

POLICIES FOR THE SOCIAL INCLUSION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN ECUADOR

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Abstract: *The indigenous people of Ecuador are divided by nationalities and aboriginal peoples; Currently, according to the National Council for the Development of Nationalities and Peoples of Ecuador (CODENPE), in the Ecuadorian territory, in the Costa, Sierra and Oriented regions, there are 14 nationalities and 18 indigenous peoples, each with its own worldview, customs and traditions. The generals that regulate the behavior of these cultures are the ama killa, ama llulla, ama shwa (not to be idle, not to lie, not to steal), they practice the minka and ayni, which are models of community cooperation and collaboration. The exclusion of indigenous people has been a problem, which, from generation to generation, for more than 500 years, our aboriginal brothers have had to endure, until June 2022, according to the National Survey of Employment, Unemployment and Underemployment (ENEMDU, 2022), income poverty in the rural sector was 42.9% and extreme poverty reached 22.7%; that is, of the approximately 1,080,000 indigenous people, 463,320 indigenous people live in poverty and 245,160 live in extreme poverty; which implies pointing out that the discrimination, exclusion and exploitation of this group of priority attention is recurrent. The manuscript answers the question: Have public policies of social and political inclusion improved the quality of life in the indigenous communities of Ecuador? The results allow us to establish that public policies for social and political inclusion are mechanisms that materialize the rights to citizen participation and a dignified life, not only of indigenous people, but of all citizens of Ecuador; however, these strategies are not fulfilling the stated objective, which is why the quality of life in the rural sector where the majority of aborigines reside has not improved significantly.*

Keywords: *indigenous population, social exclusion, political exclusion, poverty, quality of life.*

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Introduction

On the origin of the aborigines of Ecuador, until the present time it has not been possible to resolve and give an accurate theory; there is no document that identifies for sure if we are originally from these lands or come from others; what is known is that we belong to the group of hunters and gatherers of fruits; among the oldest remains that betray the presence of human beings in Ecuadorian territory, are the remains found in El Inga (11,000 - 4000 BC), a place that is located on Cerro Ilaló, in the valley of Los Chillos in the capital of the republic, here, it was found, "a lithic instrumental

collection consisting of: spearheads, cutters, bifacial knives, brushes, piercing scrapers, among others that complete 50 different types of artifacts" (Ministry of Culture and Heritage, 2020).

In the province of Cañar, in the Black Cave of Chobshi, in Sigsig, the archaeological remains found "with obsidian spears and knives, determined that they were made during the years 8,060 and 5,585 BC. " (Ministry of Culture and Heritage, 2018). According to Milo Hellman (1980), the oldest human vestige in Ecuador (approximately 4,950 years), was found in the ravine of Chalán of the parish Punín, canton Riobamba, province of Chimborazo, the skull has an australoid appearance by the boveda cranial and the facial region, the aforementioned author points out that, similar raves have been found in Tasmania, Australia and New Guinea, resemble those of Pericue, California; Lagoa Santa, Brazil; and Paltacalo in Ecuador.

The archaeological findings and their corresponding studies, "has allowed to find relationships of several South American cultures with others developed in Central and North America", however, if we analyze the physical and biological traits of the North American natives, Canadians, Brazilians, Argentines, Mexicans, etc., we notice that there are notable differences with the indigenous people of Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia, which induces to point out that our aborigines arrived from different places.

The division into nationalities, peoples, communities; social and political organization; The development, customs and traditions of the aborigines of the American Concontention, are issues that allow to identify different characteristics among the indigenous people of the region. In Ecuador, 14 nationalities, 18 peoples and hundreds of indigenous communities currently coexist; each with specific and common characteristics; with their own and acquired customs and traditions; with a social and political system that is opposed to the essence of their cultural identity.

1. Indigenous communities in Ecuador

Indigenous communities in Ecuador are part of the country's indigenous nationalities and peoples; A community is the ancestral space and territory where our aborigines reside. According to the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC, August 2020) and the National Council for the Development of Nationalities and Peoples of Ecuador (CODENPE, 2001), there were 14 nationalities and 18 indigenous peoples in the country, totaling more than 1 million inhabitants; most of the indigenous nationalities are located in the Amazon Region and the largest number of people are located in the Amazon Region. the aborigines are located in the Sierra Region; On the number of indigenous communities, there is no exact statistical data, but these are located in the rural parishes of each cato of the twenty-four Provinces of Ecuador.

