

THE INDIGENOUS IDENTITY INTERPRETED AS A CATEGORY OF ANALYSIS IN POPULATION STUDIES

LA IDENTIDAD INDÍGENA INTERPRETADA COMO UNA CATEGORÍA DE ANÁLISIS EN LOS ESTUDIOS DE POBLACIÓN

A IDENTIDADE INDÍGENA INTERPRETA COMO CATEGORIA DE ANÁLISE EM ESTUDOS DE POPULAÇÃO

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ABSTRACT

In Latin America, based on the recognition of Indigenous Peoples, the identification of gaps or disparities between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous population has emerged as a new research interest. To this end, capturing Indigenous identity is key to conducting certain analyses. However, the social contexts where the identity of Indigenous persons are (re)produced has been significantly altered. These changes are generated by the assimilation or integration of Indigenous communities into dominant national cultures. Within this context, limitations emerge in the use of this category, since Indigenous identity has a political and legal component related to the needs of the government. Therefore, critical thought on the use of Indigenous identity is necessary in an epistemological and methodological approach to research.

This article argues that research about Indigenous Peoples should evaluate how Indigenous identity is included, for it is socially co-produced through the interaction of the State and its institutions. Thus, it would not necessarily constitute an explicative variable. By analyzing the discourse about Aymara Indigenous communities that has emerged in the northern border of Chile, this paper seeks to expose the logic used to define identity. Therefore, I conclude that the process of self-identification arises in supposed Indigenous people, built and/or reinforced by institutions, which should be reviewed from a decolonizing perspective and included in comparative research.

Keywords: Indigenous, Identity, Census.

RESUMEN

En Latinoamérica, a partir del reconocimiento de los Pueblos Indígenas, la identificación de brechas o disparidades entre la población Indígena y no Indígena ha emergido como un interés investigativo. Con este fin, capturar la identidad Indígena es clave para conducir algunos análisis. Sin embargo, los contextos

sociales donde se (re)produce la identidad de las personas Indígenas han sido alterados significativamente. Dichos cambios son producidos por la asimilación o integración de las comunidades Indígenas a las culturas nacionales dominantes. En este contexto emergen limitaciones en el uso de esta categoría, puesto que la identidad Indígena tendría un componente político y legal relacionado con las necesidades de los gobiernos. Por lo tanto, una reflexión crítica sobre el uso de la identidad Indígena es necesaria en los enfoques epistemológicos y metodológicos de investigación.

Este artículo argumenta que la investigación sobre pueblos Indígenas debería evaluar el cómo es incluida la identidad Indígena, porque ésta es socialmente co-producida en la interacción con el Estado y sus instituciones. De esta forma, ella no necesariamente podría constituir una variable explicativa. A través del análisis de discursos acerca de personas y comunidades Indígenas Aymaras que han emergido en la frontera norte de Chile busco exponer las lógicas empleadas para definir la identidad. Se concluye, entonces, que paulatinamente el proceso de auto-identificación emerge en supuestos Indígenas constituidos y/o reforzados por las instituciones, los cuales deberían ser revisados desde un enfoque descolonizado para ser incluidas en investigaciones comparativas.

Palabras clave: Indígenas, Identidad, Censo.

RESUMO

Na América Latina, a partir do reconhecimento dos Povos Indígenas, a identificação de lacunas ou disparidades entre a população indígena e não-indígena surgiu como interesse de pesquisa. Com essa finalidade, resgatar a identidade indígena é chave para conduzir algumas análises. No entanto, os contextos sociais onde a identidade das pessoas indígenas se (re) produz foram alterados significativamente. Essas mudanças

são produzidas pela assimilação ou integração das comunidades indígenas às culturas nacionais dominantes. Nesse contexto, surgem limitações no uso dessa categoria, uma vez que a identidade indígena teria um componente político e legal relacionado com as necessidades dos governos. Portanto, uma reflexão crítica sobre o uso da identidade indígena é necessária nos enfoques epistemológicos e metodológicos de pesquisa. Este artigo argumenta que a pesquisa sobre os povos indígenas deveria avaliar como é feita a inclusão da identidade indígena, que é socialmente coproduzida na interação com o Estado e suas instituições. Desse modo, ela não necessariamente poderia constituir uma variável explicativa. Através da análise do discurso sobre pessoas e comunidades indígenas Aymara que surgiu na fronteira norte do Chile busco expor as lógicas utilizadas para definir a identidade. Conclui-se, então, que paulatinamente o processo de auto-identificação emerge em supostos indígenas constituídos e/ou reforçados pelas instituições, os quais deveriam ser revisados a partir de um enfoque descolonizado para incluí-los em pesquisas comparativas.

