Social Innovation and Social Policy: Empowerment of indigenous women the management of sustainable productive organizations in Vietnam and Mexico

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Abstract:

The present proposal, as an area of opportunity, addresses the empowerment of indigenous women, as a mechanism that seeks to achieve the development of management skills of sustainable productive organizations in the short, medium and / or long term, create individual commitment to develop their own potentialities and to generate an answer for their social change and human development. This in support of the strategy to combat poverty and social exclusion, through the development of productive projects, through the management of sustainable productive organizations that seek to improve the living conditions and social position of indigenous women.

The importance of the research is that it seeks to deepen the social exclusion processes present in indigenous women, in order to propose alternative solutions in order to overcome their condition of multidimensional poverty and that seek to strengthen the actions for empowerment in the development of their management capacities themselves that are elements that promote the development of sustainable productive organizations.

Keywords:
Empowerment of indigenous women, management of sustainable organizations, multidimensional poverty, social exclusion.

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1. Introduction

It is estimated that the world population is 7 billion and that its growth is likely to reach 9 billion in 2050\(^1\). In this scenario, it is foreseeable that there will be an increase in the demand for natural resources, and with a greater concern, a decrease in them, while in socioeconomic scope income inequality and a higher level of poverty multidimensional, social exclusion in the population become more evident.

From the perspective of social justice and human development, in the fight against multidimensional poverty, the condition of marginalization and the degree of social exclusion presented by the population under this condition is recognized as lacerating; but even more, the one observed in indigenous women, which is conferred, by this single fact, a higher level of severity to overcome their poverty status. In response to this social problem, the federal government in Mexico seeks to promote the empowerment of the management capacities of sustainable productive organizations managed by indigenous women through support for productive projects.

The construction of a new agenda, at an international level, aimed at defining a new economic development scheme, this has navigated through sustainability (1987)\(^2\), social exclusion (1989)\(^3\) and (2018)\(^4\), empowerment of women (1995)\(^5\), sustainable development (2002)\(^6\) and (2012)\(^7\) and multidimensional poverty (2010).\(^8\) However, this has been a task that has not yielded results, since the development of capacities that promote the administration of sustainable productive projects, in most cases, faces the cultural and historical brake, of the lack of equal opportunities in indigenous women, which makes efforts to seek the empowerment of women, and in spatial decision-making that have an economic and social implication, within their group and family structure, are minimized.

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2. In the Brundlant Report in 1987, the term sustainability is introduced, as a way of addressing the dichotomy of economic development which seeks, on the one hand, better living conditions and on the other, a negative impact on nature as a result of exploitation of goods and natural resources. See. J. W. Kuhlman and J. Farrington. (2010). What is sustainability?, Sustainability, vol. 2, pp. 3436-3448.


6. As a result of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, sustainable development is defined as a harmonious combination between the social, economic and environmental, this being an objective to be carried out by the countries participating in the meeting. See. M. Li (2012). National Institutions for Sustainable Development: A preliminary review of the institution literature. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.


Overall, when seeking to overcome the condition of multidimensional poverty and social exclusion that occurs in indigenous women, one of the alternative solutions is the development of productive capacities and the consolidation of a business scheme that allows its sustainability productive, that is, to generate business management capacity in a group that does not have the experience, technical knowledge and from which, it is necessary to strengthen their capacities to achieve their empowerment in order to achieve the management of sustainable productive organizations.

2. Indigenous women: Comparison Vietnam - Mexico

Recent studies indicate that various groups, such as the indigenous population, have been subject to social exclusion, a situation that aggravates their situation of multidimensional poverty (Medel, 2016), thus hindering their social incorporation to access the formal labor market, to health, education and housing services. In this sense, (Tetreault, 2012; Rionda, 2010; Barba, 2009; Del Popolo et al., 2009; World Bank, 2004; Uquillas et al., 2003; Appasamy et al., 1996) point out that the indigenous population is subject to social exclusion due to factors such as: i) their ethnic status, ii) their gender status and iii) their status as multidimensional poverty.

In this way, how to identify the population that suffers the condition of social exclusion? What degree of social exclusion suffers and how can this condition establish a priority in eligibility as a target population beneficiary in a social program?