Each ancestral community is characterized by having its own identity, worldview, norms, customs and traditions; However, they also have characteristics in common and a past and future that is built on the momentum of their struggle; inclusion, equality, equity and the protection of Pachamama are the fundamental purposes, not only of the unworthy nationalities and peoples of Ecuador, but of Latin America and we would dare to say, of the aborigines of the whole world.

The presence and work of Monsignor Leonidas Proaño, known as "The Bishop of the Indians", marked a new milestone in the history of the aborigines of Ecuador, especially the Province of Chimborazo, his work focused on education and communication, "with the Popular Radio Schools that was a fundamental tool to teach the indigenous people literacy in their own language. " (The Telegraph, 2013), the love and work for this priority attention group, served him to be nominated as a candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1960. The struggle for social change of unworthy communities has not been easy, it has caused rape, torture, dismemberment, forced disappearances, deaths, until the present moment there are "situations of injustice, marginalization, exclusion and domination" (Bravo, Galindo, Larrea & Rúales, 2021, p. 95).

Ideological domination through religion and politics is marking a gap that affects the natural principles of indigenous people; the minka in the Sierra Region and ayni in the Coastal Region, are chimeras that the elderly yearn for girls, boys, adolescents, young people and adults to practice for the sake of the peaceful and harmonious coexistence of the community; however, beliefs, practices and ambition for power have taken many indigenous people representing Ecuador's indigenous nationalities and peoples out of context, making representativeness a mechanism to satisfy personal interests and those of the political movements and parties that sponsor them.

2. Public policies for social inclusion in indigenous communities in the United States

Social inclusion is a strategy that allows to combat poverty and improve the quality of life of the inhabitants, is related to equality, equity and social justice; For there to be true social inclusion, there needs to be an effective distribution of natural wealth. In Ecuador, there are human groups, which for hundreds of years have been marginalized and excluded, among them are the indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorians, whose participation in the social and economic life of the country, has been minimal, this being the main reason for these ethnic groups, throughout history have staged uprisings, uprisings and protests dating from the Audiencia of Quito in the eighteenth century, until July 2022, the causes of their struggle are recurrent, respect for their rights, protection for Pachamama, review of neoliberal policies recommended by the International Monetary Fund IMF.

In Ecuador, the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion, hereinafter MIES, is the public entity that plans and implements policies and actions aimed at seeking the social inclusion of the country's inhabitants, especially individuals, families and vulnerable groups, whose purpose is to achieve equal opportunities to achieve integral development that eliminates situations of poverty. marginalization or violation of people's rights. To achieve this, the government, through the MIES, implements priority affirmative actions aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination that affect individuals and groups that are in a situation of inequality, to achieve in desired Sumak Kawsay or good living.

According to the MIES (2021), inclusion and social mobility policies aim to achieve the Good Living of the population based on four axes of rupture: the decommodification of well-being, universality, the recovery of the link between the social and economic spheres; and socialization and social co-responsibility over well-being, which implies guaranteeing the

protection, promotion and development assistance of the inhabitants of Ecuador in all their life cycles; provide basic services that guarantee life and health; guarantee the comprehensive protection of the inhabitants that allows raising the standard of living of citizens, for which it is necessary that the State and public authorities respect and ensure respect for the rights enshrined in the Constitution and international instruments. However, in practice it has not been possible to achieve full social inclusion in Ecuador, it is enough to carry out a basic analysis of the indicators of poverty, education, access to basic services, among others, to determine the great social inequities that still persist in Ecuador, without denying that there have been advances in recent decades. especially with regard to the indigenous sector.

The indicators provided by the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses, hereinafter INEC, indicate that, between December 2018 and December 2019, in rural areas, income poverty went from 40.0% to 41.8%, extreme poverty from 17.7% in December 2018 to 18.7% in December 2019, poverty due to Unsatisfied Basic Needs (NBI) in the rural sector reaches 61.6%. In the last two years (2019 - 2020), according to the latest INEC report (2020), poverty grew by more than 7 percentage points from 25% to 32.4%; on the other hand, unemployment and informal trade rose considerably, not only due to the presence of the global pandemic Covid 19, but also due to the economic crisis and the recurrent cases of corruption that in the country have come from less to more.