Palavras-chave: Indígenas, Identidade, Censo.

INTRODUCTION

This article explores aspects of identity as a category of analysis in comparative studies of Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations. Using discourse analysis, the social and institutional changes in the conception of Indigenous identity are emphasized to subsequently discuss their methodological use in comparative studies. In particular, in discursive terms, identity is co-produced by the Indigenous Peoples and the State institutions. The latter fulfill an important role in defining the attributes of these identities in countries that offer legal recognition to their Indigenous Peoples. To exemplify this process, specific discourses about Indigenous Peoples and organizations in northern Chile, specifically in the Arica and Parinacota region, were selected. This region is located on the Chilean border with Peru and Bolivia, which provides other particularities that must be considered in this case. The evidence is based on documents issued by Indigenous authorities and organizations.

Discourse analysis is an interpretive and explanatory methodology that takes quotes in a specific historical and ideological context to describe the connection between the language and the relationships of power (1). This research method seeks to analyze people's narrative concerning one or a multitude of realities (2). In this case, official speeches relating to indigeneity have been fundamental in the construction of the individual and collective identity of the Indigenous people of a territory. In particular, as will be further explained below, this occurs with the legal recognition of Indigenous Peoples and the establishment of an institutional structure of protection and development based on Indigenous identity. Thus, identities are discursively constructed in accordance with the interpretation of memories and experiences (3). As time passes, people constantly renew their identity in diverse contexts through the act of narration. Language is therefore fundamental to building identities and to politically establish particular actions. Hansen

states that identity is political, social and relational. Hence, to analyze Indigenous identity, in this case the Aymara, it is necessary to understand the discourses that have emerged in the interaction of governmental authorities (4).

CONTEXTUALIZATION

Since countries recognized Indigenous Peoples in their respective legislation, researchers, professionals and politicians have been preoccupied not only in quantifying and characterizing the Indigenous population, but also determining gaps in relation to the non-Indigenous population. Governments have taken on the responsibility of monitoring and closing these divergences, specifically those related to health, education and employment. For example, each year the Prime Minister of Australia is responsible for issuing a report to Parliament describing the closing of gaps between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations and non-Indigenous populations. For governments, the generation of statistics that allow making the reality of the Indigenous population and the impact of public policy in the closing of gaps more objective is fundamental. The criteria, methodology and results obtained by official institutions serve, in many cases, as reference for researchers in their comparative studies.

"Who is Indigenous?" is a recurrent question that governments face given the heterogeneity of Indigenous Peoples at different territorial and administrative levels. In particular, authorities have used different criteria to count the Indigenous population, such as self-identification, ancestry, customs, membership, physical characteristics, among others (5). The United Nations and the International Labour Organization have recommended using self-identification as the main criteria (6). Under this criteria, people and communities determine their own identity, which is built in relation to the perspective of "others" and considering territorial and socioeconomic categories (7). Although this process cannot reveal multiple identities, several countries respect the right of self-identification for all those who recognize themselves as part of an Indigenous Peoples. Be it this criteria or another, Axelsson and Sköld warn that governments use a colonial perspective to interpret Indigenous identity based on a single criteria (8). Thus, self-identification indirectly promotes the disconnection of Indigenous persons from their territories and ancestral languages, for these are not requirements to obtain Indigenous recognition. Under this condition, people could declare being Indigenous only to gain access to government schemes of social security without considering the needs of Indigenous Peoples to which they claim to belong to. Whilst self-identification is an accepted criteria to quantify Indigenous population, governments define other criteria to establish identity from which they can interact with institutions.

