

NGOs reports vs. Reality: Indigenous Peruvians' real-life challenges

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This research explores if NGOs accurately document the socioeconomic and environmental issues Indigenous Peruvians face. The study draws on previous literature on environmental challenges and focuses on socioeconomic challenges affecting Indigenous people. Additionally, the research contributes to previous studies as some researchers argue there is a disconnect between development organizations and target communities and propose the outsiders' theory claiming that development organizations lack the cultural awareness to understand the needs of target communities. The study uses thematic coding to find the seven main issues documented in NGO reports. These seven topics served as the basis for formulating open-ended questions to conduct 45-minute interviews with ten Quechua speakers to then analyze the transcripts through two rounds of thematic coding. Socioeconomic issues are the most pressing issue for Indigenous Peruvians, as these people lack access to basic services. Consequently, Indigenous people leave their communities looking for better jobs and educational opportunities in cities. Furthermore, socioeconomic issues make Indigenous people more vulnerable to environmental challenges as Indigenous migrants are usually poor, and climate change disproportionately affects people facing poverty. The project will help to close the gap between NGO reports and real-life challenges to allow researchers to explore policies on how to address the connection between socioeconomic challenges and environmental issues instead of following external agendas.

Key words: Indigenous Peru, Indigenous Issues, NGO reporting



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Peruvian centralization does not allow institutions to address Indigenous people's challenges, such as a lack of education and healthcare access. Peruvian institutions offering services such as healthcare and higher education are highly centralized in the capital, neglecting other regions, including areas with a higher density of Indigenous people. For instance, according to Espino (2023), "only 36% of Peruvians have higher education and, of that 36%, only 13.9% come from rural areas" (p. 1). Furthermore, according to Diego Venegas, the former Minister of Health:

The inefficiency of the health care system is a consequence of centralization, as Peruvians heavily depend on hospital centers in Lima while other patients from the rest of the country struggle to receive medical attention. More specifically, according to Venegas, "only five of the 25 departments of Peru have radiotherapy, reflecting the huge gap between the capital and the rest of the regions of Peru. ("La pandemia y el centralismo," 2021)

Understanding the centralized system in Peru helps to comprehend why the research question focuses on assessing if NGOs accurately address the issues Indigenous people face, as NGOs do not document factors such as centralization as mechanisms contributing to inequalities Indigenous people face. Consequently, the research question will allow for gathering primary data NGO reports lack.

NGOs and the Peruvian government classify poverty, lack of education, a poor healthcare system, and lack of political rights as the main challenges Indigenous people face. More specifically, the prevalence of poverty and poor education among Indigenous people contribute to social exclusion. The United Nations Economic and Social Council report identifies poverty as an issue disproportionately affecting Indigenous people as "Indigenous peoples are in the worst economic situation compared to other Latin American citizens as many Indigenous individuals live on less than \$1 per day ("Underdevelopment, Poverty of Latin America," 2011). Furthermore, according to the Peruvian Ministry of Diversity and Social Inclusion, poverty leads to Indigenous people's lack of access to higher education, causes occupational segregation, and reduces the opportunities of Indigenous Peruvians for political participation; consequently, all these factors exacerbate discrimination and social exclusion (Valdivia, 2007, p. 644). Knowing the economic inequalities and discrimination Indigenous people face helps to understand why the research question focuses on finding discrepancies and similarities between NGO reports and the individual experiences of Indigenous people, as this comparison will reveal if the focus of NGOs on socioeconomic inequalities aligns with the issues Indigenous individuals believe are more important to solve. More specifically, this study analyzes the testimonials of the interviewees to find common patterns of Peruvian social dynamics influencing socioeconomic challenges that may not be covered in NGO reports.

NGOs highly emphasize environmental challenges as a key issue Indig-

enous Peruvians face. NGOs and the researchers working for these organizations are concerned about the negative impact of territorial displacement, extractive industries, and climate change on Indigenous lands and attempt to include Indigenous people in the development of environmental programs to address environmental issues. Deruyttere (1997) highlights the problem of the pollution of Indigenous territories as the result of mining, logging, poaching, and commercial farming and calls for the preservation and restoration of these environments. Similarly, the website of UNESCO Peru highlights the importance of giving Indigenous people visibility and promotes capitalizing on these people's knowledge of the environment to design and implement environmental programs to address issues such as climate change ("UNESCO Peru," 2023). Being aware of NGOs' emphasis on solving environmental challenges provides context to explore whether NGOs impose environmental agendas on Indigenous populations. The research question investigates the possibility that contrary to NGO reports, Indigenous people in Peru prioritize solving socioeconomic disparities over addressing environmental challenges.

This research assesses if NGOs accurately document the factors influencing Indigenous issues in Peru. The research investigates similarities and differences between NGO reports and the real-life issues Indigenous individuals face. The primary data for this project are ten interviews of 45 minutes with 10 Indigenous individuals based on questions about territorial rights, extractive resources, climate change, poverty, education, healthcare access, and discrimination. The interviews include the topics discussed in NGO reports. This research theorizes NGOs are imposing environmental agendas on Indigenous populations in Peru when, in reality, Indigenous Peruvians perceive socioeconomic challenges as more important issues.

Existing research on Indigenous challenges focuses on outsiders' perspectives; in contrast, this project focuses on understanding insiders' perspectives on the Indigenous challenge by gathering primary data. Prioritizing insiders' perspectives over outsiders such as non-governmental organizations can help to devise initiatives considering Peruvian social dynamics to solve the issues Indigenous people perceive as most important.

Indigenous interviewees' experiences align with NGOs' reports on socioeconomic issues, yet the interviews challenge NGO reports documenting environmental challenges as an issue for Indigenous Peruvians. The testimonials align with NGO reports addressing lack of access to healthcare, access to education, discrimination, and poverty. However, the interviews challenge NGO reports documenting climate change, territory displacement, and extractive resources industries as issues for Indigenous Peruvians. The following literature review addresses the debate among scholars studying socioeconomic issues affecting Indigenous people and the scholars studying the protection of environmental rights in Indigenous lands. Additionally, this section discusses the gap between NGOs and target communities,

highlighting the “outsider theory,” which suggests NGOs lack the cultural awareness to understand the needs of target communities. The research design outlines the use of an interview protocol covering seven NGO-reported issues for conducting ten interviews, along with two rounds of thematic coding to analyze the transcripts. The analysis section includes quotes from the interviewees aligning with the information from NGO reports about socioeconomic issues, and it also includes quotes challenging NGOs documenting environmental challenges as the most pressing issue. The discussion section supports scholars investigating socioeconomic challenges faced by Indigenous communities over scholars focused on environmental conservation. It also supports the scholars’ argument about NGOs imposing an environmental agenda, as there is a lack of alignment between the NGO reports and the interviewees’ testimonials. Lastly, this paper advocates for government investment in small hospitals and tutoring programs to address socioeconomic issues and policies fostering economic growth through sustainable practices in extractive industries.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Socioeconomic vs. Environmental Issues