2.1 A look at the indigenous presence in Vietnam

Vietnam is a multi-ethnic country with 54 recognized groups. Of these, 53 are considered as minority ethnic groups, and together bring together about 13 to 14 million people, that is, about 14.6% of the country's 95 million inhabitants in 2018. It is important to note that the national poverty rate is 7% and the poverty rate registered in ethnic minorities was 23.1% in 2015.9

Most social transfers (excluding pensions) go to the bottom 4% of the population: who are clearly net beneficiaries of fiscal policy once government spending on social services is considered, while the richest 20 percent are net taxpayers.10 With a Gini index of 35.311, Vietnam has grown without a significant increase in inequality. Fiscal policy in favor of the poor is estimated to have reduced inequality by more than 3 points.

2.2 A look at the indigenous presence in Mexico

In Mexico there are 72 indigenous peoples, the percentage of the population of 5 years and more speaking in the indigenous language in 2015 represented about 6.6 percent of the total population, representing approximately 7.3 million people in the country. Indigenous peoples often face structural discrimination compared to the non-indigenous population and face high rates of multidimensional poverty12, social exclusion13, low access to health services, chronic malnutrition, high infant mortality rates, high illiteracy rates and limited opportunities of participation and political representation.

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The official multidimensional poverty rate that combines income poverty with six indicators of social deprivation shows only a slight decrease between 2010 and 2016; where 46.1% of the population was classified as multidimensionally poor in 2010 compared to 43.6% in 2016. Moderate improvements in poverty reduction seem to be due to insufficient growth and redistribution. There are large differences between the industrialized north and the less developed south, with limited convergence between them. In 2016, 68% of the extremely poor lived in only six of the thirty-two states of Mexico, even though the Human Development Index is 0.61.14

Rural areas suffer a vicious cycle of low productivity, low investments in physical and human capital, and high poverty rates, particularly in the south of the country. In addition, although it has declined slightly since 2008, income inequality remains high. Between 2010 and 2014, the annualized income growth of the 40% lower income distribution grew only 0.51 percent, compared to 0.7 growth for the entire population. In response to this social problem, the federal government in Mexico seeks to promote empowerment in the management capacities of sustainable productive organizations run by indigenous women through support for productive projects.

2.3 Sustainable Development Strategy: Vietnam and Mexico REDD +

As part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the 17 global objectives are geared towards economic development efforts. Through the mechanism of emission reduction due to deforestation and forest degradation (REDD +), it is aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 13 and 15, that is, climate change, the reduction of deforestation and the sustainable use of ecosystems, with the determination to reduce poverty, health and well-being, decrease hunger, and strengthen institutions.

From figure 1 the part of the Community Organization and sustainable agriculture and productive reconversion is important to note that indigenous women who manage to be incorporated into productive programs lack the necessary experience and training in management, production and marketing for the management of sustainable productive organizations, which is why this research proposal addresses, as an area of opportunity, regarding the orientation of the approach in social development programs proposing the empowerment of indigenous women in the short, medium and long term, as a proposal in the fight against multidimensional poverty and social exclusion, which in today is still deficient for the achievement of improvements in living and social condition.

2.3.1 The participation of indigenous women (ethnic minorities) in Vietnam: REDD+

In accordance with the provisions of the On Approval of the National Action Program on Reduction of Green-house Gas Emissions through Efforts to Reduce Deforestation and Forest Degradation, Sustainable Management of Forest Resources, and Conservation and Enhancement of Forest Carbon Stocks, 2011 – 2020\(^\text{15}\), the government of Vietnam, in the part corresponding to the Committee of Ethnic Minorities, indicates that it is responsible for participating in communication and promotion, awareness and capacity campaigns, with the purpose of building, encouraging ethnic minorities to actively participate in the operations to reduce emissions due to deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+), and contribute to the implementation of the National REDD+ Program of Action and national programs and projects.

