

## Indigenous peoples Contla de Juan Cuamatzi, Tlaxcala: pending for the right to the conservation and transmission of the indigenous language challenges

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Recibido 20 de Febrero, 2015; Aceptado 16 de Agosto, 2015

### Resumen

No es una sorpresa saber que los pueblos indígenas son los más vulnerables y discriminados en las sociedades occidentales incluyendo la región América latina y el Caribe. En Tlaxcala, los factores estructurales que indican la pobreza en la población indígena son palpables, así como la percepción negativa de otros ciudadanos sobre estos grupos repercuten tanto el desarrollo social como los derechos humanos fundamentales de preservar su idioma materno y transmitirlo a sus descendientes. Pese a los avances considerables de las autoridades para implementar programas de reintegración de los pueblos indígenas en los ámbitos social, educativo, político y laboral, los resultados se revelan lentos e insuficientes para mejorar sus expectativas. Este artículo consiste en analizar y presentar las condiciones socioeconómicas de las familias indígenas del municipio de Contla de Juan Cuamatzi y los factores que se relacionan con la preservación y transmisión de una lengua indígena, parte de su identidad cultural que constituyen los retos pendientes para el respeto de sus derechos.

### Abstract

Not a surprise that indigenous peoples are the most vulnerable and discriminated against in Western societies including Latin America and the Caribbean region. In Tlaxcala, the structural factors that indicate poverty among the indigenous population are palpable and the negative perception of other people about these groups affect both social development and fundamental human rights to preserve their mother language and pass it on to their descendants. Despite considerable progress by the authorities to implement reintegration programs for indigenous peoples in the social, educational, political and labor fields, the results are revealed slow and insufficient to improve their expectations. This article is to analyze and present socio-economic conditions of indigenous families in the municipality of Contla de Juan Cuamatzi and factors relating to the preservation and transmission of an indigenous language, part of their cultural identity are the remaining challenges for respect of their rights.

**Citación:** LINDOR, Moïse. Indigenous peoples Contla de Juan Cuamatzi, Tlaxcala: pending for the right to the conservation and transmission of the indigenous language challenges. *Revista de Desarrollo Económico* 2015, 2-4: 287-299

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**Introduction**

The socio-economic situation of indigenous people and their integration into national life as equal citizens has a long history of cultural resistance and socio-political struggle. However, inequality and stigma impact the social, political and cultural development. The threat of a possible cultural blockade, self discrimination and low self-esteem among indigenous peoples is alarming, and the transmission of cultural traditions to their offspring revealed day after day more difficult and selfless, by discriminatory issues. Therefore, the majority of indigenous youth in this town not even speak an indigenous language not feel the interest to learn. However, the right to freedom and respect to preserve and transmit the native languages is urgent to promote cultural identity in the town of Contla de Juan Cuamatzi. In the state of Tlaxcala, socioeconomic and cultural context of indigenous peoples translates little progress on public policies to counter the socio-economic and cultural decline puzzle in these vulnerable groups and the remaining challenges to guarantee their rights.

**Goal**

Analyze and explain the socio-economic factors and the effect of preservation and transmission of indigenous languages in Contla de Juan Cuamatzi.

**Hypothesis****General hypothesis**

People over Contla de Juan Cuamatzi not preserve indigenous languages and transmitted to future generations by discriminatory issues, therefore, young people know not to speak.

**Alternative hypothesis:**

Young people do not speak an indigenous language because they have a bad perception of it and suffer social and family crisis belonging and self -discrimination.

**Literature review**

Referring to the rights of indigenous peoples, the United Nations (UN, 2006) noted "the importance of establishing and respect the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples, such as the right to culture, identity, a language, employment, health and education. And their right to protect and strengthen their institutions, cultures and traditions and promote their development in accordance with their aspirations and needs. Similarly, discriminating against them and promotes their full and effective participation in relation to matters concerning them are strictly unjust, also have the right to remain distinct and to pursue their own idea of economic and social development. Promoting full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in decisions that directly or indirectly affect their lifestyles, their traditional lands, their cultural integrity or any other aspect of their lives".

