

# Multivariate Statistical Study of the Development of the Indigenous Populations in Mexico

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## Summary:

Mexico stands as a country characterized with one of the richest cultural heritages and ethnical diversity, maintained for more than five centuries after the discovery of the new world. General consensus, among different world institutions, exists about the important advances of the country and its contribution in the globalization process. Its entry in the OECD in 1994 and the recent 2000 democratic elections highlight important progress in the economical development of the country and the wealth of its population. However an important part of the population, mainly of non Spanish background, still suffers great amount of marginalization in different domains. After the Spanish conquest a relevant part of the indigenous population was decimated but fortunately, many important ethnical groups still remain, constituting almost ten percent of the country's population. The objective of this paper is to present a statistical image of the authentic indigenous Mexican population as well as some of the official statistics limitations, with the goal to explore its situation and to identify strategies for its recognition and development.

## Introduction

Our era is characterized by accelerated globalization processes in those which are sought greater exchanges between nations, to expand markets, to impel the cooperation, the industrialization, the urbanization and, theoretically, all exchange to accomplish any activity for human development. This trend toward the globalization has been promoted mainly by the three country blocks (North America, Europe and This Asian), represented by the most powerful nations of the planet. However said, these projects consider as principal actors the national societies or nation states letting invisibles the integrating minority populations of the said states. Yet in the European Union, one of the regions in which is observed a great number of agreements towards globalization does not exist clarity about how to answer to the certain protests of minorities. Within that context, Mexico is presented as one of the countries that more commercial agreements has accomplished between those different blocks. From the cultural point of view, for many countries and for our Northern neighbors, Mexico is a Latin American country, in economic development process, in which their inhabitants are Spanish-speaking (Hispanics) and almost all of catholic religion. The studies of the World Bank (10) characterize Mexico as an emerging country with an intermediate poverty level, with 8% of its population below the international line of extreme poverty of a dollar per day, and with

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24.3% of its population below two dollars per day. In the United Nations Development Program Report (8) Mexico obtains the 55th position in terms of the Human Development Index (IDH), with a life expectancy (2001) of 73.1 years, a Literacy Rate of 91.4% and a GDP (in US dollars) of 8430.00. Mexico presents itself as a Federal Republic with a surface of 1 972 547 Km<sup>2</sup>, formed by 32 states and 2 377 municipalities. The population in the census of the 2000 was evaluated in 100.5 million of inhabitants. However census information frequently omits numerous aspects of the diversity associated with culture of its inhabitants making amalgams according to solely national criteria as language, religion or income level. It is perhaps by the desire of annihilating scourges as illiteracy and poverty that our governments confuse politics against those scourges, with politics tending to homogenize and to integrate the indigenous populations to the national project.

To think about the future and to initiate a study of the indigenous populations of Mexico might seem to fight against more than 500 forgetfulness years and against the globalization trends in which are ignored the rights of the individual to maintain his individuality, as well as the numerous community rights to safeguard their specificities. In this work we consider of vital importance to maintain social diversity characterized by attributes such as culture, ethnic, linguistic, organization, among others in base to the premise of the fact that diversity in all the aspects is one of most important characteristics of any system to maintain its existence and its evolution.

### **Some Features of the Evolution of the Originating Population in Mexico**

In Mexico, current indigenous communities have their ancestry in the populations that lived before the discovery of the American continent, that survived after the conquest of Mexico. Upon beginning this study, some questions that emerge are for example *Who were those populations and how many inhabited the different regions of Mexico (Mesoamérica) in the moment in which Spanish invaded the region in 1519? Which was the development level, Which are their specificities and How much ethnic diversity existed? How they have evolved since then ?*