2.3.2 The participation of indigenous women (ethnic minorities) in Mexico: REDD+

In Mexico the REDD+ program\(^\text{16}\) recognizes that through the implementation of a comprehensive model, for the conservation of forests, it is possible to cope with the phenomenon of climate change, and also guarantees the maintenance of the quality of life of communities, particularly in indigenous communities, which includes promoting the provision of environmental services and food production, thereby seeking to reach a standard of living in its population.

3. Empowerment of indigenous women vs multidimensional poverty

In accordance with No. 17 of the Resolution adopted by the General Assembly of United Nations\(^\text{17}\), is established the commitment to support the empowerment of indigenous women, as well as to formulate and implement, in collaboration with indigenous peoples, individual indigenous women and their organizations, policies and programs designed to promote capacity development and strengthen their leadership, with the purpose of removing barriers to their participation in political, economic, social and cultural life.

3.1 Vietnam’s successful experience in the multidimensional poverty reduction

The national poverty rate is the percentage of the population that lives below the national poverty lines. National estimates are based on estimates of subgroups weighted by the population of household surveys. Table 1 presents, for the selected years, the information of Vietnam and Mexico, as can be seen, the% of population living below the poverty line, the efforts made in Vietnam are significantly more effective than those observed in Mexico.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Año</th>
<th>Vietnam</th>
<th>México</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>43.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: World Bank, Global Poverty Working Group. Data are compiled from official government sources or are computed by World Bank.

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From Table 1 it is observed that the strategy adopted by the Government of Vietnam has managed to reduce the level of poverty significantly, while the result of the application of the Mexico strategy shows results with reduced effectiveness. A better approach to the study of poverty is the multidimensional perspective through multidimensional poverty index (MPI) of (Alkire-Foster, 2017) recognizes three dimensions and 10 indicators for the study of multidimensional poverty. Figure 2 shows the structure of the MPI, which allows it to be used globally to perform cross-country analysis.

**Figure 2**  
Structure of the Global MPI

In Figure 3 below, the Contribution of the indicator to the general poverty by area (National, Urban and Rural) diagram is shown for Vietnam and Mexico where it is observed that one of the main problems that include the conformation of the Index of Multidimensional poverty in Mexico is Food, while in Vietnam, this indicator does not represent a problem every time as part of the Vietnam Government's strategy, it has devoted its attention to the agricultural sector and especially to food production.

**Figure 3**  
Indicator Contribution to Overall Poverty by Area

According to ActionAid International Oxfam Great Britain, Vietnam has brought the principles of socialist policy to action, thereby achieving the fulfillment of several of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

### 3.2 Vietnam’s successful experience in the empowerment of women

In Vietnam, progress has been made in the design of public policy that weighs gender equality, the economy, culture and social welfare, especially in vulnerable groups such as the poor, the disabled and ethnic groups. In particular, the actions taken by Vietnam in favor of the empowerment of women and their link with the development of the environment, from the perspective of sustainability, is evident in the event called “Women and future of the green

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19 Friedman (1992) points out that empowerment "...is a process related to the access and control of three types of powers: a) social, understood as access to the base of productive wealth; b) the politician, or access of individuals to the decision-making process, especially those that affect their own future; and c) the psychological one, understood in the sense of potentiality and individual capacity. " See. Friedman, J. (1992), Empowerment. The Politics of Alternative Development, Blackwell Ed., Massachusetts.
economy” in Hanoi City on June 24, 2019, the coordination of the Women's Union of Vietnam, and the Center for Innovation against Climate Change and the Ministry of Science and Technology, where they met received proposals for development policy in favor of the green economy and the empowerment of women.

Figure 1
Gender Equity Index (GEI)

Figure 1 shows the Gender Equality Index (GEI), for Vietnam and Mexico. The GEI represents a necessary condition in the economic and social development of women, since it allows to identify the degree of social participation in the construction of the future, independent and familiar, in the search for better living conditions. It is observed that the GEI of Vietnam is 74, a figure that represents the weighting of the factors: Education with 97, Economic activity with 81 and Empowerment with 44. For its part, the GEI of Mexico is significantly lower with a value of 61, because the weighting factors are: Education with 99, Economic activity with 44 and Empowerment with 39.

