

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Mexican Migrant Workers:
Are They the Image of a Global Village?

by

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with two important concepts in anthropology, globalization and identity, and seeks to discover the effect, of any, that globalization has on identity. The example used for this research is that of Mexican migrant workers employed in Canada and the United States. These workers are exposed to global trends in the form of work abroad for four to six months out of every year, and the aim here is to determine whether or not this exposure has an effect on the self-perception and self-presentation of the workers. Several indicators were used to determine whether identity had been affected, including language, religion, sense of place, perceptions of others at home and abroad, and consumption patterns. This research examines the situation of both single workers and families, and brings to light several new variables that may be further examined in future studies.

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The new electronic interdependence recreates
the world in the image of a global village.

Marshall McLuhan.1962. The Gutenberg
Galaxy. Page 31.

Mexican Migrant Workers:
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I. Introduction

Globalization is a concept that has received a great deal of attention in recent decades and has been dealt with in a number of social science disciplines. Globalization is generally used to refer to social, economic, cultural and demographic processes that take place within nations but also transcend them, such that attention limited to local processes, identities and units of analysis yields incomplete understanding of the local. These global processes have had a very visible effect in areas of the world that were formerly considered to be “peripheral” (that is, outside of the major industrialised centres) but that now have become very important centres of production. Mexico, which in the past two decades has undergone rapid industrialisation and an explosion of foreign investment, is the example that will be used for this research. This particular country was chosen because it is often used as an example in literature dealing with globalization and because it has a long history of relations with both Canada and the United States, making it accessible.

One important element in the global economy is the process of migration, which has increased dramatically between Mexico, Canada and the United States. Although this increase in migration has no doubt had an effect on many aspects of the lives of the Mexican migrant workers, the issue to be dealt with here is to find out how migration affects the identity of the people involved. Identity is an important concept in anthropology, but it is one that has had to be reexamined in light of global trends which create problems with the traditional attempt in anthropology to equate a location with a cultural identity. There has been a great deal of speculation regarding how identity is being reformed and maintained by people such as migrant workers in the face of this new global world, but there has been very little actual field research done in this area to verify these theories. Working within the theoretical frameworks already established, the aim here is to provide research in this area.

This research project has two major research objectives. The first objective is to determine how recent trends towards globalization in Mexico, as indicated by events such as increased industrialisation, increased migration and the passage of the NAFTA, fit into the

more general, worldwide trends towards globalization that have been discussed by many authors. This part of the research was dependent upon library research into existing material on globalization; the presentation of this material is designed to provide an understanding of the wide variety of approaches that exist in the area of study, and provides the theoretical background for the second objective.

The second research objective is to determine whether these recent trends towards globalization have had an effect on the identity of the people involved and, if so, how. Identity, in this research, refers to the self-perception and self-presentation of the people involved. This part of the research was performed through fieldwork among migrant workers in Mexico. Furthermore, previous works by various authors on issues dealing with globalization and identity and with migration and identity were used before field research was attempted in order to provide an overview of the different approaches that may be taken in dealing with these topics and to create a theoretical framework within which field research was to be carried out.

II. Globalization

A. Issues of Globalization

There is a great deal of literature which deals with the general characteristics associated with the phenomenon known as “globalization”. Randall White, in his book Global Spin (1995), defines seven characteristics of globalization. He states that globalization is a form of imperialism, and that it is marked by the spread of technology beyond the First World. Globalization involves new economic forces (specifically capitalism), and new political realignment in the form of trade agreements. White also sees the emergence of a global culture as a result of new migrations. Finally, global culture has resulted in a revival of global governance, and is closely associated with the emergence of the nation state (White 1995: 10-12). Many of these characteristics, particularly those referring to technology, trade agreements and migration, are already visible in Mexico.

While White provides information on the characteristics of globalization in general, Gary Teeple, in his book Globalization and the Decline of Social Reform (1995), outlines the major characteristics of a global economy as they appear within a given country. These characteristics include free economic zones, deregulation of the economy, privatization of public corporations, debt reduction, the dismantling of the welfare state, circumscription of human rights, circumscription of trade unions, restrictions to democracy, and increased relative poverty between classes and nations (Teeple 1995: 83-143). These characteristics are generally agreed upon by other authors as well, and have been seen in many countries in the past few decades, including Mexico.

While much work deals with the characteristics of globalization in general, there are other issues related to globalization that need to be considered. Jorge Larrain, in his book, Theories of Development: Capitalism, Colonialism and Dependency (1989), looks at the issue of whether a global economy is inevitable, where it started and where it will end. He discusses Gino Germani’s sociological theory of modernization and Rostow’s economic theory of modernization; these theories provide a more historical perspective regarding globalization. Rostow’s theory states that societies begin as traditional or agricultural societies, but then enter a process of transition which, with the exception of Western Europe,

is externally induced, usually through colonization; economic changes are introduced and growth becomes a permanent feature of society (Rostow 1960: 21). Society then follows a road to maturity, during which the economy becomes modernized and makes use of new technology; this leads ultimately to a period of high mass consumption (Rostow 1960: 139). Germani's theory tempers this straightforward process with the realisation that social institutions change at different speeds, so that the traditional and the modern coexist. This results in a rather tense situation in which underdeveloped countries develop consumption attitudes typical of developed economies, but with underdeveloped production structures (Germani 1965: 72). This situation can be found in Mexico and other Latin American countries, where wages remain low but improved technology and increased migration have led to changing attitudes towards consumption.

Larrain (1989) also deals with issues of global paternalism, or the idea that globalization patterns are similar to earlier patterns of colonialism. He mentions A. G. Frank's idea that underdevelopment is inevitable for any country exposed to a colonial relationship (Frank 1969: 146). However, one must also take into account Hinkelammert's idea that all countries had the opportunity to break out of the colonial pattern in the 19th century, when the means of production in developed and underdeveloped countries were very similar (Hinkelammert 1972: 84). Some countries, such as the United States, succeeded in this. However, because the means of production are now very different in developed and underdeveloped countries, and the importation of new technologies and means of production is the only way to achieve development, it is now almost impossible to break out of the colonial pattern, and attempts to do so have resulted in massive debts for the countries involved (Hinkelammert 1972: 88-89), as can be seen in many Latin American countries, including Mexico.

These discussions of development and colonialism imply that globalization is not a recent phenomenon, although it is often treated as such. Sidney Mintz (1998) states that the massive movement of people globally is centuries old, dating back to when people first began to explore the globe (Mintz 1998: 131). The identification of persons with more than one community may be considered to be similarly ancient, since many people who sailed to the

New World returned home (Mintz 1998: 125). The “new” globalization that is discussed now is new only insofar as it is designed as a conceptual tool with which to comprehend a new stage of world history in which the velocity of movement of commodities, ideas, capital and people through space and across borders is much more rapid and unpredictable (Mintz 1998: 118). It is as such a conceptual tool that the idea of globalization is used in this study.

Globalization, even when discussed as a recent phenomenon, is a concept that creates problems for the researcher, and these problems must be recognised. Gordon Laxer (1995) raises some very important questions about globalization in his article *Social Solidarity, Democracy and Global Capitalism*, examining issues of causality which are seldom dealt with in literature regarding globalization. First of all, he challenges the assumption that national sovereignty is eroding due to globalization, saying that countries involved in former colonial relations (such as Latin American countries) were never self-sufficient as nations. He then challenges the idea that the relative level of transnational ownership and control have increased as a result of globalization, saying that transnationalism has been around for a long time and that it is due to modern technology that it has recently undergone such an explosion. However, he further states that modern technology might not be the only cause of transnationalism, and examines a political movement by the “neoliberal political right”. “Neoliberal political right” here refers to a strange combination of liberals in favour of universalism and conservative business people in favour of transnational development who are seen by Laxer as cooperating in order to gain favour for transnational ownership. Laxer states that this political factor would not have been necessary if technology alone could account for transnational trends. Finally, he challenges the idea that democracy is strengthened by global market reforms, saying that capitalism, by its nature, is antithetical to democracy (Laxer 1995: 288-300). Although this opinion is contrary to the norm, Laxer states that capitalism undermines democracy because it requires a large working class that must be controlled by a small managerial class, preventing the working class from determining or even participating in a significant way in its own destiny. In any examination of globalization, these issues of causality must be carefully examined and, even if they cannot be resolved, they must be recognised by the researcher.

Since a major example of current globalizing trends is the free trade agreement with Mexico, there is literature that deals specifically with globalization in Mexico. Claudio Lomnitz (1994), in his article *Decadence in Times of Globalization*, makes three major claims regarding globalization in Mexico. First of all, he states that Mexico, unlike other North American countries, is not yet in a postnational movement and that globalism has not yet developed an alternative institutional basis to that of the national community in Mexico. Secondly, he states that the cultural implications of globalization are different for rich and poor countries, and that multiculturalism reinforces an active/passive distinction between the rich and the poor. Thirdly, he states that decadent ideologies predominate in many Third World societies and have not been wiped out by the forces of globalization, as many would like to believe (Lomnitz 1994: 257).

Much literature regarding globalization in Mexico has very pessimistic undertones, such as Nestor Garcia Canclini's article (1995), *Mexico: cultural globalization in a disintegrating city*. This article characterises Mexico as a global city, which may be defined as a centre of production and financial management, several of which exist in the larger global structure to control the flow of goods and capital (Sassen 1991: 34). However, this article states that Mexico City has become a fragmented and conceptually undefinable space lacking a centre (Canclini 1995: 750). Similarly, Sergio Zermeno's article (1993) *La derrota de la sociedad* states that free trade is leading to a dissolution of Mexican collective identity as a result of the concentration of people in border areas and mass migration. As well, Zermeno states that modernisation (meaning globalization) undermines modernity (meaning democracy), because modernisation is based on transnational corporations which are accessible to only a few, the rich and the educated. This, he believes, will result in an increasing gap between the rich and the poor, those with access to the privileges of modernisation and those without access, those he calls the anonymous masses (Zermeno 1993: 278). It is the aim of this research to investigate these claims regarding globalization in Mexico.

B. Fordism and Post-Fordism

Fordism is a concept that generally refers to the era of mass production following the Second World War, specifically in the 1950s and 1960s. In the Fordist system, the central state and large-scale modes of regulation played a crucial role in assuring the coherence of the regime (Mayer 1991: 107). The system relied on regulating the domestic market and the capital/labour relationship. However, in the mid-1970s, the rigidities of the production structure and the rising costs and destructive side-effects of mass production and mass consumption caused a slow-down in growth rates (Mayer 1991: 107). In order to overcome this crisis, capitalist elites needed to do more than just adjust the way in which production was organised; new, more flexible forms of production were required along with new corresponding forms of regulation, new rules and new institutional arrangements (Mayer 1991: 108).

