

**RIGHTS AND INDIGENOUS ADOLESCENCE IN MEXICO:
NEW SUBJECTS, NEW DILEMMAS[♦]**

Gonzalo A. Saravi^{*}

Pedro da Silva Abrantes^{**}

María Bertely Busquets^{***}

[♦] We would like to thank Richard Maclure for his useful comments and recommendations that allowed us to shape and improve this article.

^{*} Center of Research and Graduate Studies in Social Anthropology (CIESAS), Mexico, and Visiting Research Associate at the Latin American Center, University of Oxford. gsaravi@ciesas.edu.mx

^{**} Center of Research and Studies in Sociology, University Institute of Lisboa (CIES-IUL), Portugal, and Visiting Researcher at CIESAS, Mexico.

^{***} Center of Research and Graduate Studies in Social Anthropology (CIESAS), Mexico.

Abstract

This article aims to discuss the advances and challenges related to the fulfillment of the rights of Mexican indigenous children, especially during their adolescent years (ages 12-18). The article has two main sections. First, we review a selection of qualitative and statistical literature that provides a broad overview of the rights of indigenous youth in Mexico and of issues pertaining to their identities and living conditions. Secondly, we present a synopsis of the results of a collaborative research project recently undertaken in thirteen indigenous communities located in different regions of Mexico, and one in the US. The results of the study shed light on the varied circumstances of youth living in diverse rural and urban socio-economic contexts. Drawing upon the study's findings, we discuss three critical aspects of indigenous youth rights: growing indigenous youth awareness of their rights; the evolving and differentiated identities of indigenous adolescents; and the connection between indigenous youth identity and rights.

Keywords:

Childhood, Youth, Poverty, Rights, Identity, Ethnicity

Introduction

In the current era of globalization, the question of indigenous youth rights has become an issue of growing concern among policy makers and academics, particularly in contexts of stark socio-economic inequality and expanding cultural diversity.

Although there are relatively few studies of indigenous adolescence in Mexico, there is substantial evidence of the violation of their rights, often associated with poverty, discrimination and violence (Del Popolo et. al. 2009; Pérez Ruiz, 2008; Urteaga, 2008; UNDP, 2010). Those aged 12 – 18 years old face particular risks – notably non-completion of school, migration in search of uncertain job opportunities, and

employment in dangerous and low-paid work. In the process many of them are experiencing contradictions of identity. Because of the effects of poverty and the need to seek independent means of survival, many indigenous youth in Mexico have become psychologically and emotionally affiliated to other cultural *morés* that have fostered a degree of separation or exclusion from families and home communities. Yet at the same time, most of them continue to experience a sense of uniqueness and wellbeing [*buen vivir*] based on strong family and community ties, a close relationship with their home territory and natural environment, and a connection with their cultural heritage. These dichotomous sentiments of exclusion and wellbeing that are inherent to the self-conceptions and everyday experiences of many indigenous children and adolescents pose several specific dilemmas and policy challenges that will be discussed in this article.

Drawing upon current scholarship and recent national census data on the status of indigenous populations in Mexico, and on the findings of an extensive participatory research project coordinated by the authors on rights and identities among indigenous adolescents,¹ this article is divided into four main sections. In section 1 we discuss the ambiguous situation of indigenous children's rights in Mexico, focusing on two central paradoxes: a) the tension between individual and collective rights among indigenous populations in Mexico, and b) the contradiction between the formal

¹ This research was coordinated by María Bertely Busquets and Gonzalo A. Saraví from CIESAS (as principal researchers) and Pedro Abrantes from CIES-ISCTE (as associated researcher), and a team of 20 research assistants. The research was developed in 2011 and financed by UNICEF. Fieldwork was conducted in 13 different communities from several Mexican states (Ciudad de México, Morelos, Guerrero, Veracruz, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Jalisco, Chihuahua, and Sinaloa) and California in the United States. The participants belong to the main ethnic groups in Mexico: nahuas, zoques, tzeltales, ch'oles, mixes, raramuris, wixaritari, tlapanecos, mixtecos, and zapotecos.

expansion of rights of indigenous populations and the persistent structural conditions of exclusion and vulnerability that constitute the lived realities of most indigenous people. In section 2 we present an overview of our qualitative study conducted in collaboration with indigenous young people in twelve communities in different regions of Mexico and in one community in the U.S. A key methodological feature of this study was to elicit the perspectives of indigenous youth through a process of mutual learning among all participants. In section 3, based on the perspectives of our youth participants, we examine the conflicting dualities of indigenous adolescent rights in relation to three issues: a) the right to education; b) evolving indigenous youth identities; and c) the growing awareness among indigenous youth of their legal rights. In the concluding section 4 we consider the long-term conditions of indigenous youth in contemporary Mexico and the prospects for the advancement of their rights.

1. Indigenous Youth in Mexico:
The ambiguous rights of a marginalized population

In terms of current legislation and social policies in Mexico, and even in the realm of mainstream social research, indigenous youth are often neglected, or at best are considered a marginal topic of interest as a sub-category of Mexico's overall youth population. This sets the stage for the perpetual exclusion of indigenous youth in social policy deliberations and scholarly discourse. When occasional attention does focus on indigenous youth, too often they are presented either as "generic" youth or, more often than not, as a sub-category of low-income and potentially troublesome youth. Rarely are distinctions made that relate to the unique history and cultures of

diverse indigenous populations in Mexico. This blindness to the historical and cultural uniqueness of indigenous Mexican youth lies at the root of two principal tensions that tend to confound consideration of the rights of indigenous adolescents. First, there is a conundrum concerning the distinction between individual rights and the collective rights of indigenous people. In the case of indigenous youth specifically, this invariably relates to the tension between new evolving identities that reflect the shifting contours of modernity and globalization on the one side, and the imperatives of tradition and ascribed social identities that are the bases of indigenous cultural continuity on the other. The second tension relates to the inherent challenge in augmenting the fundamental rights of indigenous populations that, for the most part, continue to live in poverty and relative isolation due to singular historical circumstances and structural constraints. We will now discuss these two major dimensions in more detail.