In recent governments, some emblematic programs have been implemented, including: the "Manuela Espejo" solidarity mission project, Joaquín Gallegos Lara bonus, "Ecuador Without Barriers" program, Dignity Program for an Ecuador without Mendicity, Social Protection Network project, strategies that seek to achieve the social inclusion of persons considered to be of priority attention, especially the disabled; however, corruption is not indifferent within these humanitarian aid and social inclusion programs, punishable acts in which the same authorities of the MIES, the National Assembly, public servants of the Judicial Branch have been involved, who have benefited from the aid granted by each of the aforementioned programs.

Public policies of social inclusion are strategies that make effective the enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the Constitution, in international treaties and in national laws, this includes the inhabitants of the indigenous communities of Ecuador who are located especially in the rural sector of the cantons of the provinces of the country. and that are characterized. Public policies for social inclusion, among other things, aim to combat poverty, inequality, inequality, illiteracy, precarious living conditions, difficult access to the health sector, drinking water, etc., rights and services that in the indigenous communities of Ecuador are constantly violated and unobserved, thus building indigenous communities. of the country, as, "the sectors most abandoned by governments, entities and

corresponding organizations, are a highly vulnerable sector where the highest levels of poverty and inequality are found" (Castro & Montoya, 2021).

3. Public policies for political inclusion in indigenous communities in Ecuador

Political inclusion is related to democracy and the participation of citizens in the decisions taken by the State in favor of its constituents, paying special attention to women, youth, indigenous people and Afro-descendants; Citizen participation in Ecuador is guaranteed through the rights and principles of participation, enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador; rights that also, are recognized by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, expanded in Observation No. 25 on Participation in Public Affairs and the Right to Vote of the Human Rights Committee.

The Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador (2021), grants citizens rights of participation, rights that empower Ecuadorian women, including foreigners legally residing in the country, to enjoy the rights to elect and be elected, participate in matters of public interest, present projects of popular normative initiative, be consulted, supervise the acts of the public power, revoke the mandate they have conferred on the authorities of popular election, perform jobs and public functions based on merit and abilities, and in a system of selection and appointment transparent, inclusive, equitable, pluralistic and democratic, which guarantees their participation, with criteria of equity and gender parity, equal opportunities for persons with disabilities and intergenerational participation, forming political parties and movements, freely joining or disaffiliate from them and participate in all decisions taken by them. In Ecuador, elections of public authorities are carried out in two ways, one through universal, direct and secret ballot, is mandatory for persons over eighteen years of age and deprived of liberty without an enforceable conviction, for citizens between sixteen and eighteen years of age, those over sixty-five years of age, Ecuadorians living abroad, members of the Armed Forces and National Police and disabled persons is optional; the other way is, through nomination or designation by the competent authority, for which the equal representation of women and men must be observed. ; to ensure the participation, election and appointment of excluded and marginalized persons such as indigenous people, the State shall adopt affirmative action measures.

Currently, political inclusion is related to citizen participation in "the control of public sector entities and agencies, and of natural or legal persons of the private sector that provide services or develop activities of public interest" (Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, 2021, p. 137), All this, in order to guarantee responsibility, transparency and equity in the acts of the public and private sector, which helps to protect rights, denounce and combat corruption, as a fundamental axis to achieve the well-being of all Ecuadorians.

Citizen participation is one of the functions of the Ecuadorian State, being one of its fundamental obligations, the, "formulate public policies of transparency, control, accountability, promotion of citizen participation and prevention and fight against corruption" (Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, 2021, p. 138), for its part, the Council of Citizen Participation and Social Control "will promote and encourage the exercise of the rights related to the citizen participation, promote and establish mechanisms of social control in matters of public interest" (Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, 2021, p. 138)