Previous research has focused on understanding the dynamics behind socioeconomic inequalities with an emphasis on ethnic minorities in Latin America. Ethnicity is one factor correlated with inequalities, as Indigenous people in various countries of Latin America face discrimination that limits access to government services and job opportunities. Thorp et al. (2006) used the CRISE survey of perceptions of identity to show that:

Socioeconomic inequalities have in part an ethnic dimension. The researchers asked participants if someone’s ethnic or racial origins affected the chances of employment. According to research, in Bolivia and Peru, nearly two-thirds of respondents felt that ethnicity impacted job opportunities while in Guatemala half of respondents felt being Indigenous affects job opportunities in the public sector. (p. 458)

This research project can help understand how inequalities such as limited education opportunities, lack of health access, and discrimination impact the individual experiences of Indigenous Quechua speakers in Peru. Additionally, this project’s insights on discrimination will help to understand ethnicity as a factor limiting opportunities for Peruvians.

While a group of researchers focuses on indigenous socioeconomic inequalities, other scholars discuss the development of transnational movements to promote environmental conservation. Scholars propose a more inclusive framework including indigenous insights for environmental conservation. Hibbard et al. (2008) attribute the emergence of a transnational movement in the 80s and 90s focused on place-based projects aiming to

integrate the interests of the economy and Indigenous needs to preserve the environment as a response to scholars' critiques about excluding Indigenous people's views. Similarly, Lertzman & Vredenburg (2005) focused on a case study using interviews, press releases, and panel reports to highlight the benefits of negotiations that included the insights of native people. In this case study, The Scientific Panel for Sustainable Forest Practices – an organization studying the preservation of the environment – used the Nuu-Chah-Nul's environmental knowledge to find agreements about land planning in native territories in Canada (Lertzman & Vredenburg, 2005). This research will analyze if Indigenous individuals prioritize environmental conservation over socioeconomic inequalities or vice versa. Additionally, the personal experiences of the interviewees will provide information on socioeconomic and environmental issues to understand why they prioritize some issues over others.

Some scholars led credence on NGOs imposing environmental agendas to control the region by questioning the actions of Latin American governments with extractive resources. These NGOs impose agendas with the excuse of caring for Indigenous rights and the environment. For instance, Lorena Suarez (2014) supports the idea of ex-presidents of Latin America opposing the imposition of environmental agendas. Furthermore, the author analyzed the discourses against the imposition of NGO environmental agendas of the former presidents of Bolivia, Uruguay, Ecuador, and Cuba. In the 2012 discourse of Pepe Mujica, the former president of Uruguay, the former leader argued that "if international donors are so concerned about protecting the environment, then why these organizations do not encourage powerful countries to stop importing resources from developing countries polluting the most?" (Suarez, 2014, p. 82). The analysis of the interview testimonials will allow finding patterns about how environmental and socioeconomic issues affect Indigenous Peruvians to complement the information of the NGO reports.

Development Agents vs. Target Communities

Research has examined the disconnect between the priorities and strategies of NGOs and the actual needs and preferences of Indigenous communities. This misalignment in goals and priorities results in development projects' ineffective outcomes. De-Sardan (2008) analyzed different anthropological case studies in Africa as evidence of development organizations commonly deploying "experts" to engage with villagers and conduct rapid field studies aimed at identifying community demands. However, these fieldwork projects often serve as a means for development organizations to justify implementing the same projects across multiple developing countries without adequately addressing the unique needs of each community (De-Sardan, 2008). Similarly, after conducting a fieldwork project in Guatemala with the Ch'orti's, Metz (2006) argues that the lack of consideration for

family planning in development projects is one example of the disconnect between local needs and broader politics, as Indigenous people in Guatemala have the highest birth rate in Latin America, but there is no project willing to address the issue and instead, development projects “impossibly try to keep up with population growth rather than giving Ch’orti’s the means to prevent it” (p. 248). This project extends previous research on the disconnect between NGOs and Indigenous communities by analyzing NGO reports and complementing these reports’ information with primary data. However, instead of analyzing the disconnect between development projects targeted toward Indigenous people, this research aims to find the potential disconnect between NGO reports and the issues Indigenous Peruvians face.

Scholars in the social sciences developed the outsider theory to describe the challenge external organizations usually face when attempting to address social issues in communities where these organizations have limited knowledge or lack direct experience. Outsiders may end up not comprehending the dynamics of a specific culture due to cultural barriers and the insiders’ lack of trust in people outside their communities; consequently, scholars suggest engaging in collaborative research with insiders to avoid biases. Giwa (2015) analyzes case studies to highlight the challenges researchers from the Global South face to understand communities they do not belong to due to cultural barriers and highlights the importance of collaborating with insiders, as these people can grasp aspects of culture outsiders lack access to. Similarly, Mullings (1999), analyzes his own experiences on how cultural perceptions influenced his fieldwork project when conducting interviews with managers and workers in Jamaica and suggests external organizations and researchers be in a constant reflexive and critical process to recognize how positionality affects the understanding of the insiders’ dynamics. This research project contributes to the body of the outsider theory by examining the possibility of NGOs acting as outsiders lacking the cultural awareness to understand the challenges of Indigenous Peruvians. Additionally, in case this study finds discrepancies between the NGO reports and the interviews on Indigenous challenges, it could emphasize the need for collaboration between NGOs and Indigenous people to adequately address Indigenous issues.