1.1 The Crossroad of Individual and Collective Rights

During the last two decades the discourse of the universality of individual rights has made substantial headway throughout much of Latin America. This has led to social policy advances, particularly in relation to improvements in the expanding accessibility of education and to health care, both of which are widely acknowledged as inviolate rights for all individuals. Women, children, and adolescents, who have historically been socially marginalized and silenced, are generally perceived to be the main beneficiaries of rights-based discourse and the universality of individual rights. Although this has proven to be significant for many indigenous people, it has also generated the incursion of influences that have eroded the internal organization and

traditional norms of many indigenous communities (Van Cott, 2000). As some scholars have argued, growing emphasis on the universality of individual rights over collective rights is an expression of top-down neoliberalism and globalization which has had the effect of fostering challenges to traditional patterns of family and community organization (Sousa Santos, 1995; Hernández, Paz and Sierra, 2004).

Despite these challenges to traditional patterns of indigenous community life, the patriarchal norms of family structures have remained largely intact. For example, while women's participation in social movements, as reflected by their prominence in NGOs and CSOs, has been an empowering process and has facilitated heightened awareness of gender inequities and pressures for responsive gender policies in Latin America (Valladares, 2008), indigenous women (particularly young women) rarely have full autonomy and freedom to express their opinions, or opportunities to make their own personal life choices. With ascribed early marriage and the integration of children into adult work continuing to be normative practices, many indigenous adults still exercise unequivocal authority over young people. Consequently, the advancement of child and youth rights as an offshoot of the discourse of the universality of individual rights has proceeded slowly among indigenous populations. The principles outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and even in the Declaration of Indigenous People's Rights (2007), barely register as foundations of the transformation in the status of indigenous youth.

Nevertheless, as a number of ethnographic studies have documented, the notions of "youth" and "adolescence" have begun to be accepted, both rhetorically and in practice, in many indigenous communities, in rural as well as in urban settings

(Corpus Flores, 2008; Cruz Salazar, 2006; Martínez, 2002; Martínez and Rojas, 2011; Pérez and Arias, 2006; Pérez Ruiz, ed., 2008; Romer, 2008). A combination of educational expansion, national mass media, access to new technologies (television, mobile cellular phones and internet), and tides of migration are fostering changes in the perceptions and lifestyles of growing numbers of indigenous young people. These changes invariably have created tensions in traditional communities and cultures, and many indigenous adolescents have been left feeling that they are not understood and valued in their communities. There is, therefore, a growing propensity among indigenous youth to criticize the persistence of authoritarian and patriarchal family structures.

Additional tensions have resulted as a result of indigenous efforts to strengthen recognition of autonomous collective rights in Latin America, frequently in the face of state intransigence. Such efforts have made some headway, notably in Bolivia and Ecuador, resulting in political compromise and constitutional reforms. Yet in other countries, particularly in Colombia and Mexico, indigenous efforts to reinforce the right to collective autonomy have been met with violent state reprisals (Maybury-Lewis, 2000; Flores Félix, 2005; Montes de Oca, 2006). In the southern states of Mexico, notably Guerrero, Oaxaca and Chiapas which have relatively high numbers of indigenous people and undercurrents of political, economic, and religious tensions, movements advocating greater indigenous autonomy have been strongly repressed by government and paramilitary groups (e.g., the Zapatista Movement in Chiapas). Local and regional elites see these movements and their demands as a threat to their interests and power (Grammont & Mackinlay,

2006). Formal democracy in these states is new and weak, undermined by persistent political, economic, and even religious tensions. Discrimination, racism, and the persistence of post-colonial domination over indigenous people have also contributed to this context of indigenous resistance and state sponsored repression (Gall, 2004). Not surprisingly, as we will discuss shortly, these conflicts have generated substantial challenges for many indigenous adolescents. Migration of indigenous youth to cities and across the border to the USA has also become a pervasive threat to indigenous communities and their struggles for collective autonomy (Blackwell et al., 2009; Aquino, 2011 – NOT LISTED IN BIBLIOGRAPHY).

1.2 The Paradox of Rights in a Context of Social Disadvantage

1.2.1 Poverty and the Vulnerability of Indigenous Children and Youth

Mexico has two different criteria to identify its indigenous population: by language and through self-identification. According to the country's 2010 national census, 7.5 million people (6.6% of the Mexico's population) consider an indigenous language as their mother tongue.² Out of this number, 12.3% are children aged 3 to 9 years old, and 20.1% are adolescents ranging from 10 to 19 years old, indicating an approximate total of 2.4 million children and adolescences as speakers of native languages in Mexico. On the basis of self-identification, however, 17 million people (14.9% of the national population) are indigenous. This means that 58% of the self-identified population who consider themselves to be indigenous do not speak a native

² Data analyzed in this section was collected in the *Censo de Población y Vivienda 2010*, and provided by the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), in its webpage <http://www.inegi.org.mx/> [consulted in January of 2013].

language. Although the 2010 census does not provide tabulations by age group, drawing from different data bases we estimate that 2.5 million children aged 3 to 9 years old and 3.5 million adolescents aged 10 to 19 years old can be identified as indigenous, with approximately one-third using a native language as their mother tongue.³

More than 80% of Mexico's indigenous population lives in the southern and south-east regions of the country.⁴ Most of the native language speakers live in small communities or towns having less than 15,000 inhabitants. These communities tend to be located in remote areas, with scarce infrastructure and high levels of poverty. Generally the people in these communities hold a close relationship with the natural environment and identify strongly with their territory and their ethnic heritage. During the last three decades, however, the number of indigenous people migrating to urban contexts has increased and there are now sizeable numbers of indigenous people living permanently in cities in Mexico as well as in many other Latin American countries. Although conventions and laws ostensibly protect the rights of indigenous children, they are rarely fulfilled because of the persistence of entrenched socio-economic inequality in Mexico, particularly as this affects indigenous communities (Bayón 2009). The rate of poverty among indigenous people is almost double the rate among the rest of the population in Mexico⁵, as is the overall rate of indigenous infant

³ This estimation comes from applying the same proportion of children and adolescents in the whole Mexican population to the indigenous population.

⁴ Chiapas (18.3%), Oaxaca (17.3%) and Veracruz (9.3%) are the three states with the greatest concentration of indigenous; Yucatan is the only one where more than half of its population identify themselves as indigenous.

⁵ The rate of poverty in Mexico is 44.1%, but among the indigenous population this percentage is estimated to be 79.3%; 39.1% live in moderate poverty and 42.2% are considered extremely poor (CONEVAL 2010, Anexo Estadístico, Tabla 13). Evidence of their living conditions include the following

mortality among the indigenous population (4.3% versus 2.65% for the population as a whole) (UNDP 2010).