The reaction to the crisis of Fordism is the phenomenon known as post-Fordism. The post-Fordist economy has polarized into two different sectors, the high-paying corporate service sector and the low-paying sectors of downgraded manufacturing and lower-level services. The new division of labour and the so-called “flexible specialization” or “flexible accumulation” characteristic of the new post-Fordist regime have led to a differentiation between cities and regions as “core” areas of Fordist industrialization become marginalized in favour of peripheries with cheaper production costs and a ready supply of cheap labour (Mayer 1991: 108-109). Mexico is an example of one such periphery, and the shift to the post-Fordist system may be seen as having been largely responsible for the explosion of production in Mexico earlier in this century and the increase in labour migration within and out of Mexico.

The crisis of the Fordist accumulation regime wiped out huge numbers of formerly stable manufacturing jobs; at the same time, the post-Fordist economic growth sectors are failing to create large number of middle-income jobs. Instead, those sectors of the economy that are currently expanding are based in large proportion on flexible and unguaranteed jobs (Mayer 1991: 108), such as those filled by migrant workers. The class structure in the post-Fordist city is therefore determined by two equally dynamic sectors: the advanced services

and high-tech sector and the unregulated, labour-intensive informal sector. The metaphor of the “dual city” captures a defining feature of the emerging post-Fordist city; the segmentation of the labour force into a secure, multi-skilled core and a casualized periphery is different from the core/periphery society of the Fordist model because in the emergent post-Fordist model, the two societies are actually based on different models of production rather than one model which cohered in the Fordist economy as a result of full employment and the welfare-state forms of inclusion (Mayer 1991: 109).

There are three bases on which Fordism and post-Fordism may be compared: the *organisation of production, the labour process itself, and the spatial division of labour in society* (Oberhauser 1990: 216). First of all, in terms of the organisation of production, Fordism incorporates long-run, assembly-line production accompanying the mass production of goods. Fordism is also characterised by an intensification of production achieved through the speed-up of the assembly lines. Because of the nature of this assembly-line form of production, large stockpiles of component parts are also required in order to prevent a total stoppage of the assembly lines (Oberhauser 1990: 216).

Post-Fordism, in terms of the organisation of production, is based on flexible manufacturing characterized by small series, short-run production; the emphasis is on producing a wide diversity of products that matches the rapidly changing consumer markets. Productivity is increased in a post-Fordist system through the application of technologically advanced, numerically controlled machines and robots; thus, technology becomes much more important to production in the post-Fordist system. This system also entails frequent and small-scale delivery of supplies to main assembly plants, also known as the “Just-In-Time” system; this involves automated control to minimize the stock of parts and components, thereby eliminating unused capital. The goal of zero stock is accomplished when incoming parts are immediately transferred to the production line (Oberhauser 1990: 216).

Secondly, in terms of the labour process itself, Fordism involves the parcelization of tasks and repetitive motions performed in a specific time. The labour force has no control over the work process in a Fordist system, because the task and the speed thereof is dictated by the assembly line. Fordism also implies a deskilling of the labour force, resulting in a

high proportion of unskilled versus skilled labour, unskilled labour being required in order to staff the assembly lines (Oberhauser 1990: 216).

Post-Fordism, in terms of the labour process, involves semi-autonomous work groups which must acquire functional flexibility where labour is responsible for numerous tasks, as opposed to one repetitive task in the Fordist system. The post-Fordist system also requires a combination of low-skilled workers in maintenance and menial jobs, but there is an increased number of highly skilled engineers and machine operators overseeing computer automated machines and robots; thus, the importance of technology in the post-Fordist system contributes to changes in the labour process and greater stratification among the labour force (Oberhauser 1990: 216).

Thirdly, the spatial division of labour is different in Fordist and post-Fordist systems. In the Fordist system, unskilled assembly production requires location in areas with large supplies of relatively cheap labour, this being domestic or immigrant labour. Because of this need for a large labour force, there is frequent relocation to peripheral regions with nonmilitant, cheap labour. Fordism also involves the fragmentation of production processes corresponding to the hierarchy of labour skills and social relations; in other words, all of the managerial people in the Fordist system are concentrated in one area, while the assembly-line workers are concentrated in another area, usually in peripheral areas with a ready labour supply (Oberhauser 1990: 216).

In the post-Fordist system, separate, yet related, trends link the spatial division of labour and production organisation. There is, first of all, a spatial dispersal of production; this involves deepening divisions of labour where conception and execution of production are differentiated on a global scale. Secondly, there is a spatial reintegration of production; this involves the concentration of several levels of production and corresponding labour processes in regional complexes. In other words, different stages of production take place in different areas of the world, much more so than in the Fordist system, but there is less fragmentation according to hierarchy of labour skills and social relations at each regional location (Oberhauser 1990: 216). Peripheral regions such as Mexico and the cheap, mobile and flexible workforce that they provide are, therefore, essential to this system of production.

C. Flexible Accumulation

All of the above characteristics associated with post-Fordism are also often associated with the phenomenon known as flexible accumulation. Flexible accumulation is not actually synonymous with post-Fordism, but it is an important element thereof. Flexible accumulation rests on the idea of flexibility with respect to labour processes, labour markets, products and patterns of consumption. It is characterized by the emergence of new sectors of production, new ways of providing financial services, new markets and greatly intensified rates of commercial, technological and organisational innovation to meet new market demands (Harvey 1989: 147). Flexible accumulation has entrained rapid shifts in the patterning of uneven development, both between sectors and between geographical regions. For example, on the first level, there has been a surge in service-sector employment at the expense of the manufacturing sectors of the economy. On the second level, there has been a rapid development of new industrial ensembles in hitherto underdeveloped or peripheral regions; examples of this include new waves of development in southern Italy and Mexico (Harvey 1989: 147).

As a result of flexible accumulation, the labour market has undergone a radical restructuring. Faced with strong market volatility, heightened competition and narrowing profit margins, employers have taken advantage of weakened union powers and the pools of surplus labourers who used to be employed in manufacturing positions to push for more flexible regimes and labour contracts. This has in turn resulted in a sharp core/periphery distinction. The core is made up of employees with full time, permanent status and is central to the long term future of the organisation. Enjoying greater job security, good promotion and reskilling prospects, and relatively generous pension, insurance, and other benefit rights, this group is nevertheless expected to be adaptable, flexible, and geographically mobile, if necessary (Harvey 1989: 150). The periphery encompasses two different sub-groups. The first consists of full-time employees with skills that are readily available in the labour market, such as clerical, secretarial, routine and lesser skilled manual work. With less access to career opportunities, this group tends to be characterized by high labour turnover which makes work force reductions relatively easy (Harvey 1989: 150). The second peripheral

groups provides even greater numerical flexibility and includes part-times, casuals, fixed term contract staff, temporaries, sub-contractors and public subsidy trainees, with even less job security than the first peripheral group. This category of employees has grown significantly in the past few years (Harvey 1989: 150), and migrant workers may be said to belong to this category.

Both Enzo Mingione (1991) and David Harvey (1987) outline several social consequences of flexible accumulation. To begin with, Mingione outlines two effects of flexible accumulation which he calls the “surplus population” and the phenomenon of “informal work”. The surplus population designates an excess part of the population that, either willingly or unwillingly and for different reasons, works and survives totally or partially outside of formal labour channels (Mingione 1991: 233). According to Marxist theory, the growth and spread of capitalist relations of production continues to produce surplus population which is in excess relative to the economy’s capacity to absorb the labour supply at the moment that it is formed and acts as a reserve army for subsequent waves of capitalist expansion (Mingione 1991: 234). However, with the slow-down of Fordism, there has been a widening gap between the potential labour supply and the formal employment structure which has engendered two main types of surplus population: one which cannot be absorbed independently of the system for regulating working activities, and another which cannot be absorbed under the conditions established by the capitalist regulatory system (Mingione 1991: 237).

The surplus population takes part in what Mingione calls “informal work”, which is work that takes place outside of formal labour channels (Mingione 1991: 233). The type of informal work that is undertaken varies according to the type of surplus population, as mentioned above. The type of surplus population which cannot be absorbed independently of the regulatory system takes part in “survival strategies” and “economic innovation strategies”; survival strategies involve changes in family strategies whereby more members of a family take part in some form of employment, and economic innovation strategies involve innovative self-provisioning and independent initiatives, such as starting one’s own business (Mingione 1991: 236). The type of surplus population which cannot be absorbed

because of the regulatory system participates in different types of informal work, such as “moonlighting” or multiple jobs, subcontracting or “outwork”, or clandestine employment; this sector of the population is also susceptible to exploitation in the form of child or illegal immigrant labour, and is more likely to turn to crime (Mingione 1991: 236). Illegal migrants would fit into this latter group; it is the aim of this research to determine where legal migrant workers may fit into this system.

David Harvey (1987) agrees with many of Mingione’s ideas regarding surplus population and informalisation, and points out that the increase in the surplus population and the need to depend upon informal employment has caused an increase in the number of urban poor since the 1970s (Harvey 1987: 272-273). Harvey also discusses some more symbolic aspects of flexible accumulation. He states that flexible accumulation encourages the exploration of product differentiation and the rejection of the standardised accumulation of mass culture, tapping the repressed market desire among the middle and upper classes to acquire symbolic capital, which is defined as the collection of luxury goods attesting the taste and distinction of the owner (Harvey 1987: 274). The use of money earned abroad to buy luxury goods was, in fact, one of the criteria used to determine how migrant workers respond to globalization and how their identity has been affected by it, and will be discussed in more depth later in this paper.

The increase in urban poor as a result of flexible accumulation has affected individual households, causing households to change their survival strategies and take advantage of informal work techniques in order to survive in the new economy. Enzo Mingione (1991) outlines three major survival strategies that households use. The first is a strategy whereby informal work is carried out as a second job by the sole breadwinner in the household (Mingione 1991: 165). The second strategy, which is the most common, involves a formal and an informal job carried out by different persons, and the third involves a prevalence of informal activities carried out by various people in the household (Mingione 1991: 165). This research also seeks to determine whether or not migrant workers make use of any of these survival strategies.

Regardless of which strategy is used, informal working activities tend to reveal a significantly lower ratio between gross income and working time than that found under formal working conditions. As well, in all three cases, not only is the amount of time spent in working activities very high, but it involves discrimination between the sexes and the various age groups within the household (Mingione 1991: 165). The flexible economy tends to polarize the work force by gender, in particular. It is increasingly women who are disproportionately filling the non-expert slots that characterise much informal work; women fill the low-wage service sector occupations, especially jobs such as health technicians, sales workers, secretaries, and clerical workers (Rubin 1995: 315). The contingent work force is overwhelmingly female, with some 67 percent of part-time workers being female (Rubin 1995: 315).

Some important changes in the social structure of households and families are taking place in industrialized countries, especially in areas where informal activities are spreading the most rapidly. There has been, first of all, an increase in households made up of one person or a couple and, logically, a decrease in large households due to the decline in inter-generational households and falling birth-rates (Mingione 1991: 168). Secondly, there has also been a rise in the number of households and families headed by a female, which may be associated with the growing inclusion of women in the employment structure (Mingione 1991: 169). Thirdly, there has been a drop in the employment rate for younger age groups within households due to high unemployment and to a longer period of education; this has a major effect on the resources needed within households, especially where students remain at home (Mingione 1991: 169). Finally, there has been an increasing geographic mobility of households, which creates a number of disadvantages in the areas of both emigration and immigration since it reduces the resources that can be acquired from communal, kinship and friendship networks (Mingione 1991: 169). Geographic mobility has necessarily increased among migrant workers, although the other characteristics of flexible households were also investigated with respect to migrant workers.

