



ECUADOR AS A DESTINY COUNTRY OF A VENEZUELAN MIGRATION

ECUADOR COMO PAÍS DE DESTINO DE LA MIGRACIÓN VENEZOLANA

Tapia-Segarra Jenny Irlanda ¹

Arias-Crespo Lisseth Paola ²

Pardo-Medina María Ximena ³

¹ Docente de la Carrera de Trabajo Social de la Universidad Católica de Cuenca. Cuenca, Ecuador. Correo: jtapias@ucacue.edu.ec. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9479-7692>.

² Estudiante de la Carrera de Trabajo Social de la Universidad Católica de Cuenca. Cuenca, Ecuador. Correo: lpariasc73@est.ucaue.edu.ec. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3730-0691>.

³ Estudiante de la Carrera de Trabajo Social de la Universidad Católica de Cuenca. Cuenca, Ecuador. Correo: mxpardom26@est.ucacue.edu.ec. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1789-6109>.

ABSTRACT:

Venezuelan migration has a political and social background that brings with it an economic crisis, which has been affecting different countries from Latin America including Ecuador. On the other hand, the lack of possibilities for the development of a good life, where access to basic services is not affected has been one of the latent consequences for the displacement of the Venezuelan population to various countries whose effects are visible in the Ecuadorian environment. Is not strange to see Venezuelan citizens, women and men, as staff working in small businesses such as: clothing stores, restaurants, groceries stores, ice cream shops, among others. Also, informal work and begging cannot be put aside which has forced a large number of individuals of that nationality to be observed in the city of Cuenca in recent months. The methodology used in the development of this research has been considered the execution of interviews and life stories allowing to obtain data directly to be analyzed and interpreted with scientific rigor. The research was initially developed with theoretical elements of the birth of socialist policies, and the socioeconomic concepts that have been given throughout history; not having a specific database, a second stage was continued where the diagnosis of the situation facing Venezuela within the areas described above was made. And finally the different migratory processes were analyzed and the characteristics of Venezuelan citizens living in Ecuador, mainly in the city of Cuenca.

Keywords: migration, population, economy, politics.

RESUMEN:

La migración venezolana tiene un trasfondo, tanto, político como social, que ha traído consigo una crisis económica afectando a los diferentes países de América Latina, entre ellos Ecuador. Por otro lado, la falta de posibilidades para el desarrollo de un buen vivir donde no se perjudique el acceso a los servicios básicos ha sido una de las consecuencias latentes para el desplazamiento de la población venezolana a diversos países, cuyos efectos son visibles en el entorno ecuatoriano; no es extraño, ver a personas tanto hombres y mujeres de nacionalidad venezolana laborando en locales comerciales como: restaurantes, boutiques, heladerías, tienda de abarrotes, supermercados, tiendas de electrodomésticos, entre otros; además, no se puede dejar de lado el trabajo informal y la mendicidad que ha obligado a desarrollar un gran número de individuos de dicha nacionalidad que se observa de manera especial en la ciudad de Cuenca en los últimos meses. La metodología utilizada en el desarrollo de la presente investigación se ha considerado la ejecución de entrevista e historias de vida, permitiendo obtener datos de forma directa para ser analizados e interpretados con rigurosidad científica. La investigación fue desarrollada en un primer momento con elementos teóricos del nacimiento de las políticas socialistas, y los conceptos socioeconómicos que se han dado a lo largo de la historia; al no poseer una base de datos concreta se continuó con una segunda etapa donde se realizó el diagnóstico de la situación que enfrenta Venezuela dentro de los ámbitos descritos anteriormente. Y finalmente se analizó los distintos procesos migratorios y las características de los ciudadanos venezolanos radicados en el Ecuador principalmente en la ciudad de Cuenca.

Palabras Clave: migración, población, economía, política.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Migration has been considered an alternative for survival on some occasions for many families in vulnerable situations. Because of this, it is necessary to know the meaning of migration that corresponds to the action carried out by one or more people to go to another country making this your place of residence in the short, medium or long term according to both labor and social conditions, also considering whether these contribute to improving individual and family living conditions. In addition, among some of the important aspects that cause migration, a socio-economic or / and political alteration may be manifested, which are part of the development of family members.