In a recent report, ECLAC (2014), for his part declared that "it is necessary to redesign the balance between the state, market and society to build agreements that attend those actors to ensure far-reaching political agreements. With these premises it is clear that indigenous peoples should be included in such agreements, and they require open spaces for faster progress in implementing the standards. One of the main challenges in this area is the integration of the rights of indigenous peoples in a new model of governance of natural resources. It is moving from the "new treatment" to the "new pacts.

Also notes, the minimum standard of rights, binding on States, indigenous peoples is articulated, in turn, into five dimensions: the right to non-discrimination; the right to development and social welfare; the right to cultural integrity; the right to own, use, control and access to lands, territories and natural resources; and the right to political participation "(ECLAC, 2014: 15).

According to CONEVAL (2012: 7), "the Mexican indigenous households are those with one of the founding members (chief or head of household, spouse or any of the ancestors) is indigenous language speakers. It is noteworthy that Article 2 of the General Law of Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Peoples states that indigenous languages are those from existing towns in the country before the establishment of the Mexican state, in addition to those originating in other American Indian peoples equally existing, which have taken root in the country and subsequently recognized by having an orderly and systematic functional and symbolic oral forms of communication together".

Meanwhile, INEGI (2011) explains that one can "identify indigenous peoples from two elements: 1) it is proposed to focus on the distinction of phenotypic and linguistic aspects, as well as traditions and customs; 2) incorporates symbolic elements that have to do with the cosmic vision. " In this sense, the worldview is fundamental to understanding the ethnic identification in the regions.

In every culture, the mother tongue is a linguistic, historical and interpersonal fortune. It is an element that distinguishes the indigenous peoples and communities is the language through which they communicate.

Which gives them a sense of belonging and identity and is a key to the transmission of values and beliefs factor. Therefore, one of the main criteria for the identification of this analytical group is considering speech of any language. Thus, the authorities should protect the right to a dignified life and develop strategies for the preservation and transmission on the indigenous population to avoid potential self-discrimination and cultural blockade in the town of Contla de Juan Cuamatzi.

From this perspective, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO / WHO) (2006: 3) emphasizes the need to promote actions and initiatives to consider health in a holistic manner by incorporating the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination, participation, respect for indigenous culture and its revitalization and reciprocity in relationships. However, lack of indigenous health services and other assistance and therefore are victims of inhuman attitude of certain bureaucrats and doctors suffering from Doctitis which is a non-contagious, selective and / or prolonged illness among doctors, when they are pushy and tend to pass over others because of the level of study they hold.

This evil becomes a dangerous disease that destroys psychologically and emotionally people are in such a situation and affect their environment for their behavioral problems. You can also strike down the most admirable and inherent to the human being as qualities: altruism, harmony, humility, sensitivity, solidarity, generosity, love for others and mutual respect.

According to ECLAC (2012: 3) states that "poverty and exclusion and disempowerment generate low self-esteem, fundamental elements for the development of people.

It must implement a program of empowerment of African descent and indigenous women to enable pass them in a better position to face the challenges of their own development and that of their communities". Systematically, when people are discriminated against, mortified and dominated socioeconomic and psychologically, used for decades by their own, the recovery of personality and self-esteem is wait. As well as extreme poverty is passed on indigenous peoples, the same goes for self discrimination.

### **Indigenous peoples in Mexico and socioeconomic characteristics**

It is not a secret that Mexico is distinguished by a great historical and cultural wealth and a large population diversity country. Worldwide, the Mexican culture and biodiversity are recognized thanks to the policies of tourist promotion, use of the environment and so on.

According to the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (CDI) (2009), the total indigenous population was estimated to 12, 707, 000 inhabitants. The population five years and over speaking indigenous languages is 6, 044.547 inhabitants (7.1%) nationally. While the indigenous population speaking indigenous language is 4, 209.080 inhabitants. There is a total amount of 871 (35.7%) of indigenous or indigenous presence in Mexico municipalities. 481 (19.7%) of municipalities with more than 70% indigenous population.

However, socioeconomic conditions are deplorable in indigenous peoples. The report of the Commission (2009) states that 33.9%, that is 295 indigenous or indigenous presence marginalization grade "very high" municipalities. 46.5%, 363 have a degree of "high" marginalization.