For many indigenous families children's work is a necessary economic strategy, in both rural and urban settings, despite laws that forbid child labour (Monroy & Juan Pérez, 2009). Figures from the 2010 Mexican Census show that the rate of labor participation among indigenous children aged 12 to 14 years old is 8.3%, more than twice the rate among non-indigenous children (3.9%). Although it is an economic imperative for many families, this tendency for many indigenous children and youth to begin working at an early age is also an aspect of their early transition to adulthood. Children's participation in economic activities and household tasks is widely regarded in many indigenous communities, especially in rural small town environments, as a necessary part of socialization and integration into the socio-economic life of the community (Bertely, et al., 2013). In this sense the active involvement of youth in the realm of work serves to strengthen the social cohesion of families and communities.

Yet in other contexts, notably in urban areas and commercial agricultural enterprises, indigenous child labour is frequently subject to exploitation. Away from their home communities, where work has nothing to do with the cultural continuity of indigenous communities, but rather is an extension of the sole pursuit of monetary gain, indigenous youth are highly susceptible to discrimination and to the restricted job opportunities that see most of them in low paid and frequently dangerous occupations. The ethnographic work of Zarco Mera (2009) on the experiences of

figures: 25.7% of indigenous houses lack water, 76.8% do not have satisfactory drainage systems, and 17.8% have only dirt floors.

indigenous teenage prostitutes in Chiapas provides a dark portrait of deprivation and exploitation, reflecting the risks faced by many migrant young people who have limited or no forms of protection.

Health services in indigenous communities are likewise often inadequate to meet the needs of all inhabitants. Disease and child malnutrition are inordinately high in indigenous communities (INCIDE, 2010), as are viruses such as AIDS, various forms of substance abuse, and domestic violence brought on by the stresses of poverty (Evangelista & Kauffer, 2007). In Yucatan state (which has a proportionately high indigenous population), many indigenous young people rely on self-medication and traditional healers because of their overall poverty and limited access to health services (Báez Landa, 2008).

1.2.2 Education

During the last four decades Mexico has made significant gains in expanding the accessibility of education for children and adolescents, and this has included an increase in the accessibility of schooling for indigenous young people.⁶ Since 1993, because secondary education (K7-K9) has been designated in the Mexican Constitution as basic education, it is officially compulsory. Yet up to the present time full secondary school enrolment has not been achieved in Mexico, and many indigenous children, particularly those living in poor rural regions, have no access to school at all. Early school abandonment is also a major problem confronting indigenous communities. While the national rates of non-indigenous school-age

⁶ For instance, the rate of basic education is now 62% in the 15-24 age group, 32% in the 25-44 age group, 14% in the 45-64 age group, and almost zero among the oldest generation.

children (7 – 14 years) and adolescents (15 – 19 years) who are out of school hover around 8% and 42% respectively, the rates of school leavers among indigenous children and adolescents are significantly higher, estimated to be almost 15% and 60% respectively for both age groups (INEE, 2008; Del Popolo, et al., 2009; UNDP, 2010).

At least one factor underlying high early school leaver rates is the generally poor quality of indigenous public schooling. Despite efforts to expand availability of schooling for indigenous children, qualitative indicators such as teacher proficiency, available materials and infrastructure, and school-community interaction generally remain well below acceptable national standards, thereby reducing indigenous adolescent prospects of graduating with high school degrees (Del Popolo et al., 2007; Saraví and Abrantes, 2010). This in turn means that the majority of indigenous youth are excluded from the possibility of higher education and eventual higher end employment levels.

The educational disadvantage of indigenous girls is even more acute, especially in rural areas. While female school enrolment in Mexico has grown faster overall within the last two decades than male enrolment, this has not been the case among indigenous populations where girls are frequently withdrawn from school, or prevented from attending, because of household financial constraints and the perceived need for girls to contribute to domestic work either in their own homes, or as paid domestic labour in other homes. Indigenous women are distinctly disadvantaged in comparison to indigenous men, and there is in fact a wide (and growing) intra-gender inequality gap. Early marriage partly explains this gap. Recent

evidence indicates that the average age of marriage for indigenous females is 18.8 years old, which is two years younger than the overall average for females in Mexico (CONAPO & INEGI, 2009). In addition, an estimated two out of ten indigenous females between 15 and 19 years old are already mothers, and six out of ten aged 20 to 24 years old have one or more children (Ibid). On average, indigenous women have 2.8 children, one child more than the average of Mexico's total female population (Ibid.).

Educational discrepancies among indigenous populations exist between rural and urban areas as well, with indigenous youngsters living in rural areas abandoning school earlier than those living in urban areas. Although rural – urban educational discrepancies are common in Mexico as a whole, the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous rural youth is greater than it is for indigenous and non-indigenous urban youth (Del Pópolo et al., 2009). By and large, urban contexts offer more educational opportunities for minority groups than rural communities do, and this has contributed to the ongoing trend of rural-urban migration, especially among indigenous children and adolescents.

2. In Search of Indigenous Adolescent Voices:

A Participatory Research Project

As we have discussed thus far, indigenous communities have been buffeted by the effects of poverty, migration, discrimination, and periodic violence, all of which have led some of these communities to strive for greater autonomy from state authority. These struggles and changing realities, in conjunction with exposure to modern education, new technologies, mass marketing, and images of consumer-oriented

lifestyles, have had a significant impact on indigenous adolescents. The current generation of indigenous youth has consequently become a unique social group with identities characterized by new aspirations and expectations, but also by myriad frustrations, tensions, and uncertainties.

In an effort to elicit the experiences of adolescence in indigenous contexts, we undertook a comprehensive one-year study that aimed to facilitate the articulation of youth voices and to contribute to advocacy of their rights within their own communities and in Mexican society as a whole. In particular we were keen to discern the attributes of an indigenous identity among girls and boys, and to evoke youth perceptions of the rights of adolescents and indigenous people, and the extent to which these rights are promulgated and protected. The collaborative approach to the research, therefore, was more than a methodological procedure to collect information; it also served as a way to foster reflexivity and critical awareness of child and youth rights among indigenous research participants.