In Latin American countries, the (voluntary or forced) assimilation process has contributed to reshaping various characteristics considered as traditions of Indigenous identity. The countries, intentionally or not, have established mechanisms of assimilation aimed to integrating Indigenous individuals into their national cultures. Consequently, descendants of the first

integrated Indigenous population could develop an identity that differs from their parents or grandparents. However, assimilation involves the political socialization of national principles and values through which government is accepted or refuted. Corntass el states that the demand for special rights results in the politicization of Indigenous identity (9). Within this historical, political and social context, governments as well as researchers require a better understanding of the processes that explain the identity of Indigenous persons (8). To go further into this complexity, this article presents Chile's experience with existing Indigenous communities in the country's northern border.

The Arica and Parinacota region located in the north was under Peruvian sovereignty until the War of the Pacific that occurred between 1879 and 1883. As a result of this conflict, Chile occupied the Peruvian provinces of Tacna and Arica, which unlike other annexed territories did not have any saltpeter deposits. According to the Treaty of Ancón in 1883, after 10 years of occupation, people in these provinces could decide if they wanted to belong to Chile or Peru. Due to these conditions, Chile implemented an assimilation process known as Chilenization, which targeted the rural population of the region that is recognized as Indigenous today (10). At the time, authorities perceived that people living in villages in the Altiplano (Andean highlands) of the occupied provinces were in favor of Peruvian citizenship. However, as an alternative to the referendum and after many years of negotiations, both parts agreed in the Treaty of Lima in 1929 that the province of Arica would remain in Chile and the province of Tacna would return to Peru.

Given the absence of policies to improve living conditions in the Altiplano, a spatial inequality between Arica and the villages in the Altiplano appeared, motivating the rural-urban migration of Indigenous families (11). The urban and economic development of Arica also attracted Indigenous people from other countries, particularly from Bolivia (12). During these social processes, Indigenous identity was not present in public policy. Governments did not pass any special laws for Indigenous people and communities in general, as occurred with some Mapuche communities (7). This situation changed when the government recognized the preexistence of Indigenous Peoples in their territory.

The first democratic government, after the military dictatorship (1973-1990), created an institutional scheme to protect and foster the development of Indigenous Peoples based on the recognition of their identity. In 1989, Patricio Aylwin, the presidential candidate of a center-left coalition, agreed to the support from Indigenous organizations in the presidential elections in exchange for the creation of a special law for them. This pact was known as the "Acuerdo de Nueva Imperial," which was signed days before the election and translated into the Ley Indígena (or Indigenous Law) No. 19,253 in October 1993. However, although indigenous leaders had agreed with the government to complete recognition as is recommended by international organizations, parliament defined Indigenous Peoples as Indigenous ethnic groups aiming to reduce their political status (13). In spite of this limitation, Indigenous persons and their organizations began to interact with State institutions through their identity.

Like other countries, Chile adopted self-identification as main criteria (14). One of the first instruments to incorporate Indigenous identity as a category was the national census in 1992. Since then, the census form has included a question so that people can identify as members of recognized Indigenous Peoples (see Table 1). Nevertheless, the method has changed in line with the government's interests (14). For example, the 1992 census presented two limitations: first, it made reference to the concept of "Indigenous culture" without considering the notion of Indigenous Peoples, and second, the question could only be answered by persons over 14 years of age of Chilean nationality. It is important to acknowledge that in Chile there were people born in other countries who identified with Indigenous Peoples recognized by national legislation.

In Chile, the 2002 census is the source of the most recent information about the Indigenous Peoples. In terms of the 2012 census carried out during Sebastián Piñera's administration, two committees, a national and another international, questioned its methodology and results (15, 16). Therefore, the government excluded this census in defining public policy, and its results were considered as non-official statistics. According to the 2002 census, the national Indigenous population was of 692,192, of which 29,484 live in the Arica and Parinacota region. This represents 4.3% of the total Indigenous population. The Aymara Peoples' national population totaled 48,501.