Therefore, the objective of the research was to recognize the condition that led the Venezuelan population to choose Ecuador as a destination country, for this, it has been considered important to identify the socioeconomic and political reality of Venezuela, and if these were the determining factors for the development of migration processes. Alluding that the interest of the analysis focuses on mass migration, whose effects are visible within

the Ecuadorian country, especially in the city of Cuenca, being evident the increase of people of Venezuelan nationality in the different sectors of the city. So much so that one of his articles in the newspaper El Comercio analyzes the migratory situation of Venezuelans in Ecuador, identifying several cities, such as:

Quito, Guayaquil, Ibarra, Manta and Cuenca are the main cities of residence for Venezuelans who have entered the country. Most have third or fourth level academic degrees. However, they have enrolled in various trades and even in informal commerce. There are no official figures for the number of Venezuelans in Ecuador. But, since September 2016 there has been a growing wave of migration. (El Comercio, 2017)

There is no doubt that Venezuelan migration has become a problem where direct intervention is concerned to identify whether the reasons for this phenomenon, it is due to the presidency of Nicolás Maduro or the socialist bases wrongly proposed by the old leaderships. Inasmuch as, the Venezuelan government is currently going through a difficult situation in its economy



due to political mismanagement, which has caused its inhabitants to seek new frontiers to improve their quality of life. In response to the above, it is important to analyze whether the utopian socialism of the 21st century is a factor that caused the deterioration of the sociopolitical condition of Venezuelans.

State of the art

- **Socialism**

Socialism was born as a counterpart to the rise of capitalism, it is proposed with the objectives of equal distribution of goods, whose administration is directed by the same people, it also proposes the elimination of social classes, that is, an egalitarian society, all this with ideals of great thinkers like Plato who uses this expression to counteract the term individualism which aims to create a utopian society where, the harmony between the beings that inhabit it is the secret for good coexistence. On the other hand, in the article published by Harnecker, he argues that "there are three social classes: the upper class; the middle class and the lower class, the classes depending on the material goods that each of these groups have, will depend

on their income " (pág. 9). As a result of this, the term "socialism" has mutated over the years, being manipulated or misinterpreted for too much or simply used as an excuse for personal gain.

In the case of Venezuela, it occurs during the leadership of Hugo Chávez, where it was intended to establish a state based on a 21st century socialism. In relation to this, Heinz Dieterich Steffan writes the socialism of the XXI century; this arises since 1945, after the war in Afghanistan and the emergence of the Third World Order, "Participatory democracy is the response of the peoples and the hope of social movements" (Zamora Lomelí, 2016, p. 171). According to the virtual magazine Lifeder, Asia and Europe are the countries where the socialist system is most closely linked, some of them like China, North Korea, Russia, Vietnam, among others, are clear examples of a different use of socialism.

According to Boron, Amadeo and González, in an analysis of Marxist theory, they affirm that:

In the eyes of the Marxist, the classless society is revealed instead as a colorful watercolor in which identities and ethnic



differences, cultural, linguistic, religious, gender, sexual, aesthetic, etc., will be strengthened once the restrictions that prevent their flourishing have disappeared: class society and class exploitation. (Boron, Amadeo, & González, 2006, p. 187)

From a Marxist vision where the economic and social superstructures are accompanied by the materialism that make up society, has a proposed solution, consists of the elimination of private property and control of the means of production because the system was adjusted in the concentration of capital towards the sectors of great opulence at the expense of the proletariat.

Because of this, Carrión Morán, performs an analysis of the vision and focus on Marxist theories, quoting Claus Offe, O' Connor and Milliband, emphasizes that "communism is achieved when your needs, when each and every one of the people in society has their needs covered, everyone has the same opportunities to get equal salary and status and privileges disappear " (2003, pp. 100-101). Some of the countries that have inspired their governments in Marxist theory are Cuba with Fidel Castro and Ernesto "el che" Guevara, the Soviet Union with Lenin

Stalin and Trotsky, the People's Republic of China with Mao Tse-Tung, among others.