10%, that is 87 of them have a degree of "medium" marginalization. A ratio of 5.2%, that is 45 of them have degree of marginalization "low" and 9.3%, that is 81 indigenous or indigenous presence grade of "very low" in Mexico marginalization municipalities. Also, nationwide, they are 64% of private homes inhabited by indigenous population with piped water. 83.1% of private homes inhabited by indigenous people with electricity. Thus, 43.7% of private homes inhabited by indigenous people with a dirt floor. While there are 62.4% private homes for indigenous people cook with firewood.

With respect to the localities with more than 40% indigenous population is 56.8% of the employed population working in the primary sector. 30.7% of the working population does not receive income from their work. While 22.2% of the employed population receives from 1-2 minimum wages. 53.5% houses with dirt floors; 42.3% of homes do not have running water; 73% households that do not have drainage; 20.7% households do not have electricity. In contrast, 13% of households lack piped water, sewage or electricity. Nearly 25,000 indigenous communities are located in areas of difficult access to public services and roads. He said that 33.2% of indigenous children under 5 years suffered from stunting in 2006, compared with 12.7% of all children of that age. The infant mortality rate of the indigenous population is 60 percent higher than the non-indigenous population.

It is estimated that the illiteracy rate among indigenous peoples is four times higher (over 26% of the population aged 15 and over) than the national average (7.4%). So, one in three general multigrade primary schools, while two out of three indigenous schools in this state, that is, their teachers serving more than one degree.

Therefore, in 2005, only 13% of students in the sixth grade in indigenous schools is in the top group in terms of reading comprehension, compared to 33% national average. 51% are in the lowest level (the national average is 25%) ". To do this, many indigenous children stop going to school because they have to start working at an early age or because their parents do not have sufficient income to pay their tuition. It seems that many of these children help their parents in the field and engaged in another activity. With regard to child labor, 36% of indigenous children between 6 and 14 years of age work, twice the national average estimated at 15.7%. Indigenous peoples also have a particularly high rate of internal migration to the agricultural areas in northern Mexico. It is estimated that in 2003 48.7% of children working as agricultural laborers spoke an indigenous language, and 42.9% do not attend school. Another important factor for not attending school is early family life assumed indigenous children, as mentioned above.

UNICEF (2015) stressed that there is a significant difference between the percentage of indigenous women who married before 15 years of age (nearly 5%) compared with non-indigenous women (2%). Also, about 24% of indigenous women married before 18 years of age, while 15% of non-indigenous women did at that age. This situation is related to economic dependence in rural areas or indigenous groups.

### **Indigenous languages spoken in Mexico**

According to INEGI (2010), the most widely spoken indigenous language in Mexico is the Nahuatl with a total amount of 1 544.968 speakers, that is 754.321 men and 790.647 women. Therefore, 118.953 men and 125.080 women, that is 244.033 Totonac speakers (Totonaco).

While 85 men and 60 women speakers of other indigenous languages of Mexico. 472 men and 361 women speakers from other Latin American indigenous languages are recognized. And a total amount of 144.987 individuals, that is, 77.282 men and 67.705 women speak an indigenous language is not specified in Mexico. Thus, it follows that Mexico has a large indigenous cultural and linguistic wealth. And concluded that more women speakers of indigenous languages in Mexico are men. And the most widely spoken indigenous language is Nahuatl where there is a higher proportion of male speakers.

### **Indigenous peoples in Tlaxcala, municipality of Contla de Juan Cuamatzi**

We reaffirm that the worrying situation of vulnerability in which indigenous people are given much to talk about social and cultural policies national and state levels. It is recalled that indigenous peoples have always seek and try to defend their autonomy squeezing self-determination to make decisions and institute practices related to own worldview, indigenous territory, land, natural resources, socio-political organization, administration of justice, education, language, health, medicine and culture.

No doubt that Indians are a cultural and social heritage. Therefore, the language is vital when it comes to the wealth of a people. In this sense, indigenous autonomy is constructed from both the restoration and strengthening of ancestral institutions to revalue and restore the system of uses and customs of indigenous peoples; the will and institutional and political as empathy and humanism ethics. The indigenous population of Tlaxcala makes no exception.