Table 1: Questions in Chilean censuses to count the Indigenous population

| Census | Question |
|--------|--|
| 1992 | If you are Chilean, do you consider yourself as belonging to any of the following cultures? Mapuche, Aymara, Rapa Nui, or none of the above. |
| 2002 | Do you belong to any of the following native or Indigenous Peoples? Alacalufe (Kawashkar), Atacameño, Aimara, Colla, Mapuche, Quechua, Rapa Nui, Yámana (Yagán), or none of the above. |
| 2012 | Do you consider yourself as belonging to any native or Indigenous Peoples? Yes or No [Yes] To which one? Mapuche, Aymara, Rapa Nui, Likán Antai, Quechua, Colla, Diaguita, Kawésqar, Yagán or Yámana or other (Specify) |

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, 1992, 2002 and 2012 census.

Of them 25,730 are located in the Arica and Parinacota region (53.1% of the national Aymara population), of which 23,288 live in the city of Arica (90.5% of the national Aymara population). The Aymara Peoples' case is particular given the rise in its population in recent years, in contrast to the scarce population that existed before the 1992 census. So, although the self-identification criteria was not included in censuses prior to 1992, the Indigenous population can be estimated through a territorial criteria. In the Arica and Parinacota region, the population in areas recognized as Indigenous by the State did not exceed 7,274 between the 1930 and 1989 censuses. Based on this information, it cannot be said that the entire population self-identified as Indigenous, but rather that it represents a maximum. The difference between this figure and the population that has identified as Aymara in recent years suggests that the increment in local Aymara population cannot be explained through demographic factors. Hence, it is likely that the interaction between descendants of national and international Indigenous families, as well as the mechanisms of identification could have influenced the creation processes of Aymara identity at a local level.

The census has allowed to count and find the Indigenous persons in the country. However, the government has implemented two mechanisms to identify Indigenous population in Chile. First, to improve the social and economic characterization of the Indigenous population, the Indigenous category was included in the National Socioeconomic Characterization (CASEN) Survey as well as in the census. This survey, in particular, evaluates since 1985, every 3 and 4 years, the impact of social programs, particularly the sources and levels of income. The CASEN survey includes a question to identify indigenous populations since 1996 that was modified in 2006. Since that year, the question considers belonging to an Indigenous Peoples and the recognition of Indigenous ancestry as criteria.

Second, the estate defined a mechanisms of identification based on a list of surnames linked to each Indigenous Peoples to categorize the population. All persons that possess or any of its ancestors, up to three past generations, that have had at least one Indigenous surname have the option to identify as Indigenous presenting as argument their cultural features associated to an Indigenous Peoples. The State, through the National Corporation of Indigenous Development (CONADI) issues certificates that authenticate the Indigenous identity of those who fulfill these requirements. The certificate is required for other processes such as the creation of Indigenous organizations, the access to social benefits, application to publicly-funded projects, voting in Indigenous elections, among others.

In summary, the recognition of Indigenous Peoples generated not only one, but three mechanisms of identification based on different or partially similar criteria (17). Hence, even if in the analyses Indigenous Peoples look like a homogeneous population based on their identity, there are particularities not only within each Peoples, but also within Indigenous communities. As will be detailed in the following analysis, the identity of the Aymara Peoples in northern Chile has been co-produced through the interaction with government institutions.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

To illustrate how Indigenous identity has changed and/or has been negotiated, four speeches were selected that correspond to particular moments in local history and emerge from the interaction between Indigenous persons and authorities. Thus, we provide evidence for the two already mentioned periods and the social and institutional constructions of identity.

During the first period, without legal recognition, the central government did not make distinctions in its public policy in relation to the Indigenous identity of its population. Nevertheless, in the Arica and Parinacota region at the end of the 1950s, the central government created, exceptionally, an autonomous institution that took on, among other responsibilities, the development of communities located in the villages in the Altiplano. This institution was known as the Junta de Adelanto de Arica (JAA). It was the first local authority to interact with Indigenous people, within a context of needed development, initially with the support of the United Nations through a technical assistance program known as the Andean Plan and later in an independent manner. This institution acquires relevance particularly after the military coup in 1973, for the authority gave greater importance to border and national security. Thus, the military dictatorship established an organ within the JAA called the Committee of Interior Development (CDI) to reassert territorial sovereignty. To implement a plan, the CDI elaborated a report on the people that lived in the Altiplano. Although the JAA had worked with the Indigenous communities since the 1960s, no official description of the Indigenous population can be found in its documents until the CDI begins to operate. In one of its documents, the CDI characterizes the population of the Altiplano in the following way:

"The human element of our region (the rural area of Arica) is characterized by a group structure of a rather primitive nature, with certain individualism in its action (little communal spirit), a certain degree of disenchantment that makes it be passive and a certain slowness in its reaction motivated by the years of isolation and in a frequently aggressive environment. A certain developed migratory spirit can be added as an important or remarkable characteristic, natural in the face of the attractions of the city. Its culture is based on values of a profoundly rural type (folk) that obviously does not coincide with the vitality and the demands of urban groups, which on the other hand has kept them somewhat foreign to technological advances of the time" (18).

Outline for a program of Inland [Highland] Development of the Department of Technical Management, Division of Studies and Development, JAA, March 1974

The economic development driven by the JAA created a gap between the rural and urban sphere. On this border, as the quote indicates, the authority perceives a different attitude in the population of the villages in the Altiplano. From that perspective, these people would lack a collective activity among themselves and in relation to the environment, contrary to what is thought today. Ignorance of the communities' cultural and organizational practices was probably due to the Altiplano's inaccessibility and unfamiliarity. Authorities perceived that individuals in the Altiplano were not prepared for life in the city. However, they saw the need to migrate as something positive. At the time, Indigenous people viewed rural-urban migration as a viable alternative to improve their living conditions. In the city, Indigenous people without a legally recognized identity faced difficulties given the cultural differences between the city and the villages in the Altiplano. During those years, Indigenous identity could have been a category that would have allowed to differentiate the living conditions of people in the region and generate specific information about them. Likewise, identity was only social and fostered through family.

The situation changes from 1993 onward, the recognition of identity led to Indigenous persons being named public authorities and professionals in CONADI's local office. From within these roles, they promoted in the villages in the Altiplano the affiliation to an Indigenous identity and the creation of organizations according to the law. During the Ricardo Lagos administration (2000-2006), the decision was made to prepare a document that would compile the history and current situation of the Indigenous Peoples throughout Chile. In 2001, a committee was created in charge of preparing the document, which required the participation of Aymaras. The opportunities in which Aymaras could present before the committee were diverse during the entire process. On one occasion, as was recorded in the minutes, they had to explain how their identity was related to their nationality, this was due to concerns about the cultural practices associated to the neighboring countries of Bolivia and Peru. Thus, one of the representatives of the Aymara Peoples presented before the committee:

"In the first place, [...] from an Aymara point of view, from the point of view of identity, [...], we respect nationalities from the perspective of the country we belong to. Therefore there are Chilean Aymaras; Bolivian Aymaras; Argentinian Aymaras; Peruvian Aymaras; and just maybe we must have North American Aymaras, from a legal viewpoint, so there is no problem. But if you call me Chilean or not, I say yes, I am Chilean and here is my ID card [and] military service and I can show you. So, I am Chilean from that point of view, and administratively I am obviously Chilean, and I live in this country, and I participate politically in this country, and I have aspirations, lets say, within the entire national structure, and I assert my rights in this sense also" (19).

Aymara leader before the Historical Truth and New Deal Committee, 2001 on the problems of the communities

Although the Aymara people experienced a process of acculturation since they were incorporated to Chile, authorities seem to doubt their integration into national society. The Aymara culture is transnational because anthropological and linguistic studies locate it across the Andes in Bolivia, Peru, Chile and Argentina (in order of the size of their population). In this context, the representative in that meeting emphasizes that the Aymaras are Chilean, not only because they possess a document that says so, but because they fulfill all of their civic duties. The obligatory military service, in particular, makes reference to being able to be a part of the armed forces, in other words, protect Chilean interests. Thus, it was not necessary for the law to mention that Indigenous identities are subordinated to the national identity. In this case, the Indigenous people themselves have positioned their identity at that level. As a consequence, Indigenous identity can only be understood within the State that recognizes it. Hence, even if it is understood that Aymara identity is transnational, effectively, there are significant differences in their conception, which can also occur in other countries.

