

Children and Youth in the Context of Mexico-U.S. Migration

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Abstract

In this paper, we explore the situation of the children and youth living in Mexico that are exposed to migration. In particular we analyze: 1) the recent trends of Mexico-U.S. migration of the children and the youth; and 2) the effects of the youth migration experience on their probabilities of attending school –either because they migrated to U.S. or they live in households with migration experience (remittances reception or migration of a household member). Using data from the 2010 Mexican Census sample, we characterized the population under 19 years old according to their migration exposure. We also run a logistic regression model to estimate the probabilities of attending school for those 14 to 18 years old given their migration experience and sociodemographic characteristics. Our results show the need of rethinking the educational policy for incentive the reincorporation of the migrant teenagers to the Mexican Educational System.

Extended Abstract

The marked increased of the Mexico-U.S. migration flows during the nineties and the first half of the last decade, along with augmented length of stay in the northern country and the loss of circularity of the phenomena, have modified the discussion about the implications of Mexico-U.S. migration in origin contexts. On one hand, return to Mexico patters changed, which meant longer stays in the U.S. and a certain tendency towards permanent settlement. On the other hand, it became apparent the change in the migrants profile that were more heterogeneous and integrated new actors such as women and children. Thus, the family circumstances and the household living dynamics in places of origin changed.

At the same time, international migration has spread to regions with a little or null U.S. migration experience and the number of households that received remittances had augmented. The discussion about the effect of migration in the origin places was focused on

how remittances affect the local development and the effect of emigration on types of family organization. Among the discussions, there was a debate about the impact of migration on the lifestyle of the children and, in particular, on the effect of exposure to migration on educational trajectories.

In the last five years (2005-2010), the trends linked to the new context in which migration occurs had changed. The tightening of immigration policies and local anti-immigrant environment in the U.S., the increase in deportations, the difficulties in crossing the border and the insecurity to do so –due the presence of organized crime – and the economic crisis of 2008 have changed the migration dynamics. Several data sources, including the 2010 Mexican Census, have documented a dramatic drop in the net migration balance that is explained by the lower Mexican emigration rates as the increase in the return to Mexico rates. It is estimated that during the last five years about a million people return from U.S. (Zenteno, 2011). And, over 25% of these migrants are Mexican children and youth –either because they born in Mexico or born in the U.S. but they live in households where the household head was born in Mexico.

International migration exposure and participation of Mexican children and youth

The Mexican census data allow us to analyze the migration exposure of children and youth in several forms: either because they have migrated to U.S. or because they live in contexts with migration experience, that is say, they live in households that receive remittances or where a family member had migrated, or in towns with high migration prevalence.

In table 1 we describe the Mexican population under 19 years old according to their exposure to migration. In 2010, 6.5% of the children and youth living in Mexico had experienced migration. It means 2.7 millions of minors. About 2 millions are minor living in households with migrants and/or that receive remittances. These children and youth are more concentrated in rural and medium-sized cities than those without migration experience. Furthermore, despite the geographical spread of migration, they reside mainly in the states of the traditional region of emigration (about 40%). In fact, in this region, 8% of children were in households with a migrant member and / or that received remittances.

The other 700,000 minors of table 1 immigrated to Mexico. Over a half of million was born in U.S. and lived in households where the head was born in Mexico. Of these, around 310,000 immigrated during the last five years. In this table, we also observe two smaller groups of migrant minors: those who return during the last five years and the temporal migrants (people

who migrated to U.S. and returned to Mexico between 2005 and 2010). These three groups reflect the consolidation of a migration pattern of the Mexican children and youth during the last decade. This is an unexplored phenomenon that implies new challenges as their incorporation to the Mexican Educational System. Are Mexican institutions prepared to receive these children?

International migration and educational attendance

One of the possible effects of international migration on the lifestyle of young people and children is linked to changes in their educational trajectories. The migration of the children or their families involves a change in the family context and educational environment. For migrants, it also involves the incorporation to an unknown educational system or that contrasts with the one of their previous places of residence (Giorguli and Serratos, 2009; Giorguli, Vargas, Salinas, Hubert and Potter, 2010; Gutierrez, Sanchez and Giorguli, 2011). There are also studies that show indirect effects of migration on the youth education by increasing the resources of household, for example, through the reception of remittances (Hanson and Woodruff, 2003, Meza and Pederzini, 2009).