3. Outlook and future development: REDD+ Vietnam - Mexico

In its first phase, it seeks to identify current case studies and analyze proposals for the potentialization of areas of opportunity in areas identified with social exclusion and multidimensional poverty, in terms of self-supply projects, start of productive activity or strengthening of productive activity sustainable, compatible with the national REDD+ strategy, Vietnam and Mexico. That is, in this first phase, the areas of opportunity are identified: Who are they? Where are they? and What is the distributive impact of social spending on federal budget programs that target them?

To respond to this, it is proposed to use the estimation of the Empowerment Incidence Index (IIEmp) based on the Alkire - Foster methodology, with this, it is sought to estimate the degree of Empowerment incidence in locations with Indigenous women in a situation of multidimensional poverty and degree of social exclusion.

And in the second phase, it seeks to contribute to the orientation of the public policy of social development expenditure, in Vietnam and Mexico, identifying scope and results, in order to achieve efficient use of federal and state public resources, in order to contribute to transparency and accountability, a situation described in the following general and specific objectives.

Main goal

To assess whether the REDD + Program related to the Organization of Communities and Sustainable Agriculture and Productive Reconversion promotes actions to achieve the empowerment of the management of sustainable productive organizations in indigenous women in situations of multidimensional poverty and social exclusion in Mexico (women indigenous people of Veracruz) and in Vietnam (women of the Hmong and Dzao ethnic minority).

Specific objectives

1. Determine the degree of social exclusion, multidimensional poverty and incidence rate of empowerment of indigenous women in Mexico (indigenous women of Veracruz) and Vietnam (women of the Hmong and Dzao ethnic minority).
2. Description of current case studies and the proposal of potentialization of areas of opportunity in areas identified with social exclusion and multidimensional poverty, in terms of self-supply projects, start of productive activity or strengthening of productive activity.
3. Contribute to the orientation of the public policy of social development expenditure, identifying scope and results, in order to achieve efficient use of federal and state public resources, in order to contribute to transparency and accountability.
4. Strengthen the exchange of information, databases and methodological construction with national and international social research institutions, for the development of the research line: Management of sustainable productive organizations and empowerment of indigenous women for Mexico and Vietnam.

Objective 1, follows:

Activity 1.1
Methodological design for estimating the index of social exclusion, multidimensional poverty and index of empowerment of indigenous women.

Activity 1.2
Methodological design for estimating the index of social exclusion, multidimensional poverty and index of empowerment of indigenous women.

Objective 2 follows:

Activity 2.1
Analysis and Evaluation of the degree of distributional impact of social spending in the national REDD+ programs, and in particular into the productive programs of Community Organization and Sustainable Agriculture and Productive Reconversion.

Objective 3, follows:

Activity 3.1
Identification of areas of opportunity, in areas with multidimensional poverty, social exclusion, with the presence of indigenous women, through the coordination of exploratory work with academic groups: Sustainable management of horticultural resources and Technologies alternatives for sustainable agriculture of the Universidad Veracruzana.

In order to identify current case studies and analyze proposals for the potentialization of areas of opportunity in areas identified with social exclusion and multidimensional poverty, in terms of self-supply projects, start of productive activity or strengthening of sustainable productive activity. And to contribute to the orientation of the public policy of social development
spending, identifying scope and results, in order to achieve efficient use of federal and state public resources, in order to contribute to transparency and accountability.

4. Summary and conclusion

Indigenous women who manage to be incorporated into national REDD+ programs, and in particular into the productive programs of Community Organization and Sustainable Agriculture and Productive Reconversion, generally lack the necessary experience and training in management, production and marketing for a management of sustainable productive organizations, so, in the case of Mexico (State of Veracruz), exploratory work will be coordinated with the academic bodies: Sustainable management of fruit and vegetable resources and Alternative technologies for sustainable agriculture at the Universidad Veracruzana, and it seeks to identify areas of opportunity for the development of sustainable agricultural activities, for the empowerment of indigenous women, seeks to achieve the development of management capacities of sustainable productive organizations in the short, medium and / or long term, create individual commitment pair to develop their own potential and to generate a response to their social change, in terms of self-supply projects, starting productive activity or strengthening sustainable productive activity.

References

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