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Translocal experiences of indigenous migrant students in Monterrey, Mexico

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Abstract

Rural-urban migration has been increasing and is commonly seen in northern cities of Mexico. Indigenous students do not always have opportunities to receive higher education in their communities, and therefore migrate to urban areas. After migrating they can face certain challenges navigating the urban lifestyle. With the help of the translocality concept, this study employed a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to explore the reason behind five indigenous students' migration and their experiences of different translocal circumstances. The results and analysis indicated that the students had both similar and different experiences in the various translocal arenas. The analysis showed the reasons behind the students' migration were often linked to educational opportunities, but they also expressed different aspirations and plans for the future. Further, adjusting to their new city environment proved to be challenging. They experienced both a negative and positive sense of place in Monterrey, but Mision del Nayar, the university and other indigenous students helped them feel a sense of belonging. The experiences the students had in the different translocal arenas shaped their narrative, and hence, impacted their sense of place and sense of belonging. Lastly, the students experienced translocal identities on a daily basis.

Keywords: translocality, indigenous students, sense of belonging, sense of place, encounters with others, Monterrey

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Migration från landsbygd till städer har ökat och har blivit vanligare i norra städer i Mexiko. Studenter från ursprungsbefolkningar har inte alltid tillgång till högre utbildning i sina samhällen och migrerar därför till stadsområden. Efter migrationen kan de genomgå vissa utmaningar med att navigera sig i den urbana livsstilen. Med hjälp av translokaltetskonceptet tillämpade denna studie ett frågeformulär och semistrukturerade intervjuer för att undersöka orsakerna till fem inhemska studenters migration och deras erfarenheter av olika translokala omständigheter. Resultatet och analysen tydde på att studenterna hade både liknande och olika upplevelser i de olika translokala arenorna. Analysen visade att anledningarna till studenternas migration ofta var kopplade till utbildningsmöjligheter, men de uttryckte också olika ambitioner och planer inför framtiden. Vidare visade sig anpassningen till deras nya stadsmiljö vara utmanande. De upplevde både en negativ och positiv känsla av plats i Monterrey, men Mision del Nayar, universitetet och andra inhemska studenter hjälpte dem också att känna tillhörighet. De erfarenheter som studenterna hade av de olika translokala arenorna formade deras berättelse och påverkade därmed deras känsla av plats och känsla av tillhörighet. Avslutningsvis påvisade studien att studenterna dagligen upplevde translokala identiteter.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Indigenous rural-urban migration in Mexico

Rural-urban migration is a phenomenon that has been increasing in developing countries over the years. Factors responsible for these migration patterns are often linked to socioeconomic factors for both individuals at the sending and receiving areas (Marta et al, 2020, p. 118-119). Indigenous individuals migrating from rural to urban areas have been increasing and are commonly seen in northern cities of Mexico (Kumar Acharya, 2013, p. 141-142). There are 17 million people that are considered indigenous in Mexico. Although Mexico has adopted the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (IWGIA, 2020), the indigenous still experience many challenges that affect their livelihoods. Exploitation of their territories and natural resources leave them with limited water supply and scarce agricultural opportunities. A lack of quality education also makes it difficult to receive well-paid jobs (Canedo, 2019, p. 14). These problems could cause poverty and force them to migrate. However, indigenous people could also be motivated to migrate to urban areas because of opportunities. This includes better employment, housing, social and political recognition, or better education – all of which would improve their quality of life (United Nations Human Rights, 2010). Adjusting to the city environment is difficult and indigenous people often face specific problems in doing so (Kumar Acharya, 2013, p. 141-142). The problems indigenous people face in urban areas are mainly related to deficient housing, finite access to services and unemployment. Furthermore, they may be victims of discrimination and struggles of maintaining their language, culture and identity, causing them to lose their indigenous heritage (UN, n.d.). In regard to identity, the effects of urban migration differ among indigenous individuals. Some indigenous people choose to strengthen their connection with their indigenous communities and heritage and actively seek and demand protection for these aspects of their identity. However, some choose to disassociate themselves from those same aspects and change their identity upon settling in a new place (IOM, 2008, p. 51). The indigenous youth often find themselves between urban and indigenous societies in a state of “no man’s land”. They are not fully accepted in the urban society, but the indigenous communities cannot offer them the opportunities they want, such as higher education (UN, n.d.). There are only a limited number of organisations working with indigenous individuals in Monterrey and even fewer organisations working with young indigenous individuals (Hernández Salinas & Reséndez Córdova, 2019, p. 18). Misión del Nayar is one of the few organisations that work closely with indigenous students who have migrated to Monterrey. They henceforth play a vital role in our research regarding contact, finding participants, providing contextual information and advice.

The majority of migrants encounter new means of interaction with people when they locate to a new environment. The new location will provide new behaviours, movements, and corporeal experiences. As a result, the material and symbolic elements of places are altered (Brickell & Datta, 2011, p. 3). Using translocality, we can examine these experiences closer. Translocality interprets

the linkages between locations by how migrants create and experience them (Hoerder, 2013). The concept allows for a more robust and nuanced understanding of migration (Harris & Prout Quicke, 2019, p. 1). This study contributes to the understanding of rural-urban migration of indigenous students focusing on their choices to migrate and their experiences of translocality.

1.2 Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this study is to explore rural-urban migration of indigenous students focusing on their choices to migrate, as well as their experiences and challenges of translocality. Furthermore, the study explores their identity transformations using the translocality concept. The research questions we attempt to answer with our study are:

1. What are the underlying reasons behind rural-urban migration for indigenous students?
2. How do indigenous students experience different translocal circumstances?

2. Contextual background

This chapter provides the reader with a deeper understanding of the indigenous people and the Mexican context in which they live. Further, the role of the NGO Misión del Nayar and its background is illustrated.

2.1 Monterrey

Rural-urban migration is a phenomenon seen in Monterrey, Nuevo León which is located in northeast Mexico. The city symbolises wealth with its mixture of manufacturing and services, which in turn makes Nuevo León the third biggest state economy in Mexico. The disparity between urban areas and the poverty of rural cities are clearly shown through Monterrey's mix of wealthy, middle-class and poor inhabitants (Vellinga, 2000, p. 294-296). Monterrey has a long pattern of industrialisation led by the private sector which has attracted both internal and international migrants in the higher and lower job sector (Marchand & Ramírez, 2019, p. 623). Indigenous people make up a large part of the flow of internal migrants in Nuevo León, most of whom have migrated from central and southern states of Mexico since the 1970s. This is in large part a result of its industrial sector, making it an attractive location for migrants who can perform low-skilled labour. Most of the indigenous immigrants in Nuevo León are located in the city of Monterrey, and they stand out for both political activism and educational achievements. Additionally, Monterrey has become a popular city for young indigenous immigrants seeking better education, both regarding high school and university (ibid., p. 624-625).

2.2 Indigenous people

There is no authoritative definition of indigenous people, but there are a handful of criteria that can help identify them. In the United Nations Human rights's fact sheet Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Human Rights System, these criterias differ slightly depending on the source. First, Martínez Cobo highlights self-identification as the main criteria in addition to several others. Second, there is a historical continuity of their societies developing during pre-invasion and pre-colonial times. Additionally, the communities aim to preserve, develop, and pass on the territories and identity that follow their legal system, social institutions and cultural patterns to future generations. In addition to these, The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples highlight other criteria. Indigenous people have a strong connection to land and natural resources, specific social, economic, or political systems and their own language, culture, and beliefs (UN, 2013, p. 2-3). There are fifty-six indigenous languages in Mexico (Yoshioka, 2010, p. 8) They are commonly referred to as dialects (UNESCO, 2019). The indigenous communities that are relevant for our study are shown in Figure 1.



Figure 2: A map illustrating where the indigenous communities of the students are present in Mexico

2.3 Misión del Nayar

Misión del Nayar is an organisation founded by Fray Pascual Rosales Durón in 1968 and has since offered education to indigenous people who are marginalised and victims of poverty. In 1985, the organisation opened the scholarship program for men and women between 18 and 25 years of age, who come from marginalised indigenous communities in rural areas. This was an effort to allow more indigenous people to receive a higher education. Misión del Nayar helps indigenous students in Monterrey with several different phases and activities. They mainly provide support in four different areas. (1) maintenance, in the form of shelters where they offer accommodation, clothing, food and transportation services. Fulfilling the primary needs of students allow them to focus on their studies, rather than focusing on acquiring the resources themselves; (2) socio-educational, where each student is offered a 100% scholarship for university studies, support classes in mathematics and English, as well as activities in art and sports. This acts as a supportive network that increases the durability of the students; (3) health and wellness, including support services for mental health, training in preventative health and referral to specialised health care. The purpose of this is to decrease the disadvantages the students face as migrants from schools in rural areas; (4) labour, by integrating young people into working life through workshops and a Life Plan program in order for them to effectively use their higher education after their studies (Hernández Salinas, Reséndez Córdova, 2019, p. 15-16; Misión del Nayar, 2020).

