

POSITIONING OF CAMPUS IX OF THE AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF CHIAPAS AMONG SIXTH-SEMESTER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TONALÁ, CHIAPAS

POSITIONING OF CAMPUS IX OF THE UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE CHIAPAS AMONG SIXTH-SEMESTER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN TONALÁ, CHIAPAS

.

Velasco Jiménez Diana

Autonomous University of Chiapas

<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-1126-9940>

diana.velasco@unach.mx

Maza Zepeda Norberto

Doroteo Arango State High School

<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-0217-2582>

beto2788@gmail.com

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.61273/neyart.v1i2.103>

| Received: 04/17/2025 | Accepted: 06/15/2025 | Published: 07/11/2025

This work is
licensed under an
international
Creative Commons Attribution 4.0.



Abstract: This article focuses on describing the positioning of Campus IX of the Autonomous University of Chiapas (UNACH) in the higher education options available to sixth-semester students in the municipality of Tonalá, Chiapas. It identifies whether students are aware of the educational offerings, the duration of the bachelor's degrees, and the type of educational system offered at this campus. This is because in recent years, new enrollment has been declining, and it is believed that one of the factors that has caused this situation is that many of the students studying at the upper secondary level are not aware of the Tonalá campus, much less its educational offerings. Another reason is that knowing this situation makes it possible to identify whether students consider the campus a good option for higher education and, if not, it would be worthwhile to analyze the reasons why they do not consider it so.

Keywords: Institutional positioning, university educational offerings, educational preferences, public higher education.

Abstract: This article focuses on describing the positioning of Campus IX of the Autonomous University of Chiapas (UNACH) in the options of sixth-semester students from Tonalá, Chiapas. One of the objectives of the article is to identify whether students are aware of the educational offerings, the duration of the degrees, and the type of educational system offered on this campus. This is due to the fact that in recent years, enrollment of new students has been declining, and it is believed that one of the factors causing this situation is that many students in upper secondary education are unaware of the Tonalá campus, much less its educational offerings. Another reason is that knowing this situation allows us to identify whether students consider the campus a good option for higher education and, if not, it would be worth analyzing the reasons why they do not consider it so.

Keywords: Institutional positioning, university educational offerings, educational preferences, public higher education.

INTRODUCTION

Higher education is a strategic asset for nations, as it is the indissoluble link between the creation of highly skilled human capital and the production and dissemination of knowledge that promotes the formation of fairer societies and more competitive economies.

For this reason, and especially in these times when knowledge is fundamental to all social, economic, and cultural activities, all countries are making significant efforts to ensure that their higher education systems meet the best international practices and standards in terms of professional training, scientific research, and technological development (Fernández, 2017).

Campus IX is located in the municipality of Tonalá, which, according to data from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), had 8,167 inhabitants between the ages of 15 and 19 in 2020, which is the group we need to study for the purposes of this research; of these, 42.3% attend upper secondary school. It is important to mention that according to these statistics, only 14.8% reach higher education, which is essential to understand the potential educational demand for UNACH Campus IX.

This campus consists of an academic unit comprising the Istmo Costa Campus IX School of Administrative Sciences, which is classified in the area of Social and Administrative Sciences according to the classification of the National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions (ANUIES); It offers three educational programs leading to a bachelor's degree in a classroom setting, with an enrollment of 337 students distributed among the bachelor's degrees in accounting, administration, and tourism management (UNACH, 2023).

Research objectives General

objective

To analyze the positioning of Campus IX Tonalá of the Autonomous University of Chiapas in the preferences of sixth-semester high school students in the municipality of Tonalá, Chiapas, using quantitative analysis to determine whether there is a lack of awareness about the educational opportunities available.

Specific objectives

- To determine the level of lack of awareness of the educational offerings of UNACH Campus IX.
- To identify the preferred options for higher education among sixth-semester upper secondary school students in the municipality of Tonalá, Chiapas.
- Compare the level of positioning of UNACH Campus IX among sixth-semester upper secondary school students in rural areas and students in the municipal capital.