- **Populism**

It is a transformation in a socio-political situation, that centers citizen participation in political life or is a mere appearance. According to Andrés Malamud's reaction, populism promotes:

The direct relationship between the leader and the masses. To evade parliaments and parties, populist leaders construct an antinomy and stand on one side: the town. The generic name of populism is Manichaeism. More than institutions or elites, the enemy of populism is nuance. (2017)

It can be both left or right as well as conservative and progressive, all and each of them operate on philosophical visions of culture, history and anthropology. In the case of Latin America, the vision of the Cuban Revolution is taken as a basis, this was of great influence towards the Latin countries. According to Salinero Rates, his study on populism is characterized by:

The promise of a quick realization of the wishes of the people as opposed to the



long-term conflict management procedures of democracy. That is why it is argued that populism emphasizes the disregard of institutional mediations that are seen as obstacles to obtaining short-term solutions to their problems, which fits very well with the direct relationship between the popular will and the leader. (2015, p. 21)

Populism considered as political movements, represented with great popular support in which sectors belonging to the non-working class participate, according to Germani Gino he refers to populism as:

A form of socio-political mobilization, a multi-class social movement, through which backward masses participate who are manipulated by demagogic and charismatic leaders which, in turn, are part of regimes that emerge in the historical phases of transition and change of traditional society to modern society, implying the passage from a political system with restricted participation to a political system with broad participation. (1968, p. 371)

Meanwhile, the arrival of populism in Latin America, has reflected what the Cuban Marxist guerrilla was, to fight for power,

from being military dictatorships they would become civil governments. They are directed in the search for ideals based on the theories described above, to monitor governments without the need for military force, making way for populism, in this way, to have control and domination of a people through manifestations of false promises.

- **Venezuela in 1920 to 1960**

Between 1920-1960 Venezuela was part of one of the first five democratic countries in Latin America (Uruguay, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica and Venezuela); rests in one of the largest oil reserves in the world. Marcano & López write in an article what the economy of Venezuela was like in the 60s, its oil wealth reached a wealth similar to that of Norway with: "298,350 million barrels of crude, that could cover the current demand in the United States for the next 70 years " (2016, pág. 1). In addition to its good production of goods and services, they would place it among one of the best economies in South America. Similarly, Sundell argues in his post: "Venezuela had between 1973 until the end of 1980, one of the most developed liberal democratic systems outside the industrialized world" (2007, p. 16). However, being a bipartisan



country, it reached the breaking point in the 1990s, with the arrival of Chávez to power.

On February 4, 1992, Hugo Chávez commanded the Ezequiel Zamora operation, which was a resounding failure, sentencing him to prison for two years. In 1994, Rafael Caldera assumed the presidency, who agreed to cancel the process against Hugo Chávez " After the charges against Chávez were dropped, Commander Fidel Castro would tour Venezuela demonstrating his political project based on "the need to convene a National Constituent Assembly that will re-establish the Republic" (Duarte, 2014) .

Because the Presidency of Hugo Chávez began in 1998 when he ran for the first time in elections with a socialist system, emphasizing a proposal for social revolution. In 1999 he assumed power with more than 81% of the vote, being the most popular in polls. At the beginning of his government, he divided the people of Venezuela into two parts: the Chavistas who supported the Bolivarian revolution and the opponents who demanded greater economic freedom; later, he would be elected for the second and third time in the years 2002 and 2007 respectively where his terms were not

successful due to the lack of foundations in the ideals he raised.

Hence, the beginning of his second term; He was immersed in strikes, massive demonstrations of citizens in the streets, abstinences in commercial activities, closure of educational institutions, among others, that caused the silence of the press. Generating great challenges for the life and social peace of Venezuela. Since the participation of socialist politics, the Venezuelan country has been in an economic and social disaster, which is declining and harms not only this country but all of Latin America.

Furthermore, in the same year, the uncertainty in oil activities has negative consequences for Venezuela, as it is an eminently oil-rich country. The weak demand for crude oil brought chaos in the internal economy and the decline began in practically all areas of development. This suggests that the current government take cautious measures in its financing program, something that was not done, strongly impacting internal sustainability.

The arrival of Nicolás Maduro to the presidency unfolds when Hugo Chávez won



his fourth presidential election in 2012, however, some time later he died of cancer on March 5, 2013. After this process, Nicolás Maduro assumed the government of Venezuela as "president in charge", later on April 14 the presidential elections were held, where Maduro was officially elected president of Venezuela for a period of four years. Then the people re-elected him to the presidency on May 22, 2018. In his presidential term, oil began to fall drastically, aggravating the situation in Venezuela, from what was evident, the great caravans of individuals leaving their country in search of new opportunities for themselves and their families. The chaos has forced them to make the tough decision to migrate to different Latin American countries, including Ecuador.