3. Translocal patterns in previous research

In this chapter an overview of previous research is provided to demonstrate how translocality and the related concepts have been applied earlier and explore rural-urban migration. A number of central concepts are outlined to investigate and analyse the second research question, such as translocality and the related concepts: (1) encounters with others, (2) sense of place, and (3) sense of belonging. An exploration of previous research on rural-urban migration identifies and exemplifies reasons behind– and patterns of movements. In this study, these findings serve as a reference to investigate and analyse the first research question. The final section of this chapter brings the concepts together in the form of an analytical framework which has guided our data collection and analysis of this study.

3.1 Translocality

The simplest criteria of being translocal is being physically located in one place, while having significant ties to another location. Currently there is no universal definition of translocality, but the concept has been applied to a multitude of areas, such as migration, mobility, and place-making. Greiner and Sakdapolrak (2013) highlight that translocality was developed from transnationalism, which is used for cross-border migration. Translocality allows the aspects of transnationalism to be scaled down for application on internal migration, which is the most

globally common population movement. Smith (2011) understands translocality as “a mode of multiple emplacements or situatedness both here and there” (p. 178). Emplacement in this context refers to the locations, and situatedness as the way it intertwines with environmental, social, and cultural factors. Brickell and Datta (2011) analyse translocality as “groundedness during movement” that is not necessarily transnational (p. 1). They bring up three axes in their book *Translocal geographies: space, places and connections* and divide translocality in three, what they identify as ‘disjunct registers of affiliation’: translocal homes, translocal neighborhoods and translocal cities. The concept of home is explained as both “a physical location of dwelling as well as a space of belonging and identity”. In contrast to transnational migration of refugees, where ‘loss of home’ is often prominent, non-refugee transnational or internal migration involves strategic decisions from the migrants to both benefit from their social and cultural networks, as well as enter new spaces of social and political power (ibid., p. 10). Home to a migrant can be described as translocal as it is shaped partly by consumption, remittances, and social networks, as well as creating a new home and connection to homes in other localities (ibid., p. 11). Neighborhoods refer to places where situated communities form meaningful social actions and subjectives, which are reproduced in the same, as well as different localities. Translocal neighborhoods are places where a migrant engages in everyday activities. This is often the immediate site of encounters with ‘otherness’, as well as the place where belonging is initiated (ibid., p. 12-13). Cities exist in the “intersection between place and displacement, location and mobility, settlement and return” as a central arena. Cities are therefore crucial in creating and influencing migratory patterns, political landscapes, identities, and narratives. Migrants' everyday lives are experienced in a variety of urban sites, such as workplaces and neighbourhoods, which in turn form conflicting views of the local. Not only does the city shape the everyday lives of migrants, but migrants also shape the city by mobilising across various places (ibid., p. 14).

3.2 Encounters with others

When people migrate to new areas, they encounter people of different cultures. This is especially apparent for indigenous people who usually have different experiences than the general population. Guimond and Desmeules (2018) conducted a study in Nitassinan, northern Canada where they examined the employment; intercultural space of encounter; and sense of place of indigenous people at the construction site of the Romaine River hydroelectric megaproject. The indigenous group Innu are victims of exclusionary practices, prejudices of representation and widespread ignorance resulting in marginalisation (p. 219-220). The Innu had only recently been exposed to the neoliberal labour market, which put them at a disadvantage when it came to securing an income. Indigenous populations tend to be less educated and trained compared to non-indigenous populations, thus they have higher rates of unemployment. However, there was a need for a workforce in large worksites like the Romaine project (ibid., p. 220). The indigenous workers spent each day in a non-indigenous social environment (ibid., 227). The interesting part about this study was that the author provided perspectives from both indigenous and non-indigenous people. When

it came to encounters with the other ethnic group, there was an evident difference to the view on the reason behind the exclusion of indigenous people. The Innu saw it as a result of “‘persistent prejudice’, discrimination, intimidation and even racism” from the non-indigenous workers that resulted in tension between the two groups. Additionally, the non-indigenous people avoided getting to know anything about the indigenous people, resulting in ignorance against them. Non-indigenous people who worked in the higher positions argued that they simply did not work closely with the indigenous people and did not feel the need to interact with them, while the ones in the lower sector had more in common with the indigenous people and thus automatically got to know them. The social and occupational divide was advanced as a result of cultural and linguistic differences. These different perspectives, and possibly lack of encounters with the other group, shaped their view of each other (ibid., p. 224-225)

Richmond and Smith (2012) studied at-risk indigenous students in Ottawa, Canada, and their perceptions of their urban school environments. Similarly, to Guimond and Desmeules (2018), ignorance and discrimination played a big role in the treatment and attitude of indigenous people from non-indigenous people. The findings of the study showed that the indigenous youths were disproportionately affected by negative experiences and violence at their urban school. Because of the lack of trust of the non-indigenous teachers and staff, most indigenous youths expressed that they did not request help from social support. However, the youths established that there was a need for social support that recognised and understood the indigenous challenges on a daily basis. This support also needed to be adjusted to accommodate the cultural, social, and curricular realities of indigenous students, as these differ from non-indigenous students. The faculty showing ignorance and lacking appreciation of their social and cultural circumstance resulted in support that was merely symbolic and not functional (ibid., p.12).

3.3 Sense of place

Sense of place can involve both positive and negative affiliations to a location. Tachine et. al. (2017) explored this in their study on indigenous American students and their first year at an undisclosed university campus. While the study highly focused on a sense of place, the affiliations they had to the campus itself shaped the amount of belonging they felt. The students had a negative and decreased sense of place because of racial confrontations, social isolation, stressors related to exams and family disconnection while residing on campus (p. 795). However, the students also had positive affiliations to the university, partly because they had family members who had or were attending the college. The students were therefore connected to the campus ahead of their arrival and thus felt a familial connection (ibid., 798). Additionally, the indigenous cultural center was described as a “home away from home”. A place where the students could claim “indigenous space” and share their language and understanding with each other (ibid., p. 799). Similarly, Harris & Prout Quicke (2019) concluded in their study on the ways indigenous students who migrated from rural Australia, to Perth, Western Australia cope with their new residence, that what appears to have been a valuable aspect in establishing a sense of place was having a place where the

indigenous migrants could discuss obstacles of their migration. The centers on campus served as critical spaces and places where the students established contact with other indigenous migrants (p. 6-7).

Similar to Tachine et. al. (2017), Guimond and Desmeules (2018) established the same contradictory argument of both negative and positive affiliations to the same place. Their analysis of the employment; intercultural space of encounter; and sense of place of indigenous people at Romaine River in northern Canada showed several paradoxes to their sense of place (p. 219). One paradox was that the Innu had strong ties to the indigenous territory, yet spent each day as a minority in a non-indigenous social environment (ibid., p. 227). The indigenous workers expressed that they felt a sense of home and well-being in natural places, such as forests and rivers that were located by the construction site. In contrast, a few of the indigenous people expressed that the construction site felt almost like a prison, where the lack of freedom was highly evident. The activities they valued were restricted only to spaces dedicated to their traditional activities. This resulted in a feeling of hostility toward the worksite, which could be decreased by integrating the natural setting to contribute to the well-being that nature provided the indigenous workers (ibid., 228).

Research on rural-urban migration shows that translocality allows for a sense of place to exist in more than one location. In his article, Greiner (2010) examined rural-urban migration in north-western Namibia, specifically around the village of Fransfontein. He concluded that translocal identities were shaped by movement from rural-urban areas, as well as reflected in the return migration to rural areas. In one of the interviews, Lensey Nel said that they believed in their roots and usually kept rules they had on the farm in their new households, bringing affiliations of the rural home into the urban home. The migrants expressed their urbanised experience by for example implementing modern livestock breeding and introducing urban decor in their homes. This is an example of modernising rural homes by implementing urban conveniences, illustrating the bridging between two locations. Translocal spaces were created through this ideational and material exchange (p, 149-150). They brought affiliations from one place to another, creating a sort of merge of their sense of places.

Longboan (2011) further discussed translocality in her study on virtual meeting places, where indigenous people from north Luzon in the Philippines attempted to maintain their ethnic identification. The findings demonstrated that the comparable identifications and histories of the members exposed several linkages and connections between places. The online forums provided universal meeting places where different topics were discussed and shared (p, 321). The interactions in the email group did not only mirror the offline interactions the Igorot shared, but also allowed them to be extended in new ways. The translocal online 'home' the membership created became a continuation of the physical 'home' they shared in their community. The interactions among the members of Bibaknets (email group) indicated that their indigenous identity was not geographically dependent. The author argued that while the online 'home' de-

territorialised the place where they met, it re-territorialised their indigenous identity by making connections to the site of their indigenous home, despite the fact that these connections were made through online exchanges (ibid., p. 338-339). This is an example of how a sense of place is not fixed to a physical location.