This project will address the current scholarly debate about NGOs imposing agendas on developing countries. Additionally, it will draw on existing research about indigenous socioeconomic and environmental challenges Indigenous people face in Latin American countries by analyzing the individual life experiences of Indigenous people in Peru. The project contributes to recent research by analyzing if the agendas of NGOs align with the real-life experiences of ten Indigenous Quechua speakers in Peru by providing an in-depth evaluation of overlaps and discrepancies. This analysis will allow an understanding of the factors contributing to the challenges Indigenous people face in having access to healthcare, access to education, discrimination, resource extraction, territorial displacement, economic inequalities,

and climate change. The recognition of the most salient issues Indigenous people face helps to respond to these people's needs by developing an Indigenous political agenda. The publication of this project can serve to promote research to suggest policy changes and create awareness about the Indigenous issue among scholars.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This project used primary data drawn from in-person interviews I conducted in Peru with ten Quechua speakers. The questions of the interviews pertained to issues regarding access to healthcare, access to education, discrimination, resource extraction, poverty, territorial displacement, and climate change Indigenous Peruvians face according to two NGO reports. This study analyzed the report of the Minority Rights Group International (MRG) from the database of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and one report of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). I chose the MRG report from the database of the UNHCR and the ECLAC report because both are the main development organizations worldwide as they develop projects and conduct research to advance global development agendas, promote human rights, and address challenges affecting vulnerable populations. The interviews provided information about the personal experiences of Indigenous Peruvians on the seven main socioeconomic and environmental challenges addressed in the NGO reports. As this data focused on individual experiences, the interviews provided examples of the specific ways these challenges affect Indigenous individuals' opportunities and rights. The interviews helped close the gaps in the NGO reports' conclusions to better understand how the seven main challenges mentioned above affect Indigenous people.

After identifying the seven main challenges discussed in the NGO reports on socioeconomic and environmental issues, I designed an interview protocol to supplement the existing information of the two NGO reports. I designed interview questions by including two to six questions per topic and follow-up questions to explore individuals' insights (see Table 1). These types of questions encouraged participants to elaborate on personal experiences on how socioeconomic and environmental issues affect their daily lives. Individual narratives contributed to finding commonalities of opinions and factors influencing socioeconomic and environmental challenges to shed light on systemic issues Indigenous Peruvians face. Additionally, interviews with ten people provided information about the six main issues explored to understand the unique experiences of Peruvian Indigenous challenges not necessarily covered in existing research.

Questions per topic
Territorial rights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · How was life in the place that you were born? · Why did you decide to move to Arequipa? · If you had the opportunity to go back to live the rest of your life in your place of birth, would you do it? Why?
Extractive resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · What are the main activities people do for living in your place of birth? · Have the occupations people used to have changed over time? If so, why? · What are the main resources you can find in your original region? How do people take advantage of these resources? · Is there mining or tree felling in your place of birth? If so, what are your opinions about these activities?
Climate change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Have you noticed a change in how people back in your hometown raise their crops or livestock? · What are your opinions on heavy rains and their effect on crops and living back in your hometown? · Do you believe climate change equally affects your place of birth and Arequipa? Why do you have this opinion?
Poverty: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · In what industry do you work? · How do you feel about the work that you do? · In what part of the city do you live? · Why did you decide to live there? · How often do you go to buy groceries, and where do you buy them? Why do you prefer to go shopping in that place?
Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Was your primary school close to your house back in your hometown? · How was your experience in high school? · Back in high school, what was your ideal occupation? · Did you have the opportunity to follow a profession in the field that you wanted to? Why or why not?
Healthcare: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · How frequently did you go to the doctor when you resided in your place of birth? · Was the hospital close to your house back in your hometown?
Discrimination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Do you believe that in our country, white people have more opportunities than others? · Have you ever witnessed someone being mistreated based on their appearance? · Have you ever felt discriminated against?

Table 1: List of questions used in the interviews

I collected the participants for this study through personal connections and a snowball technique, ensuring a diverse pool of Indigenous individuals from the Andean region of Peru who migrated to the city of Arequipa. I chose people from Cusco, Puno, and the Andean region of Arequipa, as most Indigenous people in Peru speak Quechua and the majority of Quechua speakers residing in Peru live in the same areas as the ten interviewees I gathered (see Table 2). After finding the participants, obtaining approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and ensuring participants' informed consent, I conducted 45-minute interviews in Spanish with participants from a diverse mix of educational levels and occupations, including 5 women and 5 men. I conducted the interviews in a casual setting at a coffee shop, and I recorded the participants without including videos to protect the privacy of the interviewees. During the interviews, individuals discussed socioeconomic challenges such as lack of access to education, health, and poverty as factors influencing the decision to leave Indigenous communities. Primary interview data provided narratives defying the assumption of NGO reports about all Latin American Indigenous people facing the same issues. Specifically, this data helped to get the opinions of Indigenous Peruvians about Indigenous challenges to complement the information from the NGO reports.

Origin of the interviewee	Date of the interview	Place of residency
Interviewee from Santa Lucia, Puno.	December 19 th , 2023	Moved permanently to Arequipa.
Interviewee from Juli, Puno.	December 20 th , 2023	Moved permanently to Arequipa.
Interviewee Castilla, Arequipa.	December 22 nd , 2023	Moved permanently to Arequipa.
Interviewee Ilave, Puno.	December 27 th , 2023	Comes to Arequipa every three months and then goes back to Ilave.
Interviewee 1 Chumbivilcas, Cusco.	December 28 th , 2023	Moved permanently to Arequipa
Interviewee 1 Achoma, Arequipa.	December 29 th , 2023	Initially moved to Arequipa, moved to Brazil, went to Lima, and now resides in Arequipa.
Interviewee 2 Achoma, Arequipa	December 29 th , 2023	Moved permanently to Arequipa.
Interviewee from Huancane, Puno.	January 4 th , 2024	Moved permanently to Arequipa.
Interviewee from Ninantaya, Puno.	January 5 th , 2024	Moved permanently to Arequipa.
Interviewee from Espinar, Cusco.	January 6 th , 2024	Moved permanently to Arequipa.

Table 2: Interviewees information

I used content analysis and two rounds of thematic coding to analyze the data. The first round analyzed the transcripts by identifying the seven main topics discussed in the NGO reports, and the second round analyzed document files to look for common opinions and experiences of the participants when facing these issues. The first round used the seven codes to examine the transcripts and used targeted transcription to translate to English information defying or aligning with NGO reports. After this process, I created seven documents for each theme. These document files went through a second round of thematic coding to find patterns about the opinions and challenges individuals face by using nineteen thematic codes (see Table 3). Two rounds of thematic coding guaranteed gathering the most recurrent themes from the NGO reports and the interviews. Lastly, thematic coding facilitated the organization of information according to the seven topics to compare and contrast the NGO reports with individuals' experiences.