- **Immigration**

Immigration is defined as the action and effect of a person who comes to another country to reside in it, generally due to reasons such as economic, political and social. Nicolás Bajo Santos defines immigration as "a social phenomenon of the first order, with all its implications of an economic, political, demographic, cultural, religious nature and of all kinds" (2017, p. 3).

In other words, they are people who leave their country to settle in a foreign country, in order to get a better job, to escape persecution in their homeland or to seek better health, education, security, work conditions, etc.. Fernando Troyano points out that the displacement of people caused by wars and catastrophes fit the definition of immigrant, although this group is often called refugees (2002).

In Venezuela, the current situation in the country aggravates inflation and unemployment, hence the consequences of the rise in prices, shortage of basic supplies, violation of human rights, non-compliance in the State system, increase in the rate of violent crimes, delinquency, corruption within institutional systems, both internal and external debt, unemployment, strikes, repression, seizure of the leadership of the state, social division, are some of the social ills that Venezuela suffers.

These problems led hundreds of Venezuelans to seek other horizons, far from the land where they were born; currently there are large groups of Venezuelans in Spain, the United States, Chile, Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, Mexico, Costa Rica and among other countries or continents as can



be heard in the different media. That exodus (because it would no longer be called emigration, but rather "flight") is due to various factors, many of them associated with the situation in the country and others, obviously, of a personal nature. Insecurity, anarchy, lack of opportunities, economic crisis, lack of quality of life; are some of the reasons why these citizens have found it necessary to seek other borders to improve the quality of life of their families, this with the sacrifice of leaving their homeland.

The truth is that in recent years the growing migratory phenomena have caused family abandonment, for having a better life; many leave their children in the care of relatives or close friends trying to provide them with financial support, and to be able to support their needs. Aruj Roberto states that the decision to migrate is not made solely to obtain satisfaction of basic needs, "But also because of the imaginary opportunities that arise from the structure of the labor market and the general cultural and social framework of the country to which it is directed" (2008, p. 100). No matter how hard, costly or risks this process entails; the necessary procedures, the conditions imposed by the destination state, equal

enjoyment of all your rights, both for the individual and for his family. This is established by the Organic Law of Human Mobility in the following articles:

Art 43.- Right to free, responsible mobility and safe migration, art. 44.- Right to request an immigration status, art. 46.- Right to immigration information, Art. 47.- Access to justice under equal conditions, art. 48.- Right to integration of girls, boys and adolescents, art. 50.- Right to register titles, art 51.- Right to work and social security. (2017)

- **Ecuador as destination country**

Ecuador is a country that has been characterized by immigration for years, however, in recent years it has gone from being an emigrant country to a country that receives immigrants from all continents, furthermore, a relevant fact is that the Ecuadorian territory has increased in number of migrants since the principle of universal citizenship was recognized in the Montecristi constitution in 2008, according to data from the Civil Organization of Venezuelans in Ecuador, there are approximately 28,347 Venezuelans in the nation who live mainly in the cities of Quito,



Guayaquil, Cuenca, and Ibarra (Izurieta Guevara & Viteri, 2018). Venezuela, a nation that is going through a disastrous crisis, reasons enough to migrate to another country in search of a better life, many Venezuelans chose Ecuador as their destination country, another reason that Venezuelans have emigrated to Ecuador is because of the incredible devaluation of its currency, on July 5, 2018, the website "DolarToday" reveals that the bolivar is devalued by 2815%, which corresponds to 1 dollar, equivalent to 3,500,265 bolivars. According to Izurieta & Viteri, who argue:

The proximity, the language, the possibility of finding a job, economic stability and access to basic services are some of the factors that are taken into consideration when choosing the destination nation. Ecuador has become an attraction for Venezuelans because of dollarization, the proximity between countries, flexibility in immigration legal regulations and the cost of living. Because the dollar is a strong currency, many are drawn to it. (2018, p. 13)

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodology used in the present study was clearly qualitative, through an analytical-descriptive approach it was possible to identify the situation that forced Venezuelan citizens to leave their country. As strategies for gathering information, the interview and life stories were applied, allowing their analysis and interpretation in an effective way.