3.4 Sense of belonging

The first year in college for students affects the subsequent years (Tachine et al, 2017, p. 802). The first year determined whether a student would complete college and for indigenous students, this area was particularly under-examined. Thereupon, understanding ‘sense of belonging’ for indigenous students on campus is limited. The study conducted by Tachine et al (2017) at an undisclosed college examined what positive or negative factors influenced first year indigenous American students’ sense of belonging and secondly, what the findings indicated in regard to their early college success (p. 786). Factors that strengthened the indigenous American students’ sense of belonging were the indigenous support center on the university campus and connection to their families. During times when colleges offered efforts to connect with students, some students discussed how they felt estranged, and for some, this feeling continued beyond the first week (ibid., p. 794). This extension of not belonging further than the first week of college revealed that students also felt a disconnection from not practicing indigenous ceremonies, which resulted in a loss of self (ibid., p. 795). Language, ceremonial cycle, sacred history, and place were essential for indigenous people to maintain their ‘self’ (ibid., 796). Although the family was not near the students at the time of their college time, nor had the family members attended the same college, the family still had an influential role in the students sense of belonging through encouragement (ibid., 797). Many students also associated their sense of belonging to family members who had or were attending the college. In sum, the majority of the students viewed connection to family, culture and spirituality as essential for their sense of self and belonging. They also described how the university created a separation from their “cultural anchors” and functioned as a site of prejudices and invalidations. Generally, their sense of belonging increased as the extent to which indigenous students felt connected to their cultural heritage increased (ibid., p. 800).

Along similar lines, Richmond and Smith (2012) examined students in Ottawa, Canada, but in the context of social support. Social support and educational accomplishments were pivotal elements for the health among indigenous Canadians. There were occurring varieties in educational accomplishments between non-indigenous and indigenous students and the gap was widening. More specifically, the authors examined perceptions of at-risk indigenous Canadian students of their urban school environments, as well as access to social support (p. 1). At-risk students in this study referred to youths that were marginalised and estranged. This was characterised by illegal behavior, academic failure and drug or alcohol use (Ibid., p. 4). Reaching out to receive social support depended on the context of the situation. The youths made a distinction between two types of support: structural (“nature and structure of one’s interpersonal relationships or social networks”) and functional (“represents the functions that a relationship or network actually serves

the individual”) support. The youths established that there was a need for social support who recognized and understood the indigenous challenges on a daily basis. Furthermore, a social support that was able to provide cultural, social, and curricular resources with the realities of indigenous students. The inadequate acknowledgment of the youths’ cultural and social aspects meant that such support was solely symbolic and not functional (ibid., p.12).

Harris & Prout Quicke (2019) shifted the focus and examined in which ways indigenous student migrants cope with their various self-identified aspirations concerning their personal growth, confronting stereotypes and “improving the quality of life for other indigenous peoples” (p. 1). The study was conducted with in-depth interviews of ten indigenous students who migrated from rural Australia, to Perth, Western Australia followed by a participatory focus group. Drawing its analysis from a translocality perspective, two main themes related to a sense of belonging emerged. The first was in which ways students developed translocal networks and homes at the university through indigenous student centers on campus. Most students had formed a critical relationship to student centers before migrating to the city of Perth. The centers served as critical spaces and places where the students established contact with other indigenous migrants, often by attending events through the center. To nurture this sense of belonging, the participants’ associated these translocalities with feelings and experiences, resulting in the transformation of these physical spaces into places of meaning and significance. What appears to have been a valuable aspect in establishing a sense of place, was having a place where the indigenous migrants could discuss obstacles of their migration (ibid., 6-7). The second theme to emerge was their active struggles to ground and care for their indigenous identities in the city. Students described feeling “colonial discourses regarding urban indigenous (in)authenticity acting upon them in their university environments”. Findings from both the focus group and the interviews showed that participants had experiences with students questioning their indigeneity and identifying the students as “certain types”. The student centers and the networks embedded within were described as critical in coping with such situations (ibid., 8-9).

Guimond and Desmeules (2018) concretised the sense of belonging by studying the indigenous group Innu and their belonging in Nitassinan, northern Canada. The location is an ancestral territory of the Innu, however, they are victims of exclusionary practices, prejudices of representation, widespread ignorance resulting in marginalisation (p. 219-220). The indigenous people preferred the company of other indigenous people because it provided a sense of familiarity, comfort and security. In contrast, they felt mistrust towards non-indigenous people because of the colonial past, discrimination, and the negative experiences they had with personal relationships. This mistrust could be decreased by creating activities involving the merger of indigenous and non-indigenous people to make the location less marginalised (ibid., p. 226). The authors observed that the indigenous people felt more pressure to assimilate compared to the non-indigenous workers. This brought them to the discussion whether the price of ‘belonging’ was for them to

slightly abandon their heritage and become more 'white' as the authors put it. There needed to be an integration strategy that would not promote 'white' as normative (ibid., p. 228-229).

3.5 Rural-urban migration

Rural-urban migration is a common choice for indigenous migrants and other internal migrants (U.N, p. 1). Greiner (2010) examined rural-urban migration in north-western Namibia, specifically around the village of Fransfontein. He explored patterns of migration, exchange, and identity formation, deepening the understanding using a translocal perspective (Greiner, p. 131). Fransfontein represents a settlement pattern typical for the wider region and it comprises the traditional economic strategy of farming. Many historical influences have shaped the ethnic diversity in this settlement, including migration during colonisation and apartheid. The difference in economic development between rural and urban areas is a major factor for migration in Namibia, because of the resulting income disparities. This is because of colonial legacies, as well as the spatial planning still remnant from apartheid (ibid., p. 137).

Arguing along the same lines together with Nauman, Greiner (2017) wrote another paper exploring the mobility patterns and translocal relations of miners in the Northern Cape province of South Africa (p. 875). South Africa has a similar history of colonialism and apartheid as Namibia, and therefore share the same differences in economic development between rural and urban areas. The collapse of the apartheid system gave miners the opportunity to extend their translocal action space, which is the extended space where they move and work. Urban areas have become important spaces of interaction as a result of multi-locational working space. During this type of mobility, rural homes tended to remain places of belonging where mobile and immobile people assemble and impact each other (ibid., p. 886).

Harris & Prout Quicke (2019) shifted the focus and examined in which ways indigenous student migrants cope with their various self-identified aspirations. Drawing their analysis from a translocality perspective, one theme emerged related to the student's decision to migrate to the university in Perth, Australia. The key reasons behind migrating were for many students to gain independence and increase personal growth. For others, the reason was to reduce negative stereotypes regarding indigenous people. The students all had one common goal: to improve quality of life for indigenous Australians. Many of the participants also described that they planned to return back to their communities, often for employment in fields where they would have a positive impact on indigenous people (p. 5-6).

The various themes explored in this summary of previous research are relevant for the analytical framework our study depends on. Reasons for migration addresses why individuals migrate to different locations. Previous studies have given us various explanations of migratory patterns and in this study we explore explanations behind migratory patterns of young indigenous students in Monterrey guided by findings in previous research. The previous research presented several useful

concepts, including: encounters with others, sense of place and sense of belonging. The concepts reflect the correlation between locations, experiences, and affiliations, while translocality allows for the essence of these concepts to transform. Our research focuses on how these concepts are experienced under different circumstances specifically by indigenous students.

3.6 Analytical framework

The three registers of affiliation Brickell and Datta (2011) identified provided a starting point for our analysis. Translocal homes, neighbourhoods and cities all shape the lives, interactions and identities of migrants, and act as different arenas of experience. What becomes translocal is represented by the three scales, but being translocal has a deeper influence on identity. The experiences indigenous people have in urban areas plays a key role in how this plays out. Whether they encounter otherness, feel a sense of belonging or a sense of place, not only connects to their well-being, but whether or not they can feel a connection to the location they live in. The translocal arenas are: (1) Translocal homes, representing the direct difference of home in Monterrey (urban) in comparison to their indigenous home (rural), which is the closest indicator of identity and belonging (ibid., p. 11). (2) Translocal neighbourhoods represent the initial interaction with others, sense of belonging and the location where their everyday life and social interactions occur (ibid., p. 12-13). (3) Translocal cities, which create and influence migratory patterns and mobility across different urban areas, including homes, neighbourhoods and workplaces, which shape migrants' views of the local, creating conflicting narratives (ibid., p. 14). It is in these three translocal arenas and scales, indigenous people may encounter others, feel a sense of place or sense of belonging. In turn, these affiliations shape their translocal identities.

The following concepts are explained by how they are used in this paper. Sense of place describes how migrants experience the place where they are. It refers to the attachments migrants develop to specific locations, whether it is a home, neighbourhood or city. The attachments can be positive in the form of comfort, safety, and well-being, or negative in the form of fear, dysphoria and placelessness (Foote & Azaryahu, 2009). In the case of a sense of belonging, indigenous people have strong ties to land and territory, where they feel belonging, and it is especially important for their success. However, a sense of belonging is not only tied to ancestral homelands but can be experienced in different places and with different people. They use both imaginative and material resources to feel at home and maintain a sense of belonging (Brickell & Datta, p. 187-188). When migrating to a new area, encounters with others impacts the identity transformation of the migrants. When translocal migrants encounter others, the otherness exists as a result of a difference in histories, attitudes, diasporic belonging, national identity and ethnicity, which converge in a certain location. These encounters can be both positive and negative (Brickell & Datta, p. 3). Based on previous research, we have created an analytical framework to guide our data-collection and analysis. It demonstrates the different arenas, affiliations, and the result of translocal identities

(Figure 2). This was later applied to the coding scheme where we interpreted the translocal experiences in relation to the affiliations in the different arenas.