2.1 Research Design and Methodology

The study was conducted by 20 field researchers in thirteen indigenous communities in different regions (twelve in Mexico, and one in the United States). The selection of communities took into account geographical, cultural, and socio-economic diversity. While the popular stereotype of indigenous people is that they are rural peasants, in fact an estimated 40% of indigenous children and adolescents currently live in urban settings (INEGI, 2010). Consequently, for purposes of the study, four urban communities were selected, with one of them situated in California which has a

significant number of Mexican indigenous immigrants. In aggregate terms, these communities reflected four types of contemporary indigenous conditions in Mexico :

a) Communities that have achieved a certain degree of political and cultural autonomy, with their own institutions and forms of self-government [*auto-gobierno*], and with strong ties of social solidarity and histories of struggle for the attainment of economic and social justice. This category included the following groups located in different states: *Zoques*, *Ch'oles* and *Tzeltales* from Selva Lacandona, Chiapas; *Mixes* from Tlahuitoltepec, Oaxaca; *Tlapanecos* and *Mixtecos*, from Montaña Alta, Guerrero; and *Wixaratarí* from the Sierra Norte, Jalisco.

b) Rural communities where language and landscape are the main sources of identity, even as the interconnected effects of economic change and out-migration processes threaten to diminish these aspects of indigenous identity. The groups in this category were: *Mixtecos* from Juxtlahuaca, Oaxaca; *Nahuas* from Cuentepec, Temixco, Morelos; and *Nahuas* from Ahuica, Chicontepec, Veracruz.

c) Migrant communities that retain a strong sense of ethnic identity and close ties with their home territories. These consist of families living in rural or urban contexts, often as temporary workers. They included: mixed ethnic groups working as temporary agricultural labour in Sinaloa; *Mixtecos* from Guerrero who were employed as commercial farm workers in Oacalco, Morelos; and *Zapotecos* and *Mixtecos* living in Santa María, California (U.S.).

d) Migrants living in low income urban barrios. This category included: *Binnizá (Zapotecos)* living in Mexico City; *Rarámuris* living in an indigenous settlement in the city of Chihuahua; and *Nahuas* from Tetelcingo, Morelos.

A central methodological objective of the research was to engage groups of indigenous youth as research collaborators. In contrast to the conventional approach of conducting research *on* children, for ethical and epistemological reasons we conducted our inquiry into aspects of indigenous youth rights and identity in Mexico, topics which they themselves could analyze critically, as a series of collaborative activities *with* the youth participants. Accordingly, in each community, with the approval of their parents and community leaders, a total of 250 indigenous adolescent girls and boys aged 12 to 18 years old participated voluntarily over a period of three – four months in a series of discussion groups, artistic sessions, and data collection activities with field researchers (Bertely and Saraví, eds., 2011; Bertely, et al., 2013). In order to recruit the youth participants, the field researchers drew upon existing networks of youth aged 12 – 18 years in each community. The number of participants in each community varied, ranging from six young people in the Californian setting to approximately 80 in Chiapas. For the most part, however, the norm was 10 – 20 youth participants per community.

Across the thirteen communities, there were marked differences among the youth who participated in the study. In Mexico City, for instance, most of the young *Zapotecos* participants were attending school and were actively engaged in ethnic organizations and artistic movements. In contrast, in the suburbs of Chihuahua City our sample of youth included teenage *Raramuris* who had abandoned school and were

working in the informal economy. Elsewhere, because child labour is an ongoing practice among indigenous people, most of the study participants were engaged in income-earning activities was a common feature among several of the selected communities. Their work, however, varied according to locale, e.g., small-scale farm work and domestic chores in traditional rural communities, piece-work in commercial agricultural enterprises, and low wage manual labour in urban settings. Another difference across the community settings was language use. There were those whose mother tongue was their *lingua franca*, there were others who were bilingual (i.e., capable of speaking both Spanish and their mother tongue), and still others who did not speak their heritage language. Likewise, there were youth whose lives were relatively peaceful and who were involved in various community projects, and there were others who were living in contexts characterized by risk and conflict.

In other research projects with children and adolescents, researchers have often tapped into the creative inclinations of young people through various forms of play (Corsaro, 2005; Atkinson, 2006), through letter-writing and painting (Podestá, 2002), in writing and the performance of theatre pieces (Kaptani & Yuval-Davis, 2008), and by involving them as co-researchers through participation in data collection and analysis (Alderson, 2005). Our approach to fieldwork was based on a methodology that incorporated participant engagement and reflexion designed to enable these young people to articulate their experiences and perspectives (Podestá, 2007; Rappaport, 2007; Leyva, Burguete & Speed, eds., 2008; Bertely, ed., 2008). In so doing, we also aimed to facilitate their heightened critical awareness of issues pertaining to their own rights.

Fieldwork with the youth was conducted in stages. All group activities began with a series of informal workshop discussions centered around the lives of young people, with attention devoted particularly to aspects of identity and to their perceptions and experiences of youth rights. With the permission of the participants and their participants or guardians, field-researchers taped these discussion sessions and took extensive notes. Following every group session, each research team produced a detailed report, highlighting the key themes and points of discussion, along with references to group dynamics and the general tenor of youth participation.

These first dialogical stages of the research project were succeeded by a series of more independent creative activities focusing on the general topic of rights and identities. Initially these activities were guided and facilitated by the field researchers and several professional artists and arts instructors to ensure that youth creativity was a genuine form of self-expression.⁷ The various groups of youth selected the languages and forms of expression that they wished to use. These included theatre, video (fiction and documentary), music, drawing/painting, photography, graffiti, and often a combination of these creative forms. All the works, as well as some vignettes of the creative processes involved, were recorded, edited, and saved on compact discs.⁸ In addition, some of these artistic works were presented

⁷ Each group was assigned a budget of U\$s 1,500 dollars to buy the materials or services needed to develop their own artistic project.

⁸ A multimedia book with the process and the products developed by each group has been published and is now being diffused, not only in participating communities, but in many events and institutions across the country. The main chapters of this book were written by each group of adolescents, and are based in their debates and discussions during the initial workshops. Bertely, M. and Saraví (eds.) 2011. *Voces de Jóvenes Indígenas: Adolescencias, Etnicidades y Ciudadanías en México*. México: UNICEF/CIESAS. The book is also available at: <http://www.vocesdejuvenesindigenas.mx/>

or performed in the communities where the youth lived, and elsewhere in special events.

Wixaritari children from the Sierra Norte, Jalisco (left) and *Nahuas* children from Ahuica, Chicontepec, Veracruz (right). Project: *Voces de Jóvenes Indígenas: Adolescencias, Etnicidades y Ciudadanías en México*. (Bertely & Saraví (eds.), México: CIESAS & UNICEF, 2011).