Research questions

1. What is the level of positioning of Campus IX Tonalá of the Autonomous University of Chiapas in the preferred options of sixth-semester high school students in the municipality of Tonalá, Chiapas, using quantitative analysis to determine whether there is a lack of awareness about the educational offerings?
2. How much is the level of ignorance about the educational offerings of UNACH Campus IX?
3. What are the preferred options for higher education among sixth-semester high school students in the municipality of Tonalá, Chiapas?
4. Where does UNACH Campus IX rank among sixth-semester high school students in rural areas and students in the municipal capital as a higher education option?

Justification

The importance of this research lies in discovering whether high school students in the municipality are aware of the educational offerings of the campus, which allows us to know whether the campus is an option to consider when they decide to choose a higher education institution to continue their studies.

The aim is to implement strategies to increase enrollment at Campus IX Tonalá, which has a positive impact on the municipality's economic development by training graduates in accounting and administration who promote local and regional development.

Conducting this research has practical and methodological utility, since having access to the institutions with the highest enrollment at the upper secondary level in the municipality allows us to obtain concrete data that enables us to analyze the real perspective of the students and collect a greater number of responses that yield statistical data closer to reality.

The human and financial resources available to us will enable us to complete this research and use the results to positively impact the design of strategies to increase new student enrollment at the IX Tonalá campus in the coming semesters. **STATE OF THE ART**

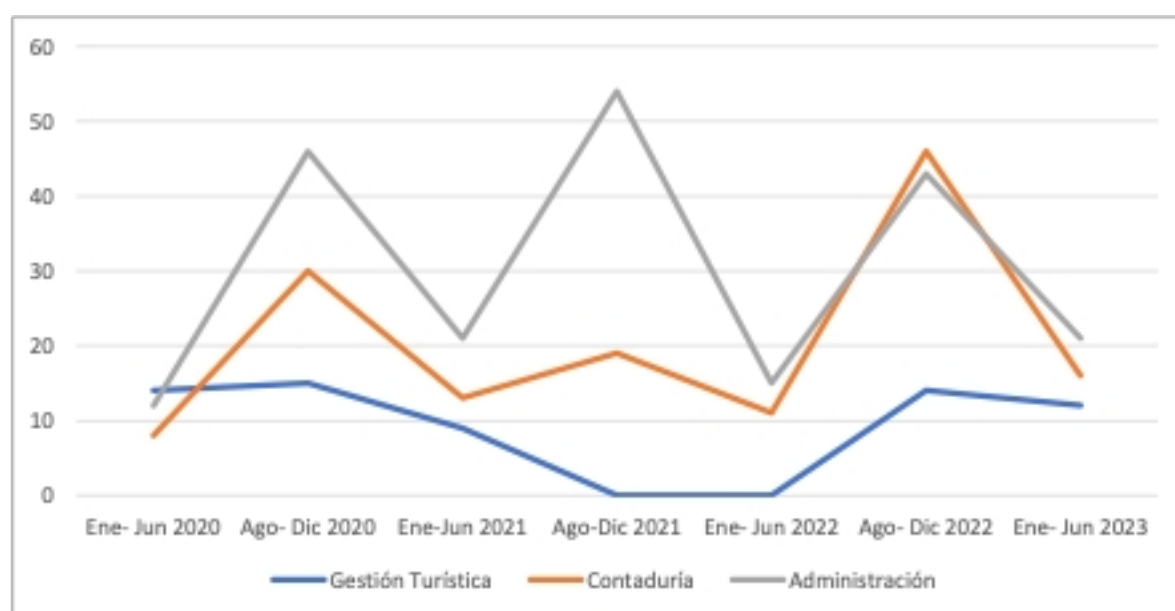
In Tonalá, there are currently two public universities, the University of Sciences and Arts of Chiapas (UNICACH) and UNACH, as well as five private universities, such as the Institute of Higher Studies of Chiapas, the University of the Pacific of Chiapas, the Center for University Studies of the Valley of Chiapas, the Institute of Entrepreneurs, and the University Institute of Chiapas Studies. The

above shows that the higher education offerings in the municipality are sufficient for the school-age population.