The Organic Law of Citizen Participation (2020), aims to "promote, promote and guarantee the exercise of the rights of participation of citizens, collectives, communes, communities, indigenous peoples and nationalities, Afro-Ecuadorian and Montubio peoples, and other lawful forms of organization, in a protagonistic manner, in the corresponding decision-making, the autonomous collective organization and the validity of the forms of public management with the help of citizenship; to institute deliberative bodies, mechanisms, instruments and procedures" (p. 4); the Organic Law of the Council of Citizen Participation and Social Control (2018), which "aims to regulate the organization, functioning and attributions of the Council of Citizen Participation and Social Control, in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic and the law"; the Organic Electoral Law, Code of Democracy (2020), which aims to guarantee the enjoyment of political and participation rights. (National Assembly, Organic Electoral Law, Code of Democracy, 2020)

In the current Constitution (2021), in article 61, several mechanisms of citizen participation can be evidenced, which can be considered in addition to constitutional rights, as public policies of political

inclusion, among them are: elect and be elected; participate in matters of public interest; present draft popular normative initiatives; be consulted; to supervise acts of public authority; revoke the mandate of popularly elected authorities; perform public jobs and functions based on merit and ability, and in a transparent, inclusive, equitable, pluralistic and democratic selection and appointment system, which guarantees their participation, with criteria of equity and gender parity, equal opportunities for persons with disabilities and intergenerational participation; and to form political parties and movements, to join or disaffiliate freely from them and to participate in all decisions taken by them.

The National Development Plan, for many authors, is the mechanism that guides the destiny of the Ecuadorian State, the effectiveness of its application allows to achieve the Sumak Kawsay through the effective enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the Constitution and in international human rights instruments, this includes guaranteeing equality and equity with social justice; however, whether the content of the National Development Plan 2007-2010, National Plan for Good Living 2009-2013 is revised; National Plan for Good Living 2013-2017 and National Development Plan, Toda una Vida 2017-2021, most of the content is theory, because in reality, there are few objectives that have been met.

Under these arguments, it can be concluded by pointing out that the public policies of political inclusion that the Ecuadorian State has established to ensure the full and active participation of citizens in the public sector, are governed by the principles of equality, equity and non-discrimination; are the strategies, plans, programs, projects and activities that the State is creating and promoting, so that citizens effectively enjoy the rights of participation; transparency is guaranteed in public management and decision-making of the governments that make up the territorial organization of the Ecuadorian State and are regulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador and the Organic Code of Territorial Organization, Autonomies and Decentralization (COOTAD) to guarantee the well-being of citizens.

With regard to public policies for political inclusion in Ecuador's indigenous communities, it should be noted that the 1998 Constitution, in compliance with Convention No. 169 of the International Labour Organization (ILO), recognizes the collective rights of our aborigines, by constituting itself as a social State governed by the rule of law, multicultural and multi-ethnic, guarantees the participation of this social group in decisions especially related to the environment; for its part, the current Constitution extends the collective rights of indigenous communes, communities, peoples and nationalities; However, political exclusion is another of the problems that our indigenous people had to resist for more than 500 years and that currently, although it is true, there is an indigenous participation in political affairs, it is no less true that the opinions and decisions coming from women and young people are not considered efficiently and effectively.

4. Poverty and quality of life of the indigenous people of Ecuador

Unemployment, poverty, migration, discrimination, unsatisfied basic needs, are some problems that have been leading since 1532 (Inca conquest), our natives; Although the right to water is a human and constitutional right, in several indigenous communities rainwater, pogoio, lagoons and in the best of cases piped water are consumed, "75% of the population has access to safely managed drinking water, the gap in this access persists in rural areas" (Council for the Protection of Rights, 2021), a situation that puts at risk the life, health and personal integrity of those who live in ancestral lands.

The problem of poverty among the indigenous people of Ecuador is evident in the rural sector, where it is not even known what the basic family basket is; Many indigenous people have immigrated and emigrated to get out of this crisis, in fact, several have succeeded, but its consequences have been unfavorable for their cultural identity, for the family, even for the community. From the point of view of sociology, poverty is a consequence of the poor distribution of natural wealth. Although socio-economic and political relations within the community are based on the principles of minka, solidarity, collaboration and cooperation, having ventured into politics, changed the worldview of several indigenous people, who saw in this human activity, the best way to change their quality of life and those of their own. forgetting their ancestral and community principles.