To obtain a full description of the populations, before the conquest results very difficult since most of the information generated by the civilizations called "precolombianas" was destroyed by the conquerors in their zeal by mastering the inhabitants and to impose new beliefs, customs and forms of life. Fortunately it is possible to obtain some answers, thanks to numerous vestiges and archaeological sites that yet exist as: : The Sale, The Tajín, Cuicuilco, Tulle, Teotihuacán, Palenquee, Chichén Itzá, Yaxchilan, Bonampak. Sites that attest of the cultural, political, social, economic and scientific advances achieved by these civilizations of Mesoamérica. With respect to the size of the population, there exists full consensus of the fact that after the conquest occurred a great demographic disaster, not just result of the bloody battles and of the forms of representing the invader (Wishart-2002), but due to a series of devastating epidemics such as the smallpox, Measles, typhus and hemorrhagic fever (3) presents the following summary, in which are included different hypothesis. However they show an important variability . for example for the region of the valley of Mexico, Cook and Borah estimate a population between 18 and 30 million, while Rosenblat, Aguirre and Beltrán estimate a population of 4.5 million (Table 1).

It also results extremely difficult to present a description of the evolution of the indigenous population after the conquest. In same Table 1 are observed estimates of the reduction of the

population, according to the authors, reduction goes from 24% to 90%. On the other hand, growth of the population was accompanied by a great mixing of peoples of different ethno-racial backgrounds (Indian, African and European).

<b>Author</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Population (millions)</b>	
		<b>1519</b>	<b>1595</b>
Rosenblat	"Mexico"	4.5	3.5
Aguirre-Beltrán		4.5	2.0
Zambardino		5-10	1.1-1.7
Mendizabal		8.2	2.4
Cook and Simpson		10.5	2.1-3.0
Cook and Borah		18-30	1.4
Sanders	Central Mexican Symbiotic Region	2.6-3.1	0.4
Whitmore	Valley of Mexico	1.3-2.7	0.1-0.4
Gibson		1.5	0.2
Sanders		1.0-1.2	0.1
Kubler	128 towns	0.2	0.1

Table 1<sup>2</sup>

Indians always made up the overwhelming majority of the population of colonial Mexico, and people of solely African or European origin were always only minor fractions. The second largest group by the end of the sixteenth-century was the "Euromestizos," that is, Spanish-speakers of mixed Indian and European stock. Within a century of conquest Indo-mestizos (mixed stock Indian speakers) and Afro-mestizos (Spanish-speaking mixed groups with an African component) also made up a sizeable fraction of the population" (8). The difficulties to trace the evolution of the population, throughout the history of Mexico, are complicated upon observing that very few statistical studies present information in this regard and that in these is shown contradictory information (Table 2).

<b>year</b>	<b>population</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>year</b>	<b>population</b>	<b>Author</b>
1793	4.5	Revillagigedo <sup>2</sup>	1870	8.8	Hermosa <sup>3</sup>
1803	5.8	Humboldt <sup>2</sup>	1885	10.9	Fomento <sup>3</sup>
1810	6.1	Navarro y Noriega <sup>3</sup>	1895	12.6	I Censo <sup>3</sup>
1830	8.0	Burkhardt <sup>3</sup>	1900	13.6	II Censo <sup>3</sup>
1854	7.9	Orozco y Berra <sup>3</sup>	1910	15.2	III Censo <sup>3</sup>

Tabla 2<sup>3</sup>

A summary of some studies (Table 2) is presented below .

"The Villaseñor "census" of 1742 produced valuable reports for many parishes and towns but failed to cover the entire colony. For many places this document reports numbers of families—often crudely eye-balled—rather than inhabitants. For

<sup>2</sup> Sources mentioned in MaCaa publication are: Rosenblat, *Población indígena*, vol. 1, pp. 57-122. Aguirre-Beltrán, *Población negra*, pp. 200-1, 212. Zambardino, "Mexico's Population," pp. 21-2. Mendizábal, "Demografía," vol. 3, p. 320. Cook and Simpson, *Population*, pp. 38, 43, 45. Cook and Borah, *Aboriginal Population*, p. 88. Cook and Borah, *Indian Population*, pp. 46-7 (as corrected). Sanders, "Central Mexican Symbiotic Region," p. 120; "Ecological Adaptation," p. 194. Whitmore, *Disease*, p. 154. Gibson, *Aztecs*, pp. 137-138. Kubler, "Population Movements," p. 621.

