

Learning to be Responsible: Young Children's Transitions Outside School

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Indigenous quechua children

- How do andean children get integrated in their society?
- How do they develop autonomy?
- How do they internalize social and cultural?
- Through what kind of “rites of passage” do they pass from one age category to the next?

Purpose

- To make visible the process of change that quechua children go through
- The learnign they acquire through this process
- How do they develop their competences,
- Specially in domestic and community envirnments (considering also their high school enrolment)

Scenarios and participants

- Central Andes
 - Cuzco (Paucartambo)
 - Apurímac (Andahuaylas)
 - Ayacucho (Cangallo)
- 38 boys and girls (5 – 12 years old)
- 62 adults





0-3

Rituals of Growing Up: Social Transitions During The Early Years

Rituales marcadores del crecimiento del niño

- Naming at birth: (*unuchaku, yacuchan* o “*agua de socorro*”)
- 2-3 years old: first hair cut (*rutuy chicuy* o *chukcha rutukuy*)
- Change of clothes: from *wawa* to *girl/boy*
- (Catholic) Baptism
- More specific turning points: starting to eat, to sit, to walk, etc.



Points in common

- Rites mark the progression of the child through life, highlighting progressive autonomy, and strengthening at the same time interdependency:
- Children strengthen or expand their social relations by acquiring a long-term relationship with their godparents, which involves mutual obligations and the chance to access further resources and support



4-7



Learning to be responsible: A progressive inclusion in social life

Gradual changes

- Progressive inclusion of children in a range of tasks (domestic and productive).
- Children go from being “little children” who are taken care of, to more “grown up” children who are able to take care of others.

Ana, from 5 to 6 years old

Ana's mother: Last year she was not very aware of some things, because she was little. ... [Now we say] bring water, anything.

When we say that, she goes; she goes to do light shopping. She is changing, Madam.

- Ana's mother: To earn money we grow vegetables. She sells them in the [local] market ... Ana, with my Ofelia ... here in the village market. ... They do that, they want to sell ... this Friday they are preparing themselves, to sell on Saturday ...
- Interviewer: Is she playing more or less than last year?
- Ana's mother: Now she likes to sell.



Felipe

Felipe's mother: last year he just played, now he is doing some things... He brings wood, peel potatoes, miss, stuff like that.

Interviewer: Who taught him??

Felipe's mother: I did, "get it, quick", I tell him.

Interviewer: Whatever you say he does? Or doesn't?

Felipe's mother : When I hit him with whip he does, miss.

Interviewer: Only when you hit him he does?

Felipe's mother : Uhu, if I don't do it, he goes to play.

8-12

Authonomy and participation in the social world: the older children

Paid work

- Felipe's mother: (Children) work since nine, twelve years old. (...) It is important ma'am, with some thing [money] he would help.
- Interviewer: How do you realize your son is ready to work?
- Felipe's mother: He himself is goign to tell me, ma'am, as he grows up "I am going to work" he would say miss.



Work and education

- Sandro: It is ok that children work [in agriculture] ... because it is easy to get (money) for pay.
- I: What do you need to pay? ... Do you need to pay things?
- Sandro: Yes ... to pay photocopies, for the exam.

Politic participation

- Participation in politic-union activities.



Final thoughts

- Early development of domestic and productive skills
- Early development of a sense of responsibility to develop them.
- Development of sense of belonging to the group children participate in, expressing a shared identity.

- Through the gaining of specific economically and socially relevant knowledge, children at the same time learn how to participate reciprocally as responsible members of a social group, gaining thus not only practical skills but also socio-cultural knowledge.

Paradise & de Haan (2009)

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THANK YOU!