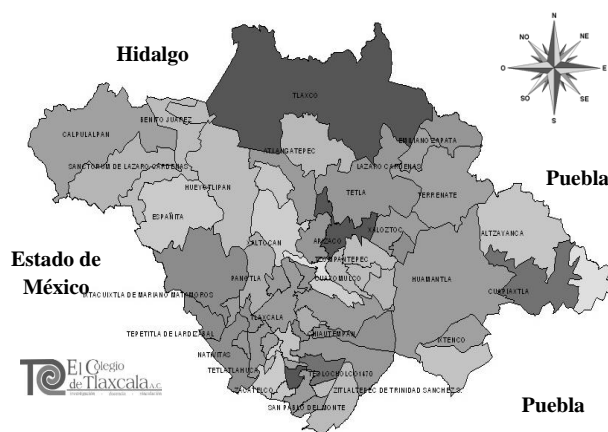
Before developing the situation of indigenous peoples and indigenous languages spoken Tlaxcala, a brief geographical presentation of the state of Tlaxcala it is made. Figura 1 shows the map of the United Mexican States including the State of Tlaxcala.



**Figure 1** Map of the State of Tlaxcala and the states of Mexico.

### Geographical presentation of the state of Tlaxcala and its municipalities

The state of Tlaxcala is one of the 32 states of Mexico. It is the Mexican state of smaller size of the country. It is geographically located in the east central region of the republic. Its capital is Tlaxcala with 89,795 inhabitants and covers an area of 4,016 square kilometers. According to INEGI (2010), the state of Tlaxcala is divided into 60 municipalities. Therefore, the municipality of Contla John Cuamatzi has 35,084 inhabitants (See figure 2).



**Figure 2** The map of the state of Tlaxcala and its municipalities

### Socioeconomic position and indigenous language in Contla de Juan Cuamatzi

According to INEGI (2011) defines the indigenous population and the population living in households where at least one indigenous language speakers, excluding households in which the speaker is part of the domestics. It includes speakers of indigenous languages that are non-indigenous and indigenous language speakers living in dwelling households. According to data from INEGI (2011). One of the municipalities in the state of Tlaxcala with the highest proportion of indigenous inhabitants, is Contla de Juan Cuamatzi.

However, the socio-economic situation of the municipality gives a lot to talk about. According to data from INEGI (2011), "the municipality represents 3.0% of the population of the company with 96 men for every 100 women and the median age is 25 or less. 8036 is occupied dwellings with an average of 4.4 occupants. Thus, out of 100 houses, seven have floor. With regard to the availability of public services, 61% houses with no running water inside the house, 92% with drainage, 90.7% of health service and 98.8% houses with electricity.

It is considered that women between 15 and 19 years have on average 0.1 children born alive; however, this average is 3.8 for women between 45 and 49 years. While for women between 15 and 19 years, one death is recorded for every 100 live births; while for women between 45 and 49 years, the percentage is 8. Out of 100 houses, seven have Internet, Computer 15%, 47% with a cell phone and landline with 23.8%. With respect to the distribution of the population aged 15 and over by level of schooling, 5.5% is concentrated uneducated, 60.3% of primary school level, 0.1% with completed technical or commercial primary, 20.1% higher Media, 100 people of 15 and over 14 have some degree adopted in higher education and 0.2% unspecified. Thus, out of 100 people between 15 and 24, 99% read and write a message. The literacy rate for the group aged 25 and over is 91.7%. Whereas, with regard to school attendance by age group, 100 people between 6 and 11 years, 98% attend school, 52.8% children 3-5 years attending school, 96.8% individuals of 12- 14 attend school. In contrast, 46.7% of individuals aged 15-24 attending school. Regarding the economic status of the population of 12 years and more, the city has an economically active population of 54.4% in total, ie 75.1% men and 35.1% women. Therefore, a total of 95.2% of working population, ie 94.3% men and 96.8% women is recorded. 5.7% men and 3.2% women: while 4.8% of unoccupied population is concentrated. Instead, a non-economically active population is 45.2% in total, that is 24.3% men and 64.6% women. With respect to the distribution of the population of 12 years and more not economically active by type of activity, are 39.6% students, 51.2% persons engaged in household chores, 1.8% retirees and pensioners, 2.3% persons with physical limitations or permanent mental condition that prevents them from working people and 5.1% in other non-economic activities”.

