

**LATIN AMERICA - FROM BEING THE MOST URBANIZED REGION TO THE PRESENCES OF INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL ISSUES IN THE REGION HAS ACTED AS A HURDLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT**

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**ABSTRACT**

Latin America is the most urbanized region in the world with 80% of its people living in cities and home to several problems starting from economic to political crisis , where violence and inequality domains the region , the cities are corrupted and the political institutions are weak, the country lacks proper education , where the bulk of the society is uneducated and working in the informal sector , due to high gender discrimination in the employment sector , the region has not experienced progressive development in the economic region , where some parts of the region is highly developed . The Amazon Rainforest which produces 22 % of the world's oxygen is now burning , rapid environment and climate changes have made the life of people miserable, deforestation has emerged as a major contributor to agricultural , environment hazard which has an impact on the economic . The COVID-19 pandemic has declined the economic progress which , Latin America has developed over the last 15 years , there is no chance of development in the region till the next 10 years , as part of the post COVID-19 affect .

**Keywords** : Latin America , economic crisis , violence , climate change , Amazon Rainforest , COVID-19 .

## INTRODUCTION

Latin America comprises of 21 countries belonging to South and North America . Latin America is a term which is used for speakers and inhabitants of the Romance language speaking region, they share a common background of Independence struggle and conquest of Portuguese and Spaniard from 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century .Latin America is home to more 652 million people , consisting of 20 countries and 14 independent territories , covering an area of 19,197,000 km, starting from Mexico to many parts of Caribbean , covering 13% of the Earth Surface . Its nominal GDP is US 5,188,250 million dollar and PPP GDP US 10,284,588 million dollar for 2019.Latin America culture is an amalgamation of Indigenous people European and African . Spanish is mostly spoken by people . Ever since the Independence ,many countries have shared a common culture ,however there is a large difference in the geographical and climate conditions . Ever since the Spanish and Portuguese conquest on the Iberoamerica which was later given the name Latin America , Latin word gives equal weightage to both French and Italian contribution . Latin America is considered to be most urbanized continent with 80% of its people are living in cities , it has the shortest coastline compared to other continents . Latin America is unique for a number of things especially the Amazon Rainforest which produces 20% of the world oxygen and is home to half of the world species , earlier Amazon rainforest used to be twice the size of Belgium , Columbia produces 90% of the world's Emeralds , there are around 77 uncontacted tribes in the Amazon Rainforest, Costa Rica in Latin America has been recorded as the happiest country in the world , The Uyuni in Bolivia is the world's largest salt flats, Ecuador is the first country in the world to give nature constitutional Rights . Latin America's largest trading partner is America and second is Asia . The Atacama Desert is Chile is regarded as the world's driest desert . Amazon covers eight countries which incorporates : Brazil , Ecuador , Colombia , Peru , Bolivia , Guyana and Venezuela . The Amazon covers an area of 2.5 million square metre and is the world's largest rainforest , and a home to unique wildlife . In spite of so many achievements , Latin America has many issues and challenges to resolve in the country which may include Corruption , unemployment , lack of economic growth, Political instability, Lack of social security, massive cases of drug trafficking , crimes, followed by poverty and social inequality , Lack of education , Violence , in particular gender violence , poor health care facilities and environmental health especially with the ongoing burning of Amazon forest over the years , according to a survey conducted in Latin America majority of the people considered Corruption to be the biggest challenge that the countries face. There are even cases of organized crime violence happening in the countries . Latin America in the 21st century are facing these problems despite so many measures taken by the government .

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this exploration , I have used a amalgamation of two of the archetypical social sciences research tools application –as they are authentic and brilliant method to assemble statistics from multiple appellant in an methodical and convenient way . Question were asked to the parents and their children , survey , interviews –consisting of several interrogation which were dispersed among representative of each contender group.

### OBJECTIVE OF RESEARCH

In this Research paper the main area of studies include

1. An depth study on Latin America culture , diversity and geography
2. Current issues in Latin America
3. An Analysis on the Amazon Rainforest and its affect on the environment
4. Latin America economic crisis and its future aspects.
5. What will be the future of Latin America with the rise in COVID -19 pandemic