As might be expected given the diversity of the youth and the regions where they were living, the topics of their creative presentations varied considerably. Some combined positive descriptions of their traditional cultural roots with depictions of new (modern) values and ideas derived from personal experiences and influences of the outside world (e. g. groups from Cuentepec, Morelos; Mexico City; Santa María, Oaxaca; and Chihuahua City). Others revealed more critical perspectives, notably the stresses associated with migration and discrimination (Ahuica, Veracruz; and Selva Lacandona, Chiapas). A theatre piece recounted a tale of community violence and corruption rooted in drug trafficking (Tetelcingo, Morelos). A short video recounted the corporate privatization of lands and plants, a vital element of *wixaritari*' culture (Sierra Norte, Jalisco), while another documentary film presented a community's struggle for free education (Montaña Alta, Guerrero). Several presentations focused on the harsh living and working conditions experienced by indigenous youth and their families (Juxtlahuaca, Oaxaca; and Oacalco, Morelos). Taken all together, these artistic products offered remarkable insights into the living conditions of indigenous youth,

the cultural norms into which they are socialized, the challenges they face, and the strategies they adopt in addressing these challenges.

3. The Perspectives of Youth Research Participants: **Challenges related to rights and identity**

While a broad range of issues were highlighted as a result of this participatory research process, many of which have been presented elsewhere,⁹ for purposes of this article we highlight three principal cross-cutting themes that were articulated through these creative forms of expression: a) the right of indigenous youth to good quality education; b) an awareness of their increasingly hybrid identities that set them apart from their elders; and c) a growing consciousness of youth rights as an aspect of their own identities as young people. We elaborate briefly on each of these.

3.1 The Right to Education

As census data have shown, indigenous children and youth lag below the average in terms of educational access and achievement in Mexico. Nevertheless, the number of indigenous children enrolled in school has steadily increased over the last two decades. This is a reflection of the growing legitimacy of modern schooling among many indigenous families and communities. But as we have also discussed, the problems of educational quality and inequality remain significant in indigenous communities. In our study, most youth were well aware of the notion of education as a fundamental right, and were quick to articulate several barriers that prevented

⁹ See Bertely and Saraví (2011) and Bertely, Saraví and Abrantes (2013).

many of them from attending school, or carrying on their education into secondary school and beyond.

Poverty, and the corresponding need to work, were singled out as the most prominent barriers to education. As many youth indicated, from the perspective of their own families and communities, adolescents were at a stage in life where they were expected to participate in various household responsibilities and to contribute to family incomes. As three youth explained:

As [young] women in our community, besides studying, we help our mums to cook tortillas, to bring water to our house and to wash clothes in the well; boys have to go with our dads to plow in the fields and to reap the sowing (*Nahua* adolescent from Huasteca Veracruzana, Veracruz).

While we grow up we have to take on more responsibilities with our families at home and in the fields; for instance, to wash clothes and plates, to clean, to crop coffee, and some of us also must find a job to support our family (*Mixe* adolescent from Sierra Norte, Oaxaca).

To work is good, because it allows us to have our own money, to help with our home expenses and to learn to do things (*Nahua* adolescent from Temixco, Morelos).

Concern about work was a preoccupation among our youth participants. This underscored a contradiction concerning their education that most indigenous adolescents experienced personally. On the one hand, they appreciated the

opportunity for education and spoke of their desire to continue their schooling, but on the other they were concerned about what they perceived as a weak relationship between school learning and job prospects. From this perspective, many felt that it was better to leave school at a young age in order to seek paid work and the possibility of developing work-related skills and expanding social networks that could serve as foundations for long term employment. In short, while keen on learning and on education as a fundamental right, many of the indigenous youth in our study were acutely aware of their likely long term need to survive as rural workers or as urban labour in the informal economy. Consequently they found themselves questioning the value of spending more than a few years in the formal educational system.

In addition to the perceived gap between school curricula and work, youth participants frequently pointed to language and cultural barriers that hindered their education and precipitated early abandonment of school. For young people who are conversant in their own indigenous language, and particularly those who use their mother tongue on a daily basis, the language of schooling (Spanish) is a factor of alienation, effectively disconnecting classroom learning from the common forms of interaction in their communities, and preventing or limiting communication between their parents and school authorities. As one Raramuri adolescent in the Oasis settlement of Chihuahua said quite categorically, “We want our classes spoken in our language [Raramuri] at school.” Youth also spoke about the barriers that had existed between themselves and many of their teachers who had limited or no antecedent connections with indigenous communities. Many youth felt, therefore, that because of this cultural gap, teachers often tended to discriminate against them, treating them as

socially and academically inferior to non-indigenous students. As one Nahua youth observed, “The right to learn is important, we like to learn new things, but we don’t like school because we are mistreated” (*Nahua* adolescent from Temixco, Morelos).

This evidence of language and cultural divisions between schools and indigenous communities, and between teachers and students (and their parents), coupled with widespread evidence of poor quality instruction and lack of adequate infrastructure and resources for many schools in indigenous communities, explained the dislike and mistrust of formal schooling expressed by a substantial number of the youth in our study. By mid-adolescence, many did not appear to regret abandoning school for the precarious prospects of the job market. This, unfortunately, is a tragedy. While indigenous youth have a right to good quality education, in many respects it is the very institution of schooling that is pushing these young people away, thereby relegating them to the margins of Mexico’s political economy.

3.2 Changing Identities

As our research project revealed, despite the difficulties confronting indigenous youth, most of our youth participants in the thirteen communities of the study expressed pride in their indigenous roots. They felt a strong connection to cultural symbols such as clothing and music, and to their native languages, even if they were not conversant in them. These aspects of heritage were integral to their individual identities. They were the linchpins of psychic stability and social solidarity, enabling them to maintain an affinity with their families and their ethnic communities, and serving as the underlying norms and values that they intended to transmit to their

own children. In many respects as well, the social connections afforded by this sense of indigenous identity functioned as a decisive resource for survival in circumstances of poverty.

At the same time, however, for most of these young people pride in their indigenous roots was tempered by the influences of a non-indigenous world and by the difficulties they had experienced. From an early age most of these young people were subjected to various forms of discrimination in schools, in workplaces (especially in urban centres or commercial agricultural businesses to which their families have migrated for employment), and in public services such as health care centres. Consequently, alongside their ethnic pride and solidarity, many also harbored a sense of unease and even quite shame in their own identities. Acutely aware of their poverty and the negative stereotypical images of impoverished indigenous people often portrayed in mass media, they frequently admitted to attempting to subsume their indigenous roots in cosmopolitan circumstances such as urban workplaces and public institutions in order to avoid discrimination and marginalization.