<sup>3</sup> Sources: <sup>1</sup>Humboldt, *Essai politique*, vol. 1. pp. 325, 341; <sup>2</sup>México INEGI, *Estadísticas Históricas*, Table 1.2.

example, the town of Guadalajara is reported as containing "eight to nine thousand families of Spaniards, mestizos and mulatos, not counting Indians...." More common is the degree of inexactitude expressed for the town of Actopan (Hidalgo state), which reports 50 Spanish families (almost all of whom would be in Aguirre-Beltrán's terms "euromestizos"), 2,750 Indian families and 20 of other castas ("indomestizos," "afromestizos," and perhaps an African or two).

The best colony-wide census was the last, that ordered by the Viceroy Conde de Revillagigedo (1789-93) and the first to use a standard format for listing individuals by name, age, sex, occupation, race, and marital status. Nevertheless, this effort missed large expanses of New Spain. The German savant Alexander von Humboldt, from his sojourn in the colony, prepared a four volume Essai which revised the Revillagigedo figures to produce a comprehensive set of estimates, adjusted for growth to 1803.

A decade later Francisco Navarro y Noriega increased the Revillagigedo numbers by 20% for under-enumeration (Humboldt favored 10%), obtained figures for districts which had not reported earlier, and estimated growth to 1810 at 25% (1.5% per annum for 17 years, using arithmetic cumulation rather than geometric). For almost two centuries now, Navarro y Noriega's results remain the most widely cited, yet they surely exaggerate the true population in 1810 by perhaps as much as one-fifth. Unfortunately, the royal accountant followed the method favored by Humboldt, estimating growth from parish records by subtracting burials from baptisms.

Neither Navarro y Noriega nor Humboldt paid much heed to the fact that in Mexico baptisms were always more faithfully recorded than burials (until the latter decades of the nineteenth-century when civil registration undermined the religious system). Faulty logic convinced Navarro y Noriega that annual growth was 1.5% per year—probably double the actual figure, although only half what Humboldt settled upon. Thus, 5-5.5 million seems a more likely estimate for the population of Mexico in 1810 than Navarro y Noriega's 6,122,354 or Humboldt's 5.8 million for 1803 (and 6.5 for 1808). If historians insist on using these figures, then estimates for earlier and later years would have to be similarly corrected for errors and omissions—a forbidding challenge. In any case, population growth in the closing decades of Spanish rule was much less than Navarro y Noriega, Humboldt or other "triumphalists" of the era surmised."

From some five million inhabitants in 1800, Mexico grew to eight million by 1855, and to over 15 million in 1910. This tripling of the population over barely one hundred years probably equaled or exceeded the record for any other period in Mexican history prior to the great demographic revolution of the twentieth-century. After 1910 the population of Mexico increased more than five-fold in nine decades, surpassing 80 million in 1990. Growth in the nineteenth-century was well below the record of the twentieth, but was substantial nonetheless.

Indian villages languished while haciendas, ranchos, and towns with predominantly Spanish speaking populations grew ever more rapidly. The declining number of Indian language speakers was due more to the spread of Spanish-based education (castillanización), changing identities and mestizaje than to lower reproduction rates. Indians, according to the ill-defined 1793 count, numbered 2.5 million in central Mexico.

A century later only 2.1 million Mexicans spoke Indian languages in the entire republic, a decline from at least fifty to a scant fifteen percent of the population. If speakers of Indian languages had grown at the national average of one percent per annum over the century, they would have numbered 6.5 million in 1900. Since death rates in Indian regions were higher than the national average, perhaps half of the four million loss could be attributed to higher mortality. The other half should be assigned to mestizaje and transformed identities, sometimes forced by gun toting, land-grabbers who found it convenient to make native villages disappear. The spread of public education, market economies, and liberal politics in the nineteenth-century proved as perilous to the survival of Native Americans, their cultures and communities, as virgin soil epidemics in the sixteenth.