Understanding the importance of the institutional structure for Indigenous people allows clarifying the emergence of other attributes associated with the identity. One of them is the gender variable. While the majority of leaders of Aymara organizations were men, the representation of Indigenous women in political roles was particularly low. That situation changed due to the incorporation of gender equity in public policy. Although Michelle Bachelet's administration promoted equal participation of men and women in government, it was President Sebastián Piñera who for the first time appointed a woman as director of CONADI's regional office in the Arica and Parinacota region. After a few months in this position, some Indigenous representatives had a conflict with the regional director regarding the assignment of resources. In solidarity, one of the associations of Indigenous women that existed at the time issued a public statement addressed to her explaining the progress made during her administration. A part of the statement mentioned:

"We would like to highlight and value that under your direction spaces have opened where the Indigenous people of the area can be a part of and work in what concerns our activities of participation, for we were not heard before, nor convened to collaborate in issues that concern us. However, currently certain spaces have been generated for economic, political and social training [courses], as well as the participation in the preparation of the International Congress of the Indigenous Woman. We also value the willingness to hear our requirements, it is such that for the first time in this administration the creation of the Unit of the Indigenous Woman materializes, a space that had been demanded for a very

long time by the Indigenous women of the region" (20).

Coordinator of Women of Native Peoples Arica and Parinacota supporting the director of CONADI, 2011

In the city, Indigenous identity represents an opening not only to access social benefits but also to participate in political spaces. Political identity is a source of legitimization that was not accessible to Indigenous women. As a social group, they have joined Indigenous society from a political perspective. Gender roles in Indigenous communities are submitted to extensive changes, which mean new ways of identification and also of interaction with the government. The political value of the Indigenous identity can be observed in the action of issuing a public statement. Likewise, we observe that the changes in the institutional structure and also the social, political and economic integration of Indigenous women have led to resignifying Indigenous identity at a local level. In addition, once the gender equity policy began, different organizations appeared at a local level under the Indigenous Law, composed solely of Indigenous women. However, it is worth noting that this is how organizations are recreated in the city, establishing a distance to the Altiplano's reality.

Finally, local government adopts Indigenous identity creating a discourse about the contemporary culture of the Aymara Peoples. Authorities incorporate identity, practices and speeches associated to the Aymara Peoples in official activities. For example, in the inauguration of public infrastructure, a *yatiri*, who is an Aymara and among other functions fulfills the role of spiritual guide, conducts an ancestral ceremony called *pawa*. The *yatiri* asks the *pachamama* (known as mother earth) for permission and success. Thus, institutions strategically use Indigenous identity to socialize regional politics. In 2016, to promote a Christmas activity financed by local government, authorities created a narrative for news and social media about an Aymara boy and his experience on Christmas. The following is a fragment of that text:

"José Mamani, an Aymara boy and hiistmas in the city of Arica

José Mamani lives in the village called Guallatire, in Putre County. José enjoys watching his favorite cartoon, Peppa Pig. It is already December, and after finishing his school year, his family decides to spend Christmas in Arica, traveling from Guallatire to the city in his father's truck. Tired from the trip, the boy falls asleep and begins to dream of this favorite pig. In his dreams, José tells Peppa Pig that in November of this year, with his father and other people, they helped rescue a whale that was stranded on the beach [called] Arenillas Negras in Arica, pushing her out to sea. He also explains to her that he will spend Christmas in a great festivity with his cousins at the foot of the Morro [hill]" (21).

Local government has developed their own version of contemporary life of the Indigenous population. Two characteristics are emphasized: the connection between the villages in the Altiplano and Arica, and Indigenous surnames. However, the narrative distances itself from the reality of the village of Guallatire, for it is currently practically abandoned. There are only public servants from the Police and the National Forest Corporation there. In spite of this, local government describes the life of the Aymaras such that it could become reality for those who ignore Guallatire's situation. Therefore, identity is not only used strategically by Indigenous people, but also by the authorities. Be it to promote a government sponsored event or other, the actions of governmental institutions affect the elaboration of an identity, being more essentialist in some cases.

Through these four narratives associated to the identity and practices of the Aymara population, it is possible to understand its production in diverse realities. The quotes presented here are specific, but they allow to understand views regarding the identity of Indigenous people on the border from the quotes themselves and local authorities. Hence, it is important to consider two effects on this border: rural-urban migration and the constant nationalization of the border, which have been transversal to the periods of recognition. The problem arises in how to incorporate identity that demonstrates different realities, like a categorization variable in comparative studies of population in areas of education, health and others.