Territorial rights: <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Voluntary migration· Job opportunities influencing migration· Educational opportunities influencing migration
Extractive resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Communities affected by mining· Positive opinions on mining· Negative opinions on mining
Climate change: <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Climate change effects on food production· Climate change effects on Indigenous communities' vs urban areas· Ethnicity of the migrants affected by climate change
Poverty: <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Residing in low-income areas· Lack of ownership of property· Occupations of migrants
Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Pursue of higher education· Proximity of schools· Quality of education

Healthcare: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Medical personnel · Proximity to hospitals
Discrimination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Personal experiences with discrimination · Individuals avoiding talking about discrimination

Table 3: Codes used for the second round of thematic coding

ANALYSIS

Access to Services

According to NGOs, lack of access to education and healthcare are two issues affecting Indigenous people in Latin America. Institutions located far away from Indigenous communities, low quality of services, and lack of economic resources are factors influencing the lack of access to healthcare and education. According to Del Popolo & Jaspers-Faijer (2014), gaps in the implementation of healthcare rights among Indigenous people are influenced by material poverty, low levels of formal education, and people living in remote areas. Furthermore, “the main reasons for the lower rate of participation of youth in post-secondary education are early incorporation into work and the poor quality of primary and secondary education” (Del Popolo & Jaspers-Faijer, 2014, p. 92). However, due to the NGOs’ failure to consider the influence of national contexts on social dynamics, these reports may not accurately capture the social factors influencing the challenges Indigenous Peruvians face when accessing education and healthcare. NGOs may oversimplify how the lack of access to healthcare and education affects Indigenous Peruvians because these reports lack firsthand testimonials to understand the unique experiences of the interviewees.

Medical centers located far away from Indigenous communities and the absence of doctors in hospitals are challenges affecting Indigenous communities in Peru. On average, Indigenous Peruvians have to commute for at least one hour to go to a medical post, and these medical centers do not have doctors; instead, these centers only have nursing technicians. According to the interviewees, going to the hospital required several hours of walking, traveling on mules, or public transportation (see Table 4). Moreover, all the interviewees reported having health posts understaffed without specialized health services, such as cardiologists. For instance, according to the interviewee from Chumbivilcas, Cusco: “There was not a healthcare center near my house and the closest healthcare facility did not have doctors or nurses, there was only one nursing technician” (personal communication, December 28th, 2023). The overlap between NGO reports and the testimonies of

the interviewees validates the accuracy of the lack of access to healthcare as an issue affecting Indigenous Peruvians. Complementing the information in NGO reports with primary data helps to avoid the danger of assuming homogeneity in the difficulties of accessing healthcare among Indigenous peoples in different Latin American countries and helps to recognize how geographical isolation and lack of personnel negatively impact specifically Indigenous Peruvians.

Interviewee 1 from Achoma, Arequipa “The hospital in Achoma is about a forty- minute walk away. We did not go to the doctor regularly because the hospital was far away. Nowthat I live in Arequipa, I regularly visit the doctor for my baby.”
Interviewee from Juli, Puno “There was no health center in my town. To go to the medical center, we had to ride a mule or ahorse for almost an entire day.”
Interviewee from Huancane, Puno “I had to walk an hour and a half to get to the hospital as there is not even access for vehicles.”
Interviewee from Chumbivilcas Cusco “When I lived in Chumbivilcas I had to take transportation and travel three hours to go to thehospital because the hospital was far away.”

Table 4: Proximity to healthcare centers

Not all interviewees reported a lack of access to healthcare negatively affecting them. Some interviewees reported always being healthy and not being affected by hospitals located far away, as these interviewees did not need to go to the doctor due to good health. Additionally, some testimonials reflected healthcare services, such as vaccinations, accessible to Indigenous individuals through healthcare campaigns. For instance, the interviewee from Castilla, Arequipa said: “As part of healthcare campaigns, nurses went to people’s homes once a month to promote the health of the elderly and children by having vaccination campaigns” (personal communication, December 22nd, 2023). Moreover, the interviewee from Ilave, Puno said: “While growing up, my family focused on eating nutritious food such as quinoa and kiwicha, so my family and I never got sick to the point of needing to go to a doctor because we have always been healthy” (personal communication, December 27th, 2023). These discrepancies suggest that while healthcare access remains a concern for many Indigenous communities, there are variations in experiences undermining the idea of deficient healthcare as an issue for all Indigenous people. However, few interviewees reporting being healthy and

having access to healthcare services due to healthcare campaigns does not sufficiently counter the prevailing narrative of healthcare facilities being far away from Indigenous communities and lacking personnel.

Indigenous Peruvians face challenges accessing education due to economic difficulties and schools being far away from Indigenous communities. Indigenous Peruvians have to walk or use public transportation for at least one hour to go to school. Moreover, Indigenous Peruvians cannot pursue higher education because they need to start working at a young age due to poverty. For instance, the interviewee from Chumbivilcas, Cusco said: “In Chumbivilcas, I had to take public transportation and travel for three hours to go to primary school” (personal communication, December 28th, 2023). Similarly, the interviewee from Huancane, Puno said: “To go to school we had to walk about an hour or an hour and a half” (personal communication, December 30th, 2023). Moreover, the interviewees reported not pursuing higher education due to a lack of economic resources (see Table 5). The overlap between the interviewee’s testimonials and NGO reports is an indicator of NGOs accurately documenting the lack of access to education as an issue affecting Indigenous Peruvians. This information underscores the importance of addressing socioeconomic disparities, as these issues are the primary cause of Indigenous Peruvians’ challenges, including lack of access to education.

<p>Interviewee from Ilave, Puno</p> <p>“I have only studied until high school because then I needed to start working as I did not have money. I decided to move to Arequipa and worked on different jobs before becoming a gardener for a private residential area. My aspiration as a child was to become a civil engineer, but I did not have the time to study and work at the same time.”</p>
<p>Interviewee from Chumbivilcas, Cusco</p> <p>“From a young age, I started working selling clothes because I needed the money, so I could not go to university.”</p>
<p>Interviewee from Huancane, Puno</p> <p>“I wanted to become a teacher, and I planned to take the exam to get admitted to the ‘Universidad Nacional de San Agustín’ which is a national university that offers free tuition to students. I knew that the admission process was very competitive and since I was working because I needed the money, I did not have enough time to study for the exam, so I did not get admitted. After that, I decided to continue working and gave up on going to college.”</p>

Table 5: Financial limitations on higher education pursuit

On the other hand, variations in educational opportunities among some Indigenous individuals challenge the idea of economic limitations and dis-

tance to schools as barriers limiting education opportunities. Contrary to most interviewees, some Indigenous people had enough money to pursue higher education and others reported schools not being far from Indigenous communities. While nine of the interviewees only completed primary and secondary education, one interviewee completed higher education studies in Brazil and became a nurse. Furthermore, the experiences of two participants challenge the idea of schools being far from Indigenous communities (see Table 6). While these outliers may provide valuable insights into exceptions about educational opportunities, these exceptions do not adequately depict the barriers such as the scarce economic resources and the lack of proximity of schools faced by most interviewees. Moreover, relying solely on the experiences of a small subset of interviewees risks overlooking the broader patterns of educational inequality and socioeconomic marginalization prevalent among Indigenous populations in Peru, as reflected in the testimonials of most participants.