Considering that the programs offered at different universities vary greatly in terms of duration, profiles, costs, admission opportunities, scholarships, etc., it is feasible to analyze what influences students' decisions to pursue higher education at any of the options available in the municipality.

To do this, it is necessary to illustrate the demand that UNACH Campus IX has had in the last three years, as shown in the following graph:

Graph 1. Enrollment at UNACH Campus IX.



Source: UNACH Campus IX Registrar's Office.

As can be seen in the graph above, enrollment has fallen considerably in recent semesters, raising questions about the possible causes of this decline in demand.

Gutiérrez (2009) mentions that many young people enroll in high school because they genuinely want to study and become professionals, but others simply aim to graduate in order to obtain the corresponding certificate and enter the labor market. However, for both groups, high school is seen as an opportunity for social mobility.

Quality management in universities is a much more complex process than in companies, because universities educate human beings, build knowledge, and provide spaces for reflection. In addition, they are committed to remaining at the forefront of global changes and attentive to the recommendations of international bodies (García, Aquino, Guzmán, Medina, 2011).

This means that universities are constantly analyzing their indicators and assessment tools, which requires a clear understanding of the contextual conditions surrounding academic institutions, without disregarding the proposals of accrediting bodies when assessing educational quality.

It is therefore worth reflecting on what is influencing the social and academic recognition of campuses located in municipalities where population density is low and competition between higher education institutions is not significant, which allows for the collection of real data on the evaluation indicators of educational programs with respect to prospective students and graduates.

The educational programs offered by UNACH, which have been evaluated by the Interinstitutional Committees for the Evaluation of Higher Education (CIEES) and the Council for the Accreditation of Higher Education (COPAES), demonstrate the institution's interest in participating in these processes. Guerrero Ceh (2015) points out that, in the education sector, especially in higher education institutions, evaluation is directly linked to the granting of significant financial resources, provided that certain specifications that are of interest to the body granting those resources are met.

Participation may be motivated by various factors, including institutional interest on the part of some university authorities who were involved in decision-making at the time, and secondly, an agreement established by the Ministry of Public Education (SEP) for universities to participate voluntarily and access matching funds (Ovando, Cruz, & Grajales, 2016).

Society's demands increasingly require the adaptation of the education system, as education and its performance have been considered central to improving people's living conditions. Likewise, they must consider the demands of employers and society to improve or, failing that, design attractive educational programs that respond to real interests and promote local development.

Andión (2007) mentions that in Mexico, concern for quality in the field of education is reactive in nature and begins to appear as a result of external pressures such as the application of quality criteria by international organizations, such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

An admissions policy must be consistent with the academic policies of each university institution, particularly those that directly affect the training processes of new professionals based on actual admission conditions, avoiding the negative effects of certain actions that, due to discontinuity or inconsistencies, produce unsatisfactory results (Aguilera and Cruz, 2005).

However, if there are no studies that frame the tastes and behaviors of consumers at an educational center located in a municipality with less than 100,000 inhabitants, as is the case of Tonalá, Chiapas, it is difficult to define the needs of potential customers, who in this case would be high school students, and thus evaluate and, where appropriate, implement improvements in the educational offerings available at the Tonalá Campus.

Several studies have addressed the challenge of low access to and positioning of higher education institutions in rural contexts. For example, Wells et al. (2023) found that rural students in the United States have significantly lower rates of admission to four-year universities, and that this gap widens among those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, suggesting that rurality alone does not determine access, but rather its interaction with socioeconomic status.

On the other hand, Wei (2023) analyzed remote regional universities in China and documented that these institutions face serious difficulties in attracting and retaining both students and qualified teachers, leading to reduced enrollment rates and brain drain, a problem that also negatively impacts links with local development. These studies coincide with our findings: low awareness of educational opportunities and limited preference for Campus IX are linked not only to rurality, but also to the lack of early outreach strategies and specific resources that mitigate the structural disadvantages of rural students.