In this section, we explore the probabilities attending school of teenagers 14 to 18 years old living in Mexico in 2010, depending on the exposure to international migration (see Table 2 and Annex 2 for complete models)¹. Table 2 shows that the pattern of school attendance varies among youth in Mexico according to their international migration experience. For both men and women, exposure to migration –either because a household member migrated or because they live in context of high migration prevalence –is associated with lower school attendance. In contrast, if the household receives remittances, the probability of school attendance is slightly higher compared to youth without any exposure to migration.

For teenagers who had migrated to Mexico, there is a significant difference depending on the place of birth. Those born in the United States clearly continue their educational careers and, indeed, are the group with the highest probabilities. In contrast, those born in Mexico who migrated to the United States in recent years have the lowest odds of all groups. They are the group that requires greater attention and support in the process of reinsertion into the educational system, along with immigrant children from other countries.

¹. The probabilities were estimated controlling by the effect of the socioeconomic status and cultural capital of the household (household head years of school), the school opportunities of the towns, and the place of residence.

For the final version, we will estimate models that incorporate the parents' residence status and more variables of the household socioeconomic status.

As preliminary conclusion, the results indicate that Mexico-U.S. international migration affects the lifestyle of children living in Mexico. They also highlight the participation of minors in the flows between the two countries and stress the need to consider the challenges that international migration represent for the Mexican Educational System in the context of returning and immigration to Mexico of children from the United States.

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Table 1. Selected characteristics of the population under 19 according to their exposure to international migration. México 2010.

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Without migration experience</i>	<i>Household with migration experience</i>	<i>Household receiving remittances</i>	<i>Born in U.S. with Mexican household head</i>	<i>Return migrant</i>	<i>Migrated during the last five years</i>	<i>Other immigrants</i>	<i>Total</i>
Total	38,810,677	645,109	1,375,241	563,377	68,881	14,532	51,021	41,528,838
Sex	93.5	1.6	3.3	1.4	0.2	0.0	0.1	100.0
Man	50.7	50.1	50.4	50.5	48.7	53.8	49.9	50.7
Woman	49.3	49.9	49.6	49.5	51.3	46.2	50.1	49.3
Age								
0 a 5	30.5	35.8	27.1	42.8	3.1	11.6	30.1	30.6
6 a 12	37.4	34.6	35.4	40.2	45.8	39.6	38.8	37.3
13 a 15	15.8	14.3	18.1	9.5	26.0	18.5	13.0	15.8
16 a 18	16.3	15.3	19.4	7.5	25.2	30.4	18.1	16.3
Place of residence								
Less than 15 000 hab	7.1	12.2	13.2	9.1	8.5	6.8	2.4	7.4
15 000 a 99 999 hab	18.1	29.3	28.2	19.3	21.3	20.0	9.9	18.6
100 000 and more habitants	30.0	35.8	34.3	31.9	34.7	35.4	33.1	30.2
Metropolitan area	44.8	22.7	24.3	39.8	35.5	37.9	54.6	43.7
Migration region								
Border	19.9	12.8	12.9	46.3	31.2	31.2	33.4	19.9
Traditional	22.9	38.7	43.1	30.6	35.0	44.0	15.1	23.9
Central	39.3	37.4	34.9	19.2	26.8	18.3	28.5	38.8
Southeast	17.9	11.1	9.2	3.9	7.0	6.5	23.0	17.3
Prevalence municipal migration								
Low or null	76.5	42.0	40.1	56.0	55.3	52.9	85.9	74.5
Medium	17.4	35.0	30.3	27.1	28.8	29.0	11.1	18.3
High	6.1	23.0	29.5	16.9	15.9	18.1	3.1	7.3

Source: INEGI. Census sample 2010

Table 2. Estimated probabilities of attending school for adolescents 14 to 18 years old according to their exposure to international migration, México 2010.