### **The indigenous language Contla John Cuamatzi**

Apart from agriculture, livestock, poultry farming, beekeeping practices and forestry; industry where the business sector is made up of different types of companies, among which are: textiles, metal products, timber, food; the carnival celebrations, fairs, crafts, textiles, Contla municipality of Juan Cuamatzi has a large indigenous population who speak an indigenous language compared to other municipalities. With respect to the population aged 5 and older who speak an indigenous language, data from INEGI (2011), "there are 5108 people ages 5 and older who spoke an indigenous language, representing 16% of the population of 5 Municipal and older. Individuals have a great responsibility to conserve, promote and transmit the indigenous language at home. While less than 1% of people age 5 and older who spoke an indigenous language do not speak Spanish. Similarly, it recorded 99% speak Nahuatl and Totonac (Totonaco) 0.2% speak in 100 people age 5 and older who spoke an indigenous language”.

### **Data and Methodology**

This section of the article, the methodology used, the process of data collection, analysis and interpretation of the results is presented. This research is summarized three stages: First, randomly selected 100 indigenous households in the village to study their socio-economic status and to detect if an indigenous language spoken in the home. It comes in households with immigration identification card. We talked with the chief / head of the household and the elderly to see if there is a preservation of an indigenous language. . In the second stage, it is investigated whether there is a transmission on young people and their perception of indigenous languages.

The last part of the study is to sensitize young people about the importance and obligation to preserve and indigenous languages in their community, since it is they who could rescue her. For this, the methodology used focus groups with 99 students and one teacher Cobat 06 indigenous families in the municipality of Contla Juan de Cuamatzi, on September 10, 2015, to gather information and opinions on their perception of Indian families and indigenous languages; a questionnaire of 15 questions was developed. Therefore, semi-structured and semi-open and closed questions as an assessment tool used interviews. Subsequently, the results are presented in graphs and histograms.

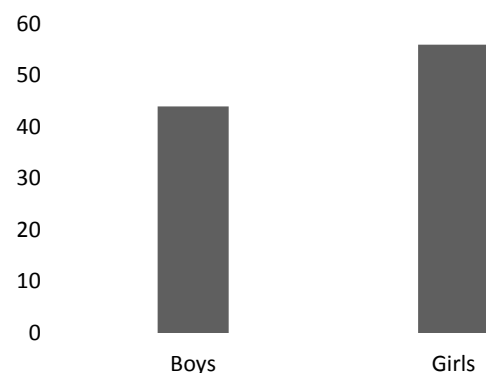
### Results and interpretation

In this part of the article the information on the socioeconomic situation of indigenous households and the perception of respondents on indigenous in the municipality of Contla John Cuamatzi to meet the target languages is presented: Analyze and study the socioeconomic factors and the effect preservation and transmission of indigenous languages in Contla Juan de Cuamatzi. The results reveal that indigenous families living in difficult socio-economic situations and there is a cultural blockade and that older people no longer speak or transmit an indigenous language at home. The results in Table 1 show that 29% women and 71% indigenous indigenous men were interviewed.

Sex	%
Women	29
Men	71

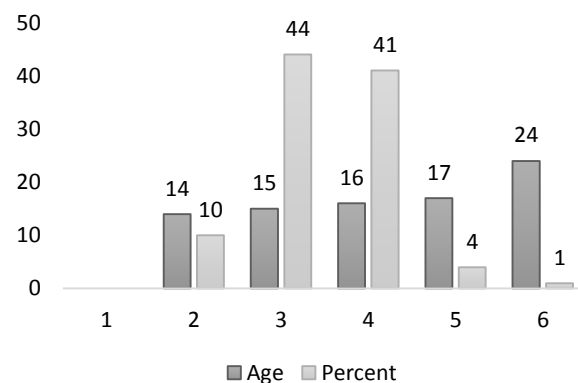
**Table 1** Number of heads of household interviewed.

Grafic 1 shows that 44% boys and 56% girls indigenous Cobat 06 Contla of Juan de Cuamatzi were interviewed.