It must be kept in mind that, although there are types of informal work that can be undertaken which are outside of the formal regulatory employment channels, no household

can achieve real independence from the market through the use of these techniques. Households are using informal work in order to be able to obtain more capital goods, and the more such goods that they own, the more dependent they become on the very market services that they are trying to reject through informal work (Mingione 1985: 223). The ability to carry out certain types of informal work, such as starting a business, is also often dependent upon the money from formal employment. There is, essentially, only one economy, and a household's position in it is fundamental in determining its positions in other economic spheres as well (Mingione 1985: 223-224).

Flexible accumulation is mentioned by several authors with reference to cultural change and cultural identity; this is an important aspect of flexible accumulation, since economy must be seen as tied to other aspects of society as well. Flexible accumulation is often seen as the economic manifestation of the culture of post-modernism (and vice versa) but, as Ian Barns (1991) points out, there are differences in how these views are stated. Stuart Hall (1987), for example, views the post-Fordist economic and social order with considerable optimism. He regards the consumption of the more customized and differentiated goods produced by post-Fordist production systems as a key site in the creative construction and reconstruction of social identities (Barns 1991: 903). Hall sees this expanded cultural ground as coming from the growth of the new social movements which have arisen in the post-Fordist system. He also sees as especially important a recovery of ethnicity in postmodern society, ethnicity being defined as the commitment to those points of attachment which give the individual some sense of place and position in the world (Barns 1991: 904). In the face of enormous globalization and transnationalism, Hall believes that people can maintain, or at least recreate, a particular sense of place and community.

David Harvey (1991), on the other hand, is less optimistic about the emancipatory possibilities opened up by post-Fordism and post-modernism; he sees these phenomena as sites of cultural resistance, but not as sites of cultural transformation (Barns 1991: 905). Harvey emphasizes the processes of community construction by different classes within urban environments, and recognizes that the processes of decentralization enable new forms of community (Barns 1991: 905). He also agrees with Hall that flexible accumulation is

associated with the emergence of a fragmented politics of divergent special and regional interest groups (Cormack 1990: 550).

Harvey differs with Hall in that he looks at the philosophical and social schools of thought that are associated with the conditions of flexible accumulations; here he sees an emphasis upon ephemerality, collage, fragmentation, and dispersal (Cormack 1990: 550). Harvey also recognises Hall's point about a place-bound identity being important in postmodern society, but he disagrees with Hall that this is a good or liberating phenomenon. He states that, in clinging to a place-bound identity, people and oppositional movements become a part of the very fragmentation upon which mobile capitalism and flexible accumulation depend; according to Harvey, regional resistance, the struggle for local autonomy and place-bound organisation might seem to be good bases for political action, but they cannot bring about historical change on their own (Cormack 1990: 551).

It is the aim of this research to determine how flexible accumulation is related to cultural change and cultural identity with respect to migrant workers. Flexible accumulation, along with the entire post-Fordist and global systems with which it is associated, cannot help but have an effect on culture and cultural identity, and it is to the issue of identity that the discussion will now turn.

III. Identity

A. Globalization and Identity

Identity, as it relates to globalization, is often referred to more specifically as a “collective cultural identity”, meaning those feelings and values in respect of a sense of continuity, shared memories and a sense of common destiny of a given unit of population which has had common experiences and cultural attributes (Featherstone 1990: 179). There are four different ways in which the formation or “reconstruction” of identity in a global milieu is often explained. The first is the “contact zone”, which refers to the co-presence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures whose trajectories now intersect (Massey 1995: 191-192). The second is transculturation, which describes the cultural processes which operate between hitherto sharply differentiated cultures and peoples who are forced to interact, often in profoundly asymmetrical ways in terms of their relative power (Massey 1995: 193). The third is diaspora, which refers to the long-term settlement of peoples in foreign places which follows their scattering or dispersal from their original homeland (Massey 1995: 193). Diasporas are usually understood to include a full cross-section of community members who are dispersed to many diverse regions of the world, and who yet retain a myth of their uniqueness and an interest in their homeland (Kearney 1995: 559). The fourth is hybridization; the culture which evolves in diasporas and similar settlements is usually the result of some never-completed, complex process of combining elements from different cultural repertoires to form new cultures which are related to but which are not exactly like any of the originals. As with the crossbreeding of plants from different strains, this process is often referred to as the hybridization of identities (Massey 1995: 193). It is the aim of this research to determine which, if any, of these categories is applicable to migrant workers in a global milieu.

There is a general perception that globalization has created a general fluidity of identity among various groups of people. Members of migrant groups might, for example, hold multiple national loyalties because the family and nation transcend territorial boundaries (Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton 1992: 175). Thus, they identify themselves with more than one culture simultaneously. Such identities must be constructed, because people are

challenged with the need to define oneself before, during and after a period of rapid social change. (Smith and Wexler 1995: 163). This is a challenge especially for members of the generation that grew up prior to the onslaught of globalization since, as Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton (1992) point out, such fluid identities can be developed through socialization as well.

The issue here is adaptation. In the context of transnational culture, adaptation refers not only to instances in which thematics and tropes are learned from without, but also to the fact that they are produced with local flavours. This indicates, among other things, a time when national identities are shown not in the form, but rather in the content of cultural productions. The form is the manner of presentation and the pure structure of the story, while the content is its topical specificity and uniqueness of events, and it is the form that embodies transnational culture; very often, it is the ability of one form to accommodate several contents that transnationalizes it (Bamyeh 1993: 62). For example, the “form” of a Jewish Chanukah celebration may be adjusted in North America to accommodate the “content” of Christmas traditions such as giving gifts. The assumption about cultural identity has been that it is a chain of solidarities which a knowledge system communicates, solidifies or reconfigures. The exposure of such elements to transnational interactions has created a fluid situation and room for diverse cultural practices (Bamyeh 1993: 65).

The latter point is an important one. It is generally agreed that globalization has pushed cultural identity from a relatively fixed set of meanings which stabilizes cultural identities and guarantees a homogeneous way of life to a form of identity where meanings are not fixed, but rather are constantly being negotiated, contested and transformed, combining elements of other cultures (Massey 1995: 199); this negotiated form of identity is also known as “fluid identity”. However, the concept of fluid identity does not take into account the possibility of alternative strategies for dealing with globalization. For many groups, cultural survival has always been seen to depend on keeping the culture closed and homogeneous; from this perspective, migration weakens the bonds of belongingness. These groups use a second strategy, the antithesis of “fluid identity”, which is sometimes known as the “revival of ethnicity”; this strategy involves the attempt to restore strong, closed

definitions of what constitutes a culture. The surprising thing is that this response to globalization is to be found in both colonizing and colonized peoples, at both the centre and the periphery, in what are thought of as both traditional and modern societies (Massey 1995: 200). This should not be surprising, according to Massey; it is rather a predictable result of a globalization process that is increasingly pushing people towards more fluid identities. Whether or not Mexican workers have developed a “fluid identity” or resisted this trend is another important question that was considered in the course of this research.

All of these theories are based on an ontological assumption that global mass culture, which in turn contributes to the reconstruction of cultural identity, really exists. But does such a global culture really exist? This is a question which will be dealt with in the next section.

B. The Local and the Global

Because cultural anthropologists have traditionally been concerned with the observance and interpretation of small local communities, the idea of globalization has caused anthropologists to look at ideas of community and “the local” in new ways. This new point of view, based on the notion of a “global community” that affects the local, has led to the development of a new ontology, or a new way of defining what can be observed, and a new epistemology, or a new way of knowing things in anthropology. This new ontology and new epistemology are by no means the same for every author, but some common trends do emerge in literature dealing with the global and the local, and it is these new ways of looking at the local and the global that have been used in this research.

Within the framework of the new ontology and epistemology have emerged various related theories dealing with the global and the local. Most of these theories deal with concepts of identity; identity has always been something that has been explored by anthropologists in great detail, and, within the new framework of global knowledge that has been developed, anthropologists are taking a new approach to the definition and formation of identity. Because anthropologists are now looking at identity within a different framework, this has implications for the methods used in research. Rather than simply equating a location with an identity and describing that identity, anthropologists must now

deal with “local” groups that are not in their area of origin, and must search for and define indicators of identity used by such groups, such as verbalizations of identity, material possessions, language, religion, values, and media preferences, all of which have been used by various authors in dealing with identity in this new “global” world.

With the dramatic increase in the global movement of people in recent years, the idea of the “local” can no longer be based purely on the physical location of a group. This raises the question of whether or not the local can still be said to be observable and, if so, how. Most anthropologists still consider the local to be observable, but indirectly, through various indicators. For example, Robert Fisher (1993) states that what is local can be defined through “new social movements” (Fisher 1993: 4) which bring members of a community together and define its boundaries. These new social movements can be distinguished from earlier forms of social movements because they are community based, they tend to be transclass groupings of constituencies and cultural identities, the ideological glue holding them together is democratic politics, the struggle over culture and social identity plays a greater role than in previous movements, and their strategies focus on community self-help and empowerment (Fisher 1993: 6-7). Such movements give the people involved a type of political awareness which holds them together and forms a community of common interests; these movements are, in fact, referred to by many authors as “new political movements”.

Margit Mayer (1991) agrees with Fisher that new social or political movements are a means by which the local can be observed, and that they encourage the participation of marginalized social groups who may not have been included in traditional movements, but who nevertheless form part of the new “local” atmosphere (Mayer 1991: 118). Zdravko Mlinar (1995) also agrees that the “new localism” can be observed through political movements, which have become based on the autonomy of local units, despite a tendency towards internal heterogenization within these local units which was not observable before (Mlinar 1995: 148). Mlinar also states that these local networks increasingly incorporate other supralocal and supranational networks, causing people to be simultaneously attached to and detached from their immediate living space (Mlinar 1995: 148); this, in one way, distinguishes these movements from previous movements and from previous ideas of what

is observable localism, but, in another way, makes it more difficult to observe the “local”, because the local has become necessarily tied to the global.

Another way in which the local can be observed is through the traditional conception of the “nation state”. While many authors dealing with the idea of globalization tend to believe that the nation state is a thing of the past, some authors maintain that it is still observable in a different capacity. For example, John Kincaid (1995) states that, while the autonomy of many of the large traditional nation states may be diminished by the global economy, small nation states, quasi-states and city states are becoming more important, more self-aware, and *certainly more economically viable* (Kincaid 1995: 75); thus, these types of states are also becoming much more observable than they were in the past.