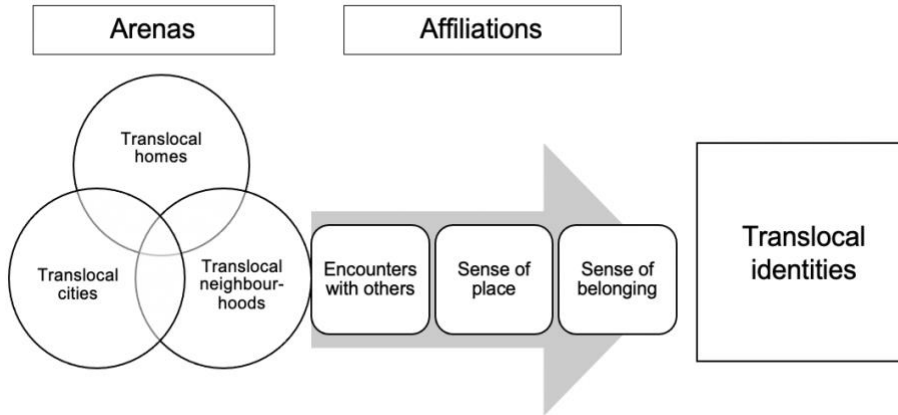


Figure 2: A framework of translocal arenas, affiliations and translocal identities.

4. Methodology

In the following chapter the research process is described for the reader in the sections: research design, selection of respondents, questionnaire, semi-structured interviews and the role of the translator. Additionally, a discussion of methodological considerations and ethical concerns is provided to increase validity.

4.1 Research design

This study is based on both a questionnaire with a combination of closed-ended and open-ended questions, and two qualitative semi-structured interviews. These methods allowed us to explore the individual cases of the students, as they all have both individual reasons for migrating and different experiences in Monterrey. The questionnaire served as a background overview of the respondents and a departure point to our semi-structured interviews. We considered using a questionnaire advantageous as it was practical when the study had to be conducted at a distance. Additionally, it allowed the respondents to answer on their schedule (Bryman, 2016, p. 288). Interviews were considered advantageous as we were able to ask more open-ended questions and collect non-verbal data (Yin, 2006, p. 119). Thus, we consider the questionnaire to be a complementary element to our semi-structured interviews. To make the data presentation more structured, we used the same categories in the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview (Appendix I and Appendix II). The collected data is presented and analysed in chapter 5 “Results and Analysis”. We combined the analysis and results because the two parts are closely connected, and any result can be analysed immediately, thus reinforcing each other.

The analytical framework was used to guide our questionnaire and interview guides, code our data and structure our analysis. The framework (Figure 2) was based on previous research and helped us structure the order of our analytical themes. The analytical themes were identified while researching the concept of translocality and appeared often while we researched previous studies. We divided the analysis in translocal homes, translocal neighbourhoods and translocal cities as we considered them to cover a large range of translocal places in the urban areas and the migrants movements. Within these sections, we used the three affiliations: encounters with others, sense of place and sense of belonging to focus on the specific translocal experiences the migrants had in Monterrey. Following the transcription, coding was conducted where we identified these affiliations the students experienced in each translocal arena and effects on identity (Appendix III). The coding served to provide examples of the affiliations, but the analysis contained other translocal circumstances as well, to avoid limiting the analysis to only the affiliations. We did not include their reasons for migration in our coding scheme as this was not an arena part of the analytical framework.

4.2 Selection of respondents

Contact was established with the NGO Misión del Nayar that directly works with indigenous students from rural areas around Mexico. The NGO helped us establish contact with the participants which were based on three main criteria: the participants had to be (1) indigenous, (2) current students, and (3) migrants. Out of 24 students, five students answered our questionnaire and among those five, two (R1 & R5) students were later interviewed. Table 1 provides context of the recipients, as they are from different indigenous communities, of diverse ages and have been in Monterrey for different amounts of time.

The respondents are not representative of every indigenous community that exists, but rather contribute to a deeper understanding based on their individual reasons for migration and translocal experiences. Our aim was to interview all the five students who responded to our questionnaire, but it was not possible due to unanswered emails and time difference.

Respondents	Community	Age	Time in Monterrey	Answered questionnaire	Date and length of interview
Respondent 1 (R1)	Tzeltal	20	1.5 years	yes	22/5-2021 1 h 6 min
Respondent 2 (R2)	Cora	22	Nearly 4 years	yes	No interview
Respondent 3 (R3)	Tzotzil	22	6 years	yes	No interview
Respondent 4 (R4)	Wixárika	21	2 years, 9 months	yes	No interview

Respondent 5 (R5)	Huichol	22	4 years	yes	20/5-2021 1 h 15 min
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Table 1 showing the background information of the five respondents.

4.3 Questionnaire

An online questionnaire was employed on Google Forms with seven themes and a combination of closed-ended questions and open-ended questions. The beginning of the questionnaire had clear instructions on how to answer the questions. The questionnaire included more close-ended questions and aimed to have a simple design, thus, minimising the risk of misunderstandings and the respondents missing questions (Bryman, 2016, p. 286). A vertical design was used in order for the students to clearly know where to mark their answers. The questionnaire (see Appendix I) was sent to our coordinator at Misión del Nayar who approved our questions to reassure that the questions were not offensive or insensitive to the respondents. The questions were later sent to our translator who translated the questionnaire into Spanish. The translated questions were inserted into Google Forms, after which we sent a link to the NGO to forward to the 24 indigenous students.

4.4 Semi-structured interviews

After the questionnaire, all students approved that we could contact them again. With the help of our translator, we established contact with three students who agreed to take part in our semi-structured interview where we decided on a time and date to obtain the interview. One student cancelled, thus we ended up with two in-depth interviews. The voluntary interview followed the same design as the questionnaire with a combination of semi-structured questions. We used a semi-structured method because it allowed us to have a flexible interview guide and ask follow-up questions (Bryman, 2016, p. 260).

When designing the question guide, we used the analytical framework and previous research as a point of departure (see Appendix II). We designed our guide starting with closed questions related to the interviewees' background and then progressively asked more open-ended questions. This structure allowed us to provide both structural and descriptive questions (Harrell & Bradely, 2009, p. 35-36, 39, 50). The guide was outlined with seven main themes, followed with specific follow-up questions depending on the respondents' answers. The interviewees received information about our questionnaires and interviews beforehand from our coordinator at Mision Del Nayar, but the purpose and structure of the interview was repeated once again when we met through video chat. The written and oral information included a brief explanation of who we were and what role they had in our research, that we were from a Swedish university, and lastly reassurance that the respondent remained anonymous, and that participation was voluntary. Before starting our interviews, consent was given to record the interviews. The respondent, the researchers and the translator were all present during the interview. The interview was recorded via zoom or teams

and with a phone as back-up. Afterwards, the translated parts of the interview were transcribed by the researchers.

4.5 Translator and interpreter

We considered that conducting the interviews and questionnaires in the respondent's second language was regarded as the best option. This was due to their insufficient English, and for the respondents to better understand the research content. As we considered our own skills insufficient of Spanish, we therefore employed a person that acted as a translator and an interpreter during the data collection to overcome these language barriers. In this research, the translator's role was to translate the questionnaire for the students and all the written communication, and during the interviews the interpreter translated the spoken language orally between the students and the researchers. The translator and interpreter was not professionally trained but rather a bilingual individual and a current university student in Monterrey

In our case, we understand that our interviews were not solely free of interpretation and had linguistic differences. Although the translator helped us understand, her understanding of the social world could also influence the data collection. We could not possibly control the objectivity in the role of the translator and interpreter more than to remind her to try and be objective. It was of high importance that we were clear about the circumstances during the interviews under which the crossing of languages had taken place, to not create a transparency problem (Resch & Enzenhofer, 2018, p. 2-3). We understand that the meanings in a context could be lost depending on how the translator interpreted the answer of the respondents. The longer the respondent answered during the interview, the more difficult it could be for the interpreter to remember. We noticed at times that they had longer answers and that the translated versions were reduced. There was therefore a chance for loss of data and that this could have influenced our results. The way the interpreter retold the students' answers influenced the dynamics of the interview process and the material produced (ibid., p. 5). The "Analysis and Results" chapter includes the quotations based on the interpreter's expressions of the respondents' answers. The language has been modified and adjusted to make the quotations readable. The interpreter referred to the respondents as 'she' during the interviews, but the quotes have been altered to demonstrate that it is the students talking about themselves.