In 1900 only six states reported one-fourth or more of total population as accounted for by native language speakers—Oaxaca, Chiapas, Guerrero, Campeche, Yucatán, and Puebla. By 1910, the group was halved to three. In absolute terms, 80% of all native language speakers in 1900 lived in seven states—50% in only three: Oaxaca, Puebla, and Yucatán. From 1900 to 1910, Indian language speakers increased their demographic weight in only three "states"—Chihuahua, Nayarit, and San Luis Potosí. By 1950 according to official figures, speakers of Indian languages numbered 2.4 million—of whom one-third were monolinguals. In recent decades a significant resurgence has taken place, reaching 5.2 million in 1980, due in part to the fact that acknowledging indigenous roots is increasingly a matter of pride rather than of shame as in earlier times. Nevertheless, by 1980 the fraction of native language speakers dropped below eight percent, barely half the figure at the beginning of the twentieth-century.

McCaa-1997 (8)

Throughout this review it is observed a lack of interest, of the different academic researchers, historians and by the same laws and Mexican policies, for identifying with clarity the populations of indigenous origin. For example in the first Constitution of Mexico (1824), the official rights given to the indigenous peoples was akin to those given to foreigners. In multiple constitution forums of those dates, it was proposed openly a reject of the word "indigenous" in the constitutional language, imitating the state model —of other foreign nations, it was proposed to give to the Mexican indigenous equal treatment to the received by Indians in the United States of America or in other Latin American nations (such as Argentina), that is to say, to finish them and to attempt to isolate them of the rest of the national society. Yet in the present any indigenous newcomer, from the countryside to the city

with any goal either to market his products, to seek employment or to obtain education has many less possibilities of succeeding in the Mexican society than a recently foreign new comer, preferably of white background and with a name and resoundingly surnames.

With this schema are built the foundations of the emerging Mexican nation and to achieve the homogenization of the population in all the senses. During the movement of "Reforma" the situation did not change much, in spite of the fact that such current was headed by an Indian of zapotecal origin -Benito Juárez García -. The Constitution of 1857 excluded of all consideration indigenous peoples, in spite of the fact that some personalities as Ignacio Ramírez "The Nigromante" proposed to reconsider the situation of the native people of Mexico. Thus, the national history submitted the indigenous of those times to a spoliation campaign of their communal lands, which became property of large landowner hands, to such degree that under the regime of Porfirio Díaz, by the end of the XIX century, the communal lands reduced considerably and thousands of Mexican indigenous were converted into land workers. This situation gave rise to the zapatista movement claiming "Tierra y Libertad (Earth and Freedom)" in the center and southeast regions of Mexico, and the "villismo" movement in the north, giving rise to the Mexican Revolution. The legal riverbed - political of this great revolution reflected in the Constitution of 1917, gave response to the demand of the land, however many demands of the indigenous peoples were forgotten. From 1917 the idea of a homogeneous state ignoring Indigenous Peoples began by the post - revolutionary governments. The foregoing had a very strong reflex in the program so called "asistencialista -integracionista" promoted from various governmental instances. In particular, the design of the Education system made by José Vasconcelos under the idea of the birth of a new race designated by him "the cosmic race", originated a form of thought towards homogenization and individualistic pretensions, with the clear slogan of the fact that the Mexican past was Indian, but that the future would be all but that. In the same direction, the post - revolutionary governments carried to their maximum expression the concept of a State certified by individual and not by various collectivities. This idea originated during the European Renaissance did not recognized in the laws, as well as in the policies determined by the State, what was **a visible reality in all the senses: the existence of peoples and collectivities differentiated** in the emerging State. Thus, the supposed Mexican Revolution, for the case of the indigenous peoples did not imply more than the change of a governmental dome. During the regimes of President Lázaro Cardenas and Manuel Avila Camacho were created and consolidated the first "indigenist" structures, for example the National Institute Indigenist. From these instances there would be possibility to channel all the will of the State to integrate indigenous peoples to the national development, under the premise that their poverty situation had to be due to "their cultural conditions and life systems". This conception unfortunately continues now days.