Similarly, Elbaz and Helly (1995) state that nationalism has increased among small regional groups, and that localism can be observed through these small-scale nationalistic movements. These authors use the example of nationalism in Québec, and state that the same processes of creating a cultural and literary inventory, the invention of national emblems and national discourses, and the transformation of cultural nationalism into political nationalism are occurring in a number of regions that are contained within larger nation states but which are coming to view themselves as independent nation states (Elbaz and Helly 1995: 23). These processes may also be said to be occurring in the smaller states and quasi-states discussed above.

Similar to the idea that the local is equivalent to some sort of political awareness is the idea that it is equivalent to social awareness. Ananta Giri (1995), for example, states that the local can be defined by the preservation of certain, unique cultural frames of production and reproduction that remain intact in certain areas in the face of the global onslaught of the new economy and serve to tie the members of a group together (Giri 1995: 212). This view is also shared by Gheorghita Geana (1997), who states that ethnicity, or at least a perceived sense of ethnicity, is the most important criteria for defining a local group (Geana 1997: 204). Ethnicity, in this case, is defined as a shared sense of identity combined with an aspiration towards self-determination (Geana 1997: 204); this makes Geana’s concept of the local more easily observable than that of Giri, since Giri’s definition of the local is more subjective than

Geana's conception of ethnicity. However, it must be kept in mind that many authors see social awareness as being broader than just ethnicity, and this will affect how these authors discuss ideas of the local.

While the local is most often seen as observable through political movements, the conception of a nation state, or social awareness, not all authors share these ways of defining the local. Authors such as Gilberto Gallopin (1991), for example, see the local as a socio-ecological system that can be defined through the effects upon a certain local area of the ecological systems that exist in that area (Gallopin 1991: 707). While ontological views such as this one are not mainstream in anthropological thought regarding the observation of the local and the global, it must be kept in mind that such views do exist and can affect the ways in which the local and the global are discussed.

Globalization is a phenomenon that has already been discussed at great length by many authors, and the discussion of it here is designed primarily to provide a contrast to ontological views of the local and to put them in context. The global tends to be defined as social, economic, cultural and demographic processes that take place within nations but also transcend them, such that attention to limited local processes, identities and units of analysis yields incomplete understanding of the local (Kearney 1995: 548). It is the development of an ontology that allows such global processes to be observed that has also resulted in the new necessity of viewing the local through a series of indicators rather than as an independent whole. Instead of being viewed as a bounded space, the local is now seen as part of a multidimensional global space, which is perceived as unbounded and composed of discontinuous and interpenetrating sub-spaces or local spaces (Kearney 1995: 549).

Many authors consider not only global processes and global spaces to be observable, but also "global culture". Global culture is assumed to be centred in the West, in Western technology, the concentration of capital, the concentration of techniques, the concentration of advanced labour in Western societies, and the stories and the imagery of Western societies (King 1991: 28). This culture is also assumed to have its own peculiar form of homogenization, a homogenizing form of cultural representation which is enormously absorptive of things (King 1991: 28).

This ontological view is highly controversial in anthropology, and many authors, such as Mike Featherstone (1990), disagree that one can observe a global culture because globalization involves the use of a variety of instruments of homogenization which are absorbed into local political and cultural economies, only to be repatriated as heterogeneous dialogues of national sovereignty (Featherstone 1990: 307). Other authors take a more moderate view, stating that global culture should be viewed not as a single culture per se, but as a method of forming a local identity and a response to the global phenomena which are affecting all areas of human existence (King 1991: 104). These views must be kept in mind when looking at issues of the local and the global, since the fact of whether or not an author considers a global culture to be observable will affect how the local and local culture will be observed by that particular author as well. The existence of a global culture was not assumed for the purposes of this research, although the possibility that such a phenomenon might be encountered was not ruled out.

The idea that the local and the global exist, and that they can be observed in certain ways, must be accompanied by a framework to which knowledge of the local and the global can be applied; that is, the anthropology of the local and the global requires its own epistemology. There are three major epistemologies that are used when discussing the local and the global. The first is dependency theory, which works on the assumption that history is the unfolding of relations between nations and colonies, or between the developed and the underdeveloped countries of the world (Kearney 1995: 550). Under this conceptualization of the local and the global, the world is envisioned as a system of centres and peripheries (Kearney 1995: 550). This is the epistemology that was used more frequently in the past when attempting to draw definite boundaries around localities, and has largely been abandoned in discussions of the local and the global in favour of the remaining two epistemologies which have gained favour in this area.

The second is world-system theory. According to this theory, the zone of analysis for the anthropologist is a global space within which nation states are relativised with other units (Kearney 1995: 550) and seen as necessarily interconnected with them. There is no longer the polar imagery between centre and periphery that is assumed in development theory;

instead, semi-peripheries may be interposed between centres and peripheries, and centres, peripheries, and semi-peripheries may change roles depending upon the situation (Kearney 1995: 550). This much more flexible method of dealing with information about the local and the global is the one that is seen most commonly in literature in the area now. The world-system theory was the primary epistemology assumed throughout this research.

The third is articulation orientation; this epistemology is different from the others in that it is mostly found in writings from what was formerly considered to be the “periphery”. In other words, this idea is found in writings from Latin America and Africa, but not commonly in writings by Western European or North American authors. This epistemology rejects the idea that there is a unitary global capitalist system, and maintains that formerly “peripheral” groups will reproduce their own distinctive forms while working within the global system (Kearney 1986: 342). While it rejects the idea expressed in dependency theory that there is a clear and necessary boundary between the core and the periphery, this epistemology also rejects the idea implicit in world system theory that it is the Western capitalist system that will become dominant in an increasingly global world.

The epistemologies discussed above all dealt with knowledge about space and about how anthropologists can conceive the spatial boundaries between the local and the global. In dealing with issues of the local and the global, spacial issues are not, however, the only important issues to be addressed. The knowledge of time is also essential to a knowledge of the local and the global. This is because the traditional epistemological approach in anthropology with regards to time is a linear system of development in which a master narrative of ultimate progress is embedded (Kearney 1995: 550). This assumption has been questioned in the light of global spatial theory, since globalization is not only spatially diverse and inconsistent, but also temporally inconsistent. Globalization cannot be easily seen as a unilineal process moving from lesser to greater development because it has, at the same time, affected many areas at different stages of development; thus, a second epistemology with regards to time requires some attention if globalization is to be understood.

This new epistemology is what is known as a “nonteleological” sense of time. According to this system of thought, events and processes occur randomly in time, without moving towards any particular goal (Kearney 1995: 550). This system of thought is very similar to that found in biology, where the randomness of evolutionary processes and species extinction has long been recognised; anthropologists are now beginning to recognise the universality and randomness of processes such as globalization, which can affect any area of the world indiscriminately and which do not appear to drive the areas it affects towards definite development or progress (Kearney 1995: 550). This concept of time, when combined with a world-system theory of spatial conceptualization, represents the most common epistemology in anthropology dealing with the local and the global, and is the one that is assumed by the authors in the examples discussed below.

Within the ontologies and epistemology outlined above, several theories of identity have developed. The first two theories of identity that will be addressed are concerned with the new forms of local identity that are perceived to have developed within a global framework that does not allow for an equation of location with identity. The first theory is that of deterritorialization; according to this theory, a deterritorialized nation state may extend its hegemony over its citizens who, as migrants or refugees, reside outside of its national boundaries (Basch 1994: 146). The example that is often cited is Haiti’s “tenth province”, which refers to the Haitians who live in the United States but who are still considered Haitian by the government of Haiti (Basch 1994: 146).

The second theory of identity is that of diaspora, a concept that has previously been mentioned in relation to identity studies. Refugees and displaced persons are often the first generations of diasporan communities. The idea of diaspora in a sense contrasts with the idea of deterritorialization since people in a diasporan community imagine themselves as a nation outside of a homeland, whereas in the case of a deterritorialized nation state a people may be anywhere in the world and still not live outside of the state (Basch 1994: 269). Diasporan communities also differ from deterritorialized populations in that diasporan communities are often not recognized by the government or people of their homeland, while deterritorialized communities often are recognized as such. Despite their differences, these

two concepts are similar in that both require an ontological view which observes the local through reference to a sense of nationalism.

Other forms of local identity which are addressed in literature dealing with the global and the local include the formation of contact zones, transculturation and hybridization, all of which have previously been discussed. They are mentioned again here because all of these theories take the ontological view that the local is equivalent to social or political awareness, rather than a sense of nationalism, as in the first two theories examined above. No particular theory of identity was assumed in this research; the aim was rather to investigate which theories might be applicable to the situation of migrant workers.

The theories of identity discussed above focus primarily on the new ways in which local identity is perceived as being formed by anthropologists, but do not deal with how these identities are maintained. One of the ways in which they may be maintained is through the concept of fluid identity, discussed previously. Working from an ontological point of view that sees the local as existing through social awareness, writers dealing with this concept maintain that such identities must be constructed, and they can be developed and maintained through socialization and passed on to succeeding generations (Schiller 1992: 175).

Closely associated with the idea of fluid identity is the idea of adaptation, also discussed above. The aim here is to point out that the main difference between the idea of adaptation and the idea of fluid identity in general is the ontology involved; the idea of adaptation tends to view the local as more of a political entity which is organising to create cultural clothes to fit the “naked body of the global economy” (Baymeh 1993: 36). Neither fluid identity nor adaptation were assumed; again, the aim of this research was to determine the applicability of these various theories.

Some authors not only reject the idea of a global culture, but also reject the concept of fluid identities altogether. While the mainstream argument in anthropology maintains that globalization has pushed cultural identity from a relatively fixed set of meanings which stabilizes cultural identities and guarantees a homogeneous way of life to a form of identity where meanings are not fixed, but rather are constantly being negotiated, contested and transformed, this does not take into account Doreen Massey’s (1995) idea of a “revival of

ethnicity”, mentioned earlier. Interestingly, this view, while it rejects the ideas of fluid identity and adaptation, is similar to the idea of adaptation in that it sees the local as a political phenomenon, but with a different goal.

A few authors also see adaptation and revival of ethnicity occurring simultaneously, on different levels. As Cristina Blanc (1995) points out, a central paradox of globalism is the fact that while increasing number of people live their lives across borders, some large nation states are closing their borders, post-colonial states are trying to incorporate former citizens, and smaller territorial units are constituting themselves as nation states (Blanc 1995: 683). Recent trends include an increasing differentiation between legal and cultural citizenship, the development of second-class citizenship status for immigrants, and the increased use of illegal immigrants as workers. These trends all demonstrate the rise of new, tighter forms of labour control based on the limitation of rights to citizenship within nation states and on a reconstruction of people’s identities (Blanc 1995: 685). This is a mixed ontological view, which sees the local as an interplay between adaptation and the revival of ethnicity, between opposing political forces. All of these possibilities were kept in mind while investigating the identity of Mexican migrant workers.

