

Abstract**The Effects of International Migration on Educational Attainment and Educational Mobility in Mexico**

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Studies on the impact of international migration on socioeconomic status in Mexico often focus on the investment of remittances in household assets, such as residential property, agricultural land, or businesses. Less attention has been given to the long-term socioeconomic effects that international migration has on human capital formation and the social mobility of the children of international migrants in Mexico. Earlier work has explored the relationship between rural-urban migration and socioeconomic mobility in Mexico by examining educational and occupational outcomes from one generation to the next. However, comparable work has not been completed on the effects of migration to the United States.

Theory and limited research are mixed with respect to the direction of the relationship. Conventional human capital theory suggests that international migration should have a positive effect on households' investments in children's education due to increased income from migrant earnings; however, limited findings based on survey data suggest that migration discourages investments in education and creates an orientation toward U.S. labor markets when the returns on education in Mexico are heavily discounted.

The main motivation of this research is to unify these two separate literatures by analyzing the role that international migration and remittances have on the educational attainment and educational mobility of young people in Mexico. The main research questions guiding this dissertation are: what is the impact of U.S. migration in the family and in the community on the educational enrollment, schooling attainment and intergenerational educational mobility of adolescents in Mexico? And, does this impact vary by the social and economic context where these children live?

I approach these questions using data from the 2000 Mexican Census of Population and Housing; more specifically, the 10% sample available through IPUMS International, which contains information on about 10 million individuals. I complement this information with

municipal level data on migration prevalence and development levels from the Mexican Population Council.

From the analyses performed to date results are consistent with the existence of two different processes connecting international migration and education in Mexico. The first process is the investment of families on human capital, defined by the use of economic resources from migration on the educational advancement of children, which has a stronger positive impact on communities with a lower level of economic development. The second process is that of discouragement of schooling among children living in communities with higher migration prevalence, once we control for the level of development in the municipality.

This dissertation provides important insight to the relationship between international migration and investments on education for younger members of the family. It also has important implications for the understanding of the interaction between family characteristics and the local economic context. Previous analyses discussed positive and negative impacts of U.S. migration separately, but the results presented in this study help synthesize these different perspectives and provides evidence of the complexity of the relationship between parents' influence and context's influence on children's schooling at different levels. Moreover, this study makes an important contribution to the literature on the effects of migration in children's education by conducting an analysis that is representative at the national level.