In spite of more than 500 domination years and exploitation of the Indigenous Peoples of Mexico the indigenous reaction adopted, from the beginning, multiple forms of resistance and of persistence, adapting their life and their customs to the new era. However the interaction between the indigenous peoples of Mexico was always scarce or void and often conflicting and dependent of the loops with various domination structures. Before the European invasion each indigenous people ignored the existence of other peoples, and the relationships between neighboring nations were often exposed to conflicts and tensions. Nevertheless the participation of these Peoples was decisive in the Mexican History as in the fight for the Independence of Mexico, in the movement of the Reform and in the Mexican Revolution at the beginning of the century XX. Recently in the decade of the ninety seventies

blossomed a variety of initiatives in the international and national arena that promoted new forms of interaction of the indigenous peoples mutually and with the rest of the society. Most of the positions supported originated from deep and systematic reflection inside some indigenous peoples. Began then the "time of the indigenous return" in some places of Mexico through the accomplishment of the Indigenous Congress, National Congress of Indigenous Peoples, National Council of indigenous Peoples, sustained at the same time in Supreme Councils of each one of the Peoples.

However, it was not until the raising of the Army Zapatista of National (EZLN) movement awoken of the 1 of January of 1994, that demands and indigenous recoveries were put in the first plan of the Mexican national conscience. From then on it was born unleashed an indigenous organizational process never seen before in the history of Mexico. Indigenous peoples of Mexico requested a serious joint demands and aspirations. These ideas would be defined in more deep, initially in the designated Indigenous National Conventions summoned by the EZLN, and thereafter in the Indigenous National Forums celebrated in San Cristobal de Las Casas and in Oventic (Chiapas) in January and in July of 1996 respectively. Finally, they were ratified by the Indigenous National Congress in October of 1996. Since then were multiplied the opportunities and tending initiatives to crystallize new form of interactions between indigenous peoples through a series of nets. All these pledges have contributed largely to make possible a wide participation of the Indigenous Peoples of Mexico in the current process that it is leading to the possible constitutional reforms on the indigenous rights, discussed in the high political fields and that finally would recognize as peoples while historical subjects, therefore would have to be permitted to generate spaces for a great labor of reconstitution of those forgotten peoples (1).

### **Multivariate Exploratory Study of the Characteristics of the Population of Indigenous Origin in the Actual Mexico**

Taking into account the few information presented in the previous section, it results extremely complex to accomplish a statistic study of the Indigenous Populations due to the numerous perspectives that can be adopted. The most common perspective has been adopted by the Mexican government and by the governmental organs commissioned with collecting information on the population. From the official point of view (INEGI-2004), in Mexico the indigenous are those that do not speak Spanish and that are found in an extreme poverty situation. From this point of view, approximately half of the indigenous are illiterate (as they do not speak Spanish), when the average at domestic level is less than 10% of the population.

The National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics INEGI (4). lists between 57 and 65 different peoples that represent between 7 and 10 million of inhabitants (almost 10% of the total of the population of the country). 1 448 936 are Nahuatl Peoples, while there only survive few families of, the Kiliwes Peoples (8) and 3 of the Aguacatecos Peoples. 90 % of the population integrate 16 Peoples and the 48 remaining Peoples constitute 10% of the population. Some indigenous Peoples are concentrated in relatively compact territories (Mixes), while others are distributed in very different regions (Nahuatl). 50% of the indigenous population is found in four entities (Oaxaca, Chiapas, Veracruz and Puebla), 90% of the population is concentrated in 12 entities (Oaxaca, Chiapas, Veracruz, Puebla, Yucatan, Guerrero, Estado de Mexico, Hidalgo, San Luis Potosí, Quintana Roo, Distrito Federal and Michoacán). about half of the indigenous municipalities lack electricity and drinking water (compared to the national averages of 13% and 21 % respectively). In fifth three percent of

municipalities is observed regular migration of an important portion of inhabitants. Four Fifth parts of the indigenous children 5-year-old show important malnutrition indices.