The theories regarding the local and local identity which have been formed by anthropologists within the framework of the new ontologies and epistemologies of the local and the global must, in order to be researched and validated, be operationalised; in other words, concrete methods must be found that can provide information to support (or not support) these theories. Because this approach to studying local groups is new to anthropology, it is not surprising that many of the theories of local identity are operationalised very differently by different authors, and that many authors revert to traditional methods to operationalise these new theories. The most traditional research method in anthropology, observation, is used by many. However, it is worth noting that this method has been adapted to make it suitable to the new approach to the local; the new ontological approaches which see the local as observable through a set of indicators have been extended to method so that the observation of identity is now the observation of various indicators of local identity, rather than the observation of a certain location and way of life,

and these indicators vary depending upon the approach of the author in question. The various indicators of identity that have been used in studies to operationalise these ontologies and epistemologies will be discussed later in this paper, as will the way in which this particular study operationalised these concepts of identity.

C. Postmodern Views of Identity

Just as the concepts of the global and the local have changed, identity, as a central concept in anthropology, has undergone a profound change in the past two decades. Traditional, or “modern” (the two words are often used synonymously by postmodernists), ideas regarding the nature of identity emphasized the dichotomy between social identity and personal identity, and stressed the psychological aspects of both personal and social or national identity formation. However, since the mid-1980s, this perception of identity has been subject to many criticisms. These criticisms have mainly stemmed from the new “postmodernist” outlook in anthropology, which rejects simple dichotomies and the idea of national or social boundedness. As a result of this postmodernist movement, several new theories of identity are also now being developed and used by some anthropologists.

New ideas regarding identity as a concept are now emphasizing the relationship between the phenomenon of globalization and the formation of identity. There is also concern with the relationship between the “global” and the “local”, as mentioned above, and the possibility of forming multiple identities depending upon the situation. New categories are being formed which are seen as more flexible than the old categories of social and personal identity. Ethnic identity as a special category is losing its importance, and identity is being approached from a more “reflexive” angle. Postmodernism also tends to emphasize ideas of oppression, power, rhetoric and discourse. As a result, identity formation is being closely associated with politics and power, and the rhetoric of identity is being examined in detail by postmodern anthropologists. Thus, because identity is a concept that has been central in anthropological studies, it is a concept that is deeply affected by epistemological changes within the discipline. The example of identity, therefore, also provides information as to how epistemological changes in anthropology, such as the recent change from modern

to postmodern ideas, can affect and have affected theoretical frameworks within the discipline itself.

Although “traditional” and “modern” approaches to identity are often referred to as one and the same thing by postmodernists, these approaches were actually quite different. According to anthropological folklore, in traditional societies, one’s identity was fixed, solid and stable. Identity was a function of predefined social roles and a traditional system of myths which provided orientation and religious sanctions to one’s place in the world, while rigorously circumscribing the realm of thought and behaviour (Kellner 1992: 141).

In pre-modern societies studied by anthropologists in the 1960s, identity was seen as unproblematical and not subject to reflection or discussion. Individuals did not undergo identity crises, or radically modify their identity. One was born and died a member of one’s clan, a member of a fixed kinship system, and a member of one’s tribe or group with one’s life trajectory fixed in advance. One was a hunter and a member of the tribe, and that was that (Kellner 1992: 141). However, as the opportunities to study premodern societies declined and anthropologists began studying developed societies, views of identity changed.

In modernity, identity becomes more mobile, multiple, personal, self-reflexive and subject to change and innovation. Yet identity in modernity is also social and “other”-related. One’s identity becomes seen as dependent upon recognition from others combined with self-validation of this recognition. Nevertheless, the forms of identity in modernity are relatively substantial and fixed; identity still comes from a circumscribed set of roles and norms (Kellner 1992: 141). Identities are relatively fixed and limited, but the boundaries of possible identities are changing.

In modernity, self-consciousness comes into its own; one engages in reflection on available social roles and possibilities. Modernity also increases “other”-directedness, for as the number of possible identities increases, one must gain recognition to assume a stable, recognized identity. In this way, the “other” is a constituent of identity in modernity (Kellner 1992: 142). Thus, in modernity, the problem of identity consisted in how we constitute, perceive, interpret and present our “self” to ourselves and to others.

Contemporary postmodern thought has rejected the essentialist and rationalist notions of identity and builds on a “constructivist” notion which it problematizes. From the postmodern perspective, as the pace, extension and complexity of modern societies accelerate, identity becomes more and more unstable, more and more fragile. Within this situation, the recent discourses of postmodernity problematize the very notion of identity, claiming that it is a myth and an illusion (Kellner 1992: 143). Postmodern theorists believe that the autonomous, self-constituting subject that was the achievement of modern individuals, of a culture of individualism, is fragmenting and disappearing, owing to the social processes and the levelling of individuality in a rationalized, bureaucratized, mediatised and consumerized mass society (Kellner 1992: 143).

It is, therefore, claimed that, in postmodern culture, the subject has disintegrated into a flux of euphoric intensities, fragmented and disconnected, and that the decentred postmodern “self” no longer experiences anxiety and no longer possesses the depth, substantiality, and coherence that was the ideal and (perceived) occasional achievement of the modern self. Postmodern theorists claim that subjects have imploded into masses, that a fragmented, disjointed and discontinuous mode of experience is a fundamental characteristic of postmodern culture, of both its subjective experiences and, especially, its texts (Kellner 1992: 144). Although “modern” approaches tend to predominate in literature dealing with globalization, postmodern ideas of identity also exist and were considered (although not assumed) for the purposes of this research.

Traditional (modern) studies of identity have emphasized two or three different “types” of identity. The most common of these is “social identity”, which refers to the meanings that individuals perceive that others attach to their particular roles (Silver 1996: 3). Social identities refer to positional designations assigned by others but accepted by the individual. Attached to a social identity are sets of normative behavioural expectations or roles (Thoits 1986: 259).

A second traditional type of identity is “self-identity”. This refers to the individual’s subjective sense of his or her biography being continuous, coherent and unique (Silver 1996: 3). Theories about self-identity construe identity formation as a process beginning in

adolescence and continuing throughout the life course, as individuals reconstruct their biographies in light of continuously changing information about their pasts and futures (Silver 1996: 3). Anthropologists who study this type of identity refer to their approach as the “life story perspective”.

The above perspectives do not consider the physical evidence constituting people’s identities to be significant. However, many traditional studies on identity also found that objects are especially well-suited constituents of identity because they provide tangible documentation of the self. Therefore, a third traditional type of identity may be referred to as “personal identity”. Personal identity is a set of meanings attached to a person according to biographical information that others know about that individual (Silver 1996: 4). This biographical information often comes from observations by others of the material goods and actions of the individual in question. It is around these three traditional types of identity that traditional theories of identity were built.

Traditional theories of identity in anthropology, especially the so-called “identification theory”, were very heavily influenced by the psychological theories of Sigmund Freud, George Herbert Mead, Erik Erikson, Talcott Parsons and Jurgen Habermas. These theorists saw identity, or “identification”, as the mechanism of internalising the attitudes, mores and behaviour of significant others in the earliest infantile stages (Bloom 1990: 50). A satisfactory synthesis of identifications, or identity stability, was seen as crucial for a sense of psychological security and well-being. As life circumstances change, individuals may make new identifications, and as the individual enters more fully into society, identifications are made with more diffuse symbolic entities (Bloom 1990: 50). This theory explains self-identity; in order to explain social identity, traditional theorists add that, insomuch as a group of individuals shares a common identification, there is the potential for group action which serves to enhance and protect that shared identity (Bloom 1990: 50).

Social or national identity is seen as being formed when the mass of individuals make an identification with the nation state; this requires that the individual actually experiences the state and that this experience evokes identification (Bloom 1990: 61). Identification will be evoked if the symbols of the state present an appropriate attitude in situations of perceived

threat or if they behave beneficently towards the individual (Bloom 1990: 61). Once the mass of the people have made an identification with the nation state, family and other social groups will tend to socialise new generations into that same identification (Bloom 1990: 71).

Although identification theory is a dominant traditional theory of identity, it is certainly not the only one. The classicist or historicist approach, for example, tends to be wary of any analysis which seeks predictability beyond what is blatantly obvious (Bloom 1990: 106). For the classicist, it is in the nature of national identity that scientific predictability should be unattainable because of the infinite number of variables that are involved. The behaviouralist approach, on the other hand, sees human behaviour as predictable and assumes that human beings are subject to society (Bloom 1990: 107). This latter approach is based on a Hobbesian notion of society as civilising the instinctively savage human, and sees the “system” as being superior to the individual.

Two other traditional approaches to identity are the realist and the idealist approaches. The realist proposition is that human nature is essentially savage and competitive, and that this nature manifests itself in the collective behaviour of states (Bloom 1990: 112). The idealist has a more benign view of human nature which is seen as essentially benevolent and cooperative. From this perspective, humanity’s essential goodness is led astray by political and social dynamics (Bloom 1990: 112). The identification approach is generally considered to be superior to these two approaches, since it provides an analysis of the psycho-social motivation of both aggressive and cooperative mass behaviour (Bloom 1990: 113).

The traditional approaches to identity studies discussed above have recently come under harsh criticism. This is because, according to Marcus and Fischer (1986), there has been a “crisis of representation” in the West which has resulted in other groups being dissatisfied with how they are represented by Western anthropologists (Marcus & Fischer 1986: 8-9). This crisis of representation has led to a new ideology that assumes that culture is a composition of seriously contested codes and representations, that poetics and politics are inseparable, and that writing invents cultures (Clifford & Marcus 1986: 2).

This new ideology or approach takes a new point of view regarding how identity should be understood; this also implies a criticism of traditional methods of knowing about

identity. First of all, traditional approaches are seen as equating the political community with the culture of the dominant ethnic or national group, undermining its public, open and shared character (Parekh 1994: 502). Postmodernists reject this so-called “substantialist” view that identity is equivalent to membership in a certain group or residence in a certain location. According to postmodernists, identity is a product of history and can be remade by history (Parekh 1994: 504).

Secondly, the postmodern view criticises the traditional definition of identity. Identity is traditionally used to refer to either the organizing or constitutive principles of a community, or to what is unique, peculiar or specific to a community and distinguishes it from others (Parekh 1994: 502). This “volitionalist” view of identity is also unacceptable to postmodernists because it fails to appreciate that a community is not a “tabula rasa”, but is rather a cluster of interrelated tendencies and impulses pulling in different directions (Parekh 1994: 504).

Thirdly, the traditional views of the nature of national identity are rejected by postmodernists. For some traditional theorists, identity is historically determined and passively inherited by each generation; this idea supports the substantialist view of identity (Parekh 1994: 503). For other theorists, identity is a matter of collective choice, and inherited identity is seen as a product of past choices and can be altered at will (Parekh 1994: 503). This latter view supports the volitionalist view of identity. A third or “constructivist” view of the nature of national identity is that identity both is and is not a matter of collective choice. Every generation is free to define its national identity but not as it pleases; identity is a product of and is deeply shaped by its inherited identity and can only change within limits (Parekh 1994: 503-504).