<p>Interviewee from Castilla, Arequipa</p> <p>“I left Castilla when I was 10 years old, so I only went to primary school in my hometown. The school I attended was small and was close to my house because the town where I lived was very small.”</p>
<p>Interviewee 2 from Achoma, Arequipa</p> <p>“The school was close, about a 10-minute walk away. My experience at school was good, the teachers always went to classes, and there were different teachers for each course.”</p>

Table 6: Educational experiences among Indigenous people

Indigenous Migration

According to NGO reports, Indigenous people migrate to cities due to territorial displacement. Territorial displacement forces people to leave Indigenous territories because the construction of infrastructures such as power plants causes disruption in the environment. According to Del Popolo & Jaspers-Faijer (2014), Indigenous people’s decision to relocate hinges on considerations relating to gaps in the implementation of territorial rights, as some cities in Latin America have been founded directly in Indigenous territories. Similarly, according to Grant (2019), private company projects, such as the construction of the hydroelectric plant known as “Barro Blanco” in Panama, caused flooding and consequently led to the territorial displacement of the Indigenous community of the Ngäbe-Buglé. NGOs addressing territorial displacement as the main issue causing Indigenous people to migrate demonstrates the emphasis development organizations place on environmental concerns, as these organizations tend to ignore other socioeconomic factors such as access to services and job opportunities causing people

to migrate, and instead choose to emphasize the environmental factors such as territorial displacement. Furthermore, by attributing environmental issues as the root cause of other social problems such as migration, NGOs mistakenly imply that solving environmental challenges would immediately solve social issues such as migration.

The testimonials of the interviewees show Indigenous people do not migrate to cities due to territorial displacement. At least within the context of this sample, the interviewees migrated to urban areas because Indigenous communities usually lack job and educational opportunities offered in cities. For instance, none of the ten interviewees reported migrating to Arequipa due to territorial displacement. Specifically, the Interviewee from Juli, Puno said:

I decided to move to Arequipa to progress financially and look for better job opportunities, and I would return to Juli just to visit my family, but I would prefer to stay to live in Arequipa to be able to make more money. (personal communication, December 20th, 2023)

Like the interviewee from Puno, the rest of the participants also reported voluntary migrating to Arequipa, motivated by better educational opportunities and due to more access to services (see Table 7). The interviewees' reporting of deciding to leave Indigenous communities due to socioeconomic issues challenges the information from NGOs territorial displacement. This discrepancy allows considering the hypothesis of NGOs imposing environmental agendas instead of focusing on solving socioeconomic issues motivating Indigenous migration.

<p>Interviewee from Huancane, Puno</p> <p>"I decided to move to Arequipa because I thought I would have better educational opportunities. For now, I would not return to Puno because I have gotten used to the fact that I can go to places such as shopping centers, and the hospital, and I can send my kids to school. None of these facilities are close to my house back in Puno."</p>
<p>Interviewee from Castilla, Arequipa</p> <p>"I came to Arequipa because Castilla is a small town. I decided to move to Arequipa because the educational opportunities are better here than in my town."</p>
<p>Interviewee from Espinar, Cusco</p> <p>"In addition to better job opportunities, I moved to Arequipa because in Espinar we struggled with limited access to healthcare services and lack of schools. The lack of adequate facilities nearby made daily life challenging."</p>

Table 7: Factors motivating Indigenous Peruvians to migrate to Arequipa

Rapid Urbanization, Discrimination, and Poverty

According to NGO reports, Indigenous people in Latin America contribute to rapid urbanization by migrating to urban areas. As a consequence

of migration and rapid urbanization, Indigenous individuals experience discrimination and poverty in urban areas. According to Del Popolo & Jaspers-Faijer (2014):

The percentage of Indigenous peoples in urban settings is significant: according to the 2010 census round, about 50% of the Indigenous population lives in urban areas...Furthermore, Indigenous migrants encounter difficulties in maintaining and exercising Indigenous identity and culture and in accessing services and employment opportunities in cities owing to structural discrimination. After migration, Indigenous women are more likely to work in domestic service occupations, in maquila industries, or informal own-account activities with extremely precarious working conditions such as miserable wages, a total lack of social security, and health coverage. (pp. 56-60)

While NGO reports offer general insights into how Indigenous people contribute to rapid urbanization and face discrimination and poverty after migration, these reports lack the opinions and personal experiences of Indigenous individuals in Peru with these issues. Consequently, these reports may overlook variations in different countries' social dynamics that contribute to these issues.

The interviewees' experiences support the idea of Indigenous migration to urban areas as a common pattern in Latin America, contributing to the issue of rapid urbanization. Indigenous migrants reside in the peripheral areas of the city, as these areas offer the most affordable housing in Arequipa. According to the interviewees, Indigenous Peruvians occupy peripheral areas of the city because of a lack of economic resources (see Table 8). Participants reported living in low-income peripheral areas of Arequipa: two participants reported living in "El Cono Norte," one participant reported living in "Apipa," one participant reported living in "Pachacutec," and one participant reported living in "Chapi." This project's interviews complement the NGO reports by highlighting how economic inequalities affect Indigenous Peruvians after migrating to Arequipa. Indigenous Peruvians living in low-income areas support the assertion that socioeconomic inequalities are the most pressing issue for Indigenous Peruvians.

Interviewee from Santa Lucia, Puno:

"I live in 'El Cono Norte' because I do not have enough money to pay for a house in another area of Arequipa. Since I work selling clothes in the street, I can only afford to live in that area of the city, as it is the cheapest place to live in Arequipa."

Interviewee from Ninantaya, Puno:

"I live in 'Chapi' and it takes me a long time to get to my job as I work as a gardener for several houses in a residential condominium in Challapampa which is one of the wealthiest areas of the city. Although I work for people who earn a lot of money, the money I make is not enough to live in an area that is closer to the city. So, every morning I have to wake up around 4 am to then take the bus to arrive at my place of work."