4.6 Methodological considerations

There are challenging aspects within every research method that needs to be addressed. Firstly, to increase the validity aspect we considered it appropriate to have two data collection methods. A questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were considered relevant and complementary to each other in our study in order to collect more basic information and through the interviews, ask follow-up questions and also gain a deeper understanding of the students' circumstances. To simplify

future replication of our study, we attached our questionnaire, interview guide and coding scheme. Secondly, due to the covid-19 pandemic circumstances with recommendations of not traveling abroad, this study had to be conducted at a distance. We experienced difficulties with finding respondents and establishing contact with them as there were e-mail delays and unanswered emails.

Further, it is worth reflecting on the impacts the selection of respondents has had on our study. The study involved five female students from five different indigenous communities. Since our sample of respondents were all found using Misión del Nayar, this could mean that the representation was limited. The results could have differed depending on who was taking part in our study. Using only female participants could mean it is not representative of the male indigenous population. However, it does not mean that the stories of female participants are not applicable to men or to future research. Our aim was not to find patterns, but rather explore the circumstances and acknowledge their storytelling. Although the small sample size and the representation is to some extent limited and could affect the drawing of general conclusions, our objective was to produce small information-rich cases. Our research could still be replicated if it were to be conducted another time, with the use of other respondents under similar circumstances. The experiences of the students may of course vary as well as the researchers' pre-knowledge. Lastly, Spanish is not the participants' first language, and neither is it the first language for us. However, the participants were still able to express themselves to our translator who translated their answers to English for us.

4.7 Ethical concerns

Through the questionnaire, we informed the students about the terms of the study and orally during our interviews. Before conducting the interviews, we wanted to have their consent from the questionnaire that we were allowed to contact them via email. Once again during the interviews, it was explained that taking part in the study was voluntary and that they were allowed to withdraw at any time. In addition, the respondents did not have to answer any questions that were uncomfortable, and we reassured the participants that their participation was confidential. We also reminded them that the questionnaires and interviews would only be used for research purposes and then deleted. The names of the respondents were coded, disabling anyone to identify them and thereby increasing confidentiality (Etikprövningsmyndigheten, n.d.). Something we considered when conducting the interviews and writing the results, was keeping the respondents anonymous. While saying things that might be considered political criticism in our country is relatively safe, this may not be the case for them. Keeping them anonymous was therefore better for their safety.

Furthermore, there are other ethical considerations within researching indigenous communities. When interviewing our respondents, we considered the existing cultural differences among us, but at the same time valued their culture and did not want to treat them any differently. We researched

the right terminology beforehand because we wanted to be respectful of the respondents and not offend their heritage. Cultural aspects, such language and experience barriers, could have influenced the interpretations of the responses from the students. We did not have a complete understanding of the history and culture of their language. It was important to us as researchers to understand one's impact and position within our own research. Historically, indigenous people have been discriminated against and dehumanised when being researched (Thambinathan & Kinsella, p. 1). Partaking in this study meant that we interacted with students from different lived experiences, different norms and different cultures (Ibid., p. 4). We want to clarify that our research could have been inevitably shaped by Western ideologies and as non-indigenous researchers we acknowledge that we are not experts in the field. However, we embraced and reflected upon our different historical backgrounds by being aware of us as cultural beings and how our own cultural experiences have affected views of cultural differences. This suggests that we could move towards greater empathy for the differences that exist (Snow et al, p. 362-366). Our research was an exchange of knowledge in both directions between the respondents and us.

5. Results and Analysis

In this chapter the results from the questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews are presented and analysed together with reference to the previous research and analytical framework. The sections are divided into five: reasons for rural-urban migration, translocal homes, translocal neighbourhoods, translocal cities and lastly, how these four areas have affected their indigenous identity. The structure allows for the analysis to explore the three affiliations: encounters with others, sense of place and sense of belonging, within the separate translocal arenas.

5.1 Reasons for rural-urban migration

The first purpose of the study was to explore the reasons behind rural-urban migration for indigenous students. The decision to migrate is the first step migrants take that makes them translocal. First and foremost, it is important to emphasize what Harris & Quicke Prout (2019) discussed in their study when they mentioned that reasons for migration may vary between students. Their study showed that students migrated in order to gain independence, increase personal growth and to reduce negative stereotypes regarding indigenous people (p. 5-6). As mentioned in our project description, there are other relevant reasons for migration, including: a lack of quality education, job opportunities, as well as social and political recognition (United Nations Human Rights, 2010). All the respondents in our study stated that the main reason for their migration to Monterrey were educational opportunities. Misión del Nayar reached out to the high school of the students and encouraged them to apply for their scholarship. The current students living in the house provided by the NGO have all been provided with this scholarship. They have lived in Monterrey a different amount of time varying from one and a half years to six years (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5). When differentiating between the respondents, the reasons for seeking higher

education in Monterrey differed slightly, but common reasons were employment opportunities, life experience and better services. There was also a pattern of more personal reasons as shown in the case of Respondent 1 where she answered:

I decided to study nursing because in my little town where I lived, we have a small health clinic that is not properly equipped. Additionally, the doctor only goes there once every two weeks. Therefore I want to help my community and be able to be prepared just in case something happens in between those days [when the doctor is not there] and help the people and be a support for the doctor.

Respondent 5 where she gave a detailed answer on how she wanted to experience living in a different way than normal and said:

I have always been very interested in construction and in the theories behind every construction and I thought that civil engineering had a whole mix of that. I also like the environment aspect of it, taking care of the environment. This involves building things carefully and properly, and the balance.

Brickell & Datta (2011) expressed how internal migration involves strategic decisions for the migrants to benefit from social and political power (p. 10). When they receive a higher education, and in turn: employment opportunities, life experience and better services, they increase this power. All students except one stated that they would not have stayed in their communities if it was not for the educational opportunity. This indicates that there are more underlying reasons behind the students' migration than just education. Many of the participants described in the study of Harris & Quicke Prout (2019) how they planned to return back to their communities to positively impact indigenous people (p. 5-6). Similarly, the respondents in our study wrote in the questionnaire how they wanted to return to their communities and work with projects that benefited their communities (R1, R2, R5). Not only did the students empower themselves as individuals but also their communities in general. Respondent 4 added that:

I think we all need to go home at some point to fill ourselves with the energy of family love, and so that we never forget where we come from. Now we can be grateful for how far we have come.

However, returning to the indigenous communities could entail challenges, as seen in the case of Respondent 1 who mentioned her concerns that returning would be complicated. Women are expected to marry a man and become mothers. When returning with a bachelor education, she was worried about how the adaptation process would look like and if people would respect her proposals. Further, during the interview Respondent 5 elaborated on that she wanted to gain more practical work experience and return to her community. Work there for a while in order to gain more expertise and then return to work in Monterrey. She added that she was worried about the effects of the covid-19 pandemic. Her studies had been online during the past year, and while she felt she knew everything theoretically, she had not had the opportunity to apply it practically. She mentioned that this was a concern for many students and a challenge they would have to figure out when their studies were finished. The results demonstrate that the students have their own stories

and that their experiences are a continuous process. The students at Misión del Nayar share their experiences together and although they are out of their comfort zone, they consider their migration worth it. The educational opportunities provided by Misión del Nayar allows the students to extend their translocal spaces (R1).

5.2 Translocal homes

Our second purpose of the study was to explore what experiences indigenous students had of different translocal circumstances. Translocal homes represent the direct differences of the students' homes in Monterrey (urban) in comparison to their indigenous home (rural). It can be considered the closest indicator of identity and belonging (Brickell & Datta, p. 11). As mentioned in previous research, Brickell and Datta (2011) discuss the concept of home partly as a physical place of dwelling (p. 10). Additionally, creating a new home and having connections to homes in other localities, makes them translocal. In a way, the students had created a new home in Monterrey. Both the respondents who were interviewed lived in a house with other indigenous students that was provided by Misión del Nayar (R1, R5). Both respondents lived with their families before migrating to Monterrey, a big contrast to suddenly living alone with housemates in a different city. Respondent 1 did feel a sense of dwelling to her family, as she considered them her biggest inspiration to keep studying. She recognised that it was also important to live without her family in Monterrey. Similarly to what Tachine et. al. (2017) concluded in their study that the family of the students can have an influential role in their sense of belonging through encouragement, even if they resided elsewhere (p. 797). Translocality allows Respondent 1 to still have that connection to her family, while residing in Monterrey. Respondent 1 exemplified that she felt at home every time she spoke in her dialect with her parents. While they both agreed that living with family was important, Respondent 5 partly wanted to migrate for the chance to live on her own and become more independent. This has a direct link to the creation of a translocal identity for her. Because home can be a prominent source of belonging, having a place that generates similar feelings as their indigenous home can be comforting. Respondent 5 agreed that Misión del Nayar can be considered a 'home away from home', and mentioned:

We say in between ourselves [the indigenous students] that we feel like a second family and because I have a really close relationship with my parents, I sometimes really like to talk to people. Therefore, I always feel supported, heard and really happy.