DISCUSSION

Rural-urban migration is one of the social phenomena that has led to growing the relationship between Indigenous people and the State. In Chile, Indigenous rural-urban migration is notable in the Arica and Parinacota region. According to the 2002 census, Arica County concentrates 91.25% and 90.5% of the regional population that self-identifies as Indigenous and Aymara respectively (22). In the region, the Altiplano is regarded as ancestral territory of Indigenous Peoples; therefore, given the migration to the city, it is thought that in some cases a disconnection could be experienced.

Within this context, government plays a significant role in fostering contemporary Indigenous identity. By including Indigenous identity in the national census, the government identified territorial and administrative divisions with the largest Indigenous populations. However, the national and sub-national statistic tends to homogenize Indigenous people. In other words, the aggregation of individual data at different levels of analysis gradually denies the existing heterogeneous reality. As was already mentioned, Chile adopted self-identification as the main basis to identifying Indigenous people.

Self-identification is not exempt of limitations, for Indigenous descendants can do or undo an identity according to the circumstances. As was presented in different speeches, Indigenous people determine their identity according to the institutional context. Self-denomination, in particular, "transforms the mechanism of group affiliation into individualized actions

of psychological and subjective election" (14). Based on the experience from Aymara communities in northern Chile, identity links patterns of social interaction that have shifted from a cultural perspective to another institutional and/or political perspective. Therefore, Indigenous identity is more of a sociopolitical variable than a sociocultural one. This assessment fits within the emergence of Indigenous women in a political context or how Indigenous representatives determine their identity according to their nationality. Nevertheless, studies on Indigenous people have incorporated identity as a way of examining disparities that point to emphasizing cultural reasons. However, Indigenous identity is fragile because it is stigmatized by non-Indigenous people. In addition, research on Indigenous people can reinforce certain negative stereotypes (23). Considering the limitations, the discussion offers two methods that have been used to analyze the Aymaras in the Arica and Parinacota region.

In the first case, Caqueo-Urizar et al. created the Scale of Involvement in Aymara Culture (EICA) to measure the level of involvement of children in Aymara practices (24). EICA was used to quantify the symptoms of anxiety and depression in Aymara children (25). However, the article concludes that the significant involvement of children in the Aymara culture constitutes a protection against those mental disorders in children. This instrument uses external categorization based on six sub-scales related to the use of language within the family, the personal use of language, the celebration of traditions, traditional activities, dance and music. Nevertheless, beyond the use of identity as an explicative variable, the EICA questionnaire asks about cultural practices which are unclear. For example, the local dance is a cultural syncretism recognized as Aymara or Andean, also domestically known as Bolivian, Chilean or Peruvian. In Arica, people identify a group of local dances (*tarqueda*, *thinku*, etc.), but there is no consensus on which of them is Aymara. In this discussion, the *thinku*, for example, is an expression recognized as Aymara but also as Bolivian (26). In addition, the people from the villages in the Altiplano indicate that dance in the Chilean-Aymara culture corresponds to music that uses guitar, mandolin or violin, and indeed does not correspond to the *thinku* or *tarqueda*. Similar discussions appear in the analysis of other cultural practices included in EICA, with the exception of the Indigenous language. Furthermore, it is interesting to understand that Aymaras arrived in Arica in different migratory waves, with an important participation of Aymara people born in other countries. Winker indicates that social and environmental characteristics can better explain the differences between migrants and persons who grow up in a country identified in the same ethnic category (27). Therefore, the absence of differences between Aymara and non-Aymara children could be explained by the degree of integration of the generation that took part in the research.