On the other hand, the poor distribution of natural wealth, not only comes from the State, but from the indigenous authorities themselves, who have negotiated under the table the destinies and future of the members of the community, in most cases, the purpose has been to seek personal and family well-



being or in turn, Through illicit acts (bribery, illicit enrichment, influence peddling, etc.), they have changed their way of life, marking more and more, the differences and inequalities among the indigenous people; in other words, the indigenous representatives, authorities and directors (golden ponchos), have used the ignorance and obedience of the aborigines to achieve their purpose. These realities are having a negative impact on the poverty and quality of life of indigenous people.

To measure the unsatisfied basic needs in the rural sector, where the largest number of indigenous people are located, four fundamental rights are taken as references: the right to education, work, housing, health and public services. Education in the rural sector is of poor quality and insufficient. It is of poor quality, because its preparation is poor compared to education received by students in the urban sector; If infrastructure, material, didactic, technological and scientific resources, including human talent, are evaluated, the disadvantages are significant, for this reason, there is a considerable number of students from the rural sector, who do not enter higher education easily. In this regard, Zambrano, (2019), points out that, in the rural sector, low learning rates, poor quality of pedagogical processes, dropout and repetition are noted. Similarly, a decrease in enrolment and an increase in school drop-out at the preschool, basic and secondary levels.

Work is a fundamental right for the social and economic development of peoples, it is the economic activity through which people can satisfy their basic needs, however, in the province of Chimborazo, where the largest number of indigenous people in Ecuador are located, according to INEC (2021), the unemployment rate in the rural sector, in 2019 it was 1.3%, by 2021 it amounted to 2.3%; among the main causes of this social phenomenon, in the first instance is Covid 19, followed by the lack of support for agricultural and livestock production; Indeed, due to the presence of the global pandemic, several indigenous people who worked in formal and informal commerce became part of the unemployed population and because of the cushioning, The employment situation of thousands of indigenous farmers and ranchers worsened significantly.

The right to housing and decent housing, especially in the rural sector, is a myth that the State and the provincial, cantonal and parish autonomous governments do not find the formula to overcome this social inequality, so that a safe and healthy habitat for indigenous people and the guarantee of their right to housing, It is an uncertain right. The same happens with health, in the communities there are no medical dispensaries, in the cantonal capitals, there are public health centers, but the lack of personnel, infrastructure, equipment and medicines, has had a significant impact on the growth of chronic diseases both in the elderly population, as in children and adolescents, "or na research of the Catholic University of Ecuador and CEDIS, carried out between 2018 and 2019, evidenced the high rates of child malnutrition in the cantons of the province of Chimborazo ", despite the fact that this province is characterized by being agricultural and livestock, by having institutions of higher education with careers related to health and nutrition, The problem could not be overcome.

Decentralized self-governments have an obligation to ensure adequate provision and access to public services. In the rural sector, and especially in indigenous communities far from the cantonal capital, there is an absence of garbage collection services; fixed telephony and internet; road, drainage, and sewerage infrastructure works; health or public health service; street lighting; markets and supply centers; public services, indispensable to improve the quality of life of the inhabitants and that by constitutional right the State and the decentralized autonomous governments must guarantee their effective enjoyment, however, the reality is different. Under these considerations, it concludes by pointing out that public policies of social and political inclusion; the agreements and agreements signed between indigenous managers and representatives and the State; and, the citizen participation of indigenous people. especially in the dialogue tables, they have not reduced poverty rates, much less have they improved the quality of life in the communities, peoples and indigenous nations of Ecuador, for this reason the effectiveness and efficiency of the management of the last governments has been deficient, which is causing a formal and real violation of the Principles of universality, accessibility. regularity, continuity, solidarity, subsidiarity, participation and equity.

6. Methodology

The study has two phases, the first phase is theoretical, in which the public policies implemented by the Ecuadorian State to guarantee the social and political inclusion of the indigenous people of Ecuador were analyzed; the second phase confronts theory with reality, to carry out this activity three



rural parishes of the Province of Chimborazo, Republic of Ecuador, were selected. For the study of the legal problem, the inductive, historical, logical, dogmatic and descriptive method was used; researchers take a mixed qualitative approach; For the objectives achieved, it is a pure, analytical legal and descriptive legal research; of non-experimental design.