3. RESULTS

According to what was reported by the interviewees, who mostly argue that the phenomenon that the people of Venezuela are currently experiencing is due to the policy of their government and therefore to the economic one it encompasses. Since in its political system it was the cause of the crisis that the Venezuelan people are experiencing several of them argue in their testimonies that their last weeks of stay in their country of origin, was surrounded by: insecurity, lack of opportunities, economic crisis, poor living conditions, high mortality rates especially of children, etc. Some expressed it through tears, because when remembering or comparing their childhood with the reality of today, it is far from being



the country where they grew up. The interviews were carried out with ten people, men and women of legal age, the narrative was organized and the life history of each case in particular was formed, establishing the place and date through dialogue and empathy. Managing to extract the narration of his life from childhood to the present; They are fathers and mothers of families who for different reasons decided to emigrate from their country in search of better life opportunities.

From the life stories captured, it can be interpreted that the interviewees had to leave their country due to the bad administration presented by the government (Nicolás Maduro as president of Venezuela) this did not allow him to grow in the economic sphere, which is why the majority of the population interviewed has a third level degree and could not practice in their country of origin, the remuneration was not enough to support their family nucleus.

The study population has left their homes due to the difficult situation their country is going through, moving away from their family environment. Having to go through different cities, his objective is to improve his

quality of life and face social factors that are still maintained in areas such as currency exchange, discrimination (all social areas), jobs that were not related to what they had studied.

The citizens interviewed reside in the city of Cuenca for between six months and eight months, most of them have a job where their remuneration is \$ 200 to \$ 250, allowing them to support housing and food expenses; of this value, they use a percentage to send to their families who are in Venezuela. They report that they hope to improve their economic situation and in the future and bring their family to the country that welcomed them.

4. DISCUSSION

The economic, political and social crisis that Venezuelan citizens are experiencing has caused a large part of the population to move to all of Latin America and especially to Ecuador, whose purpose is to improve the living conditions of the family environment. The economic situation has led the Venezuelan population to migrate in great clubs; the "high levels of inflation and scarcity of basic products, such as basic food, medicines and access to services such as



electricity, water, among others, all derived from the failed political model applied by the Chavista government" (Castillo Crasto & Reguant Álvarez, 2017, p. 160).

Venezuelan migration has become a social phenomenon, due to the crises the country is going through; the lack of opportunities to obtain a job, the scarcity of basic necessities and the inability to pay the expenses that cause access to health and housing have become triggers for Venezuelan immigration. "The receiving State of immigrants has the opportunity to offer labor policies to absorb this potential that is arriving, to strengthen the productive development of the country that welcomes the one that is arriving from another geographical space" (Married, 2017, p. 7). Ecuador, through the Organic Law of Human Mobility, is the one who facilitates the entry of foreigners and in turn guarantees the right to their free transit in the country and especially in the city of Cuenca. According to Guevara (2018, p. 13) "Closeness, language, the possibility of finding a job, economic stability and access to basic services are some of the factors that are taken into account when choosing the destination nation". That is why Ecuador has become a

benchmark for the Venezuelan population to consider a country of destination.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Socio-economic and political aspects influenced the Venezuelan population to migrate en masse to new borders, for better living conditions, as his nation was experiencing social ills such as: lack of basic supplies, humanitarian crisis, crime, malnutrition, high infant mortality rates, abuse of the power system, social division, among others.

According to the argument of the Venezuelan citizens interviewed, that this social phenomenon was due to the bad leadership of Hugo Chávez since his government was based on socialist ideals, Marxist visions, because he wanted to focus on an equal distribution for the Venezuelan population or that was proposed, because after several years in power, this nation has deteriorated with its government and the continuity of the Chavista mandate by his successor Nicolás Maduro, which aggravated the situation in Venezuela, because before the 2000s it was a state with a sustainable economy, sources of employment, natural wealth, among others.



Venezuelan immigrants who reside in the city of Cuenca-Ecuador, are characterized by having advanced academic preparation, it is important to emphasize that these people work for less than a minimum wage to support their expenses and that of their families. Historically, Venezuela was a country that received immigrants from different parts of the world, including Ecuadorians who at a certain time suffered the need to emigrate to seek better opportunities, but nowadays, Ecuador is a country that receives immigrants, including people with Venezuelan nationality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Ecuadorian government has implemented the Organic Law of Human Mobility, meanwhile, it is responsible for establishing mechanisms so that what is stipulated in its different articles is fulfilled in favor of Venezuelan migrants.

Being Venezuelan migrants, in some of the professional occasions with third and fourth level degrees, the state must provide strategies to achieve job stability according to their level of professional preparation.

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