In another case, the Ministry of Health developed a method to identify Indigenous persons based on a group of criteria. This institution has sought to improve the health situation of Indigenous Peoples in Chile. The main problem in reaching this objective was the lack of scientific data about Indigenous persons. Then, the Ministry assumed the responsibility of writ-

ing a report for each Indigenous Peoples as part of a sociocultural epidemiological project. In Arica, this Ministry prepared a report on the disparities in health for the Aymaras. Indigenous identification was based on four criteria: Indigenous surname, Indigenous family relations, institutional recognition and self-identification (28). To increase analysis sensibility, the method aimed to include the greatest possible number of cases more than to refine the studied population (29). In this respect, one of the recommendations made in the fourth session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in 2005 was to consider multiple criteria to capture identity and socioeconomic conditions (30). In New Zealand, for instance, the census uses multiple criteria to identify Indigenous population which includes self-identification and language (8). However, a problem with these methods of multiple criteria are the sources of information that use different mechanisms to gather their data. Hence, adjustments are required to calculate health indicators. In the case of health research, Kaplan and Bennett established that the analysis of different ethnic groups must consider the limitations of the data, the difference between a risk factor and a risk marker based on the ethnic category and avoid the stigmatization associated with identity (31).

To improve methodologies and methods, the participation of Indigenous people, not only as subjects of study, must be reconsidered. These previous cases demonstrate how "experts" have developed their own viewpoint on what the identity of Indigenous people is like, in most cases using government sources. That being the case, Indigenous persons have something to say about the estimates and disparities that experts identify. The participation of Indigenous people cannot be limited merely because they live in urban areas, have lost their cultural practices or speak a non-Indigenous language. Madden et al. mention that establishing a collaboration between national statistic institutions and Indigenous Peoples would contribute to achieving a comprehensible range of statistics (32). Thus, establishing a demographic evaluation based on the communities could strengthen the information. One alternative is to implement a collaborative approach within community-based participatory research (CBRP). As we have seen, after the gathering of data, the analysis is a unilateral process. CBRP is a collaborative and systematic approach that aims to create mutual knowledge between communities and researchers (33). According to Rogers Stanton, this contributes to understanding community dynamics and to decolonize the experience with Indigenous communities (34). However, Tuhiwai Smith indicates the need to pay attention to the generation of knowledge, for it could be affecting Indigenous persons (35).

The experience of the Aymara population in terms of the generation of quantitative indicators can be generalized to other Indigenous Peoples and countries. The Aymara People in Arica and Parinacota have a high level of assimilation to the urban context. The descendants of the first Aymara migrants in the urban area have adopted contemporary ways for life. This means the urban Aymaras are not comparable to the Aymaras that still live in rural areas. Thus, prioritizing identity could make other social, cultural and economic variables invisible. Disparities in health could be analyzed blindly without consid-

ering factors that emerge from other inequities. In this case, the Aymara or Indigenous identity can include several economic and non-economic disparities. Romero and Castro, for example, determined that Aymaras live in the impoverished peripheries of Arica. This means they face spatial inequity at a micro-level (36). The situation is more complex to improve the process of identification. In Latin America, States create spaces based on identity through legislation, which descendants could use or reject according to their social and economic context. This represents a limitation that social science researchers and professionals, who reflect upon the Indigenous phenomenon, must overcome methodologically rather than achieving an adjustment of the data analysis.

CONCLUSION

The social, political and economic emergence of Indigenous people at a national and international level generated the institutionalization of identity and then the elaboration of indicators to identify disparities in different areas. Self-identification is the main criteria used by governments to count the Indigenous population, however, other identification methodologies are used for complementary interests (for example, the socioeconomic characterization). They generate different perspectives for the development of comparison studies of indicators in Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations. These researchers use methodological frameworks as well as official results with little thought as to how Indigenous identity is socially and historically generated. The use of a unilateral viewpoint by researchers to study Indigenous populations suggests the need to decolonize research practices and adjust them to Indigenous Peoples' perspectives.

NOTES

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Although there is no preferred or official convention in Latin America, "Indigenous," "Aymara" and "Mapuche" are capitalized throughout this article, for they are used as a proper noun, indicate specific people who claim to be descendants of the native inhabitants of their lands and are not migrants in terms to the post-colonial nation-State borders. Thus, I recognize the growing international identity and the political difference in their own contexts between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous. In addition, "Peoples" is used in two ways to distinguish

between uses. When its first letter is capitalized, it refers to members of an Indigenous group that reemerge politically rather than an "ethnic group" or a "culture." When it is written in lowercase, it refers to human beings in general or considered collectively.

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