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Latin America faces the challenge of environment change , constant inequality and intensified violence against millions of people throughout the area . Pollution is one of the major issue in Latin America , giving rise to airborne diseases with underdevelopment in the sanitation infrastructure , many cities in Latin America are limited or zero access to hygiene and drinking water provisions The condition has been worst with rise in droughts which has become frequent , on the other deforestation has been amplified over the years , the Amazon rainforest are being cut down which has resulted in rapid change of climate change , High temperature are disrupting the water system of the Andes that are leading to disappearing glaciers , which also contributed to few disease . The poor and the marginal weather living in the urban or rural suffer because of rapid change in the environment , the poorest in the central America , suffer the most due to environmental challenges . In Caribbean countries the rise in sea level are of one of the emerging problems , the change in climate also has an effect on the agriculture and the economic growth . The Country amounts to nearly 25% of the fresh water , inequality is very common in the sub-continent Economic inequality is the crucial phenomenon that can't be isolated from political consequences , as countries become unequal and the political institutions and the relative strength of other political leaders worsen the condition and make economic inequality a major factor , Economic inequality and political institutions work hand in hand . Violence is also one of the major challenges that Latin America faces, however there are two kinds of violence practised , one is Inter personal violence and the other is violence connected with organized crimes related to drug market . The national murder rate is very high within Latin America Honduras and El Salvador are the top countries in case of assassination in the world , Chile and Uruguay have the lowest case and Mexico , Brazil , Venezuela and Columbia have less or equal to Scandinavian countries . There are many countries in Latin America which are large producers of drug but with very little violence connected with it , countries with some drug market have high levels of violence associated with it . Government rarely conform to these issues , drug trafficking and violence is very common in Latin America . Homicide , robbery and drug trafficking with no social security is very common in the region . Latin America is very poor and weak state Due to high corruption and poor political leadership and capability of the government to tackle these challenges , the economic development of these countries are very low . For instance in Brazil , corruption is the major reason for economic inefficiency over the past few years .



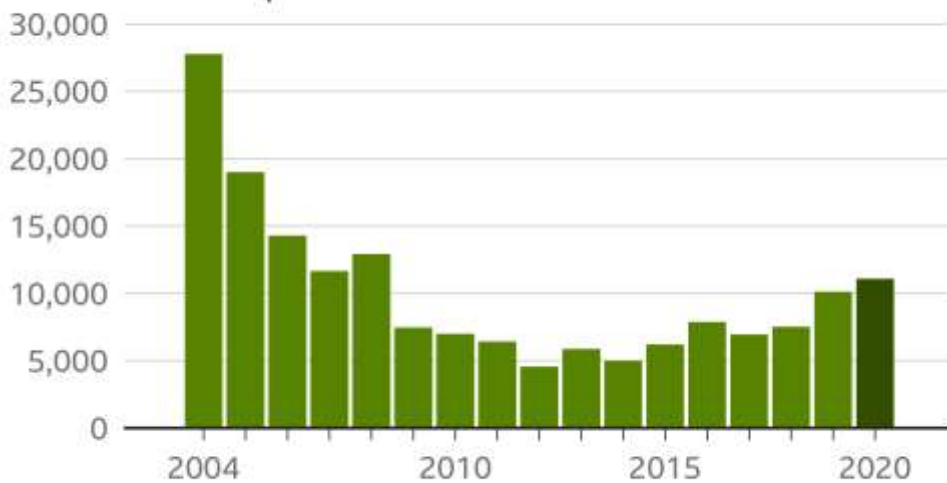
## FINDINGS

Latin America faces resources depletion when it comes to agriculture , The agricultural sector has become industrialized which requires huge amount of fossil fuel , water and topsoil resources with the provisions of automatic irrigation and agricultural machinery , on one hand where the world is shifting from non renewable source of energy to renewable energy to prevent environmental hazard and climate change , North America is utilizing more fossil fuels which has a negative impact on the environment , agriculture and soil fertility . Land management is one more issues, farmers who produce corns , soybean have shifted to rotating crops over the years , the climate change also effect the growth of crops , for instance Soybeans are sensitive to climate change and variability in cattle ranching , fruits growth is also affect by climate change , Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) accounts to quarter of global export in fishery and agriculture . Fruits and vegetables provides opportunities to small farmers , however food security is one of the major issue , where thousands of people don't have access to basic food , on the other hand we see a rise in overweight and obesity

The Amazon river which covers a region of 2.5 million square mile is home to 2500 species of fish , 1500 species of birds , 1800 species of butterflies , 4 types of big cat, 2000 species of mosquitoes and 50,000 species of higher plants which the most remarkable rainforest . Amazon rainforest , when the Brazil military regime saw the potential profit in the Amazon , the land started to be used for other purpose , almost 5 million square km of rainforest was filled with natural resources , the destruction started from 1970 , trans- Amazon highway was built connecting remote part of rainforest , the government wanted people to shift to these areas and cultivate economic , most of the people turned the land into pasture and started cattle raising , and they raised more and more land , around 20,000 square km rainforest was cut down each year , and the area was soon known as the arc of Deforestation ,people started eating more and more meat decade after decade and need for Soyabeans was served as high protein ,thus provided opportunities for many countries to grow soyabean , boosting the economic and soon these pasture land was converted into Soy Farm in Brazil, it started in 2000 , clearing more of the Amazon, creating more economic and profit for the nation , first cattle caused deforestation then agriculture came in and later came the industries , the deforestation brought massive economic growth for the people which caused in the arc of deforestation , they was massive protest , in 2003 measures were taken to protect deforestation , it started by protecting 28% of the rainforest which was very low, Indigenous people ere involved who preserved the land , turning into a sustainable use , both economic development and ecology protection , 47% land was protected by 2012 , under the Ministry of Environment , However in 2013 people again started cutting the rainforest , today the rainforest is almost burning which has resulted in massive environment hazard and climate change in the region , on the other Big industries are entering some villages and construction canals , installing wind tribunals , solar panels , cutting down forest and land for agricultural for renewable energy purpose which has an effect on the life of rural people