For the postmodernist, the constructivist view is the most acceptable, provided that it is not interpreted in a mechanistic manner (as it often is by modernist theorists). The past must not be seen as a passive storehouse of material form from which each generation chooses whatever it likes for the reconstruction of its national identity; nor do inherited institutions limit choices in a rigid and mechanical manner (Parekh 1994: 504). A coherent view of identity, for the postmodernist, must grow out of a constant dialogue between the

past and present in which each interrogates and illuminates the other (Parekh 1994: 504). The constructivist view, in its more conservative form, is the primary view of identity construction that was used in this research.

The traditional epistemological views also imply certain theoretical assumptions. First of all, the traditional views of identity imply “theories of difference”, whereby the identity or meaning of a term depends entirely upon its relation to and its difference from other terms (Grossberg 1996: 93). Postmodernists reject this view in favour of “theories of otherness”, which assume that difference is itself an historically produced economy, imposed in modern structures of power; difference, as much as identity, is an effect of power (Grossberg 1996: 94).

Secondly, postmodernists also criticise the theories of individuality which tend to predominate in modernist discourse. Other than the behaviouralist view, which views the system as predominant and does not really address the situation of the individual, most traditional theories of identity equate the various processes of individuation (Grossberg 1996: 97). The result of this is that individuality is constituted into a single and simple structure.

Thirdly, postmodernists reject the temporal theories of traditional identity studies. At the heart of modern thought and power lie the assumptions that space and time are separable, and that time is more fundamental than space (Grossberg 1996: 100). The result is that identity becomes an entirely historical construction; identity becomes the temporal construction of difference and agency becomes the temporal displacement of difference (Grossberg 1996: 100).

Postmodernists have formed their own theories to fit into their constructivist epistemology. One primary postmodernist theory is that of “singularity”, which is a mode of existence which is neither universal nor particular (Grossberg 1996: 103). Singularity may be defined as “a being whose community is mediated not by any condition of belonging, nor by the simple absence of conditions, but by belonging itself” (Grossberg 1996: 104). In other words, there is no common identity and no property that defines a group apart from the fact that the members are together in a place; it is the fact of belonging that constitutes their belonging together. Although this theory was not assumed for this research, the fact that

migrant workers are in a group together but away from their homes made the theory worthy of consideration.

According to George Marcus (1992a), one of the founders of the postmodern movement at Rice University, postmodernism is concerned with recent global trends. Postmodernism seeks to capture the velocity of contemporary changes and reorganizations of culture, economy and society both locally and globally (Marcus 1992a: 6). The larger orientation of anthropology as cultural critique must be achieved through fine-grained ethnographic studies strategically situated in the space of transnational, transcultural processes (Marcus 1992a: 7). The idea of “us”, according to postmodernists, can only be understood in terms of how cultural diversity, once tied to territorialized cultures as wholes in places far from our own, is becoming a set of complex practices of cultural preference in the processes that escape the nation-state framework (Marcus 1992a: 7).

According to postmodernists, the nation state seems powerful, since it is still the focus and frame of attention about matters social and cultural. However, it also seems to be irrelevant to so many new initiatives in the world from the activities of corporations to grass-roots social movements (Marcus 1992a: 7). Now there is a sense of the immediate presence of local-global articulations in everyday life and within the operations of major institutions. The aim of postmodernist anthropology is to develop understandings of emergent processes in the transcultural or transnational sphere without giving authority to any particular metanarrative (Marcus 1992a: 8).

These postmodern views regarding the phenomenon of globalization also affect postmodern interpretations of identity. For example, because culture is no longer seen as “territorialized” by postmodernists, identity is also not associated with a particular territory. Europeans can define themselves as belonging to a common European home, or can refer to a sense of national identity. They can also form allegiances through small and local identities (Morley & Robins 1995: 19-20). To be European is now to be implicated in all three - continental, national and regional - and being European is about managing some amalgam of these different scales of identity.

Along with these postmodern ideas about globalization, there has been a “postmodernisation” of geography that assumes the emergence of a new global-local nexus (Morley & Robins 1995: 108). Globalization is about the compression of time and space horizons and the creation of a world of instantaneity and depthlessness. Global space is a space of glows, an electronic space, a space in which boundaries have become permeable. Within this global arena, economies and cultures are thrown into intense and immediate contact with each other (Morley & Robins 1995: 115). However, it has also been suggested that there exist new geographies that are concerned with the renaissance of locality and region (Morley & Robins 1995: 115).

As Gheorghita Geana (1997) points out, groups take care to occupy as soon as possible a place in the global world and to create their own identity (Geana 1997: 204). She further points out that pinpointing the cultural identity of any given group in a global world is very difficult, because culture is not seen as analogous with genes, circulating in a fluid fashion and creating at every step a hybrid phenomenon (Geana 1997: 205). There remains, however, a dialectic between the local and the global in this global world. World culture is marked by an organisation of diversity rather than by a replication of uniformity, as is often assumed by modern theorists; globalization has not resulted in the destruction of specific structures and particularistic attachments which go with more localised communities, and, if anything, has strengthened these structures (Geana 1997: 206). Local ethnic groups and processes of globalization each develop in their own unique directions, but resonate with each other, generating an inner tension at both local and global levels, without annihilating each other in any way (Geana 1997: 207). The existence of a local-global nexus was one of the possibilities that was studied in this research, and the ability for such an interplay to exist was assumed.

While the modern problem of identity was how to construct an identity and keep it solid and stable, the postmodern problem of identity is primarily how to avoid fixation and keep options open (Bauman 1996: 18). The modern “pilgrim” sought to make the world solid by making it pliable, so that identity could be built at will, but built systematically. The

pilgrim is now discovering, however, that the real problem is not how to build an identity, but how to preserve it (Bauman 1996: 23).

The modern pilgrim is now being displaced by four postmodern “types”, each with its own way of maintaining identity. These types are conceptual tools used to explain the maintenance of identity in the absence of a permanent locality. The first is the “stroller”. The stroller finds himself or herself among strangers and being a stranger to them, and sees and knows of these strangers episodically (Bauman 1996: 26). Strolling means rehearsing human reality as a series of episodes, as events without past and with no consequences (Bauman 1996: 26).

The second type is the “vagabond”, who is masterless and has the freedom to escape the net of locally based control. The vagabond has no set destination, and is always a stranger (Bauman 1996: 28). Whereas in modern times the vagabond wandered through settled places (although he or she was never settled), the postmodern vagabond cannot because there are few settled places left. When the settled were many, the vagabonds were few, but with a decrease in a sense of “belonging” due to new global trends, the vagabond is becoming more common (Bauman 1996: 29).

The third type is the “tourist”. The tourist moves on purpose; his or her movements are first of all “in order to” and only secondarily “because of” (Bauman 1996: 29). In other words, the purpose is new experience; the tourist is a conscious and systematic seeker of experience, of a new and different experience, of the experience of difference. Unlike the vagabond, who is homeless, the tourist has a home. The problem is that as life turns into an extended tourist escapade, as tourist conduct becomes the mode of life and the tourist stance grows into the character, it is less clear which of the visiting places is the home (Bauman 1996: 30).

The “player” is the fourth postmodern type. In play, the world itself is a player, and luck and misfortune are but the moves of the world-as-player. In the confrontation between the player and the world there are neither laws nor lawlessness, neither order nor chaos. There are just the moves. The point is to guess the moves of the adversary and anticipate them. The player’s world is, therefore, the world of risks, of intuition and of precaution-

taking (Bauman 1996: 31). Time in the world-as-play divides into a succession of games. Each game is made of conventions of its own, and each is a separate province of meaning. In order to make sure that no game leaves lasting consequences, the player must remember that life is only a game (Bauman 1996: 32). This is an extreme postmodern form in which identity as such becomes almost nonexistent.

There are certain features which the four types share. The most seminal among them are their effects on popular moral and political attitudes, and indirectly on the status of morality and politics in a postmodern context (Bauman 1996: 32). All four postmodern life strategies have in common that they tend to render human relations fragmentary and discontinuous, therefore turning identity from a stable entity into a fluid, created entity (Bauman 1996: 33). None of these postmodern types were assumed to apply to migrant workers, although all were considered as possibilities.

Postmodern identity of these various types can be approached in various ways. There is the “postmodern-modern-consumptionist” approach, whereby the global is dominant and there is a narcissistic dependency on the presentation of self via the commodity construction of identity (Friedman 1992: 361). There is also the “traditionalist-religious-ethnic” approach, whereby the local is dominant and emphasis is placed on fundamentalist religion and the constitution of concrete regional or historical-linguistic identity (Friedman 1992: 361). In the Third World, there is a reaction to postmodernism that is different from the two described above. The Third World strategy is that of attracting wealth flows, of attachment and dependency (Friedman 1992: 361). Among member of the Fourth World there is yet another reaction, which is to exit the system and form or maintain a culturally organized community that is self-sufficient and politically autonomous (Friedman 1992: 362). As with the postmodern types, these approaches were not assumed but were considered in the course of this research. The way in which these various ideas regarding identity were operationalised for this research is the next topic to be discussed.

D. Migration and Identity

Migration, although it is not a new phenomenon, has changed its nature as a result of trends towards globalization. Immigration scholars argue that labour migration is linked

to the recomposition of the economic, political and social structures of a global economy and that the migration of labour is representative of the internationalization of the reserve army of labour and the effects of global economic restructuring (Cantu 1995: 401). Restructuring, in this case, refers to shifts or changes in social, economic and political structures manifested in a variety of ways on a global scale, and is characterized by: a decrease in manufacturing and an increase in service sector jobs; the geographic redistribution of manufacturing jobs; and an increase in both low-wage, low-skill jobs (with a high concentration of women, ethnic minorities and immigrants) and high-level professional jobs in service industries (Cantu 1995: 401). These changes have resulted in peripheralization, a term which refers to the social, economic and political context of a regional economy based on the nature of unequal exchange in the world system. Peripheralization includes the migration of labour from peripheral to core areas of the world system in conjunction with a rise in low-wage, low-skilled, non-union jobs in the core which predominantly recruit and employ women, ethnic minorities and immigrants (Cantu 1995: 402).

This form of migration developed as a result of the expansion of industries in the global economy, and the resulting labour supply shortage, which was also due to demographic changes and the undesirability of jobs in industry; labour recruitment had to be initiated (Cantu 1995: 402). Migrants were seen as a good labour source because they will often work for lower wages, provide a flexible labour supply and have a higher organisational flexibility (Cantu 1995: 402). This migration on a large scale has led to the need for migrant groups to form their own communities outside of their homelands and maintain their own local identities.