This common support and familiarity is an indicator that she felt a sense of belonging around other indigenous students. Encounters with others in a home comes down to the variety of the indigenous ethnicities of the girls living in the house. Respondent 1 highlighted her positive experiences with the other when she mentioned how much she has enjoyed learning about all their different communities, traditions and even the languages. This is similar to the existence of "indigenous space" mentioned in the study by Tachine et. al. (2017), where the students could share their language and understanding with each other (p. 799). Additionally, Respondent 1 had found a

sense of belonging in their common struggles. Because of the covid-19 pandemic, the students were struggling with wanting to go home, but not being able to. They all shared the same feelings and experiences of longing and had found a sort of home in their new family with the other indigenous students. Similarly to Respondent 5, a sense of belonging was achieved through the feeling of support and familiarity, but also through common struggles. These positive associations to the house is an indicator of a positive sense of place. From another perspective, the lack of interaction with the non-indigenous population in Monterrey could cause ignorance and disunion between the indigenous students and non-indigenous people. Guimond and Desmeules (2018) identified lack of encounters with the other ethnic group as a promoter of negative feelings and negative sense of place. An argument can be made for both sides, but the students themselves felt positive feelings in interacting with mainly indigenous students.

5.3 Translocal neighbourhoods

Neighbourhoods are where the students' everyday lives and social interactions occur, often acting as locations where encounters with others and creation of sense of place and belonging begin (Brickell & Datta, 2011, p. 12-13). In the study of Tachine et. al. (2017), connections to the university campus and Native cultural center shaped the amount of belonging the students felt. When applying this perspective, this can likewise be seen for example through all of our respondents who answered that they could express their indigenous 'self' at either Misión del Nayar or the university campus (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5). In order to preserve their indigenous 'self', the students often wore their traditional suits wherever they felt comfortable and tried to speak their dialect when the opportunity was given. Expressing their indigenous heritage is an indicator that they feel a sense of belonging. In the study by Tachine et. al. (2017), the Native cultural center was described as a 'home away from home'. Similarly, Misión del Nayar was described by Respondent 5 as a "second family" while being away from her own. The NGO functioned as a place for support, sharing of indigenous knowledge and sharing experiences and where the students established contact with other indigenous students. It can thus be considered a critical space for the student to feel a sense of belonging. The positive affiliations they had to Misión del Nayar indicates that they have a positive sense of place in their neighbourhood.

Furthermore, Misión del Nayar can be considered a network, as it creates interactions and relationships. As mentioned by Brickell and Datta (2011), translocality is a space where networks become territorialised through migrant agencies (p. 153). Before migrating, the students only received a limited amount of information from the NGO (R1). However, Respondents 4 and 5 indicated that there were expectations on the organisation of what it would be like and how they would teach them how to adapt. When arriving in Monterrey, these expectations became associated not only with a physical place but also a place of meaning. This is an example where a network becomes territorialised by migrants associating it with a specific location, in line with Brickell and Datta's understanding.

As previously mentioned, the students felt like they could express their indigenous 'self' and felt a sense of belonging when they wore traditional suits or spoke in their dialect. The university campus was a place where many students felt comfortable. When discussing experiences at the university during the interview, the students expressed mixed responses. Without asking a question, Respondent 5 talked openly:

At the beginning it was really complicated because when we first arrived we had a semester called "semestre soy" which means "semester I am". There we still had a lot of communication with everyone who helped us apply. So, it was still easy, but after that semester we were kind of let go. After, it was a lot of figuring stuff out on your own. A big struggle was transportation. Getting from one place to another and doing things on my own in a big place when I was used to a small little ranch. And now I am in a big city and was let loose to do everything on my own. That was difficult at first.

We further asked if she ever felt that the university valued her indigenous identity and she expressed that she felt really supported because faculty members and her teachers were interested in her background and in her ways of living. Not only would they ask personal questions, but the teachers would also assign her little assignments for her to present in class for non-indigenous people to gain knowledge about indigenous culture. She felt that it was a nice way of not only including her, but also supporting her (R5). Respondent 1 had different thoughts regarding this topic and replied:

I don't feel like they don't value my identity, [...] neither have I been discriminated against or been treated differently. Some people know, some people don't [about her indigenous heritage]. My friends know, and they know I am here [Monterrey] with the scholarship. It is neither good nor bad. It is not something very marked and it is not something about me. The teachers either do know, or they just do not care. Not in a bad way, they just do not point it out.

As seen in the two previously mentioned examples, exclusion and discrimination are two feelings that affect the students' sense of place and sense of belonging. Positive associations will likely increase a sense of belonging and a positive sense of place and vice versa. In the case of the university, where they had encounters with other students regularly, Respondent 5 had not felt any negative feelings towards her by her classmates or by the university. If there were circumstances where she had felt excluded, it was more related to groups of friends already being formed in her class. She felt supported and valued by the university when they asked her to present more about her culture, or when someone asked about her history. Feeling supported is an indicator that she felt a sense of belonging and subsequently, a positive sense of place. In terms of experiences with classmates, negative comments had occurred. While this is likely to decrease a sense of belonging, this was not the case for Respondent 5 who recalled that she was not too bothered by it. The results from Respondent 1, indicated to some extent that she had a different feeling regarding the university related to exclusion. The feeling of exclusion increased when someone pointed out her accent or her Spanish. This negative association indicates a decrease in belonging, however, she said herself that it was not too common which indicates that her sense of belonging was not

affected. There were no circumstances that increased or decreased her sense of belonging regarding feeling supported or valued by the university. As she said herself: “as some people know, some people do not” when it came to her background. It is therefore difficult to pinpoint if her sense of belonging and sense of place were affected.

5.4 Translocal cities

Cities create and influence migratory patterns, political landscapes, identities, and narratives. Migrants' everyday lives are experienced in a variety of urban sites, which in turn form conflicting views of the local (Brickell & Datta, 2011, p. 14). When the students first arrived in the city of Monterrey, they were forced to adapt to a new environment. Both Respondent 1 and Respondent 5 mentioned transportation as an initial obstacle. The transportation in big cities is different from smaller communities and Respondent 1 mentioned she did not use the subway in her community. Mobility across different urban spaces is crucial in the creation of city narratives (ibid.). Respondent 5 had an encounter on the subway where a guy touched her and she felt unable to defend herself, partly because she was dressed in a traditional suit. This encounter with others, shaped her narrative of Monterrey, and it resulted in her not wearing her traditional suit as often. A negative narrative of a location increases a negative sense of place. Similarly to those negative associations, weather was an obstacle a multitude of respondents found challenging. Respondent 4 mentioned that there were extreme climates caused by pollution in Monterrey. Respondent 1 added that the hot weather made her question whether or not she was going to stay in Monterrey. That, combined with missing her family was a constant struggle in the beginning. Her narrative was therefore negative to some extent and as a result, so was her sense of place. These challenges were not enough for her to leave however, which indicates that she must have had positive feelings as well.

As students move around the city, they are creating narratives. Not only did they spend time at the university and in their homes, they also moved to and from those places and visited other places. Respondent 1 mentioned that she did not like to go out often because she did not like big spaces and being around many people. This makes her feel insecure. However, she liked when her indigenous housemates organised visits to different locations. This goes in line with what Guimond and Desmeules (2018) demonstrated in their study when referring to indigenous people preferring the company of other indigenous people, because it provides a sense of familiarity, comfort, and security. Respondent 1 mentioned that having her indigenous friends along with her, whom she is familiar with created a more positive sense of place and thus, the narrative became more positively associated. For Respondent 5, big and open green spaces were also important. She spoke about how she liked to visit parks, and this implied that these were the spaces where she partly created her narratives. The indigenous workers in the study by Guimond and Desmeules (2018), expressed that they felt a sense of home and well-being in natural places. In the case for Respondent 5, this could be a similar feeling of nature being a source of positive feelings.

The exchange of knowledge across locations and when interacting with people while being translocal, happens when migrants themselves mobilise. During the interview the respondents mentioned different things they could learn from non-indigenous people. For example, Respondent 5 had learned: abilities of living in a city, how school worked and how to deal with different people. Similarly, Respondent 1 has learned what people to ask for help and support. These insights were from experience and from listening to other people, both of which shape individual narratives. Respondent 4 brought up an example when she noticed the difference between indigenous people and minorities, compared to non-indigenous people. She could relate when she saw indigenous people and other minorities:

For example, when I see indigenous people, foreign students, and homeless people, I can think of them and say that they also have needs that force them to be like this, to live in a place that is not their home, while they [non-indigenous Mexican citizens] often see it as an invasion of their place, something they have expressed many times.

This is both an encounter with others, as well as a clear contrast of narrative. It demonstrates that a sense of place can be different between both individuals and groups.