<i>Variables</i>	Men		Women	
	<i>Probability</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Probability</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Migration experience				
Without migration experience (<i>reference</i>)	0.637		0.640	
Household with migration experience	0.618 *		0.586 *	
Household receiving remittances	0.675 *		0.672	
Born in U.S. with Mexican household head	0.707 *		0.692 *	
Return migrant	0.542 *		0.567 *	
Migrated during the last five years	0.439 *		0.626	
Other immigrants	0.471 *		0.377 *	
Prevalence municipal migration				
Low or null (<i>reference category</i>)	0.655		0.640	
Medium	0.620 *		0.621 *	
High	0.605 *		0.601 *	

* p<0,001. Test for significative differences with respect to the reference category

Source: INEGI. Census sample 2010

Annex 1. Descriptive statistics of selected sociodemographic variables of teenagers 14 to 18 years old, México 2010.

<i>Variables</i>	Mean or distribution	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Migration experience		
Without migration experience (<i>reference category</i>)	0.922	0.916
Household with migration experience	0.017	0.020
Household receiving remittances	0.051	0.054
Born in U.S. with Mexican household head	0.006	0.006
Return migrant	0.002	0.002
Migrated during the last five years	0.001	0.000
Other immigrants	0.001	0.001
Migration region		
Border	0.109	0.105
Traditional	0.204	0.203
Central	0.459	0.464
Southeast	0.228	0.228
Prevalence municipal migration		
Low or null (<i>reference category</i>)	0.602	0.600
Medium	0.250	0.249
High	0.148	0.151
Age	15.983	15.990
Household head years of schooling	5.714	5.808
Place of residence		
Less than 15 000 hab	0.346	0.345
15 000 a 99 999 hab	0.320	0.321
100 000 and more habitants	0.180	0.180
Metropolitan area	0.154	0.154

Source: INEGI. Census sample 2010

Annex 2. Logistic model coefficients of attending school for adolescents 14 to 18 years old according to their exposure to international migration and selected characteristics, México 2010*

<i>Variables</i>	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>
Migration experience								
Without migration experience <i>(reference category)</i>								
Household with migration experience	-0.0811	0.0225	-0.2272	0.0204	***	***	***	***
Household receiving remittances	***	***	***	***	0.1670	0.0139	0.1401	0.0135
Born in U.S. with Mexican household head	0.3174	0.0421	0.2338	0.0400	0.3356	0.0422	0.2555	0.0401
Return migrant	-0.3945	0.0576	-0.3058	0.0578	-0.3790	0.0577	-0.2868	0.0579
Migrated during the last five years	-0.8087	0.1051	-0.0599	0.1328	-0.7935	0.1052	-0.0395	0.1329
Other immigrants	-0.6799	0.1156	-1.0767	0.1047	-0.6739	0.1157	-1.0693	0.1048
Migration region								
Border	-0.1780	0.0105	-0.0833	0.0107	-0.1772	0.0105	-0.0820	0.0107
Traditional	-0.2005	0.0086	-0.0789	0.0086	-0.2007	0.0086	-0.0789	0.0086
Central								
Southeast	0.0682	0.0083	-0.1570	0.0082	0.0705	0.0083	-0.1547	0.0082
Prevalence municipal migration								
Low or null <i>(reference category)</i>								
Medium	-0.1491	0.0079	-0.0820	0.0078	-0.1581	0.0079	-0.0940	0.0079
High	-0.2144	0.0101	-0.1652	0.0100	-0.2410	0.0102	-0.1955	0.0102
Age	-0.5701	0.0021	-0.5624	0.0021	-0.5702	0.0021	-0.5627	0.0021
Household head years of schooling	0.1549	0.0008	0.1356	0.0008	0.1552	0.0008	0.1359	0.0008
Place of residence								
Less than 15 000 hab								
15 000 a 99 999 hab	-0.1116	0.0074	-0.1309	0.0074	-0.1112	0.0074	-0.1307	0.0074
100 000 and more habitants	-0.0427	0.0093	-0.0434	0.0092	-0.0431	0.0093	-0.0434	0.0092
Metropolitan area	-0.0575	0.0105	0.0247	0.0105	-0.0582	0.0106	0.0245	0.0105
Constant	8.9563	0.0344	8.9325	0.0343	8.9519	0.0344	8.9305	0.0343
Wald Chi Square	100110.83		94676.52		100148.59		94674.22	
Pseudo R ²	0.1524		0.1394		0.1526		0.1394	
Total of cases	645,649		641,252		645,649		641,252	

* Robust standard errors corrected by cluster within the households

Source: INEGI. Census sample 2010