The population directly involved is made up of 20 indigenous authorities and managers; and, 80 inhabitants belonging to the ancestral peoples of Cacha, Punín and Flores, which is why the Delphi method was applied; for the selection of those involved, non-probabilistic sampling was used to criteria of the researchers, to whom a questionnaire of 9 closed questions was applied; For the treatment of information, mathematical, computer and logical techniques were applied.

5. Presentation and discussion of results

Table 1: Research results

QUESTION	AUTHORITIES AND MANAGERS INDIGENOUS		INDIGENOUS	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
<i>Do the public policies implemented by the Ecuadorian State guarantee the social inclusion of the indigenous people of Ecuador?</i>	35%	65%	10%	90%
<i>The agreements signed by the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) with the Ecuadorian State guarantee the social inclusion of the indigenous people of Ecuador?</i>	24%	76%	15%	85%
<i>Have the public policies implemented by the Ecuadorian State improved the quality of life of indigenous people?</i>	25%	75%	15%	85%
<i>Do the public policies implemented by the Ecuadorian State guarantee the political inclusion of indigenous Ecuador?</i>	45%	65%	25%	75%
<i>Have the public policies implemented by the Ecuadorian State improved indigenous citizen participation?</i>	30%	70%	20%	80%
<i>Do the public policies implemented by the Ecuadorian State guarantee the right to political participation?</i>	25%	75%	15%	85%
<i>Do the public policies implemented by the Ecuadorian State guarantee the right to elect and be elected?</i>	25%	75%	5%	95%
<i>Do the public policies implemented by the Ecuadorian State guarantee the right to vote freely and in a unique manner?</i>	20%	80%	10%	90%
<i>Does exclusion and discrimination against indigenous people persist?</i>	85%	15%	90%	10%

SOURCE: Questionnaire applied to the authorities, managers and indigenous people of the ancestral peoples of Cacha, Punín and Flores

For a better understanding of the results, it is necessary to point out that, between the authorities and indigenous leaders, from the conceptual point of view, there is a difference that for many is not significant, instead for the results of the present investigative work, it is fundamental; the indigenous authority is the aboriginal who decides to participate in the political life of the State and through popular elections tries to reach a seat as a public authority (councilor, mayor, prefect, assemblyman, etc.); On the other hand, the director is the representative of the commune, community or indigenous organization, who is elected by the members of the collectivity. On the other hand, indigenous is the pseudonym given to the aboriginal or native of an ancestral territory; On the other hand, peasant, is the person who is dedicated to agriculture and livestock within the community territory.

Constitutionally, the Ecuadorian State guarantees, without any discrimination, the rights enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic and in international human rights instruments, human dignity, life and personal integrity being fundamental rights of these normative instruments; In order to give effect to the enjoyment of the above-mentioned rights, the State prepares and implements public policies. To

reduce inequality and in some way reward the hundreds of years of discrimination and exclusion of indigenous people, social and political public policies have been created.

The public policies implemented by the Ecuadorian State to guarantee the social inclusion of indigenous peoples are intended to meet the needs and solve the socio-economic problems of this vulnerable group. To meet this objective, according to Carranza & Cisneros (2014), strategies and reforms have been designed, such as: national strategy for equality and eradication of poverty (ENIEP), national strategy for the change of the productive matrix (ENCMP), the reform of social security, the reform of the human development bonus (BDH), creation of the care system during the life cycle, health system reform; These strategies and other public policies of social inclusion, analyzing the quality of life of the majority of indigenous people, remained in the dialogue tables of demagogic politicians, including the agreements signed by the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) and other indigenous movements, facts that have motivated to resort to social protest.

The political inclusion of excluded people is not only an aspiration enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic, but one of the objectives of human rights and the sustainable development goals of the 2030 agenda. The reforms and public policies that have been implemented to achieve greater citizen participation of indigenous people have not been 100 per cent effective; It denotes a significant participation of a privileged group called "Golden Ponchos", many of them for personal interests, have left the ship of the indigenist movements, to address the political parties of the mestizos, including in the indigenist political groups, there is greater participation of the mestizos than the aborigines themselves.

