

The perspective of women, youth and older adults in the face of the new rurality

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Abstract

What is a new rurality attributed to? There is much debate about the new rurality, on the one hand it is attributed as a current study for agrarian issues, stimulating new research in rural transformations or simply a new concept that gained popularity to what already existed. The term became more common and was used improperly for political purposes and to promote the legitimacy of certain actions. The concept of new rurality is analyzed and the impact it has had through three social actors, which were not mentioned in studies of yesteryear on issues of the field: women, young people and older adults, seen as new actors or simply were invisible in the tasks of the field.

Keywords: adolescents and older adults, new rurality, rural-urban relationship, women.

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Introduction

The human being has been immersed in a stage of capitalism called globalization, where what is important is to put a price on nature and its resources. It is in a stage of environmental and humanitarian destruction, unaware of the consequences. Land is, has been and will be an essential economic asset in rural societies, but its monetary value is not the only nor the most important for many people. A price has been placed on natural resources, including land seen as property, merchandise and not as the space where human actors reproduce life in community, constituting the social space in which a culture can be transmitted from generation to generation, There is a relationship between man and nature, whose well-being depends on the existence of a healthy balance between these two elements.

The process of globalization has increased competitive pressures on agriculture and mechanized agricultural exploitation, which has widened and deepened capitalist production relations in the countryside and reduced employment opportunities for agricultural workers, worsening employment conditions rural.

Kay (2009) argues that the transformations of the rural sector have such relevance from neoliberal globalization, that they require a rethinking of the whole discipline of rural sociology. The problem is that they are used as a framework for the analysis of new research, on the changes that globalization has caused, highlighting certain problems that have been ignored, but that already existed, taking them back as new. Wanting to give a solution, to the degree of wanting to fight poverty originated by an unequal globalization that makes proposals or implementing solutions that have only affected the field more.

Rurality and modernity

The concept of rurality, this is as old as the first human settlements, especially considering the number of inhabitants; In the case of Mexico, the official definition of rurality depends on the demographic situation of around 2 500 inhabitants. In other cases, like Chile, it depends on settlements and occupation ranging from 1 000 to 2 000 with a PEA of 50% in primary activities. In Honduras, Panama and Nicaragua are based on the number of people and lack of service (Castro and Reboratti, 2008). The difference and particularity between the rural and the urban concretes the scope of a series of state actions in different sectors of society: there is often talk of rural education, rural credit, rural roads, rural health, rural poverty, rural development, without the definition of the rural has been questioned.

There are several methods that have their advantages and disadvantages to denominate a rural population; there is no linear concept and nothing in itself that can give an exact definition of what rurality is. The problem is that the definition of the rural is found as a category of the urban, for which reason the space is differentiated in a non-neutral way. This view comments Castro and Reboratti (2008) tends to separate society in two terms: the rural as backward, poor, isolated, slow changes, tied to nature and primary production; the urban as rich, modern, dynamic, industrial and connected with the world.

In the new rurality, the different aspects of rural transformations stand out, indicating that there is a change in rural activities and where they give importance to non-agricultural jobs to obtain higher incomes as livelihood strategies of peasants or agricultural workers. Bengoa (2003) affirm that the existence of a new rurality means that at least important fundamental changes have taken place, new subjects, new productive relationships and nothing tells us that this happens in a homogeneous and definitive way. In the case of Gómez (2002) he says that if there are many significant transformations in the rural sector, his final conclusion is that perhaps, the new thing is that now we look at a reality that was previously ignored.

The new rurality has been the evolution of rurality, changes and transformations that this has had in the rural area, related to the city and society in general. Kay (2009) comments that the new rurality is interpreted as a way of reconsidering rural development in terms of a variety of regulations, such as reducing poverty (caused by an unequal globalization), environmental sustainability (which is a form of to be able to exploit natural resources), gender equity (a sector already existing in the countryside, but nevertheless not visible), the revaluation of the field (always fought for it), its culture (the new globalized culturalization focused from a westernization) and facilitating decentralization and social participation to the people, overcoming the rural-urban division, overcoming the rural and becoming urban? and guarantee the viability of peasant agriculture (focused on a competitive, mechanized, transgenic capitalist market, affecting the peasant).

The new rurality has brought with it new social actors, new social relations, new rural scenarios, rather it is considered that these new scenarios have been in an unequal aspect that its consequence is the impoverishment and the disappearance of the peasantry; it is not that suddenly new social actors appear in the rural areas, but that the visualization of already existing characters has been allowed but previously invisible, as is the case of women, young people and older adults, these have been detected in agricultural activities, the integration of the rural and the urban, the role of migrations and remittances, among others.

Women

The literature shows the participation of women in Mexican agriculture in the last three decades, since the eighties and nineties when this situation began to be visible. The woman enters this participation of the rural field in an economic environment, because she takes care of the plot or sells what she produces. Gonzalez (2002) in her article makes visible the moment in which studies of the participation of women in the Mexican countryside begin, interviewed the government programs for the field and studied the roles of women in the family.

Although this process is not entirely new, it corresponds precisely to the fact that “the work of women in agriculture has become more visible, partly because research and better data collection have managed to establish more reliably the activities” (Lastarria, 2002).

Rural women are not properly new actors in the countryside, since they have always participated actively in the history of indigenous and peasant mobilizations. There is a rural woman with very own characteristics, due to the importance of the individual and collective action that they have in the family and the community.

The new environments made evident the already existing, but now progressive increase of the participation of women in productive and community activities; but this visibility has not occurred as a result of the free choice of rural women, but was the consequence of abandonment and marginalization in which the rural sector had fallen within the framework of the national development project under neoliberal policies (Rubio, 1997). The problem is that the neoliberal project did not have a diversified policy towards the rural sector, except with a gender perspective.

The impact of economic measures on the quality of life of rural women was undoubtedly negative, to counteract this impact, the government tried to assist women with welfare programs (such as the Progresá and Oportunidades program) or tried to incorporate to women in work situations. From there, the social enterprises that give a certain self-financing are created, avoiding the problems of impoverishment and social exclusion. They arise from the need that the government has to give answers or solutions to various social demands, but it comes back to the same, most of these companies are to keep a part of the social sector stagnant, most do not have equity of gender and sometimes do not have technical and administrative advice.

Villarreal (2000) talks about the woman-subject-of-development, which are those women who have received some kind of help, entering some program or credit from the government, where it makes them different and more modern. He says that for this, the government and the women supported handle a double discourse: on the one hand, the government reduces aid or projects aimed at women so that they enter into development and progress on the other, women continue to be classified as submissive and poor so that the government help them.

Managing for both a discourse that does not take to start a gender equity, does not take them out of their problem, only superficially covers it. Only the problems of women are claimed, but the problem is not fixed. At the end of her text, she comments on the notion of the woman-subject-of-development attributed to an identity based on lack and entails a series of implications in terms of power, control and regulation, where women and academics reproduce these models by going to different scripts in their discursive practices, of politicians and operators of development projects with diverse interests (Villarreal, 2000).

Migration and remittances

The occupational crisis of the poor, worsened by indebtedness and neoliberal globalization, has increased migration across borders to other countries. The decision to migrate frequently is part of a subsistence strategy of the family group and often involves younger members of the family. The majority of workers who migrate send remittances to their families, although these begin to spread over the years. Male migration and the insecurity of remittances force rural women to participate actively in productive and community spheres, not previously considered by them.

Nowadays, thanks to remittances, peasant women put the field to work, buying seeds, hiring tractors, laborers, etc. Taking a burden off the government, because to some extent, migration is profitable with the entry of foreign currency, reducing the number of poor, reduces the chances of social conflicts; Little has governments done to remedy the issue of migration or to make possible a more productive use of remittances.

Apart from remittances, the rural economy outside the agrarian has become an important source of income for most of the peasants. Within the new rurality mention is made of non-agricultural jobs, “considering themselves as survival strategies and as a response to the crisis of the peasant economy, they should be seen as a new form of integration to the market economy” (Grammont, 2004). Rural non-agricultural activities have become increasingly important in terms of employment and income for rural inhabitants, are much more dynamic, more productive and generate income than agricultural activities, hence their importance continues to grow in jobs and income, compared to agricultural activities.

The impact of transformations on livelihoods, on the participation of women in agricultural productive activities and their decision to exercise their agency as actresses in the field seeking multiple activities and new survival strategies must be questioned. At the end of the day another non-agricultural activity can generate income within the family nucleus but it is a form of expulsion of rural women in agriculture. If this is the new rurality then, it reaffirms that it is the visibility but also the disappearance of women in the countryside.

Young's

The young people of the world are a majority who suffer a constant invisibility of their contributions to economic activity and social life. One of the factors of the decline of youth in the field is the insertion into the labor market, occurs at a younger age than in the cities, and with it the school dropout. Young men and women venture into this market through family businesses, manufacturing companies, natural resource extraction companies, among others. They are pressured into the early search for work, to help solve the basic needs of impoverished households, and more if the income from their work is short-term.

Rural settlements are prone to experience dispossession, displacement and other situations of insecurity, such as the exploitation of natural resources located in their villages; where large extractive industries of natural capital (gas or oil, water/land), extraction of wood, mining and hydrocarbons are installed, which degrade the environment that threatens natural resources. They sell the idea to the settlers for secure employment, short-term salary, benefits, etc. Situation that on the one hand dazzles the young and on the other they are forced by the family to enter to work, to obtain immediate monetary resources. Situation by which several young people drop out of their studies.

According to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), school dropouts among young people are high for different reasons, including high poverty in the rural sector that leads to the premature inclusion of young people in the labor market, with low qualifications and remuneration. On the one hand, young people leave school to help their families and on the other the jobs they can aspire to are precarious, it is a vicious circle of poverty.

The majority of young people are inclined towards underemployment and informal employment as access routes to the labor market to obtain some income; combining stages of “unemployment, underemployment, inactivity, temporary contracts or self-employment. Such conditions cause a distancing of the nuclei that constitute the basis of their formation, perceiving an increase in the social problems associated with unemployment” (Miranda, 2006).

Marco Antonio Ortiz Salas, leader of the Coalition of Democratic, Urban and Peasant Organizations (CODUC), warned that young farmers no longer want to work the land and their incorporation into criminal groups grows due to the lack of opportunities in their communities. Only 20% of young people, men and women, stay to work in rural areas, the rest 80% leave their communities to go to urban cities or try to cross, undocumented, to the United States of America (Ortiz, 2012). The migration of young people to the lack of opportunities and income in their communities.

Another cause that incurs on the decrease of rural youth in their territories of origin, is the migration from the countryside to the city, mainly in those families driven by the impoverishment of the countryside, who look for employment opportunities or income in the cities. In part due to the growth of rural tourism, the penetration of the news media and information between rural and urban areas influence and increase different cultural values among young people. The belief that in urban areas there are better employment opportunities and social development that cannot be found in their communities, driven by the influences of the media are attracted to the city "is reflected in the field lack of young labor".

Being young and being young in the countryside is a particular condition, because in the opportunities of education, employment and health are unequal among young people from different territories, factors such as subjectivity, ethnic-cultural substratum, gender, belonging, come into play to a given socioeconomic stratum and the generational historical context of each young person. The norms, values, relational practices and the world view of young people, part of the particular cultural references of the social group where they live the process of socialization. Being young occurs in central institutional spaces such as family, school, school and workplace, and in more informal but very influential nuclei such as the group of friends.

Older adults

Older adults in the field are considered to be people of experience and wisdom, but they also suffer from a certain degree of vulnerability: they have stopped, in many cases, from supporting themselves, from providing sustenance and sometimes even find themselves terribly alone and even marginalized by society. Within families, older adults suffer from the problem of the patriarchal system, because the subordination of the young person is related to the patriarchal-authoritarian scheme in which the exercise of power by the adult generations, invisibilizes their contributions and their potential.

An important economic source for rural older adults is that given to them through social programs. One of them is program 70 and more that consists of an economic support of \$500.00 (five hundred pesos M.N.) monthly, which in most of the time is delivered bimonthly. Unfortunately, this social program also has limitations, it is only for people over 70 years of age and who have documentation (birth certificate, unique registry key - CURP - and proof of address). There is a large number of older adults who do not have their papers, the causes are diverse: the parents only baptized them (they took this document as an official, discarding the importance of the documents issued by the civil registries), they lost the documentation (the parents never gave them their birth certificates), the data of one document does not coincide with another, etc.

Most of the elderly who have dedicated their entire lives to the countryside do not have resources from a pension or receive an insufficient pension, they are forced to look for a job and many of them fall back into informality, most of them as street vendors. The main problem perceived by 4 out of 10 older adults is the difficulty to find work that this sector of the population is made up of people who are over 60 years old (ENADIS, 2010).

Added to this also face the lack of preparation at least those over 60 years of age. Of every 10 people aged 60 or older, 3 cannot read or write (INEGI, 2005). In addition, older adults have the highest percentage of people with incomplete basic education and one of the lowest with upper secondary and higher education.

As well as young people, older adults face discrimination associated with their age, since they are the ones with the greatest labor problem, which is evidenced by the types of employment they access.

Proposals

You can create spaces for socialization, learning, application of knowledge and skills (particularly in harvest and post-harvest processes) in the participation of agricultural work, among other women. One of these spaces of socialization is the agrarian movement the peasant road (LVC) that the woman has gained space as the movement matured. In 1992 the Managua Declaration does not mention women or gender. The following year in the "Mons Declaration" agricultural women are mentioned only once, however, 20% of female agricultural leaders were registered at the conference. For 1996, the World Food Summit and the Forum of NGOs on Food Sovereignty in Rome constituted 34% of women leaders registered in the LVC. The women achieved significant progress by becoming more visible in the third congress of the Latin American Coordination of Field Organizations (CLOC) held in Mexico in 2001 representing 56% of delegates to the congress (Desmarais, 2007).

Food sovereignty means recovering the ability to decide on what we eat (which is currently decided by companies with private interests, which monopolize seeds, fertilizers, the distribution of food in markets). It materializes in the right to decide how to organize production, what and how to plant; how to organize the distribution and consumption of food according to the needs, prioritizing local products and landraces (Caro, 2013). Bet a peasant who can work with the land, a model of agriculture more local, ecological and more sustainable. It is important to break with the neoliberal models that govern the agricultural and food model, companies that exploit and decide what they eat and when they eat.

The participation of rural women in food sovereignty is notable, since they are the ones that produce much of the food that sustains families and communities. Women have worked agriculture, experienced, hybridized seeds, selected the edible from the inedible, preserved foods, invented and refined dietetics, culinary and their instruments. They have a long tradition of collecting, choosing and propagating seed varieties for their food and medicinal uses (Caro, 2013).

Another form of participation of rural women is the family gardens, since there are differences in the management and knowledge of species and control over the products of the garden. Women can play an important role in the composition, care, use of the garden and its products. Determine the structure of the garden, they are responsible for choosing the area, by designating the place where the different groups of plants will be, apart from what they do in their homes. You can exchange your cultivated products with family, friends or neighbors or get to sell them in small markets or neighboring communities.

Sufficient programs and resources have to be created to root young people in their communities and prevent their migration or join criminal groups. It is up to the governments to create the conditions so that the new generations have their own voice, the right to decide and participate with adequate living conditions, to assume the leading role in the transformations of their societies where the youth themselves are capable of imagining.

Youth can develop a greater sensitivity about the relationship between the human being and the environment, because when growing in the field, they have the possibility of knowing the characteristics of the environment during prolonged and continuous periods. Knowledge about the natural ecosystems and the biodiversity of the local population, and with the adequate training and education, can take advantage of alternative activities and jobs, and in the access to assets of the small family production that release the overexploitation of the natural base. In the small production units, which in turn act as learning contexts, youth emerge as the agent with the greatest potential for the constant adaptation of the productive strategy. By providing adequate training and technical resources, the rural youth has the potential to make use of non-traditional channels and sources of information, which tend to increase the effectiveness of agricultural processes.

It is recommended that you have to work with young people from a motivating point of view, because in the field there may be a youth with desire to excel and all that potential should be used through courses and training for young people from rural communities. An example of working with young people is the Center for Rural Development Studies (CEDER) is an educational and development promotion institution, driven by a team of professionals in a region of the Sierra Norte of the state of Puebla. It is a semi-coached system, young people go one week each month and the rest of the time they have to get involved in the field with some organization, group or dependency of their community. To put into practice what was seen in that week. The aim is to obtain an office to execute the knowledge in the community. An approach is made that young people travel to their homes at weekends, where they practice the training they got at school. It is from the education that the CEDER is generating an impact in all the communities where the students come from.

The rural space in Mexico has undergone profound changes over time through the incorporation of various forms of capitalist accumulation, which, even driven by the government, have influenced the agrarian subsistence economy and the instrumentation of modern agriculture that achieved an agriculture-industry nexus that favored the latter. Very much in spite of the neoliberal system that prevails in our times, which seeks to homogenize our species in: behavior, attitude, language, food,

in short in an individualistic and consumerist thought. There are people from our past who, with their thoughts and actions, try to perpetuate this delicate and sensitive part of our identity and cultural diversity. Without a doubt, these people of our essence are the elderly, who try to seek directly and indirectly to transcend the passage of time, through their daily contributions; that is, through his living.

Older adults have a lot of experience in the knowledge of the field, which can be transmitters of it. The restriction that refers to the education of childhood and youth, which consists of providing the individual with a well-organized set of knowledge and a certain period of his life to regulate his behavior in society (Mata and Sepulveda, 1980). The broad, in which education is present throughout the existence of man and is related to all activities, ie as a process of development and maturation of individuals, who are subjected to a series of stimuli and influences throughout his life (Mata and Sepulveda, 1980). In this sense, we can say that man is educated from birth until he dies. The individual is being prepared for the new social demands. Education cannot ignore the existence of these experiences, but must start from them to base their action and content.

The participation of the transmission of knowledge of the elderly in natural resources and of the peasantry to younger generations must be done, through education, workshops and practices; where young people and adults feel motivated in relation to their rural environment.

A participation of the elderly in the transmission of knowledge of future generations is the family garden. According to Monserrat Gispert (1993) the planning of the orchard is intimately linked with the cultural origin and the socioeconomic status of the family in it the processes of exchange of plants and the flow of knowledge are present. This movement of information comprises three intimately linked stages: acquisition, transmission and socialization, which are carried out through the following systems: orality, documents and gestures. This is where older adults can participate through the flow of knowledge, transmission, socialization, orality and gestures.

Conclusions

New rurality is a new trend, to say that a sector that had not been touched in depth is studied and investigated (the rural theme). For this reason, scholars in the field have broadened their research, making visible certain problems and social actors, but these already had their existence and history in rural areas.

More than existing a new rurality there is a transformation in the countryside, combined with a crisis in its existence: the disappearance of the peasantry. There are no new social actors only invisible, there are new problems in the field, but these have become increasingly acute, due to the neoliberal policies poorly posed by the government. Affecting the peasantry and even worse the women, young people and older adults related to the rural.

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