If migrant groups maintain a local identity in the face of global trends, it is necessary to ask how they express this identity. This is an issue that has been addressed by many authors, and the various indicators used by authors to operationalise the concept of identity are important to any form of field research in this area. One indicator that has been emphasized in literature regarding migrant groups is that of language. Ana Celia Zentella (1990), for example, states that the survival of Spanish has become inextricably linked for many with the survival of Puerto Rican identity (Zentella 1990: 84). She further states that

English, and the fact that many Puerto Ricans who live in the mainland United States speak only or primarily English, has had a deteriorating effect on the Spanish of Puerto Rico and that, as a result, Puerto Rico's national identity itself is seen as being threatened (Zentella 1990: 85). Tony Waters (1990), in his article on the Mien people of Southeast Asia, states that the Mien or Yao language is a major indicator of Mien identity, no matter where the Mien may be living, since they are not a people who have had a permanent homeland (Waters 1990: 130). Language was used as an indicator of identity in this study in that all of the workers were unilingual (Spanish) and chose to remain this way despite frequent work abroad in English-speaking environments.

Religion is another major indicator of identity among migrant groups, according to many authors. Waters (1990) states that the culture core of the Mien, more important than any other indicator, is the Taoist ritual of ancestor worship which legitimizes the existence of succeeding generations of Mien by linking them into a vast chain of living and deceased Yao (Waters 1990: 132). Karsten Paerregaard (1994) also states that religion is an important indicator of identity among migrant groups. In Andean Peru, village identity is based on a combination of Catholicism and the worship of Andean mountain deities in a variety of festivals, with no conflict being seen between these two simultaneous forms of worship (Paerregaard 1994: 171). However, from these villages there is a substantial migrant population that moves between the village areas and large cities such as Lima to work; these migrant groups, unlike their fellow villagers, tend to be Protestants (Paerregaard 1994: 170-171). This is a good example of how a migrant group can establish an identity that is different from the identity of people "at home". This indicator was used to the extent that some workers changed their religion as a result of working abroad (from Catholic to Protestant, the religion of their employers).

A third indicator of identity among migrant groups is a sense of place. Massey (1995) points out that identity can either be expressed through a connection to a particular place where people feel that they belong, or by a contrast with a place that people feel is different from them (Massey 1995: 89-92). Lionel Cantu (1995) shows that migrant groups can actually express their identity through both of these ideas of place. He states that Latino

migrant workers in the United States come with the intent of staying only temporarily, because they feel connected to their “home” and feel a need to return there (Cantu 1995: 405). However, when Latino migrants discussed why they wanted to return to their home countries, they also defined the United States as someplace that was different, a place with a lot of people who do not understand Latinos (or “Mexicans”, as they were called by the American population), and do not like how they behave (Cantu 1995: 405). Sense of place was used as a primary indicator to operationalise identity in this study, since the workers were separated from their places of origin.

This idea of forming an identity based on a lack of attachment to a place is related to the idea of forming an identity based on the perceptions of others in that place. As Cantu (1995) points out, many Latino migrants define themselves part in response to and in conjunction with how Americans view them. Cantu points out that all Latino migrant workers in a certain town in Iowa are often referred to as “Mexicans” by the local population, even though not all of them are Mexican, and even though some of them even migrated from Texas and are actually American citizens (Cantu 1995: 407). Because of this, many Latino migrants talking with Cantu about their identity refer to themselves as being “Mexican”, even those of them that are American citizens; since the people in the town define them in this way, they feel themselves to be in a different category from these other Americans (Cantu 1995: 407). These migrant workers expand this idea of difference from “Americans” by defining Americans as people who don’t like “Mexicans”. Americans, according to migrant workers, do not work as hard as Mexicans, and do not have to do so because their lives are better they are supported by the state (Cantu 1995: 407). Because this concept is closely associated with a sense of place, it was also considered in this study.

Dawn Marshall (1985), in her examination of Caribbean migrant groups, points out several more indicators of identity used by migrant groups. First of all, she says that certain material goods are used by Caribbean communities to express their identity, such as tropical foods, and Caribbean newspapers, books and records (Marshall 1985: 273). Secondly, she points out that certain organisations, such as clubs and associations, are used to indicate identity, as are Caribbean restaurants and the importation of Caribbean entertainers (Marshall

1985: 273). Material goods purchased while abroad were used as indicators of identity in this study, since many workers tend to buy goods in Canada or the United States. The ability of workers to organise themselves while abroad was also considered as an indicator of identity.

Just as Cantu stated that the perceptions of others in the place to which people migrate can affect identity, Marshall states that the perceptions of others in the place from which people migrate can affect identity. She states that Caribbean politicians in the Caribbean see overseas concentrations of Caribbean migrant groups as being a legitimate constituency, and policy statements are sometimes made to these groups of islanders before they become public at home (Marshall 1985: 273). The fact that these migrant groups are recognised in their home country allows them to maintain a localised identity that is similar to the identity of their homelands, which is not something which can normally be achieved by migrant groups living outside of their homelands. The views of people in Mexico of migrant workers were used as a means of operationalising identity in this study since it is an indicator that was often mentioned by workers.

Marshall also states that the survival of West Indian attitudes, beliefs and values is a major factor in maintaining group identity among migrants (Marshall 1985: 273). The difficulty with this statement is that it is very difficult to measure something such as values. She sees these values as being indicated by the sending of children “home” to the Caribbean for formal schooling, not necessarily because a Caribbean education is believed to be better but because it is seen as a means of transmitting Caribbean values (Marshall 1985: 273). Whether these actions actually succeed in transmitting “Caribbean values” to the children of the migrant population is not addressed by Marshall, and it would be something that would be very difficult to measure in any case; thus, in any research regarding identity, the researcher must be aware of the subjectivity of concepts such as identity, and attempt to avoid displacing his or her own assumptions onto others. Because of this problem, such subjective measures of identity were not used for this research.

Perhaps the best way to understand if something is used as an indicator of local identity is simply to ask the people who use it. Some anthropologists dealing with issues of

the global and the local are starting to move away from the traditional methods of observation and to ask people to verbalize about their identity and how they wish to be observed. It is this method of discovering indicators of identity that was used for this research; the people in this study operationalised their own identity to a significant extent through the way in which they talked about themselves and the indicators that they mentioned most frequently. Because identity is not an observable phenomenon, verbalizations were used to determine what should be observed (such as the purchase of consumer goods); observation was, therefore, a secondary method in this research which provided further insights. Such a combination of methods, when studying an issue as subjective as identity, is most likely to provide the most extensive data.

IV. The Case of Mexico

A. Historical Significance

Mexicans have a long history of association with Canada and, particularly, the United States; the history and nature of these relationships provides an important context for any study of Mexican migrant workers. Mexicans and Anglos first established meaningful contact with one another in the borderlands during the 1820s with the arrival of thousands of United States citizens in Texas, which was then a province of Mexico. Initially, cordial interactions prevailed, but as the Anglo immigrant population overwhelmed the Mexicans, the latter became a marginalized minority in their own land (Martinez 1994: 251). Despite this, many Mexicans remained north of the border after Mexican territories were lost to the United States in the Mexican War (1846-1849) (Garcia 1981: 15). Following the signing of the Gadsden Treaty in 1853, American merchants, miners, farmers and ranchers penetrated the frontier, and elite Mexicans accepted American customs in order to distinguish themselves from lower-class Mexicans (Martinez 1996: 86). Free trade began on the border in 1858, when the state of Tamaulipas created a Zona Libre or Free Zone along its boundary with Texas. In 1885 the government in Mexico City sanctioned free trade along the entire border, but opposition led to the demise of the zone in 1905 (Martinez 1996: 98). Free trade, such as the type that now exists with the NAFTA, is therefore not new to Mexico.

Mexico's limited economic development became the major internal cause for the emigration of Mexicans between 1876 and 1910. The land policy of Porfirio Diaz, designed to encourage foreign investment, caused foreigners to acquire public lands which were previously communal properties, causing land shortages and rural poverty (Garcia 1981: 45). This policy left a large class of landless rural labourers eager to move north to find jobs in industry, agriculture, and mines. This situation continued until 1910, when the Mexican Revolution broke out and people began moving north to escape the violence and unemployment of the revolution (Garcia 1981: 46). This situation was also common in other areas of Latin America. Land reform in Columbia in the early part of the twentieth century took land from rural peasants to be used to large-scale contractors as plantations (Taussig

1980: 85). This forced peasants to migrate to the plantations to work for a significant part of the year, virtually eliminating previous modes of subsistence based on plantain cultivation.

Mexican emigration to the United States continued unrestricted until 1917. The Immigration Act of 1917 reduced the movement of Mexicans into the United States and involved immigration limited for work in specific industries (Garcia 1981: 47). The Immigration Act had severe consequences for the railroads and mines in the border states which depended upon Mexican labour, and the act was amended in 1918 to allow more Mexicans to enter the United States to work (Garcia 1981: 47). Since 1920, there has been a general dependence on Mexican labour on the part of many industries, especially railroads, mining and agriculture (Martinez 1994: 28).

In 1942, the Bracero Program, a bilateral labour-contract arrangement that supplied Mexican workers to US agriculture into the 1960s, created a stream of migration and a large number of workers who settled in the border area (Martinez 1994: 39). Among the first bracero aspirants were landless peasants who had few local employment opportunities (Aldrich 1993: 326). There were also a small number of farmers who became the core migrant group over time as the landless peasants relocated permanently to the border region or to the United States (Aldrich 1993: 326); indeed, most of the migrant workers today have farms of their own in Mexico.

At first, wage remittances from the United States were used to build and improve homes, acquire animals and achieve farm improvements (Aldrich 1993: 328). Other ventures included establishing small businesses, acquiring tractors and trucks, and employing other farm workers, as well as improving the educational opportunities of the children of the braceros (Aldrich 1993: 328).

Braceros numbered 190 000 in 1951 and increased to a high of 445 000 in 1956, most of them employed seasonally in California (Aldrich 1993: 323). Statistical data regarding the actual number of seasonal Mexican workers in the United States during the Bracero Program is not entirely reliable, however, since many farm workers circumvented the contract procedure and accessed farm employment on their own. Once braceros established personal relations with employers, they would simply arrive at the same farm every season,

legally or not (Aldrich 1993: 324); these relationships often persisted long past the termination of the Bracero Program itself.

The Bracero Program was terminated in 1964, creating a large population of unemployed Mexicans along the border; this problem was approached through the Border Industrialisation Program in 1965, which allowed for the establishment of maquiladoras along the border (Martinez 1994: 39). However, labour shortages in the United States combined with anti-farm-worker legislation contributed to an increase in undocumented Mexican migrants in the 1970s and early 1980s (Aldrich 1993: 154). The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 attempted to limit the employment of undocumented workers while including a guest worker provision to permit the entry of agricultural workers on a temporary seasonal basis (Aldrich 1993: 155). This created a permanent underclass legally excluded from benefits offered to other workers, and prevented family members from coming (legally) to the United States.

The IRCA also created corruption in the recruitment process. Contracts between workers and foreign employers must be legalised by local authorities and consular authorities in the host country, and the foreign employer must pay repatriation expenses. Labour recruiters for foreign employers also must be registered (Aldrich 1993: 156). Because the Mexican government does not enforce these laws very strongly, illegal migration continues to be rampant in the United States.