Suárez (2012) states that in Mexico, as in several Latin American countries, studies have been conducted to test whether public schools are better than private schools. What they have shown is that the factor that explains the differences in student performance and achievement is the socioeconomic status of families, since private school students who have a socioeconomic status similar to that of public school students

do not perform better on the tests they take. Therefore, there is no evidence that the quality of education and students in private schools is better than that of public schools, or vice versa.

In the words of Moreno, Ramírez, and Escobar (2020), education has shaped the society to which it belongs, where particular habits, customs, and ideologies exist; however, the objective of education is not focused on developing intellectual talent, but rather on equipping human beings with capacities related to humanization, where values, ethics, morals, norms of coexistence, and the affective side can unfold to their fullest potential.

Therefore, when choosing a higher education institution, one of the factors that has the greatest impact on the decision is its prestige, what is said about it in the community, and the employability rate of its graduates, since, ultimately, most high school students who decide to continue their higher education do so because they want to improve their quality of life by obtaining well-paid jobs.

There are numerous theories regarding decisions to continue schooling and its counterpart, dropping out of school. In these theories, social inequality plays a central role in shaping subjective opportunities and subjective dispositions (Blanco, 2014).

Although a bachelor's degree does not currently guarantee a well-paid job, it does slightly improve the probability of doing so or of accessing quality graduate programs when coming from a public higher education institution with a face-to-face school system, since the more time students spend in the classroom, the more hours of experience they gain in study techniques that can enable them to perform more efficiently in graduate programs.

Suarez (2010) points out that federal public universities stand out for having the highest percentage of students who chose this type of institution as their first choice and also for being the most recommended, according to the students themselves. The data shows that it is at federal public universities where students most often perceive that they are studying at a prestigious institution with a high academic standard.

For this reason, it is essential that public universities continue to strive to maintain the prestige they still enjoy and update their curricula to make them attractive to high school graduates, not only because of their prestige but also because of the efficiency of their programs, since a considerable number of students choose the two-year, eight-month semi-schooling programs offered by some

private universities in an effort to quickly complete their higher education and enter the labor market.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

This research was conducted in the high schools with the highest enrollment in the municipality of Tonalá, Chiapas, including four state high schools and six technical high schools. The schools are located both in the municipal capital and in the surrounding neighborhoods of Cabeza de Toro, Palo Blanco, Huizachal, Ignacio Ramírez, and Paredón. The purpose of this was to gain a broader perspective on whether students in rural areas have more or less knowledge of Campus IX compared to students in the municipal capital.

This research was conducted using a quantitative approach, which will allow us to statistically analyze the responses and more quickly count the results we hope to achieve.

This research was carried out with the support of the authorities of the upper secondary schools, where the data collection instrument was applied to sixth-semester students with the support of second-semester students of the bachelor's degree in administration at Campus IX of UNACH, who will be responsible for quantifying the responses and creating a database. This research was not funded and was carried out with our own resources.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

For the analysis of results, the responses to the questionnaire consisting of seven multiple-choice questions administered to 680 high school students in the municipality of Tonalá, Chiapas, were studied, from which the following can be identified:

Table 1. Comparison of results.

Objective of the question	Result
Identify whether high school students know the location of UNACH's IX campus UNACH campus.	79% of students stated that they knew its location.
Identify whether upper secondary students are aware of the educational offerings at UNACH's Campus IX.	66% said they were aware of the bachelor's degrees offered on campus, but when asked

	which ones, only 53% correctly identified the .
Identify whether upper secondary school students are familiar with the educational system at UNACH Campus IX.	43% of students correctly identified the duration of the degree programs, while 80% were able to identify the university as a public university public institution.

Source: Prepared by the author.

The above questions allow us to answer the first objective of the research, which is to determine the level of ignorance about the educational offerings of UNACH's Campus IX, since we observed that most students know the location of the campus and that it is a public university, but only 53% actually know what degrees are offered on campus and their duration. This indicates that only half of the students can make an informed decision, if they so choose, to select Campus IX as the university where they would pursue their higher education.

