

# Results of the survey for the Canadian Studies Inter-university Seminar in Latin America 2003-2010 (SEMINECAL)

Delia Montero<sup>1</sup>  
Raúl Rodríguez

For the past 20 years, Canadian studies in Latin America have developed continuously. However, there are countries in which these studies have gained more significance such as in Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Cuba, and recently in Colombia. In each country, the development and the research areas about Canada have been different.

Since 2003, the SEMINECAL has created a space for Latinamerican masters and doctoral students to discuss their research about Canada, allowing us to observe the evolution of Canadian studies among new generations.

The objective of this survey is to evaluate, through the participants and their profile (gender, age country of origin, among others), whether their professional activities in education and research are linked to Canadian studies, their knowledge of the different financing programs offered by ICCS and other Canadian institutions, as well as their participation in other forums where they present their research about Canada and publications. This will allow us to design diffusion strategies for Canadian studies targeted at new students.

The survey was sent to 118 masters and doctoral students that have participated in the SEMINECAL from 2003 to 2010. From 118 students, 41 answered representing 35% of the total, which validates the data of this study.

## Gender, age and nationality

From the total respondents, 54% are male and 46% female. (Chart 1)

In terms of age, 51% are in the 31-40 years group, of which 50% are female and 50% are male. The next age group, which ranges from 24 to 30, represents 26.8% of the respondents, of which 64% are female and 36% are men. If we join these two groups we observe that the major participation (80%) is centered in an age range of 24 to 40, of which 60% are female. (Chart 2 and 3)

It is important to point out that the participation age has been decreasing in some countries such as Mexico and Argentina, and in other countries like Brazil the age of the participants is in the above mentioned ranges.

According to the results of the sample, the majority of the participants of the SEMINECAL comes from Mexico (36.5%), followed by Brazil (19.5%), Cuba (14.6%), Argentina (9.7%) and Colombia (7%). Students from other Latinamerican countries have had little participation. (Chart 4) Most of the respondents still live in their country of origin (85%). (Charts 5)

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<sup>1</sup> SEMINECAL Coordinators.

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## **Educational background and activities**

80% of the participants have studied their undergraduate degree in public universities, while at the masters level this percentage is 68%. From the total respondents, 90% have completed their masters studies and 10% will conclude them in 2010 (Chart 6 and 7).

As for the doctoral students, 83% are pursuing their studies in a public university and the rest in private institutions (Chart 6). From the total respondents with a PhD, 79% have not concluded their thesis, and 21% have concluded both their studies and their thesis (Chart 7). It is worth pointing out that among the graduated, most are students from Mexico, Argentina, Colombia and Brazil.

In regards to their current activity, 71% answered they are involved in more than one activity, whereas 29% are involved in a single activity.(Chart 8) The most recurrent activities are education and research (Chart 9).

However, in the respondent's publications collective books, articles from books and specialized journals, and others were included, but few publications specifically related with Canadian topics. This leads us to think that 76% of those participants whose activity is related to Canada is partially related or is a comparative activity(Chart 10). It is important to mention that all the participants have published an article in the e-books of the SEMINECAL (Cuadro 1).

## **Participation in SEMINECAL**

73% of the respondents indicated that they have participated once, and only 27% have participated more than once (Chart 11). This allows us to assert that each year new students have joined the SEMINECAL. The students that have participated more than once come from Mexico (4), Cuba (3), Brazil (2), Colombia (1), and Argentina (1).

When asked about participation in other conferences about Canadian studies, three in four respondents (73%) answered they have attended other conferences, while 27% have not (Chart 12). Most of these 73% respondents have been to conferences organized by Canadian Studies Associations in Latin America.

## **Financial Support**

63% of the surveyed participants have never requested a scholarship or financial support to carry out their research about Canada). Only 37% of the respondents have done so, mostly students from Mexico, Cuba, and Brazil (Chart 13). From this result we can infer that there is little diffusion of the financial support programs for research offered by the Canadian government.

Finally, 93% of the respondents have never requested financial support to other Canadian institutions to conduct their research, whereas only 7% of the respondents have. As a result, we find that, in this case as well, there is little diffusion of the financial support programs and scholarships other Canadian institutions offer to Latinamerican students (Chart 13).

## **Somme Conclusions**

- The age of the SEMINACAL participants has been declining and there is a majority of female participation.
- New participants have joined the SEMINACAL from 2003 to 2010, principally from Mexico, Brazil, Cuba, and Colombia.
- There is continuity of Canadian Studies among the participants, however this is weakly reflected in their publications, and they participate principally in meetings organized by the associations of Canadian Studies.
- There is a need for more promotion of the ICCS programs as well as other sources of financing for Canadian Studies.