On the other hand, alluding to gender equity, in community assemblies, the speeches, opinions and suggestions of indigenous women and youth are heard, but in practice, they remain in that, in mere opinions; in the last two dialogues, with the governments of Moreno (October 2019) and Lasso (July 2022), The participation of indigenous women and youth is nil. Article 11, paragraph 2, of the Constitution in force prohibits all forms of discrimination and the same constitutional text guarantees a system of participation based on criteria of equity and gender parity. To elect public authorities, the component authority must oblige and guarantee equal participation, of 50% of men and 50% of women, a constitutional and legal obligation, which is not fulfilled, according to *primicias.ec* (2019), of the 1,875 candidates for mayor, only 249 were women, which means only 13.3%; for the prefectures, of 223 candidates, only 39 were women, representing 37 per cent; "Since 1948, 16 electoral processes have been registered in the country and only eight women (5.84%) have participated as presidential candidates" (*Revistagestion.ec*, 2018), of this percentage of women, from 1998 to 2017, of 617 seats in the legislative branch, only 10 have been occupied by indigenous women; This shows that gender parity in the indigenous sector is an objective that is still not met 100%.

Electing and being elected is another fundamental right of citizen participation; In the indigenous sector, there is a right that has become exclusive to the so-called "golden ponchos" or "indigenous elites", who have been monopolizing the participation in the elections of dignities of popular election, using the ignorance and obedience of the indigenous, to achieve a seat in the public sector, many have achieved it and try to entrench themselves in power, making politics his *modus vivendi*, hindering and opposing the right to be elected.

The democratic system in Ecuador guarantees citizen participation through the mechanisms of representative, direct and community democracy. As community democracy, Ceceña (2008), Cameron, (2010), Orrego (2019), is understood as the exercise of self-government that expresses the form of political participation of communities in issues such as participatory planning and social control, instituting the community in the highest decision-making instance and to which its representatives must be accountable. At the same time, its purpose is the recognition and appreciation of cultural traditions and the struggle for dignity and respect, as well as the satisfaction of basic needs, all within the framework of autonomy as a fundamental principle of these democratic commitments; however, the lack of a normative and "an electoral policy of interculturality" (Ilaquiche, p.101), which strengthens and regulates community democracy, is influencing so that the right to vote freely and autonomously of indigenous people, conforms to other forms of popular election, different from their worldview, which shows an imposition of participatory democracy on community

democracy, which increases the exclusion and political discrimination of the majority of indigenous people.

7. Conclusions


The indigenous communities of Ecuador, are ancestral and community territories, where several native cultures have been developed before the Inca and Spanish conquest; our aborigines from ancient times to the present, have been characterized by their intimate relationship and coexistence with the Pachamama, hence, one of their legacies and millenary practice is the defense and protection of Nature, water and moors. The indigenous communities are located in the rural sector of Ecuador, where they still practice their customs and traditions, a cultural identity that, due to the interference of religion and politics, they are abandoning and leaving aside their ancestral legacy, assuming cultural stereotypes of other cultures.

Each commune, community, people and indigenous nationality, practices its customs and specific and general traditions; its social and political organization is based on the Community Assemblies and the Cabildos, organizations that are responsible for solving internal conflicts. An ancestral (political) community custom characteristic of social coexistence and that is disappearing, is the minka or miga, an ancient Andean philosophy that guides interpersonal relationships among the members of the community and is based on the principles of solidarity, commitment, fraternity and reciprocity; Currently, almost all indigenous communities are at the expense of being beneficiaries of public policies implemented by the Ecuadorian State, a fact that does not guarantee social inclusion, nor has it improved by 100% the quality of life of the indigenous people of Ecuador.

On the other hand, the millenary peoples of Ecuador practiced a democracy that could be called communitarian and that is currently recognized by the Institution of the Republic (2008); it is governed by the autonomous decisions and resolutions taken in an open Community Assembly or Cabildo. The autonomous decisions and resolutions are in accordance with the worldview, customs, traditions, values of each indigenous community and aim to solve problems through this form of citizen participation; however, due to social, cultural, political and legal factors, few communities, peoples and nationalities practice this type of democracy. the largest party is leaning towards representative and direct democracy, a model of participation that is based on public policies implemented by the Ecuadorian State and that do not guarantee the political inclusion of the indigenous people of Ecuador; On the contrary, they are being used maliciously as a platform for mestizos and the indigenous people themselves with golden ponchos and embroidered shirts, to come to power to satisfy their individual and family needs.

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