Regarding the objective of identifying the preferred options for higher education among sixth-semester high school students in the municipality of Tonalá, Chiapas, 73% of students expressed a preference for public universities, among which the following stood out: the Escuela Normal with 26%, UNACH with 23%, the Tecnológico de Tuxtla Gutiérrez with 10%, UNICACH with 8%, and public universities in other states with 6%. Unfortunately, only 5% of those surveyed said they were going to study for their bachelor's degree at UNACH's IX campus at the time of the survey, which indicates that it is important to plan a strategy to make more students aware of the educational opportunities offered by the campus so that they can take it into consideration when choosing where to pursue their university studies.

Valdez and Zarabozo (2017) propose that differences in Thinking Styles (TS) between academic areas in the first semester could be interpreted as one of the factors that influence career choice. On the other hand, the finding of differences between TS in public and private universities, starting in high school, raises an interesting issue: the evolution of TS during the academic career in different majors and the professional TS achieved in public and private universities.

Finally, the positioning level of Campus IX of UNACH was compared between sixth-semester upper secondary students from rural areas and students from the municipal capital.

Taking into account the 5% of students who stated that they had chosen to study their bachelor's degree at Campus IX, 65% are students from rural areas, while the rest are students who live in the municipal capital. This indicates that the majority of students from rural areas of Tonalá choose Campus IX as their higher education option. **CONCLUSION**

At the end of the research, it can be said that the objectives set were achieved. The level of positioning of UNACH Campus IX among sixth-semester students in the municipality of Tonalá, Chiapas, was determined, knowing that only half of the students are informed about the educational offerings and the duration of the bachelor's degrees offered there.

Likewise, it was discovered that, despite the fact that 73% of the students surveyed said they preferred public universities over private ones, only 23% preferred UNACH, and of those, only 5% preferred Campus IX. Finally, it was identified that 65% of the students surveyed who decided to study at Campus IX come from rural areas, while the rest come from the municipal capital.

Therefore, it can be concluded that if UNACH Campus IX wishes to significantly increase its enrollment, it must implement a work plan that widely promotes its educational offerings, publicizing the curriculum, program duration, admission requirements, graduate profile, and job opportunities available to graduates, as well as other benefits of studying at Campus IX. This should be done starting in the semesters prior to the sixth year of high school. Similarly, it is advisable to encourage students from schools in the municipal capital and rural areas to study at Campus IX, since the higher its ranking among students' options, the more likely they are to choose it.

Among the specific proposals suggested to improve the positioning of Campus IX are the following:

1. Make regular institutional visits to high schools in the municipality and surrounding communities, with interactive presentations on academic offerings, student experiences, and career prospects.
2. Implement digital and in-person information campaigns, using social media, local radio spots, and informational posters in public spaces, highlighting the quality of education, affordable costs, and the achievements of graduates.

3. Organize career fairs on campus, open to high school students, with demonstration workshops, conferences, guided tours of the facilities, and cultural activities that allow them to experience university life.
4. Establish student ambassador programs, made up of outstanding students from the campus who visit their schools of origin to share their testimonials and answer questions in a friendly and authentic manner.
5. Strengthen agreements with regional high schools and colleges to facilitate access to academic information about the campus and establish joint career guidance mechanisms.
6. Create short, engaging audiovisual materials, such as testimonial videos, informational capsules, and virtual tours, that can be easily disseminated among young people through digital media.
7. Offer scholarship programs and differentiated support for students from rural areas, in order to encourage academic continuity and reduce economic barriers that could limit their enrollment.

It is hoped that, with the implementation of these practical and focused strategies, Campus IX will be able to consolidate its presence in the minds of young people in the municipality of Tonalá and its surroundings, thus increasing its chances of becoming the first educational choice for future generations.

FUTURE WORK

Based on this research, the aim is to strengthen the issue in the near future with the design and implementation of strategies that promote the positioning of Campus IX of the Autonomous University of Chiapas among young people in upper secondary education so that they consider the Istmo Costa Campus IX School of Administrative Sciences as a viable option for continuing their higher education.

REFERENCES

Aguilera, M. P., and Cruz, C. (2005). The general principles of admission to higher education, their contradictions, and an educational model to address them: the case of the Samuel Robinson Program. *Journal of Pedagogy*, 36(77), 483-498.