All respondents replied in the questionnaire that they wanted to return upon completing their education. Some expressed concerns with returning during the interview (R1, R5), such as returning back as an educated woman or not having enough practical experience to carry out satisfactory work. This in turn demonstrates a mobility of migration patterns; from when they migrate to Monterrey, experience translocal circumstances and then return back to their communities. There is an exchange of knowledge between two locations. Respondent 5 said in her interview that she would like to bring back how much people hang out in Monterrey. For people in Monterrey, she would like them to know more about her traditions. When asked what Respondent 1 would bring from her community to Monterrey she replied:

Maybe how much we [her community] take care of nature. An example is back home, when we are going to plant something, we go through a whole process to make sure it is good and also gives back to the earth, not just taking from it. I feel like they do not give it that much importance here [in Monterrey], what is happening to nature.

When Greiner (2010) examined rural-urban migration in north-western Namibia, one of the respondents said that they believe in their roots and bring affiliations of the rural home into the urban home. Additionally, the migrants expressed their urbanised experience in their rural homes. Similarly, Monterrey influences the identities of the students as well as their narratives, but the students also influence the city with their everyday lives and ideas. Bridging these ideas and knowledge between locations they create a translocal pathway. If the students bring affiliations from the rural home to the urban home and back, it results in migration going beyond geographical

borders. There are many spaces where the students go in-between to live, study, work, be with their friends and spend free time, all of which shapes translocal narratives.

5.5 Effects on identity

Being translocal has a deeper influence on identity, which is shaped by the students' experiences. All respondents expressed that they wanted to preserve their indigenous identity. Two common strategies of preservation were dressing in their indigenous clothing and speaking their dialects (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5). From our research on the topic of indigenous language, we got the impression that language was a big part of indigenous identity. However, when we asked Respondent 5 about the importance of her language in relation to her indigenous identity, she said that she did not feel different when speaking in Spanish. She enjoyed talking in her dialect when speaking to her parents. The reason behind this was because she found it easier, but it did not necessarily change her identity. This is paradoxical to the questionnaire, where the respondents mentioned language as a way to preserve their identity. Comparably, Respondent 1 answered that she did not feel like she lost her identity when speaking in Spanish, but she mentioned that she felt at home every time she spoke in her dialect. This indicates an increase in sense of belonging in relation to her dialect. Three of the respondents highlighted the importance of sharing knowledge, either by making their heritage known or by sharing the customs and traditions that they had in their communities (R1, R2, R5). Respondent 5 took it one step further by making presentations at the university, since many people did not know about the indigenous ethnic groups. This is an example of taking advantage of encountering others, by sharing and possibly eliminating differences. Something that increases a sense of belonging is the acknowledgement of one's identity. Respondent 3 and Respondent 4 both expressed that one key to preserving their indigenous identity was being proud of who they were and where they came from. Respondent 4 wrote in the questionnaire:

[...] the first thing I do is not be ashamed of being indigenous. Every time I get a chance I put on my skirts and my blouses, and I speak my language with colleagues who speak and understand it. I try to learn from the traditions, because being outside of my community has also left me absent to attend festivities that are part of the culture and that I'm missing.

The strong values they have related to their heritage, allows them to hold on to it easier. The central meaning of translocality is being physically located in one place, while having significant ties to another location. When asked whether the respondents had ever felt disconnected to their indigenous identities in the interview, while residing in Monterrey, they both answered that they had not. Their strong ties to their indigenous roots and values were such a big part of who they are, they did not fear that they would lose their indigenous identities (R1, R5). This indicates that their sense of belonging goes further than their physical location. There were still parts of them as people that have changed or abilities they have gained from being translocal. Respondent 5 treasured her ability to now go anywhere she wanted and not have to rely on her parents. Becoming more independent was a result of having more experiences by herself and learning to live in a location

that differed from where she used to live. In a slightly contrasted perspective, Respondent 1 was used to being more self-reliant:

I have changed a lot when it comes to everything. My personality and my social skills. I used to be very independent and very shy, but now I have forced myself to be more social, not just because I live with a lot of people, but just how to approach people in general. I have also become much more organised, with my time and things. If someone who knew me a few years ago met me now they would say I have changed a lot, in a good way.

Respondent 1 is an example of how the identity of indigenous people can change without them losing their indigenous heritage. It is not all that they are, but a big part of their roots and values.

6. Concluding remarks and discussion

This chapter is separated by our two research questions. The first section draws conclusions of reasons for migration, while the second section draws conclusions on the students' experiences of different translocal circumstances. The third section consists of a closing discussion to raise a deeper understanding gained from the study.

6.1 Reasons for migration

The reasons for migration can be both simple and multidimensional and act as the first step of the students' journeys to become translocal. By examining their migration on a multidimensional level, it allowed us to address key factors of their reasons for migration such as their opportunities and their aspirations. It allowed us to move away from focusing on just a single dimension which in this study would be education. The results indicated that migration was a complex phenomenon where various underlying factors acted together to encourage the individual's final decision to migrate. The indigenous students who participated in this study all had aspirations to migrate to Monterrey mainly for educational reasons however, they all had different plans for the future upon completing their education. What made it possible for the students to migrate was the university scholarship provided by Misión del Nayar. The students had all been in Monterrey a different amount of time, ranging from one and a half years to six years. Although our purpose was not to find patterns or compare the students, we understand that the time spent in Monterrey affects their sense of place, sense of belonging and their encounters with others. It could also be associated with how much they felt that they can express themselves and the effect it has on their identity. All the students wanted to return back to their indigenous community after completing their bachelor's. One common goal for all the students was to improve their communities to some extent. However, our findings indicate that returning can entail practical challenges because of the covid-19 pandemic, or cultural challenges in the form of communal expectations on how the students should behave upon their return. We can ultimately not draw the conclusion that these reasons are universal for all indigenous people.

6.2 Experiences of different translocal circumstances

Encounters with others, sense of place and sense of belonging happen across all translocal arenas. There are several places that are more crucial to the indigenous students. From the analysis, we conclude that Misión del Nayar is important for the students in all affiliations. The NGO provides housing, support, and the opportunity for the students to interact with other indigenous students, which proved valuable for their indigenous heritage, sense of place and sense of belonging. In a way, the students created a new home in the house that was provided by Misión del Nayar. They created a familial connection to the other indigenous students living there. It became a place where they could receive support and discuss common struggles, ultimately this contributed to a positive sense of place and increased their sense of belonging. However, limiting their interactions to predominantly other indigenous students, could be negative as well. Similarly to what Guimond and Desmeules (2018) identified, lack of encounters between indigenous and non-indigenous people can be a cause for ignorance and disunion. The university proved to be a valuable place for the students. They had not experienced any exclusion or discrimination, and generally felt valued and supported. The university became a place they associated with belonging and a positive sense of place.

In addition to Misión del Nayar, their home, and the university, their mobility and experiences across urban places also shaped their individual narratives. Transportation was a big adjustment for most students, as it was a new way to move between places. This gave them a new sense of freedom but was challenging for them for different reasons. Around Monterrey, they enjoyed spending time in a lot of different locations, all of which shaped their narratives. In a way, Monterrey shaped the students through experiences and knowledge, but the students also shaped the locations. When they move across locations they bring that knowledge with them, and hence, create translocal pathways.

While all the students wanted to preserve their indigenous identities, their strategy for doing so was paradoxical. Most mentioned that their identities did not change when speaking in Spanish compared to their native dialects, but they listed speaking their native dialects as a way to preserve their identity. Wearing their traditional clothing allowed them to express and feel a sense of pride over their indigenous heritage. Ultimately the students were not scared of losing their heritage and therefore the strategies do not matter as much. They expressed how their strong roots and values gave them a kind of security to keep that heritage.

6.3 Closing discussion

The initially stated purpose of this research was to identify reasons of migration for indigenous migrant students and to explore the experiences they had of different translocal circumstances. We successfully identified the reasons behind their decision to migrate and the translocality concept

allowed us to analyse the different translocal circumstances that the students experienced. The concept of translocality allowed us to scale down the process of migration to focus on the migrants' individual paths. Translocality proved to be a holistic concept, as it allowed us to go beyond the fixed geographical boundaries and explore the migration through connections and affiliations as experienced by the students. However, it was also a very complex and broad concept, making it difficult to navigate through. The translocal arenas and affiliations cross over in many instances and their meanings are highly open to interpretation. We had to decide what parts were relevant and scale them down for our research. The three translocal arenas brought forth by Brickell and Datta (2011) as well as the various concepts that emerged from previous research allowed us to do that.

While we did not design the study to find patterns, themes emerged during the coding of the data. Our study exemplifies the migration journey of indigenous students from rural to urban areas and gives insight into their everyday lives and how they interpret their surroundings. It can be applied to cities comparable to Monterrey, or indigenous students in similar situations. This paper could be helpful to future research when examining the circumstances of return for the indigenous students. It would be useful to conduct a long-term study which seeks to explore the impact this would have on the students. This was a topic we discussed after gathering the data collection and which is interesting for capturing the impact of their return. Future research could also explore experiences of male participants and conduct a comparative study between genders.