### Amazon deforestation highest since 2008

Annual rate in square kilometres



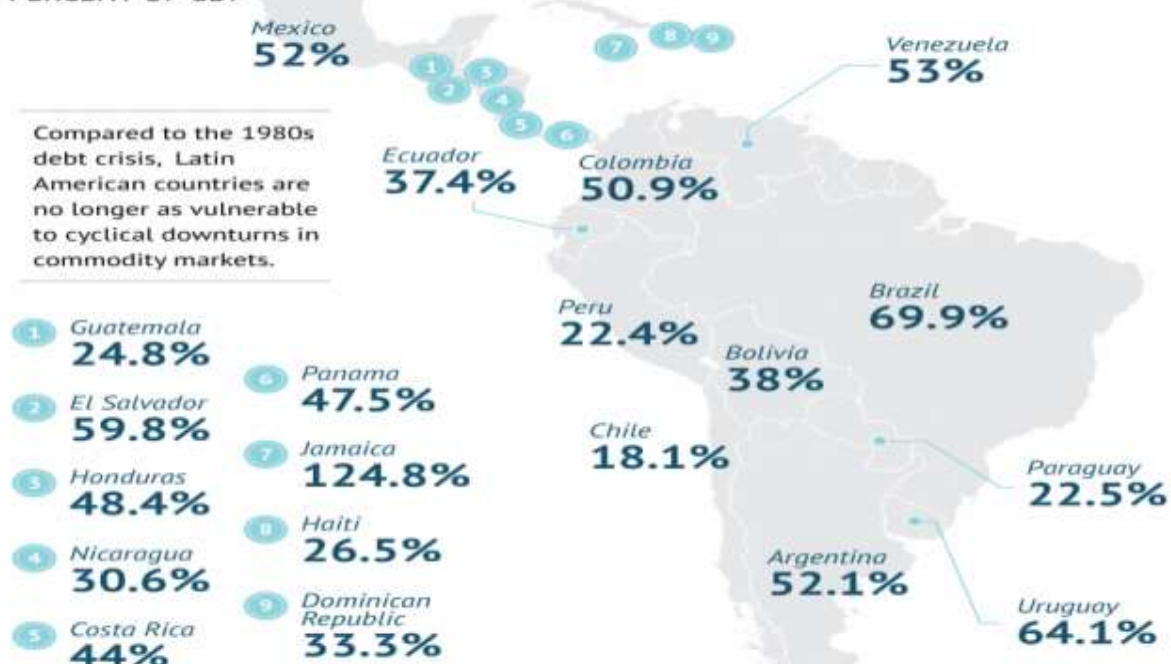
Note: Annual figures August-July

Source: PRODES, Inpe



Latin America poverty rate is high followed by lack of employment which has contributed to serious economic crisis, the middle income trap indicating the struggle of Latin America and Caribbean, the income status has remained the same and the productivity rate has also remain the same, social vulnerability has intensified and institutional weakness have acted as a hurdle in the development process. Some of Crucial factors that resulted in the middle income trap: slowdown in development due to inability to achieve changes in the productivity and competition, lack of education and with low knowledge and skill training, followed by lack of innovative ideas, there is massive inequality and absences of social protection.