Table 8: Interviewees living in peripheral areas due to lack of economic resources

While the majority of the interviewees migrated to Arequipa and built houses in low-income areas, contributing to rapid urbanization, some interviewees lack the ownership of property or do not live permanently in Arequipa. Some participants do not own a house due to constant traveling or due to having to work alternative hours as part of the requirements of being a live-in maid. For instance, two out of the ten interviewees reported not owning a house in the city of Arequipa. Additionally, one participant reported renting a house in Arequipa as the interviewee works in the informal sector and constantly goes back to Ilave, Puno to bring money to his family, and the interviewee from Chumbivilcas, Cusco reported staying at the house of her employer as part of the requirements of being a maid (see Table 9). Despite not owning a house, these people still reside in the city, and consequently, contribute to rapid urbanization by increasing social fragmentation. Additionally, these people working in the informal sector without having access to social security underscores the economic challenges faced by Indigenous Peruvians.

Interviewee from Chumbivilcas, Cusco

"Since I work as a maid, I live in the same house as the people I work for. My boss wanted me to live in her house because in that way I can take care of the house 24/7."

Interviewee from Ilave, Puno

"I come to Arequipa every two months to work as a 'carretillero' - a Peruvian term for people carrying heavy products in markets - so I can bring money for my family. While I am in Arequipa, I rent a room in 'El Cono Norte' - as this is the only area in the city I can afford."

Table 9: Interviewees' reasons for not owning a house in Arequipa

Some of the interviewees reported feeling discriminated against, as people used derogatory terms or made negative comments about their Indigenous features. Non-Indigenous people made fun of indigenous accents and features, implying these characteristics make Indigenous individuals inferior to white Latin Americans. According to the interviewees, people in cities like Arequipa made negative comments against them based on their Indig-

enous features (see Table 10). Additionally, both interviewees from Achoma and Chumbivilcas exhibited non-verbal cues indicative of discomfort while recounting personal experiences about discrimination, such as avoiding eye contact and tense body language. Complementing information from NGO reports with firsthand experiences shows discrimination towards Indigenous Peruvians, reinforcing marginalization by promoting stereotypes and eroding individuals' sense of belonging within society through the use of derogatory comments. Understanding the interconnectedness between marginalization and discrimination shows unfair treatment deepening social inequalities by limiting the opportunities for Indigenous people to participate in social activities, and consequently, supports the assertion of social disparities as one of the most pressing issues for Indigenous Peruvians.

<p>Interviewee from Chumbivilcas, Cusco</p> <p>"I have felt discriminated against because I work as a nanny, and the kid that I took care of made fun of my accent and called me a 'chola' - a derogatory term used to refer to Indigenous people especially by the White privileged Peruvians. She used this term because she said that she was not going to obey a 'chola' implying that because since she was White, she was superior to me."</p>
<p>Interviewee 1 from Achoma, Arequipa</p> <p>"When I went to study in Brazil, one of my classmates asked me if all Peruvians looked and acted the same, as she implied that my Indigenous features made me ugly and uncultured."</p>

Table 10: Interviewees' personal experiences with discrimination

While the interviewees reported discrimination as an issue in Peru, most of the participants avoided responding to questions on how discrimination affected them at a personal level. Probably due to interviewees' discomfort regarding this topic, most of the interviewees did not report experiencing discrimination firsthand. When asked about experiences of discrimination, seven interviewees shifted in their seats, crossed their arms, and avoided making direct eye contact. Although all the interviewees agreed that discrimination is an issue for Peruvians, seven interviewees avoided responding to questions about how discrimination affected them personally. Only the interviewee from Santa Lucia, Puno reported not feeling discriminated against at all: "I know that a lot of people say discrimination is a big issue in Peru, but I have not felt discriminated against because I have always been self-confident, and I am proud of my ethnicity" (personal communication, December 19th, 2023). The reluctance of most interviewees to discuss personal experiences of discrimination does not diminish the validity of NGOs documenting discrimination as an issue for Indigenous people; rather, the attitude of the participants suggests discrimination may be taboo in Peruvian

society. The lack of open dialogue about discrimination may indicate that participants did not want to share information with a non-Indigenous outsider for fear of being misinterpreted. The lack of communication between Indigenous Peruvians and non-Indigenous outsiders supports the idea of NGOs lacking cultural awareness to document the social dynamics influencing discrimination in Peru.

Environmental Issues

According to NGOs, climate change disproportionately affects Indigenous people in Latin America. Climate changes coupled with resource extraction industries threaten the ecological sustainability of Indigenous communities, causing food insecurity. According to the Del Popolo & Jaspers-Faijer (2014), “climate change is a threat primarily affecting Indigenous people because these people usually live in fragile ecosystems sensitive to changes in the physical environment” (p. 52). Furthermore, environmental degradation, pollution of Indigenous traditional ecosystems, and a decline in Indigenous traditional food sources threaten food and nutrition security for Indigenous individuals (Del Popolo & Jaspers-Faijer, 2014). Additionally, according to Grant (2019), some Indigenous leaders, such as Ricardo Ushigua, address the necessity of rejecting capitalist production and consumption of extractive industries to safeguard Indigenous traditions and ensure the Earth’s sustainability for future generations. While the ECLAC and the MRG reports provide a generic understanding of the negative impacts of climate change and resource extraction on Indigenous communities in Latin America, these reports lack the opinions Indigenous Peruvians have regarding these issues. The personal experiences of Indigenous Peruvians with environmental problems may challenge the NGO environmental narrative that claims all Indigenous peoples in Latin America have negative opinions and experiences with environmental challenges.

Some participants reported climate change having positive effects on food production, while others believe climate change is not affecting Indigenous communities at all. For instance, Interviewee 1 from Achoma, Arequipa believes climate change is positively affecting crops and the raising of cattle in Indigenous communities, as freezing temperatures no longer put food production in danger (personal communication, December 29th, 2023). Furthermore, one interviewee reported climate change not happening at all, while another interviewee reported that climate change has no impact on food production, emphasizing that the only factor affecting crops is the use of insecticides (see Table 11). The divergence between NGO reports documenting food insecurity due to climate change and the interviewees’ not considering these issues affecting food production challenges the accuracy of the NGO reports. This discrepancy suggests NGOs make generalizations about all Latin American Indigenous communities facing food insecurity due to

climate change without considering Indigenous people’s divergent experiences varying according to the environmental context of different countries, such as the case of Peru.

