, who should imply the socialization of this second population, in the frame of the basic education, in at least one of the languages indigenous to major presence.

The previous thing constitutes a concrete proposal for the combat to educationally backward. Nevertheless, as [Bourdieu \(1985\)](#) showed, it is possible to conclude that in a stratified society as the Mexican one, the language in which the official education is given shows an institutional legitimation, so that other languages are excluded, showing like that a symbolic domination in which the power exercised by the dominant groups and the relations that they have established are transferred to the linguistic forms. Consequently, to change or to adequate the language into the Mexican scholar system on basic level would imply, according to the above mentioned author: change all the laws that define the value of the linguistic products on the different classes, in this case of the indigenous population who speaks any ethnic language and also of the not indigenous population that speaks

Spanish, and this would imply the modification on social relations of domination through the linguistic area, but this apparently does not interested in the real Mexican public policy.

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