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Appendix I - questionnaire questions

English version

Background	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Name: 2. Age: 3. Gender: 4. What Indigenous community are you a part of? 5. How long have you been in Monterrey?
Education <p style="text-align: right;">Q1</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you study? 2. Year of study? 3. Why do you want to pursue a higher education?
Community <p style="text-align: right;">Q2</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are some of the biggest differences you have noticed between your community and Monterrey? Regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Your home: - Your neighbourhood: - The people (you encounter on a regular basis):
Pre-migration <p style="text-align: right;">Q1</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Q1</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Q1</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What were the reasons behind your migration to Monterrey? Choose the relevant option/options below <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● education ● employment opportunities ● better services (e.g. healthcare) ● safer housing ● political recognition ● life experience ● Other (please specify): 2. Would you have stayed in your community if you had the same educational opportunity as in Monterrey? 3. Did you have any expectations on either 1) Monterrey, 2) the University or 3) Misión del Nayar, before migrating? (If no, skip to the next question) If yes, please specify what expectations you had Monterrey: University: Misión del Nayar:

<p>Post-migration</p>	<p>Q1</p>	<p>1. Did you experience any initial challenges when arriving in Monterrey? If yes, can you please give an example?</p>
<p>Identity</p>	<p>Q2</p>	<p>2. Do you ever feel a sense of belonging in Monterrey? (e.g. within Misión del Nayar, the university, or to your friends) If yes, when do you have this feeling? No</p>
<p>Return</p>	<p>Q1</p>	<p>1. Do you consider returning upon completing your education? Yes No Do not know</p>
	<p>Q1</p>	<p>2. Do you have any agreement with your family that you will return back to your community?</p>
	<p>Q2</p>	<p>3. If you would return to your community, are there parts of urban culture you would bring back with you? If yes, can you please give an example? No</p>
	<p>Q2</p>	<p>4. How often do you return to your community/family? (e.g. holidays)</p>

Concluding question	Q1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are your plans for the future? 2. Are we allowed to contact you for more information?
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Appendix II - interview guide

Category	Common questions	Individual questions
Education (including university)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How come you chose to study in Monterrey? 2. How did you find out about the NGO scholarship, did they reach out to you? 3. Why did you choose your field of study? 4. Did you know anyone living in monterrey before migrating? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If yes, did this ease the migration process? <p>We would like to ask you about some experiences at your university.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Do you feel like the university values your identity and belonging? 6. Do you feel like your classmates and professors are aware of indigenous history? 7. Have you ever felt excluded or discriminated against at the university? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If yes, under what certain circumstances? 8. Have you experienced any ignorance regarding your indigenous history? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When and where did you experience this? 	<p>Respondent 1: civil engineer</p> <p>Respondent 5: nursing</p>
Community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Back in your community, did you live alone or with family/relatives? If yes, do you consider it important to live with your family? If not, did your family live nearby? 2. What kind of housing do you live in at the moment? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Was this housing provided by the NGO? - Are you living alone or with people? 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are the people you live with neighbors indigenous or non-indigenous, or mixed? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. How does your indigenous neighbourhood differ from your current neighbourhood in monterrey? 4. Do you miss certain places back home within your community? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If yes, have you attempted to find similar places in Monterrey? 5. Are there any indigenous customs from back home that you miss when you are in Monterrey? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - e.g traditions, clothing, decorations, daily life. 	
Pre-migration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you feel like you had to adapt yourself in some ways when arriving in Monterrey? 2. were there any parts of society that were difficult to adapt to? 	<p>R1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We asked a question about possible expectations you might have had before migrating in the questionnaire. While you didn't have expectations, we were wondering if you had any feelings before migrating? <p>R5:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We asked you about expectations on Monterrey, Uni and Mision del Nayar. You answered: Yes, according to what I investigated and what they informed me before I came was, the city, it is one of the very large cities, there is a lot of pollution, difficult to transport, etc. About the university that there were very good schools, of Mission, according to the interview, it was learning to adapt to new things
Post-migration /living in Monterrey	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you feel like you had to adapt yourself in some ways when arriving in Monterrey? 	<p>R1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there places in Monterrey where you feel

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. were there any parts of society that were difficult to adapt to? 3. Do you consider the NGO meaningful? 4. As we understand, the NGO helps you with practical matters. Do they also help in other ways, such as emotionally? 5. What have been your experiences with other indigenous students? - good or bad? 6. How often do you visit the NGO? or they visit you 7. Does the NGO function as a “home away from home”? no, how would you describe it? 	<p>more or less comfortable?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You answered that you noticed a difference between you and non-indigenous people in the manner of speaking and social life. When do you notice this and how often? Do you have examples? <p>R5:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you ever feel a sense of belonging in Monterrey? (e.g. within Misión del Nayar, the university, or to your friends) 2. Are there times when you feel a less sense of belonging? Examples of this?
<p>Identity</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What does a typical day look like for you? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What do you enjoy doing in your free-time? - Please tell us more about... 2. What places do you usually spend your time at? Besides your home and the university. 3. How do you feel about being identified as indigenous? Do you feel like you are being labeled? - if yes, do you feel like this is a challenge? 4. Do you feel like your native language is strongly connected to your indigenous identity? - Do you feel like you lose a part of that identity when speaking either spanish or english? (when do you get to speak your native language) 5. Do you feel that you can learn from other non-indigenous people? Regarding anything. 6. Do you remember any specific experience with feeling disconnected from your indigenous identity while 	<p>R1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You wrote that you want to preserve your indigenous identity by wearing your suit and speaking your language. 2. When expressing yourself, you write that you can do that within the faculty and with your classmates. - Do you feel like you cannot express yourself anywhere else? <p>R5:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You wrote that you make presentations at the faculty (uni or ngo?) since many people do not know about the different ethnic groups. Do you feel like you get a good response when doing so? Have you ever felt ignorance? 2. You said that you can express yourself wherever, whenever. Can

	<p>you have been in Monterrey?</p> <p>7. How did you feel when you first arrived in Monterrey?</p> <p>- How do you feel now? Are there any differences? Has anything changed?</p> <p>8. Have you ever felt that there are conflicting thoughts regarding your identity?</p> <p>- Are there times or places when you feel like you are losing your indigenous identity?</p> <p>9. Are you afraid of losing your indigenous identity?</p>	<p>you remember a time when you did not feel this way?</p>
Return	<p>1. Do you have any thoughts of what it will be like returning?</p> <p>- Do you have any concerns with returning back to your home community? Are you worried that some parts will be challenging?</p>	<p>R1: You said that you do not think you will bring back anything from urban culture, but are there things you wish Monterrey would learn from you or your community?</p> <p>R5: Bring back to the community: “Yes, the way of life, the customs and traditions of both.” Could you tell us more about this? Could you give an example of this?</p>
Concluding questions	<p>1. Do you feel that you have changed as a person from first arriving in Monterrey up until today?</p> <p>2. Do you have any questions for us or anything that has been unclear?</p> <p>3. Is there anything you would like to tell us that you want us to know, or feel like we have not brought up?</p> <p>4. Do you want us to send our thesis to you when it is complete? And again, you will remain anonymous .</p>	

Appendix III - coding scheme

	Translocal homes	Translocal neighbourhoods	Translocal cities	Effects on identity
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Encounters with others	The variety of the indigenous ethnicities of the girls living in the house.	Respondent 5 feeling supported because every faculty member and her teachers were interested in her background and in her ways of living	Respondent 5 had a negative encounter on the subway with a man The students learning from non-indigenous people	Respondent 5 having presentations at the university, by sharing and possibly eliminating differences.
Sense of place	The positive associations to the house	Positive affiliations to Misión del Nayar When arriving in Monterrey, the students expectations of the NGO became associated not only with a physical place but also a place of meaning	Transportation as an initial obstacle Mobility across different urban spaces Negative encounter on subway (R5) creating negative narrative of a location Hot weather combined with missing her family as a constant struggle in the beginning (R1) The company of other indigenous people, providing familiarity, comfort and security Non-indigenous mexican citizen seeing minorities present it as an invasion of their place (R4) indicating the meaning of a place can differ between people	
Sense of belonging	Respondent 1 exemplified that she felt at home every time she spoke in her dialect with her parents.	They could express their indigenous 'self' at either Misión del Nayar or the university campus The students often wore their traditional suits wherever they felt	Being in green spaces	Respondent 1 felt at home every time she spoke in her dialect. Respondent 3 and Respondent 4 preserving their indigenous identity

	<p>Misión del Nayar as a 'home away from home'</p> <p>Common support and familiarity around other indigenous students.</p> <p>Common struggles of indigenous students</p>	<p>comfortable and tried to speak their dialect when the opportunity was given.</p> <p>The NGO functioned as a place for support, sharing of indigenous knowledge and sharing experiences</p> <p>The university supported respondent 5 by giving her assignments for her to present in class for people to gain knowledge.</p> <p>Feeling of exclusion increased when someone pointed out her accent or her Spanish (R1)</p>		<p>by being proud of who they were and where they came from</p> <p>Their strong ties to their indigenous roots and values were such a big part of who they are, indicating their sense of belonging goes further than their physical location.</p>
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