The Impact of Indigenous Movements in Latin America: A Work in Progress

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Motivation for Study

- Indigenous peoples only make up 5% of the world’s population, but constitute 15% of the world’s poor.
- Typically, indigenous groups have higher rates of poverty and malnutrition, less access to education and health services, less political representation and tenuous control over their land.
- In Latin America, the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous groups is increasing.
- Raising the level of equality of indigenous people could potentially result in a significant increase in the national economies of Bolivia (by 37%), Brazil (by 13%), Guatemala (by 14%) and Peru (by 5%).

Statistics courtesy of:
The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Bank (WB)
Background

- Emergence of Latin American indigenous groups over the last 20 years.

- Results are debatable: some scholars see negative trends, others have a positive outlook.
Abstract

This paper seeks to:

- Identify and sample.
- Gather and analyze data.
- Ascertain what factors are affected.
Research Focus

- How are indigenous leaders and groups portrayed in Western media? In comparison, how are non-indigenous leaders portrayed?
Research Focus

- How do the traditional socio-cultural values of indigenous people (family, community, relationship with land) translate through an indigenous leader or group in the context of a modern political structure (Western, nation-state, capitalist)?
Research Focus

• Do indigenous people fare better in countries where the percentage of indigenous individuals as a part of the whole population is higher? Do these countries have higher indigenous representation?
• When an indigenous individual is a leader of a nation, what are the ramifications for the indigenous peoples inside that nation?
Methodology

Research Methods

- Gather statistics and assemble them in simple graph or chart form.
- Analyze both recent and current Western periodical articles to ascertain media outlook on this topic.
- Study the issues facing indigenous leaders, groups and peoples from a variety of social science perspectives in order to gain a holistic view.

- Levels of poverty, including access to healthcare and education.
- Indigenous population size and location.
- Degree of participation in governing bodies, voting trends etc.

- Economics
- History
- Political Science
- Anthropology
- Sociology


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