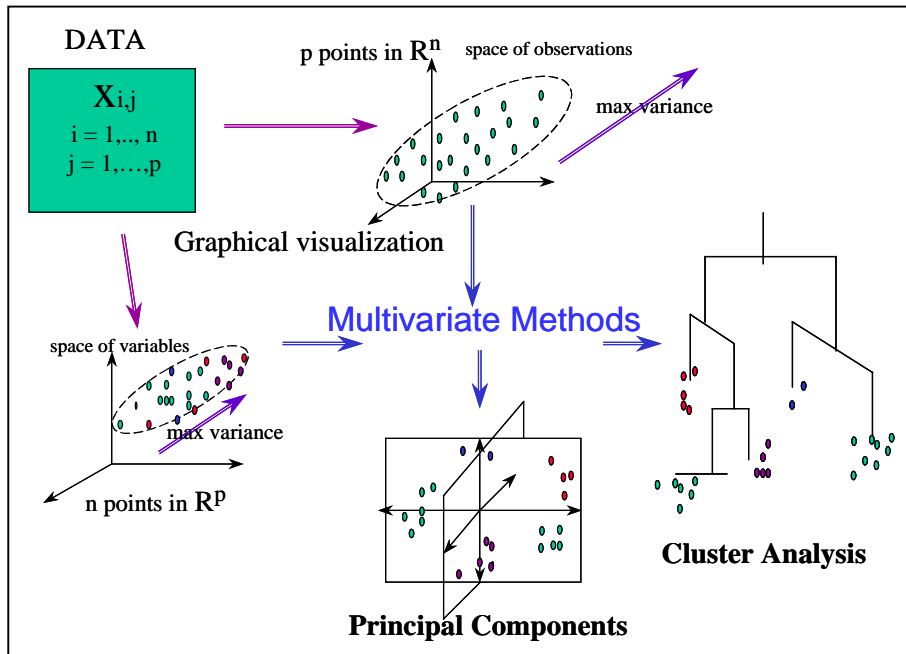
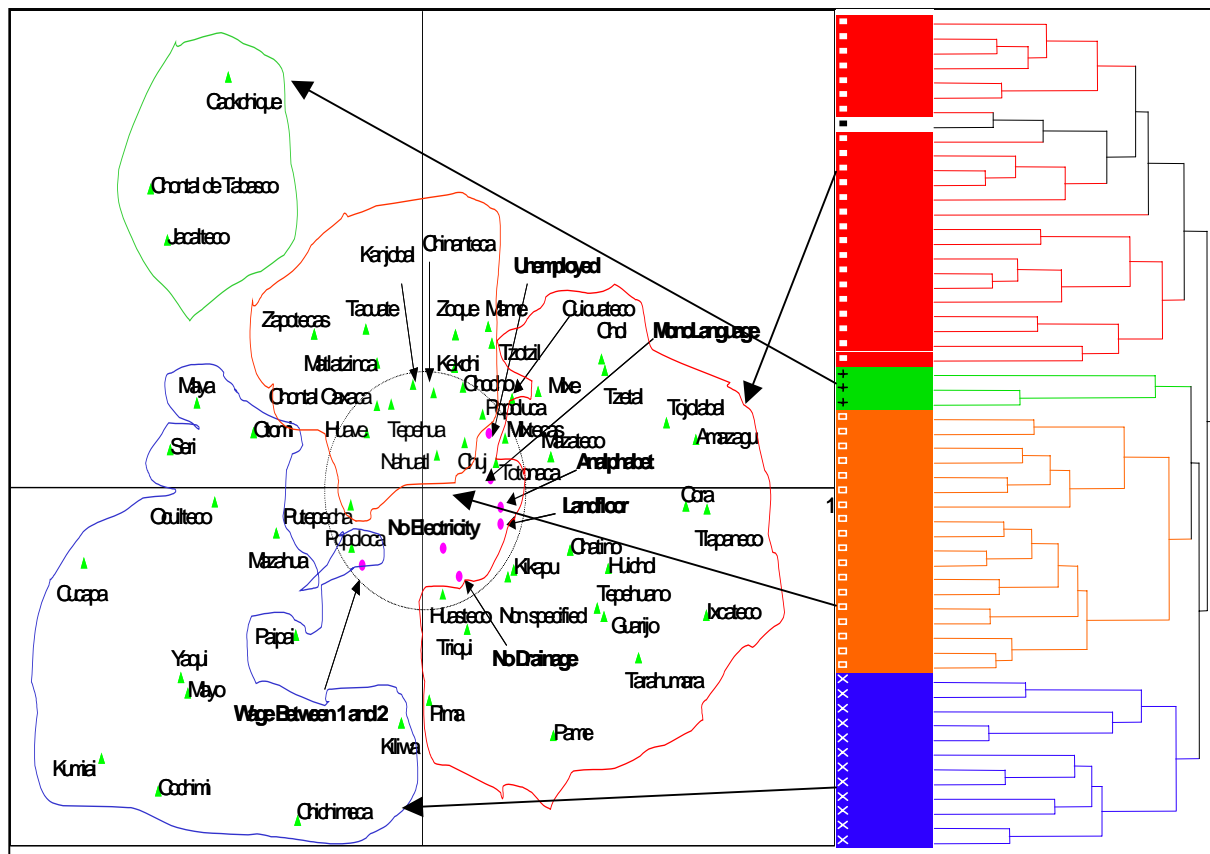


