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EDUCATION AND ALLIANCES TO REDUCE THE SPACE GAP IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES
OF MEXICO IN THE YUCATAN PENINSULA

Abstract

In Mexico there are about 62 indigenous peoples, which represents 19.4% of the entire Mexican population. Of this percentage, 971,770 people are part of the Mayan culture, mainly in the states of Quintana Roo, Yucatan and Campeche. The precarious and unfavorable conditions cause that the possibility of someone within the indigenous people to complete some university studies is very low and this figure increases for the female gender. This paper addresses a strategy to encourage the participation of indigenous youth and adolescents in the space sector, looking for ways to create national and international partnerships to promote the importance and empower the indigenous youth community to integrate into the STEM sector with a focus on Space Engineering.

Space exploration and the STEM area have undoubtedly contributed to the advancement of society; however, this scope has not permeated throughout society, there is a large percentage of the population that has not had the opportunity to enjoy those benefits and especially the indigenous communities of the key point of this document. The Sustainable Development Goals in section 4 of Quality Education, point 4.3 indicates equal access to affordable technical, professional and higher education, socially this minority group has been decriminalized. One of the main activities that are already being generated is the participation through workshops, talks and small space missions in public and educational spaces in order to provide tools and development through the promotion of space sciences where several professions converge and thus the infant and youth population can become more interested in this area.

During this process of promoting space sciences in indigenous communities of Quintana Roo in the Southeast of Mexico, We have been able to impact more than 20 schools throughout the state and we will continue to carry out more activities, workshops and technology realization through a state project in Quintana Roo that seeks these purposes, the intention is to influence the three states of the Yucatan peninsula with the aim that they can become familiar with space engineering concepts through scientific outreach and thus to develop their leadership skills so that they can in a next step to develop space science and technology from their skills.