### GROSS DEBT IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA, 2015 (PROJECTED) PERCENT OF GDP



Source: IMF World Economic Outlook

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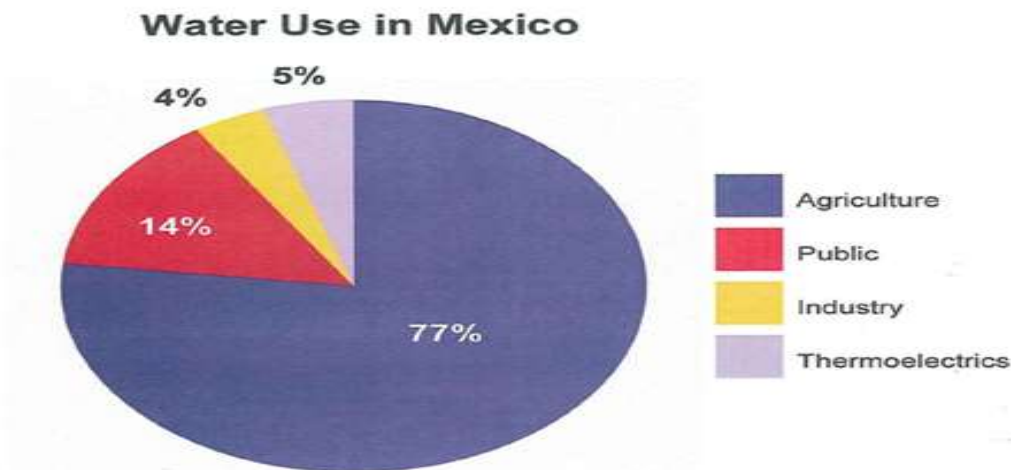
In North America , especially Mexico water scarcity has emerged as one of the biggest problem 50% of the population no access to water supply , having a population of 129 million , out of which 65 million people are facing water crisis, there is lack of waste water treatment , lack of technical and commercial efficiency , insufficient drinking water , 3 million people lack access to improved sanitation . Mexico city is sinking by 10 inches every year , excess water has been pumped from the aquifer , due to water crisis and lack of water management , Mexico has stopped fishery culture and depends upon imports from other countries ,Fish is one of the major source of protein for people of Mexico .Moreover there has been illegal fishing in Mexico , which is emerging as a major concern for the people and the seafood of Mexico is not transparent . Due to lack of violence , gender discrimination and lack of education , health issues is very common which includes high maternal and infant mortality rate m respiratory disease , lack of vaccine preventable diseases ,we also see a rise in disability and death among aging population with an increase in no communicable chronic diseases . Since 1990 the country is going through serious health issues , the average expenditure oh health is 6.7 % of the GDP , there is lack of public health strategies , there is inequality in the health sector , socio-cultural differences which affect treatment followed by education , ethnicity , maternal mortality is high among the rural population and indigenous , Financing the health system is a major issue with lack of resources available, Training and distribution of human resources do not meet the international standards . The COVID -19 situation shows the loopholes in the health care system of Latin America , the country has suffered . Education is not equally provided to all the people , there is discrimination , with high drop out rates which has played a paramount role in the growth of other issues in Latin America . As people have lack of innovation ideas with a fragile political institution which calls for immediate measures and policies to reconstruct and build a new Latin America.

### **FUTURE AFFECT**

Latin America and Caribbean has been a product of economic crisis since years . the COVID-19 situation has changed the situation in the region and made it worst .The countries will face a breakable and uneven recovery , It has had a devastating socio-economic impact in 2020 , which will be felt for the years to come if smart investment is not made in the economic sector , Climate change is also a big issue in the region, the Amazon Rainforest is burning and there is no sign for recovery in the region. The region GDP has declined by 8% due to lockdown and reduce in tourism has contributed to economic crisis , Latin America is facing the worst health and economic crisis in 90 years . Caribbean, Argentina , Peru and Panama who are highly dependent on tourism for their economic growth has been badly affected due to this COVID -19 , Countries like Haiti , Paraguay and Uruguay have been able to limit the spread and manage its economic .The region was already facing economic , social and political crisis , the COVID-19 exposed the structural differences in the economic sector , in informal and formal sector and the inequality in the employment sector between men and women . Millions of people have lost their jobs , especially in the unorganised structure where most of the occupation where contact-intensive , young people, women and workers who lacked education who formed a majority , in the employment sector has ended into poverty , it took more than 15 years to make progress which



went into vain. , there has been a 30% decline in investment in 2020. It is estimated that 30 million people will fall below poverty line as per Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean . The region has decided to adopt counter-cyclical macroeconomic policies to maintain a balance between the fiscal stability, employment growth and GDP . Fight against inequality and increase the social security system , equal access to education at all levels and working towards a better health care system .Empowering industries through investment in R&D, with focus on technology.



### CONCLUSION

Economic Development and environmental sustainability in Latin America is very important to recover from the economic , social and political crisis, excess natural resource exploitation has worsen inequality and social conflict. With a poor political governance and lack of education among the people , chance of innovative ideas and skill development remains zero . With increase in environment hazard and climate change the rural population are suffering .

Violence , Drug Trafficking has further contributed to interpersonal violence and also economic crisis in the region . Inequality in the employment sector has not allowed any proper development to take place , even before the COVID -19 situation , there was hardly any development in few sectors . There is a new to improve the social and health sector to thing about the economic development of the country , corruption and violence of any kind has to be eliminated from the region to see development in the region

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