<https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=65916616006>

- Andión Gamboa, M., (2007). On quality in higher education: a qualitative view. *Reencuentro*, (50), 83-92.
<https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=34005011>
- Blanco, E., (2014). Social inequality in upper secondary education in Mexico City. *Papeles de Población*, 20(80), 249-280.
<https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=11231067009>
- Fernández Fassnacht, Enrique (2017). A look at the challenges facing higher education in Mexico. *Educational Innovation*, 17(74), 183-207.
https://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?pid=S166526732017000200183&script=sci_arttext
- García Martínez, V., Aquino Zúñiga, S. P., Guzmán Sala, A., and Medina Meléndez, A. (2011). Proposal for the development of self-assessment tools for distance education programs. *Journal Electrónica Actualidades Investigativas en Educación*, 11(2), 1-27.
<https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/447/44720020017.pdf>
- Guerrero Ceh, J. G., & Can Valle, A. R. (2015). The evaluation of educational programs at the higher education level. *Opción*, 31(2), 557-572.
<https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=31045568031>
- Gutiérrez Legorreta, L. A. (2009). The future of upper secondary education: the case of the State of Mexico. *Tiempo de Educar*, 10(19), 171-204.
<https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=31113164007>
- National Institute of Statistics and Geography (2021). *Sociodemographic overview of Chiapas. 2020 Population and Housing Census*. National Institute of Statistics and Geography.
<https://www.inegi.org.mx/app/biblioteca/ficha.html?upc=702825197780>
- Moreno Jácome, M. C., Ramírez Ramírez, L. N., & Escobar Pérez, J. Z. (2020). Review of education in values for the level higher in Latin America. *Journal Education*, 44(1), 1-32.
<https://doi.org/10.15517/revedu.v44i1.35636>

- Ovando Díaz, M. A., Cruz Rueda, E., Grajales Castillejos, O. (2016). Evaluation and accreditation processes in educational programs at the Autonomous University of Chiapas, Mexico. *Atenas*, 4(36), 1-6. <https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=478055146008>
- Suárez Zosaya, M. H. (2010). *Challenges of a relationship in crisis: education and young Mexicans*. Economic Culture Fund-National Council for Culture and the Arts.
- Suárez Zosaya, M. H. (2012). *Public and private higher education in Mexico: Institutional inequalities and student opinions*. Autonomous University of Chiapas. Mexico.
- Valadez Huizar, M., & Zarabozo Enríquez de Rivera, D. (2017). Thinking styles and career choices at three Mexican universities. *Electronic Journal of Current Research in Education*, 17(3), 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.15517/aie.v17i3.29876>
- Wells, R.S., Chen, L., Bettencourt, G.M. et al. (2023). Reconsidering Rural-Nonrural College Enrollment Gaps: The Role of Socioeconomic Status in Geographies of Opportunity. *Res High Educ* (64), 1089–1112. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-023-09737-8>
- Wei, Y. (2023). The study of higher education policy in remote rural areas of Australia—what can China learn. *International Journal of Chinese Education*, 12(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2212585X231179725>

COLLABORATIVE WORK TABLE

Role	Author(s)
Conceptualization	Velasco Jiménez Diana
Method	Velasco Jiménez Diana, Maza Zepeda Norberto
Validation	Velasco Jiménez Diana, Maza Zepeda Norberto
Software	Velasco Jiménez Diana
Validation	Velasco Jiménez Diana, Maza Zepeda Norberto
Formal Analysis	Velasco Jiménez Diana
Research	Velasco Jiménez Diana, Maza Zepeda Norberto
Resources	Velasco Jiménez Diana
Data curation	Velasco Jiménez Diana, Maza Zepeda Norberto

Writing - Preparation of the original draft	Velasco Jiménez Diana, Maza Zepeda Norberto
Writing - Revision and editing	Velasco Jiménez Diana
Visualization	Velasco Jiménez Diana, Maza Zepeda Norberto
Supervision	Velasco Jiménez Diana, Maza Zepeda Norberto
Project Management	Velasco Jiménez Diana
Fundraising	Velasco Jiménez Diana, Maza Zepeda Norberto