**Grafic 1** Number of indigenous young people interviewed in Contla of Juan Cuamatzi.

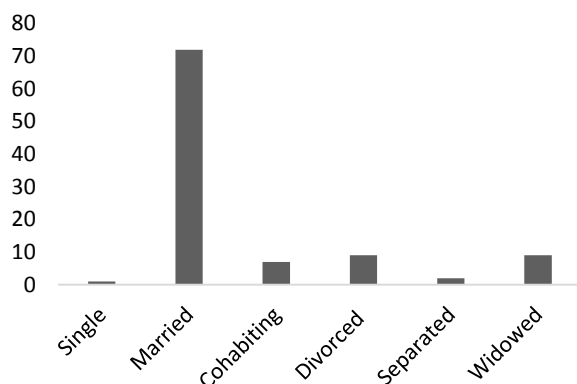
Grafic 2 shows that 10% of students is 14 years old, 44% are 15 years old, 41% are 16 years of age, 4% is 17 years old and a teacher of 24 years is recorded.



**Grafic 2** Age of indigenous respondents Contla de Juan Cuamatzi.

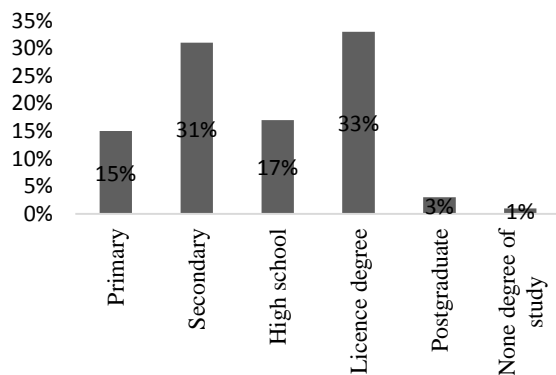
With regard to marital status of heads of Indian family. Recorded 1% single, 72% married, 7% cohabiting, 9% are divorced, they separated 2% and 9% are widowed (See grafic 3).





**Grafic 3** Marital status of heads of Indian family.

Grafic 4 shows that 15% have primary maximum level of study. 31% have secondary education, 17% have high school, 33% have a licence degree, 3% have a postgraduate, and 1% not have degree of study.



**Grafic 4** Maximum level of schooling of the head of Indian family.

The results in Table 2 show that 33% of household heads are employed. 3% work in agriculture, 17% are traders, 18% work in textile factory, respectively, and 4% work as drivers and in a restaurant. 2% are carpenters, 9% are housewives, 7% are teachers; respectively, 1% of householders are masons, and retired police officer.

¿What do you do?	Porcentaje
Agriculture	3%
Employed	33%
Commerce	17%
Textil factory	18%
Drivers	4%
Restaurant	4%
Carpenters	2%
Housewives	9%
Teachers	7%
Masons	1%
Police Office	1%
Retired	1%

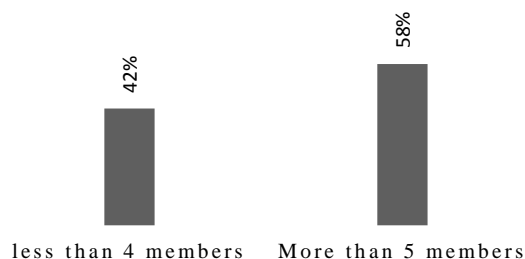
**Table 2** What the heads of Indian family engaged in Contla de Juan Cuamatzi

The results in Table 3 show that 6% of the families are in a very difficult economic situation, 12% in a difficult situation, 32% said that their situation is a bit difficult, 42% said they were in a fairly difficult situation and 8% replied that they live in an easy situation.

Socio-economic situation	Percent
Very difficult	6
Difficult	12
A bit difficult	32
A fairly difficult	42
Easy	8

**Table 3** Socio-economic situation of indigenous families in Contla de Juan Cuamatzi.

The results in Grafic 5 show that 42% of indigenous households have less than 4 members. While 58% have more than 5 members.