In addition, however, these young people were inevitably caught up in the forces of globalization as reflected in music and art, and in their growing consciousness of their own rights as individuals having distinctive interests and aspirations that frequently differed from those of their elders. These changing identities are particularly evident in urban contexts. This was exemplified by the group of *Rarámuri* research participants in a poor urban neighbourhood in Chihuahua City who produced a mural graffiti portraying their unique ethnicity and communal roots, their

religious beliefs, and their evolving attachment to the trappings of globalization and urban lifestyles. Exposed to new cosmopolitan influences, they were developing new cultural attachments that extend beyond the particularities of their indigenous roots and the traditional *morés* of their older relatives. As our study revealed, different facets of indigenous youth identity (connected to identity, gender, place of abode, and occupation) are emerging in different contexts and through diverse social interactions.

Mural graffiti of *Rarámuris* children from Chihuahua. Project: *Voces de Jóvenes Indígenas: Adolescencias, Etnicidades y Ciudadanías en México*. (Bertely, M. and G. Saraví (eds.), México: CIESAS & UNICEF, 2011).

This emergence of hybrid indigenous youth identities has invariably created stresses for youth and for indigenous communities as a whole. In contexts of discrimination, unemployment, and poverty, for young people such stresses often leave them vulnerable to risks associated with drug addiction, sexual exploitation, and a descent into crime and violence. In turn, their home communities are often unprepared or ill equipped to assist them, and so instead tend to disown those young people who fall prey to these socially disruptive activities. In the long run this is

detrimental both to the wellbeing of individual youth and to the social cohesion of indigenous communities.

3.3 The Recognition of Adolescence as a Subject of Rights

Almost all the youth in our study were aware of the discourse of child and youth rights. They were also, for the most part, conscious of the tension between the concepts of individual and collective rights, specifically as these related to their own aspirations for personal autonomy and to the continuity of indigenous heritage and traditions. Through interactions with the youth groups in this study, we discerned two aspects of this tension that were of particular concern to them: those related to age and those related to gender.

In most of our research sites we observed frequent interaction among indigenous children, adolescents, and adults. Youth research participants often spoke positively about their relations with parents and other adults, and regarded intergenerational communication as a basis of communal solidarity. Yet at the same time, most had become conscious of the age of adolescence as an increasingly prolonged stage of life. Implicitly, many of them were aware that a seamless transition from dependent childhood to full adulthood as determined by traditionally ascribed roles and responsibilities has given way to a prolonged period of socialization in which they perceive themselves as increasingly autonomous social actors. This has been due to a combination of factors – formal education, the effects of travel away from home communities that many of them had experienced, and the pervasive influence of mass media and the internet. This has led many indigenous

young people to regard their own youthful age as a discrete, sometimes fluctuating cultural juncture that distinguishes them from their parents and community elders. It is a time of exploration when they connect with non-indigenous lifestyles and become familiar with the values and norms that are more commonly associated with modernity, globalization, and city life.

For most of our youth research participants, this self-awareness of themselves as a distinct social group defined essentially by age was nonetheless coupled with a sense of frustration that they were often not recognized as such by their own indigenous elders and the society at large. While frequently aspiring to exercise what they regarded as their right to speak or act in ways that depart from ascribed social expectations, particularly those aligned to indigenous traditions, they saw themselves as constrained by prevailing conventions and power structures that either typecast them as dependent on patriarchal adult authorities (similar to young children), or stigmatized them disdainfully because of their audacity to speak and / or act in ways that reflected their independence and individualism (e.g., as young women deciding not to marry, or young males trying to adopt cosmopolitan lifestyles and identities). Consequently, as our youth participants indicated, they often felt divided between the imperatives of their attachments to family, community, and cultural roots on the one side, and the longing for self-expression and independent decision-making on the other. As one youth exclaimed, “As adolescents, we should have the right to education, to wellbeing, to freedom, to enjoyment, to work, to health, to freedom of speech and to not be mistreated” (Mixteco adolescent, from Mixteca Baja, Oaxaca). This reflects the fervour of many youth for new spaces of social participation, and for

modes of communication with parents and adults that are more interactive and in keeping with the right to be recognized as autonomous individuals.

Indigenous female adolescents in our research groups were contemptuous of persistent gender discrimination and highlighted their consternation with the persistence of a traditional patriarchal social system imposing constraints on their lives and their everyday interactions. They spoke of their fears of abuse and violence and also complained about their lack of opportunity to express themselves publicly and to make decisions, sometimes even in such mundane matters as styles of dress and choice of friends. Almost all of them likewise expressed both an awareness and a frustration with the limited formal education that, on average, most of them had received in comparison to boys, largely because they are compelled to withdraw from school at an earlier age. As recounted by the girls in our research groups, the reasons for early female school abandonment relate mainly to family expectations concerning girls' work in the home and in small income-generating activities, and to the still common custom of arranged marriages while girls are in their early to mid-teens. The issue of compulsory marriage was a particular point of grievance among many of the girls. As one girl stated, "Boys [*muchachos*] and girls [*muchachas*], we should have the same freedom to choose when and who to marry" (Tlapaneco adolescent from Montaña Alta, Guerrero).

Indigenous adolescents from Cuentepec, Morelos (left) and Selva Lacandona, Chiapas. Project: *Voces de Jóvenes Indígenas: Adolescencias, Etnicidades y Ciudadanías en México*. (Bertely & Saraví (eds.), México: CIESAS & UNICEF, 2011).

Despite the challenges and constraints that they face, many of the girls in our research groups were optimistic about the struggle for gender equality, believing that the rights of women had progressed since the time when their mothers and grandmothers were young and the notion of female rights was non-existent in indigenous communities. All our female research participants were unanimous in advocating for individual *female* rights in indigenous communities, arguing that they should be allowed to continue their schooling and that they should be free to decide their own life trajectories and lifestyles. In some of the indigenous communities where we conducted the study, it was apparent that young women had aligned themselves with feminist groups that were championing the rights of indigenous women to have access to sexual and reproductive health education and to pursue individual opportunities based on their own autonomous decisions. At the same time, however, knowing that their individual aspirations frequently contradicted local patriarchal perceptions of the collective cultural rights of indigenous peoples, they

were aware of the risks associated with their advocacy for individual female rights – the risks of family rejection, social isolation, and enforced departure from their own communities.