<p>Interviewee 2 from Achoma, Arequipa</p> <p>“The climate has not changed; it is still the same. The only thing that has changed is that now people use insecticides and before that was not used. We only used natural fertilizers with what animals like sheep and rabbits defecated with. Now people started to use specific fertilizers and insecticides to optimize food production.”</p>
<p>Interviewee from Ilave, Puno</p> <p>“I have not noticed that climate change affects our crops because food production has remained the same since I left.”</p>

Table 11: Interviewees’ opinions on climate change’s impact on food production

Some Indigenous Peruvians believe climate change equally affects Indigenous communities and urban settings, such as Arequipa. The interviewees referred to “huaycos”—a term from the Andes used to describe the flash floods and mudslides brought on by intense rains in mountains, particularly during El Niño — as an example of climate change affecting both urban and Indigenous communities. For instance, interviewees believe climate change and phenomena such as “huaycos” affect more people in the city of Arequipa, as people in Indigenous communities respect the riverbeds, while migrants in Arequipa build houses in unsafe places (see Table 12). Additionally, Interviewee 2 from Achoma said: “In my town, the ‘huaycos’ do not affect us as much because we have traditional knowledge that has helped us to build our houses to be resistant to heavy rains” (personal communication, December 29th, 2023). This discovery supports the argument about NGOs not considering the perspectives of Indigenous communities regarding climate change and erroneously reporting this issue as a challenge most Indigenous Latin Americans want to address.

<p>Interviewee from Juli, Puno</p> <p>“I think that the changes in the climate not only affect the people of my town but also the people of Arequipa because there have always been landslides here too, but the situation is worse in Arequipa since more people from other provinces have moved here. Usually these people build houses near the torrent and when there are huaycos the water is carried to the houses.”</p>

Interviewee from Chumbivilcas, Cusco

"I believe that heavy rains and huaycos affect the people of Arequipa more than the people of my town because the people who come to Arequipa build their houses in places where they should not build as the river is close to people's houses. On the other hand, in my town, people know where the water passes and they do not build in those places."

Table 12: Opinions on "huaycos" impact

Migrants affected by "huaycos" due to building houses in areas close to the river in Arequipa are Indigenous. The ethnicity of the migrants in Arequipa challenges the interviewees' perspectives on climate change affecting more Peruvians in urban settings than Indigenous communities. After a follow-up question about the ethnicity of the migrants the interviewees referred to, the participants believed migrants coming to Arequipa come from Andean regions, which are areas with a higher density of Indigenous Peruvians. For instance, the interviewee of Chumbivilcas, Cusco said, "I believe most people that come to Arequipa come from Cusco and Puno, and after migrating they build their houses in peripheral areas of Arequipa" (personal communication, December 28th, 2023). While this information supports the narrative of NGOs about climate change affecting Indigenous people the most, Indigenous people are affected by climate change only after migrating to Arequipa looking for better socioeconomic opportunities. This interconnection between environmental and socioeconomic issues reinforces the argument about socioeconomic issues being the root of other challenges, such as climate change, affecting Indigenous Peruvians.

Although some interviewees mentioned that mining is not common in Indigenous communities, these interviewees still had positive opinions on mining because it brings economic growth. These interviewees supported mining because it offers job opportunities and economic growth through the development of infrastructure such as roads. For instance, six out of the ten interviewees reported not having mining industries in their native communities, and the six supported the industry. In addition, out of the four participants reporting mining happening in their Indigenous communities, two interviewees had positive opinions about mining. Eight of the ten participants had positive attitudes toward mining because the industry offers job opportunities to locals and pays fees to the Peruvian government to develop infrastructure projects such as schools and roads (see Table 13). The discrepancy between NGOs arguing Indigenous people oppose mining industries, and the testimonials from the interviewees supporting mining due to economic growth, challenges the accuracy of the NGO reports. NGOs advocating for the elimination of extractive resources industries without fully considering the perspectives of Indigenous communities benefiting from this industry shows a disconnect between NGOs' agendas and the real-life

experiences of Indigenous Peruvians. Additionally, some individuals supporting mining due to economic development show that Indigenous Peruvians care about Indigenous communities having more access to services to alleviate socioeconomic disparities, even if achieving this progress causes environmental damage.

<p>Interviewee from Huancane, Puno</p> <p>“In Huancane there is no mining. People are mostly dedicated to livestock and agriculture. My opinion about mining is that it generates many jobs without having a higher education. Mining does not only benefit people without a degree, as professionals can also benefit from mining companies because they can become supervisors in the mine and earn a lot of money.”</p>
<p>Interviewee from Ninantaya, Puno</p> <p>“Peru is a mining country. If we get rid of mining, there will not be progress in Peru because what contributes the most to Peru is mining, and without that money, projects that benefit the communities could not be carried out.”</p>
<p>Interviewee from Chumbivilcas, Cusco</p> <p>“Where I live there is mining and the mine helps the population by giving them work and companies also give money to governments to build schools, tracks, etc. So I think mining is good.”</p>

Table 13: Interviewees’ positive opinions on mining

A couple of interviewees had negative views about mining due to the bad management of the mining fee and environmental damages caused by mining. Some interviewees had negative views on mining because, despite mining industries paying a fee, bad project management such as corruption in Indigenous communities does not allow Indigenous people to use the money to develop infrastructure projects. Additionally, some people oppose mining because mining pollutes Indigenous communities, and this pollution affects food production. According to the interviewee from Castilla, Arequipa: “Food production is not the same because the miners have ruined everything. Before mining the peaches were big, and now they do not even grow” (personal communication, December 22nd, 2023). Furthermore, two out of the four interviewees that reported having mining in their communities believed the industry is not good for Indigenous communities because it does not give job opportunities to locals, and they think local governors do not use the mining fees effectively due to corruption or bad project management (see Table 14). The interviewees’ negative views about mining show NGOs not being completely wrong in arguing Indigenous people in Latin America oppose extractive resources industries. However, not all interviewees were against mining and only a few people opposed mining industries due to the negative consequences of this industry in the environment. This lack of

consensus among participants indicates NGOs may impose an environmental agenda without considering the views of some Indigenous individuals supporting mining due to economic growth.

Interviewee from Castilla, Arequipa

"There is mining in Castilla, although mining companies give money to councils to use on projects that benefit the community, the councils steal that money."

Interviewee Santa Lucia, Puno

"In my town there was mining, but the mine did not help the people at all because they did not offer jobs to locals and even though the mine gave a mining fee, the government ended up returning the money due to lack of projects. But, I think that if that money was used effectively many people would benefit, so mining itself is not the problem, but the issue is poor project management by local authorities."

Table 14: Interviewees' negative opinions on mining.