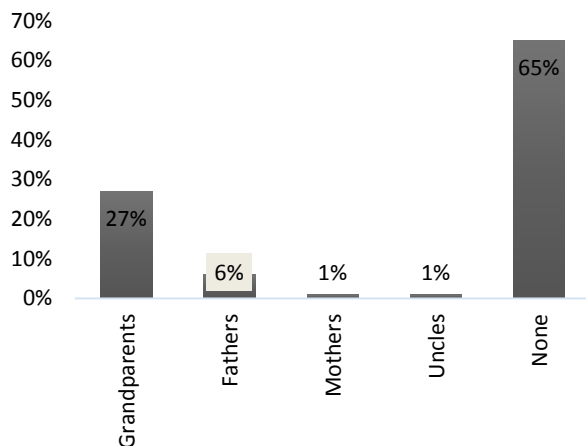


**Grafic 5** Number of members in indigenous households of Contla de Juan Cuamatzi.

Perception of the indigenous language in Contla de Juan Cuamatzi.

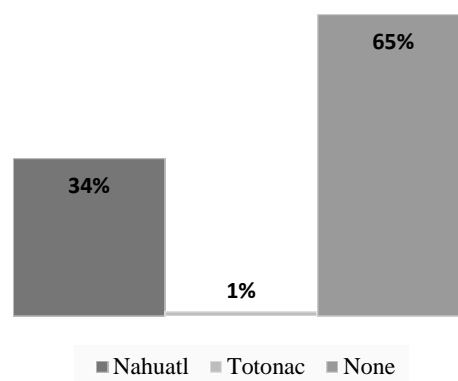
In this part of the article the perception of indigenous over the indigenous language preservation and transmission occurs at home.

In the Grafic 6 shows who speak an indigenous language in the Indian household. The interviewed answers reveal that 27% of grandparents speak an indigenous language, 6% of fathers, respectively 1% of mothers and uncles speak an indigenous language. While 65% said no one in his family speaks an indigenous language.



**Grafic 6** Who speak an indigenous language in the Indian household?

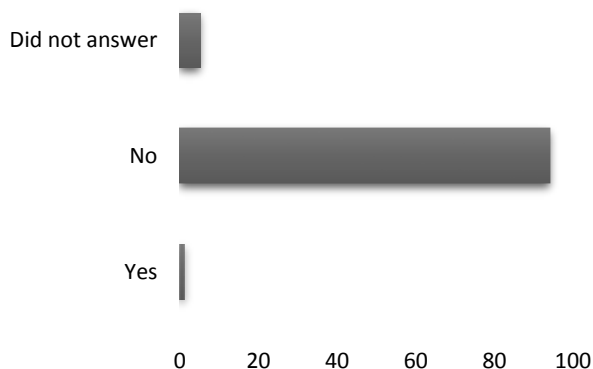
Similarly, they wondered what is the indigenous language spoken in your family? The results in Grafic 7 show that 34% of households speaking Nahuatl, 1% of households speak Totonac. In contrast, 65% of households do not speak any indigenous language in Contla de Juan Cuamatzi. Thus, the first hypothesis of the research is confirmed.



**Grafic 7** What is the indigenous language spoken in your family?

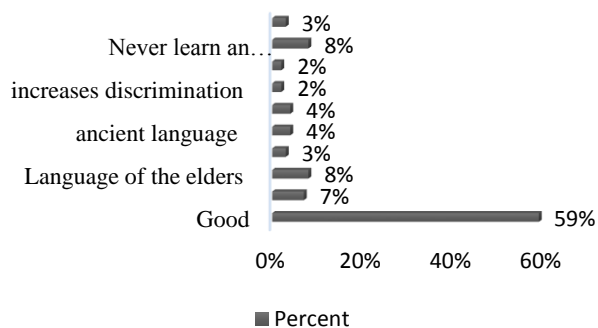
The results in Grafic 8 show the number of respondents - young people dominate an indigenous language in the municipality of Contla de Juan Cuamatzi.

Recorded 94% of young people do not speak an indigenous language because they do not transmit. 5% of them did not answer the question, while only 1% said yes speak the Nahuatl language, but is a teacher.