4. Conclusion

At the outset of this article we reviewed recent scholarship and census data highlighting conditions of poverty and inequality in which the majority of Mexico's indigenous children and adolescents are living. The evidence also clearly reveals that these young people are being systematically denied many of their fundamental rights as stipulated in Mexico's Constitution and in its Law on the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents. Cognizant of the unique histories and cultural diversity of indigenous people in Mexico, and the current contexts of poverty, migration, and urban influences that have affected indigenous communities, we therefore undertook a qualitative research study in order to examine the juxtaposition of the rights of indigenous youth and their evolving identities. In view of the breadth and scope of the research, and the involvement of indigenous youth as participants, the findings of our research project brought to light a number of tensions and challenges related to identity formation and rights fulfillment among indigenous youth in different rural and urban contexts.

As our study has shown, similar to circumstances in many other parts of the world, indigenous adolescents in Mexico have emerged as discrete groups of social actors who are experiencing profound changes that stem from attendance at school, the effects of travel (either their own or the travel of others), and exposure to mass media and the commodities of a global market economy. Most of them have

individual aspirations and expectations, and are increasingly aware of their rights as individuals. Yet simultaneously they are also more exposed to multiple forms of risk, notably through discrimination, exploitation, and violence. Increasingly as well, they have had to contend with conflicts: those associated with their indigenous origins in the society as a whole; those related to adolescence as an age group within their own communities; and, among girls, those related to their female status. Such circumstances therefore pose new challenges for indigenous families and communities, many of which continue to regard the notion of collective rights as essential for cultural preservation and transmission.

Indigenous adolescents in Mexico, therefore, have a double challenge – a struggle for the realization of their individual rights as young citizens of Mexico and of their collective rights as indigenous people. This dualistic struggle reflects the difficulties many of them are having as they create their own hybrid identities that are grounded in their own lived experiences. The tribulations confronting indigenous youth have in turn generated additional difficulties for poor indigenous communities that are now increasingly confronted with pressures to accommodate their own young people as individuals with specific rights while simultaneously responding to the risks that threaten the wellbeing of many of these youth. Unfortunately, however, the capacity of indigenous families and communities to assist their young people through the trials and uncertainties of adolescence is undermined by the persistence of poverty and structural disadvantage. Accordingly, therefore, it is imperative that state policies and programs increasingly focus on addressing indigenous poverty and improving the prospects of indigenous children and adolescents. Laws prohibiting the

exploitation of working children should be enforced. The quality and accessibility of schooling for indigenous children and youth should be vastly improved, and should include the integration of indigenous languages in the early years of school curricula and more equitable treatment of female students.¹⁰ Special protections for migrant children and young people should be considerably expanded, and public authorities should be educated to revise their stereotypes and improve their socio-cultural awareness of diverse indigenous populations. Recognition and protection of the rights and unique identities of indigenous youth should serve both to augment their socio-economic opportunities and to enhance their physical and psychological wellbeing.

¹⁰ In this context is important to point out the relevance of a new model of “Intercultural Universities” which are focused in the indigenous population offering undergraduate and graduate studies linked to the local and regional socio-economic needs.

Bibliography

- Alderson, P. "As crianças como pesquisadoras: Os efeitos dos direitos de participação sobre a metodologia de pesquisa", *Educação & Sociedade*, 26(91) (2005): 419-442.
- Atkinson, L. "From play to knowledge: from visual to verbal?", *Anthropology Matters*, 8 (2) (2006): 1-17.
- Báez Landa, M. *Juventud Maya: Problemas y Retos en Yucatán*. (México: CIESAS, 2008).
- Bayón, C. Persistence of an exclusionary model: inequality and segmentation in Mexican society", *International Labour Review*, 148(3) (2009): 301-315.
- Bertely, M. (ed.). *Los Hombres y las Mujeres del Maíz: Democracia y Derecho Indígena para el Mundo*. (México: CIESAS, 2008).
- Bertely, M. and G. Saraví (eds.) *Voces de Jóvenes Indígenas: Adolescencias, Etnicidades y Ciudadanías en México*. (México: CIESAS & UNICEF, 2011).
- Bertely, M, G. Saraví, and P. Abrantes. *Adolescentes Indígenas en México: Derechos e Identidades*. (México: CIESAS & UNICEF, 2013).
- Blackwell, M., et. al. "Cruces de fronteras, identidades indígenas, género y justicia", *Desacatos*, (31) (2009): 13-34.
- Clark, H. "Youth participation: creating good citizens or good subjects?", *Anthropology Matters*, 10(1) (2008): 1-16.
- CONAPO (Consejo Nacional de Población) & INEGI (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y de Geografía). *Encuesta Nacional de la Dinámica Demográfica (ENADID) 2009*. (México: CONAPO & INEGI, 2009).
- Corpus Flores, A. (2008). Jóvenes tseltales presbiterianos y sus prácticas divergentes: los mensajeros de cristo en la Iglesia Golgota de el Corralito, Oxchuc, MSc. Thesis, CIESAS, San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico.
- Corsaro, W. *The Sociology of Childhood*, 2nd Edition. (Thousand Oaks, SAGE, 2005).
- Cruz Salazar, T. (2006), *Las pieles que vestimos: corporeidad y prácticas de belleza en San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas: un estudio con jóvenes indígenas y mestizas*, PhD. Thesis, CIESAS, Mexico DF.
- Del Popolo, F. A. Oyarce, B. Ribotta, and J. Rodríguez. *Indigenous People in Urban Settlements: Spatial Distribution, Internal Migration and Living Conditions*. (Santiago de Chile: CEPAL/CELADE, 2007).