DISCUSSION

Environmental vs. Socioeconomic Issues

This study found only a few participants reporting environmental issues affecting Indigenous communities in Peru; therefore, this discovery challenges scholars studying the transnational movement of environmental rights. These group of scholars make generalizations about all Indigenous people prioritizing environmental challenges and ignore that Indigenous people from different countries may face unique environmental issues. Although scholars such as Hibbard et al. (2008) do research to promote collaboration with Indigenous communities to design environmental protection initiatives, these researchers focus on studying multiple countries and consequently generalize the Indigenous experience with environmental challenges. Avoiding generalizations is necessary, as only some interviewees believed climate change is negatively impacting food production and only a couple of interviewees believed mining causes pollution, negatively affecting Indigenous communities. Although this study did not find all participants having negative opinions and experiences with environmental challenges, some participants believed environmental challenges affect Indigenous Peruvians; however, these interviewees only represent a minority. The diverse views of the interviewees support the need for conducting research based on case studies rather than studies comprising multiple countries to see why participants' responses about environmental issues vary.

Interviewees reporting socioeconomic issues affecting them more than environmental issues challenges the literature on transnational environmental movements because this literature emphasizes the protection of Indigenous territories as the most pressing issue for Indigenous people, and this

project instead supports scholars conducting more research on socioeconomic challenges. Research focusing on discrimination and lack of access to services such as healthcare responds to the needs of Indigenous Peruvians, as these topics align more with the issues Indigenous Peruvians report. For instance, the participants placed a higher priority on socioeconomic development over environmental conservation, as most interviewees supported mining industries due to job opportunities for locals and funding for development projects such as schools and roads. Additionally, the interviewees expressed concerns about socioeconomic inequalities due to a lack of access to basic services like healthcare and education. In alignment with the interviewees reporting concerns with socioeconomic issues, the analysis of Thorp et al. (2006) found that Indigenous people in Bolivia, Guatemala, and Peru disproportionately face socioeconomic disadvantages, such as lack of job opportunities, compared to non-Indigenous people due to discrimination. Socioeconomic issues affecting Indigenous Peruvians the most supports previous research on socioeconomic issues having an ethnic dimension in Latin American countries. This discovery supports the group of scholars focusing on studying socioeconomic issues affecting Indigenous people over the researchers studying the impact of environmental challenges on Indigenous populations.

According to the interviewees, socioeconomic difficulties are the root issue causing environmental challenges as a collateral effect, therefore this finding supports the scholars' idea about NGOs imposing environmental agendas, as these organizations do not consider the insights of Indigenous people prioritizing solving socioeconomic issues as a strategy to mitigate environmental challenges. As a result, the NGOs' agendas do not align with the needs of Indigenous Peruvians. According to Suarez (2014), development organizations impose environmental agendas in Latin American countries despite the opposition of Latin American presidents. Similarly, the testimonials of Indigenous Peruvians support the assertion of NGOs imposing environmental agendas because contrary to NGO reports arguing Indigenous people migrate due to territorial displacement, the interviewees reported moving to Arequipa due to better educational and job opportunities. Additionally, despite NGOs claiming that climate change disproportionately affects Indigenous people, the interviewees mentioned climate change phenomena such as "huaycos" do not affect people living in Indigenous communities and only impact Indigenous migrants motivated to leave Indigenous communities looking for better socioeconomic opportunities in cities. NGOs prioritizing environmental challenges and the testimonial of interviewees prioritizing socioeconomic issues support scholars asserting development organizations impose an environmental agenda on developing countries. Consequently, this study supports more research about the attitudes of Latin American government officials and the perception of target communities on development organizations imposing agendas in Latin America.

Policy Implications

Development policies need to address the interconnectedness of environmental and socioeconomic issues by investing in building small hospitals to subsidize healthcare and by investing in traveling tutors to promote education, as lack of access to basic services reinforces poverty, and climate change disproportionately affects the poor. Policies avoiding addressing this relationship can lead to Indigenous people continuing to be exposed to climate change's negative effects, such as floods, because solving environmental issues will not be a priority, as Indigenous people will focus on addressing their immediate needs such as access to healthcare. According to Mann (2024), poor communities are more likely to suffer the negative consequences of climate change, as these people usually live in regions prone to droughts and floods. In alignment with this literature arguing that poor people are more vulnerable to climate change, the interviewees reported "huaycos" affecting Indigenous migrants residing in peripheral areas of Arequipa near riverbeds. According to them, this vulnerability arises from Indigenous migrants limited economic resources, preventing them from building houses in safer locations. Governments investing in tutoring programs and building small clinics may help Indigenous people because currently, Indigenous Peruvians struggle to access basic services like healthcare and education, and consequently, environmental concerns are not a top priority. Governments investing in tutoring programs and small hospitals to subsidize healthcare will allow individuals to have the social and economic stability to not need to migrate and be exposed to environmental challenges as a result of migration.

Latin American governments and extractive industries should develop long-term, sustainable ways such as recycling water used in mining to preserve the environment while also raising incomes. Developing initiatives should not only prioritize short-term income growth through industrial development but should also address the long-term impacts of environmental depletion by promoting economic progress while simultaneously ensuring environmental protection. According to Hariram et al. (2023), the "take-make-waste" economic model helped build modern society, but this model contributes to overconsumption and ecological damage. Consequently, a shift towards more sustainable economic models is necessary to address environmental crises and tackle growing inequality (Hariram et al., 2023). In alignment with this policy suggestion, some international mining companies are starting to develop sustainable mining techniques by using the water from the drains to purify wastewater through a wastewater treatment system to then recycle this water to use it for processing the minerals (Cerro Verde, 2024). This literature promoting sustainable solutions for mining responds to the needs of the interviewees, as these people reported being concerned about mining polluting Indigenous communities. Sustainable solutions such as recycling water may prevent Indigenous people in Latin America from

paying higher prices for products due to the depletion of natural resources. Therefore, policies promoting sustainable resource projects will prevent Indigenous people from facing more economic challenges, as these people already face poverty.

CONCLUSION

In contrast to NGOs prioritizing environmental challenges, this project found socioeconomic challenges to be the most pressing issue for Indigenous Peruvians. The interviewees prioritize socioeconomic development through the construction of hospitals and schools over projects protecting the environment. According to the interviewees, Indigenous people have difficulties accessing healthcare and education facilities due to the geographic isolation of Indigenous communities. However, some interviewees had positive opinions about mining because despite the industry causes pollution, mining companies pay a fee to promote the economic development of Indigenous communities by building roads, schools, and hospitals and by giving job opportunities to locals. Therefore, this project shows the importance of development organizations working with target communities to avoid making assumptions about the priorities Indigenous people have regarding environmental and socioeconomic issues. Collaborative work between development organizations and Indigenous communities would help better understand the socioeconomic challenges Indigenous individuals from specific communities face. This approach will help design development projects to address socioeconomic challenges as a priority.

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