Figure 1 Principles of Multivariate Analysis (6)

On the other hand published information in the Internet site of the INEGI, relative to the census 2000 is presented in tables grouped by Entities and by the Languages of the Indigenous Peoples. In the lines of the Entities table are presented 32 entities and in the variable columns Availability of Water, Electricity, Bath with piped water, Coal Use to cook, Housing with Earth Floor. To obtain a clear description of information integrated in those tables results very difficult, by that reason it was decided to use Multivariate Analysis Methods such as the Principal Components Analysis and Cluster Analysis (Figure 1). These techniques permit among others: Detection of global patterns and to visualize data easily, emergence of clusters sharing common properties, elimination of redundant information, extraction of groups with similar traits, Description of information in space, identification of relevant variables, and comparison of groups.

To evaluate the interest of these techniques Principal Components Analysis (CPA) was applied to the study of 32 entities resulting, however, some contradictory situations. For example for the life conditions of the Indigenous Peoples living in the entities represented by these criteria Oaxaca, Chiapas, Veracruz, Puebla, Yucatan, Estado de Mexico. Something which contradicts some situations is for example that people has electrical energy and cooks with coal and have land floor? Furthermore it would seem that these entities are the most privileged, when in reality are the poorest of the country (5).



**Figure 2 Projections in the first two axis of the CPA of 57 Indigenous languages and the variables: Unemployed, Monolingual (his indigenous language), Analphabet (do not speak Spanish), Housing with Earth Floor, without electricity, neither drainage and the Salaried variable with salary between one and two minimal wages. On the right Results of the Cluster Analysis through the Ward's method (6) for 57 Indigenous languages.**

The presented information taking as statistical unit the language characterized by variables such as Unemployed, Monolingual (his indigenous language), Analphabet (of course with relation to the Spanish), Housing with Earth Floor, Without electricity, Neither drainage and the Salaried variable with salary between one and two minimal wages provides a clearest vision of the poverty state of those populations. The Principal Components Analysis applied to the previous table allows to reduce 75% of the variance in three axis. In the figure 2 are presented the first two. It is observed that approximately 30 Peoples are found in serious situations with regard to these seven variables. Twelve Indigenous Peoples earn a salary between one and two minimal wages. Comparing the results of the CPA with the results of the Cluster Analysis (right of Figure 2) four groups can be distinguished.

With the information presented in the report of the INEGI (5) it would be possible to obtain a panoramic from the technical and unilateral vision of the Mexican State on the Indigenous Populations. However that study would remain very limited since it does not have a multifaceted description background of the Indigenous People today's reality.