- Del Popolo, F., M. López and M. Acuña. *Juventud Indígena y Afrodescendiente en América Latina*. (Madrid: OIJ/CEPAL, 2009).
- Evangelista, A. and E. Kauffer. "Jóvenes y VIH/SIDA: contextos de vulnerabilidad en comunidades de la Región Fronteriza de Chiapas". In *Compartiendo saberes sobre VIH/SIDA en Chiapas*, ed. R. Tinoco, M. Martínez and A. Evangelista. (Tuxtla Gutiérrez: CISC-ISECH-COESPO-UNFPA-ECOSUR, 2007). 77
- Feixa, C. and Y. González. "Territorios baldíos: identidades juveniles indígenas y rurales en América Latina", *Papers*, (79) (2006): 171-193.
- Flores Félix, J. "De indios integrados a sujetos políticos", *Argumentos*, (48-49) (2005): 69-90.
- Gall, O. "Identidad, exclusion y racism. Reflexiones teóricas y sobre México", *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*, 66 (2) (2004): 221-259.
- Grammont, H. and H. Mackinlay. "Las organizaciones sociales campesinas e indígenas frente a los partidos políticos y el Estado, México 1938-2006", *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*, 68(4) (2006): 693-729.
- Hernández, R., S. Paz, and M. Sierra (eds.) *El Estado y los Indígenas en Tiempos del PAN: Neoindegenismo, Legalidad e Identidad*, (México: CIESAS/Porrúa, 2004).
- INCIDE, (Iniciativa Ciudadana y Desarrollo Social). *El Derecho a la Alimentación en México*, (México: Observatorio de Política Social y Derechos Humanos, 2010).
- INEE (Instituto Nacional para la Evaluación de la Educación). *Informe 2008. ¿Avanza o Retrocede la Calidad Educativa? Tendencias y Perspectivas de la Educación Básica en México*. (México: INEE, 2008).
- INEGI (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y de Geografía). *Censo de Población y Vivienda 2010*. (México: INEGI, 2010).
- INEGI (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y de Geografía). *II Conteo de Población y Vivienda 2005*. (México: INEGI, 2005).
- INEGI (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y de Geografía). "Estadística a propósito del día internacional de los pueblos indígenas", Aguascalientes, 9 de agosto de 2011.
- Kaptani, E. and N. Yuval-Davis. "Participatory theatre as a research methodology: Identity, performance and social action among refugees", *Sociological Research Online*, 13 (5) (2008). 2.
- Kay, C. "Pobreza rural en América Latina: teorías y estrategias de desarrollo", *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*, 69(1) (2007): 69-108.

- Leyva, X. A. Burguete, and Sh. Speed (eds.) *Gobernar en la Diversidad: Experiencias Indígenas desde América Latina*. (México: CIESAS, 2008).
- Martínez, R. "La invención de la adolescencia: las otomíes urbana en Guadalajara" *Diario de Campo*, (23) (2002): 23-36.
- Martínez, R. and A. Rojas. "Indígenas urbanos en Guadalajara: etnicidad y escuela en niños y jóvenes otomíes, mixtecos y purépechas", in *El Triple desafío: Derechos, instituciones y políticas para la ciudad plural*. México: UACM & Gobierno del Distrito Federal, Secretaría de Desarrollo Social, (available on line at: www.sideso.df.gob.mx/documentos/ETD1.pdf) (03-09-2011)
- Maybury-Lewis, D. (ed.) *The Politics of Ethnicity: Indigenous Peoples in Latin American States*. (Cambridge, Harvard University, 2000).
- Monroy, F. and J. Pérez. "Agricultura y migración campesina: Un estudio para comprender la incorporación del trabajo infantil en una región indígena de México", *Revista Argentina de Sociología*, 7(12-13) (2009): 125-149.
- Montes de Oca, L. "Percepción social de las reformas constitucionales sobre los derechos de los pueblos indígenas: México y Ecuador", *Perfiles Lationamericanos*, (27) (2006): 107-139.
- Pérez Ruiz, M. (ed.) *Jóvenes indígenas y globalización en América Latina*. (Mexico: INAH, 2008).
- Pérez Ruiz, M. "Diversidad, identidad y globalización. Los jóvenes indígenas en las ciudades de México". In *Jóvenes indígenas y globalización en América Latina*, ed. M Pérez Ruiz. (Mexico: INAH, 2008). 45.
- Pérez Ruiz, M. and L. Arias. "Ni híbridos ni deslocalizados: Los jóvenes mayas de Yucatán", *Revista Iberoamericana de Comunicación*, (10) (2006): 23-59.
- Podestá, R. *Nuestros Pueblos de Hoy y Siempre: El Mundo de los Niños Nahuas a través de sus propias Letras y Dibujos*. (México: Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, 2002).
- Podestá, R. "Nuevos retos y roles intelectuales en metodologías participativas", *Revista Mexicana de Investigación Educativa*, 12(34) (2007): 987-1014.
- Rappaport, J. "Más allá de la escritura: La epistemología de la etnografía en colaboración", *Revista Colombiana de Antropología*, (42) (2007): 197-229.
- Reygadas, L. *La Apropiación: Destejiendo las Redes de la Desigualdad*. Mexico: Anthropos/UAM, 2008.

- Romer, M. "Los hijos de migrantes indígenas en la Ciudad de México". In *Jóvenes indígenas y globalización en América Latina*, ed. M Pérez Ruiz. (Mexico: INAH, 2008). 205
- Rubio, B. "De la crisis hegemónica y financiera a la crisis alimentaria: Impacto sobre el campo mexicano", *Argumentos*, 21(57) (2008): 35-52.
- Rus, J. "La nueva ciudad maya en el Valle de Jovel: Urbanización acelerada, juventud indígena y comunidad en San Cristóbal de las Casas". In *Chiapas Después de la Tormenta: Estudios Sobre Economía Sociedad y Política*, ed. M. Estrada Saavedra. (Mexico: COLMEX, 2009). 169.
- Saraví, G. and P. Abrantes "La política educativa en México". In *El Derecho a la Educación en México*. (México: INCIDE, 2010). 19.
- Sousa Santos, B. de. *Toward a New Common Sense: Law, Science and Politics in the Paradigmatic Transition*, New York, Routledge, 1995.
- UNDP, United Nations Development Program. *Informe sobre Desarrollo Humano de los Pueblos Indígenas en México*. (México: UNDP, 2010).
- Urteaga, M. "Jóvenes e indios en el México contemporáneo", *Revista Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, Niñez y Juventud*, 6(2) (2008): 667-708.
- Valladares, L. "Ser mujer y ser joven en las comunidades indígenas de Mexico". In *Jóvenes Indígenas y Globalización en México*, ed. M. Pérez Ruiz. (Mexico: INAH, 2008). 69.
- Van Cott, D. *The Friendly Liquidation of the Past: The Politics of Diversity in Latin America*. (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000).
- Zarco Mera, A. (2009) Migración y trabajo sexual indígena en San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas: Implicaciones en salud sexual y reproductiva. MSc. Thesis, CIESAS, San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico.