

Mexico health disparity essay example

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



Mexico Health Disparity (Section 5)

5. 0 Status of Women

This section of the paper provides an assessment of the educational, employment and social status of women in Mexico and the impact that this has on social and health issues.

5. 1 Education

Werz (Jun. 2012) writing for the Center for American Progress refers to “ the country’s educational progress, emancipation of women, and modern urban culture” as being significant factors in the emergence of Mexico as a modern, sophisticated research and manufacturing center. He also makes the comment that a crucial element in Mexico’s success is “ the rise of a middle class that is younger, more educated, wealthier, healthier, and more able to integrate women into the labor force than any previous generation.”

There appears to be in general a good gender balance in today’s education system in Mexico, although there are still pockets of resistance by the more traditionally-minded. For example, Estevez (Oct. 2013) quotes Ricardo Salinas Pliego – a Mexican billionaire – as stating during a business meeting in Guadalajara that husbands should pay wives wages to stay home and raise their children, rather than allow them to go out and study and/or work. In fairness his opinion was countered by others present. However, as Estevez points out, there are still areas, especially in rural Mexico, where gender discrimination is rife and women are encouraged to stay at home or afforded less opportunity to participate in formal education. As a consequence, such women are likely to remain in a lower social status than their male counterparts or their female counterparts from more enlightened family

backgrounds.

Rhoda and Burton (Feb. 2010) in their article "Female quality of life in Mexico" report an improving situation, and that more women are going to university, "though the difference in rate between females and males is still pronounced."

5. 2 Employment

"Mexican women face a tough future" is the title of an article in the Guardian by Guadalupe Cruz Jaime (Feb. 2012). She reports that job losses and rock-bottom wage levels were projected for 2012, and that "Work prospects are even bleaker for young women, whose chances of finding a job are no better with a high school diploma or university degree." The greatest numbers of job losses were predicted to be in the industries manufacturing shoes, textiles and toys all areas where women comprise the majority of the workforce (in textiles, women represent 70 percent of the workers). Statistics show that young women are the worst affected by job losses in recent years, even though many are educated. The article reports that of the current Mexican total of 2.8 million unemployed (men and women) 70 percent have either secondary education or higher. Curiously, the highest rate of female unemployment is among the women who are the most educated.

The same article also reports that those women who are able to find work often have to accept "poor working conditions and wages too low to cover even the basic food basket." An example given is that of the retail sector, where 4.4 million women are employed, and where salary packages have fallen by 25 percent from 2005 to 2011. To make the situation even worse for women, the article claims that a woman doing the same job as a man

typically earns circa 70 percent of what the man earns, even though she has the same education.

Brundage (Dec. 2012) reports that “ Mexican women now have better educational performance than men; however, their participation rate in the labor market is second lowest among the 34 countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).” That statistic suggests that women are still regarded in employment as secondary to men, and – as the article notes – they struggle to get into senior management positions; also wage differentials between men and women still exist in most employment sectors.

5. 3 Social Rights

Trimel (Jul 2012) reports for Amnesty International in a Press Release entitled: “ State of Women’s Rights in Mexico ‘ Alarming,’ Authorities Urged to Stop Escalating Violence Against Women.” The press release calls for the Mexican regime to “ protect women from increasing levels of violence and discrimination and ensure that these crimes are investigated and those responsible brought to justice.” Reported violence included over 130 women murdered in 2012 just in the Mexican state of Chihuahua and in the year 2009 there were across Mexico more than 14, 000 rapes reported – a shocking total considering that the majority of rapes are not reported. Various laws have been passed and measures taken to protect women from violence, but the laws are not effectively implemented and enforced. Violence against women is reported also in an article by the Commission on the Status of Women, 2013 (Jan. 2013) entitled “ Mexico - Domestic Violence & Quest for Justice” which quotes a 2011 report stating that half of all

women in Mexico aged over 15 have suffered domestic violence. However, only 20 percent of those had sought help.

On another aspect of women's rights, Amuchastegui and Flores (2011-2013) published "Women's interpretations of the right to legal abortion in Mexico City: citizenship, experience and clientelism." The article reports that In April 2007 abortion during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy was legalized by the Legal Assembly of Mexico City, making it a right.

There are certain employment rights that apply to women, such as the Maternity Leave laws, which permit a working woman to have a total of 12 weeks leave (6 before and 6 following the birth), plus additional hours or days off for a maximum of 6 months if breastfeeding the baby ("Mexico Employment Practices" Mar. 2013). In contrast Mexico is alone as being a country where a woman can be dismissed from her job simply for being pregnant ("Reform in Mexico: Labour Pains" Nov. 2012).

It seems that Mexican women still have a way to go to achieve the social rights that are due to them as equal citizens, even simply to protect them from violence including rape and murder, notwithstanding that progress has undoubtedly been made in recent years.

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