"In Mexico there is no a legal definition of the Indian condition, that would give a formal road to estimate the number of Indigenous people: here all are equal, though also there are Indian. The censuses register just relevant data but in no way sufficient: population of five years or more that speaks an indigenous language. The 1980 census counts a total of 5 181 038 and of



3 699 653 speak also Spanish. These figures and the corresponding of previous censuses have been frequently criticized and doubtful giving rise to make statements such as "Ethnic genocide". This substantial reduction of the real quantities is in principle due to an insufficient and defective collection of the data. It is well known well many persons that have by motherly language an indigenous language, conceal it and deny that speak it; this problem transmit us again to the colonial situation, to the forbidden identities and the proscribed languages, to the final achievement of the settling, when the colonized accepts internally the inferiority that the settler attributes to him, disowns it self and seeks to assume a different identity, the others. Besides this, in many cases, local authorities attitude "progressive", anxious of proving to any price that here, in this people, no longer there are Indian or already they are less: it is to say that indigenous people has become reason people. *However, besides to purify census figures, the problem consists that the fact of speaking an Indigenous language does not permit to conclude that all the speaking and only the speaking of the aboriginal languages constitute the total of the Indian population. It is not a problem of language, though the language play a role of great importance; they are social and cultural elements which determine the specificity of people. It is the basic to obtain agreements in the criteria to characterize an indigenous people or an indigenous group before the generation of estimates to count Indigenous People in Mexico.*" (2)

Even though it can result difficult to adopt points of view related to ethnic criteria, it should be possible to include numerous social and cultural aspects. A part of the population may be considered to constitute an ethnic group when its members share certain characteristics of ancestry and culture. For sociological purposes, which differs from census recording purposes, the members of such a group are usually thought not only to share a measure of common culture often exhibited by religion and language, but also to participate together in social institutions, to have a certain shared social organization and purposeful membership which the members, in some sense, assert. This collective institutional definition of an ethnic group is not at all represented in census recording. Here group statistics are only an aggregation of all individual responses (7).

Supporting this idea, various indigenous organizations have asserted that the criterion of the language is totally insufficient and it does not answer clearly to their reality, since there exist many members of these peoples that, though they have lost their language, continue preserving other essential characteristics to be indigenous. Before this situation, the Indigenous Peoples of Mexico proposed definition criteria that they have emerged from their own concrete contexts (1):

"Are communities, peoples and indigenous nations those which, having a historical continuity with the societies prior to the invasion and pre colonial that were developed in their territories, are considered different of other sectors of the societies that now prevail in those territories or in part of them. Constitute now not dominant sectors of the society and have the determination of preserving, developing and transmitting to future generations their territories, beliefs, ancestry and their ethnic identity as base of their continued existence as people, according to their own cultural standards, their social institutions and their legal systems".

## **Conclusions**

In spite of the little accomplished in this very short study of the Indigenous Peoples in Mexico, it can be observed that the Indian condition and the poverty are associated. The INEGI ( National Statistics Institute, Geography and Informatics) classifies as extremely poor to all those municipalities in which 90% or more than the population are indigenous. Of this

manner, more than the three fourths of the Indian population do live in about 300 municipalities classified in extreme poverty. However the poor classification is not reason to solve the indigenous problem with generic policies that more than to support the development of those communities have disastrous effects on other social and cultural aspects.

The official statistics and most of the academic work fail to make any clear distinction between census information and sociological phenomena which are quite different in meaning and outline. Official statistics published by INEGI ([www.inegi.gob.mx](http://www.inegi.gob.mx)) and by the official publications, just presents the perspective of the locality and of the language, neglecting ethnic, social and cultural information, related to shared characteristics related to ancestry and culture. It is important to clarify that sociological purposes, differ from census recording purposes and the members of such Indigenous group should usually thought not only to share a measure of common culture exhibited by religion and language, but also to participate together in social institutions, to have a certain shared social organization and purposeful membership. This collective institutional definition of an ethnic group is not at all represented in census recording. Grouped statistics published by INEGI are only an aggregation of all individual responses but that does not represent reality.

Finally the story of official figures in this fields also shows a consistent tendency to define Indigenous populations as poor and problematic, forgetting that their situation is the result of poor governmental strategies and wrong politics.

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