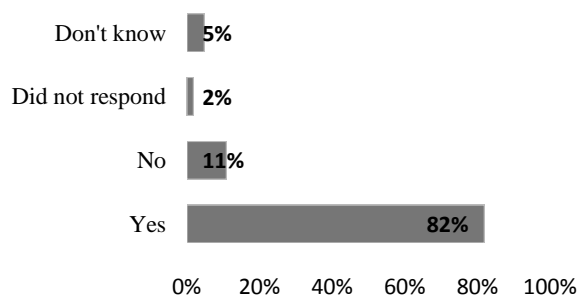
**Grafic 8** You mastered an indigenous language?

In Grafic 9 the answers of respondents on their perception of the indigenous language at home are presented. The results show that 59% of them have a good perception of the indigenous language, 7% said that the indigenous language is bad, respectively 8% responded that the language of the elders and never learn an indigenous language, respectively 3% stated that it is the language of the illiterate and did not answer the question. 4% respectively said that it is an ancient language and speak it gives them shame. While 2% of them said that the indigenous language increases discrimination and self-discrimination in their environment. Therefore, the second hypothesis of the study is confirmed.



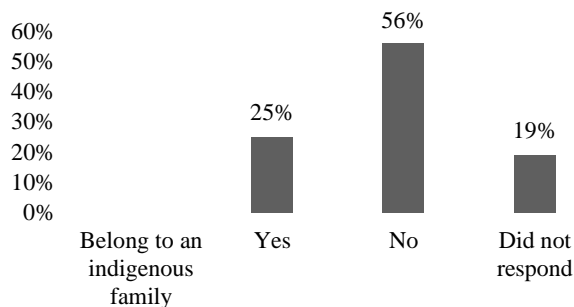
**Grafic 9** Perceptions of respondents on the indigenous language in their environment.

The results in Grafic 10 show that 82% of respondents said that it is important to preserve and transmit the indigenous language at home. While 11% said it is no longer important. Therefore, 2% of them did not respond, and 5% of the respondents said they did not know if it is important to preserve and transmit an indigenous language at home.



**Grafic 10** Perception of the importance of preserving and transmitting an indigenous language in the household.

With regard to the question, do you think that should not belong to an indigenous family that speaks an indigenous language? The results in Grafic 11 show that 25% of respondents replied that they should not belong to an indigenous family that speaks an indigenous language because they feel discriminated against. While 56% said they have no problem with that. In contrast, 19% of them did not answer the question.



**Grafic 11** Belonging to an indigenous family that speaks an indigenous language.

Thus, the second hypothesis of the research is confirmed. There really is a crisis of belonging and self-discrimination in the indigenous of Contla de Juan Cuamatzi.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

It is concluded that the main indigenous language spoken in the municipality of Contla de Juan Cuamatzi is the Nahuatl language and seniors are bilingual population. Most of the indigenous population of Contla de Juan Cuamatzi is in difficult socio-economic situation. Do not preserve indigenous languages and transmitted to the firstborn of discriminatory issues, therefore, young people do not even feel the interest to learn an indigenous language, and some think it should not belong to an indigenous family that speaks an indigenous language. The following suggestions are part of the challenges for the preservation and transmission of indigenous people in the municipality of Contla de Juan Cuamatzi languages is presented.

### **Recomendations**

1. Campaign revaluation of indigenous languages in adults who dominate an indigenous language, of their rights in societies to preserve their native language and cultural wealth is necessary.

2. Sociopolitical actions should focus both structures and language problems, unequal distribution of public services, public education reforms that contribute to their socio-economic emancipation as psychosomatic dry them in generating inequality, negative perception, and self-discrimination in young, without eradicating no way forward emotionally and psychologically much less able to transmit and preserve cultural identity.

3. It is important to establish and implement anti-discrimination laws in schools where indigenous attend and should completely eradicate all forms of discrimination in society and that this phenomenon is a psychological torture, self-discrimination and violation of human rights that affect their everyday life, their lifestyle and their cultural identity.

4. Other research on the importance of preservation of indigenous languages in other municipalities in the state of Tlaxcala in particular and the whole country in order to counter the cultural blockade and discrimination so that we have a fairer, more inclusive society is needed, tolerant, united and prosperous where all people have the same chances for a dignified life, to preserve and transmit their beliefs, customs and spoken language as part of their identity.

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