Today, the recruitment process for legal migrants is officially the same as that described above, but the number of migrants, both legal and illegal, has increased. In 1980, approximately 300 000 (legal) labourers journeyed back and forth on a cyclical basis (Pastor 1989: 319), while in 1990 the number of legal migrants increased to 500 000 (Langley 1991: 94), with over seventy percent of them working in California alone. Migrant labour from Mexico, such as the type which is the focus of this study, therefore has a very long history in the United States, and this history must be kept in mind when studying the contemporary situation.

Mexican migrant labour in Canada does not have as long a history, beginning in 1967 with the use of Caribbean and Mexican agricultural workers (Satzewich 1988: 288). The

current contract agricultural labour agreement between Canada and Mexico was signed in 1971 (Colby 1997: 2). The program is administered by the Foreign Agricultural Research Management Services, or FARMS, a federal service organisation authorised in 1987 by Employment and Immigration Canada (Colby 1997: 2). The Canadian Ministry of Labour sets the total number of workers allowed into the country each year, and employers who wish for foreign labour contact a Human Resources Development Canada counsellor; if their request is accepted, they sign a contract with FARMS requesting workers of specific nationalities (Colby 1997: 3). Private organisations can also request a certain number of workers on behalf of a group of farmers, although each farmer must sign a contract with FARMS in order to employ foreign workers. The Mexican Ministry of Labour recruits and selects the workers, and these workers must sign an agreement to work with a farmer for a minimum of six weeks to a maximum of ten months. If the employer is satisfied with their work, they can be nominated for the next season, and currently more than seventy percent are nominated workers (FARMS 1995: 16).

This program is very different from the programs in the United States, and the ease in gaining documents to work in Canada, combined with the distance between Canada and Mexico, makes illegal immigrant labour nonexistent in Canada. As well, the number of legal workers in Canada is much smaller, only 4166 in 1994 (FARMS 1995: 26). Most of these workers are employed in Ontario, with only 150 temporary Mexican workers employed in Alberta (Smart 1998: 2). Canada, therefore, also has a history of Mexican migrant labour, providing a context into which the workers in this study may be placed.

B. Research Methodology

This particular study of the issues of globalization and identity that have been discussed above involved fieldwork with Mexican migrant workers in various locations, both in the United States and Canada. Locations in the United States concentrated on farms around the San Diego area, near the US-Mexico border, which employed Mexican workers. (See Map 1.) This area was chosen because it is an area which has a long history of work migration and because it is an area in which contacts could be easily made. All of the workers employed on these farms were legally employed in the United States, through the

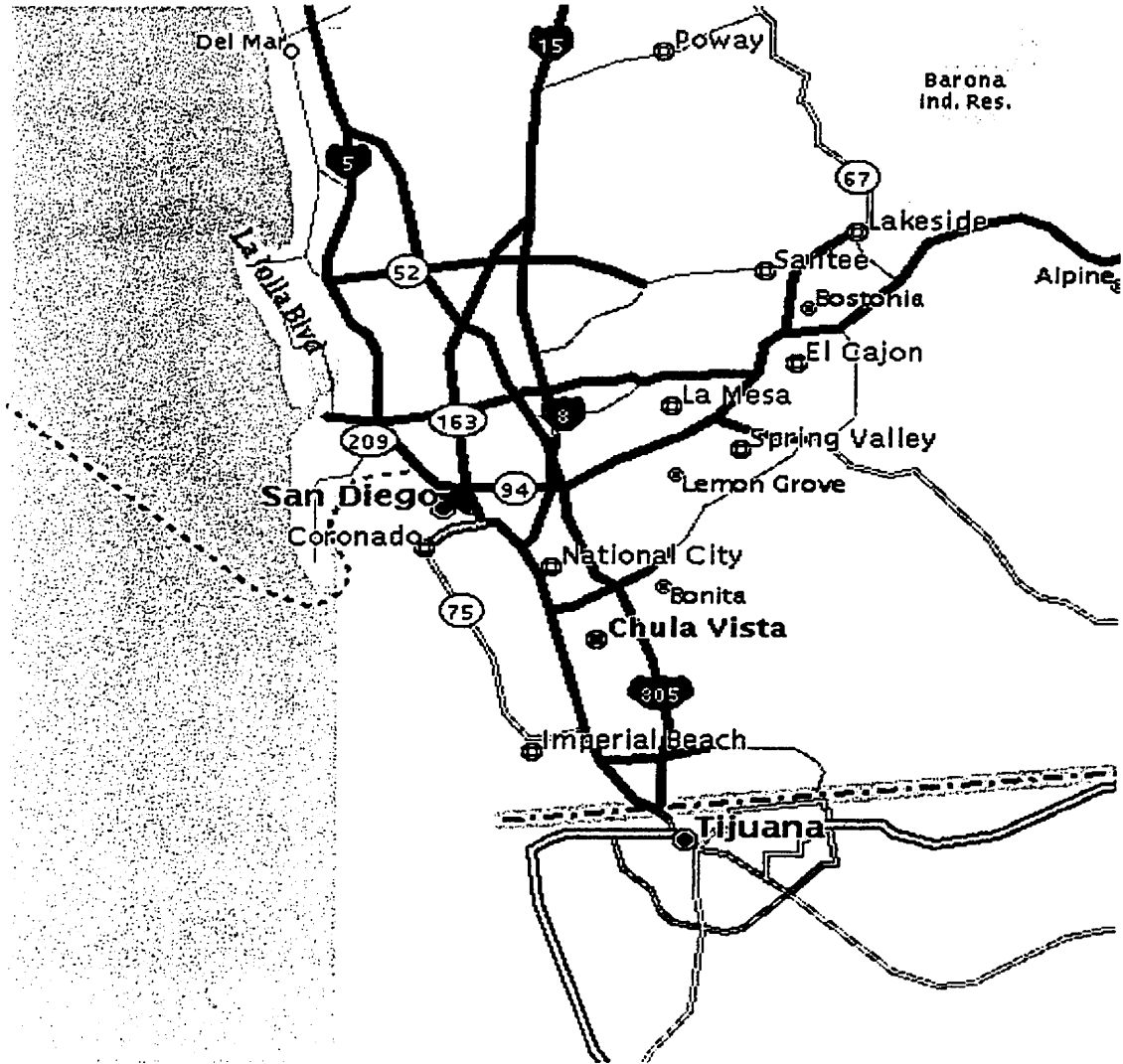
cooperation of a local private organisation and the state government. The workers were employed primarily by fruit and vegetable growers, especially those specialising in crops such as peaches, oranges, strawberries, peppers, broccoli, and asparagus. All of the farms in this study were small, family-run farms. Although larger farming cooperatives and greenhouses existed in the area, the particular private organisation in question here was not affiliated with these larger operations.

Locations in Canada included farms in Southern Alberta (primarily around Lethbridge) which employed Mexican workers through the foreign worker program sponsored by the federal government and by a private organisation¹. (See Map 2.) These farms were also family farms, but were more diverse, growing potatoes, cucumber, zucchini, onions, cabbage, lettuce, parsnips, carrots and cauliflower; several honey farms in the area also employed a small number of Mexican workers. Many of the workers in Canada had worked in the United States previously, either legally or illegally, although the reverse was not the case. In the locations used in the United States, most of the workers were males and did not have family members with them, although a few travelled in father and son pairs, which made generational comparisons possible. In Canada, both single male workers and families were studied, allowing comparisons by generation and by gender. All of the families studied had heads of the households who had previously done temporary migrant work in Canada and were able to move to Canada due to the combined efforts of their former employers and a local private organisation.

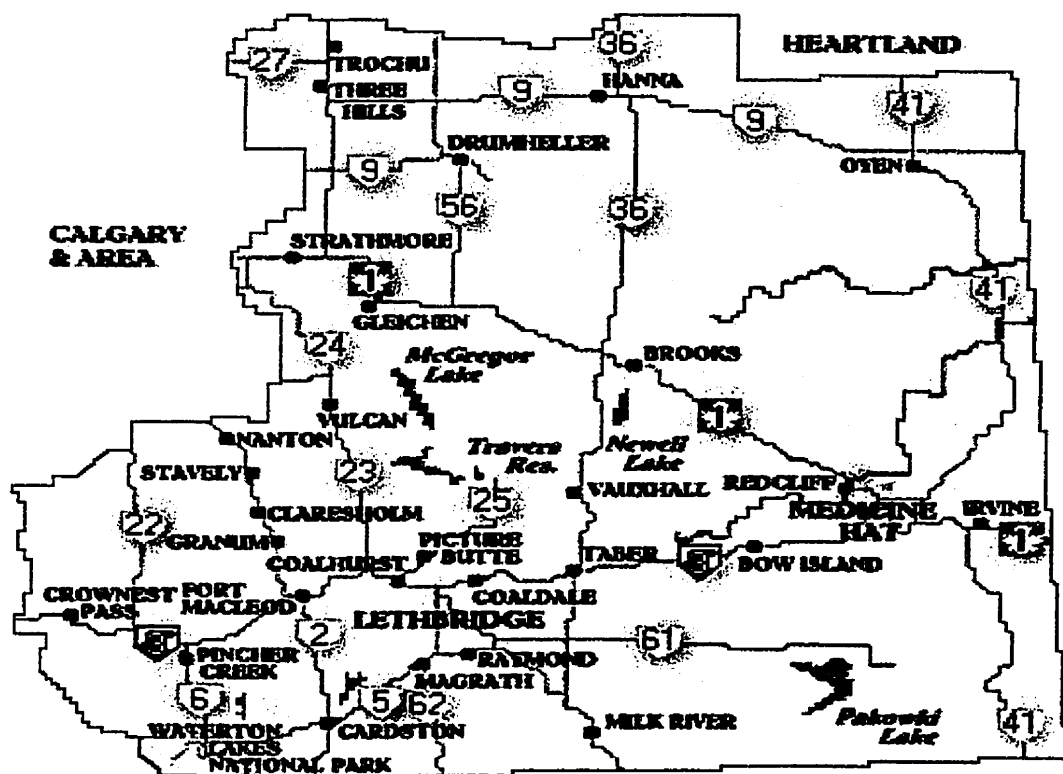
Interviews were performed in the San Diego area between May and July of 1998. Connections were made through the afore-mentioned private organisation with local employers of Mexican workers, and transportation was provided by one of the contacts in the organisation. All of the interviews were performed independently on the farms in question, although accommodation was provided in San Diego by the contact in the local organisation.

¹ The private organisations mentioned as sponsors of workers in Alberta and California were branches of the same organisation, which facilitated the contacts in the United States. The organisation, as well as the farmers involved in the programs sponsored by this organisation, wished to remain anonymous; for this reason, no names of contacts, employers or farms will be used in this document.

Map 1 - Map of Southern California



Map 2 - Map of Southern Alberta



Interviews were performed in Southern Alberta between August and October of 1998. Initial connections were again made with employers of Mexican workers by a local private organisation (a branch of the same organisation used in the United States), although in this case many of the employers knew one another and would refer me to friends and neighbours directly. Interviews were again performed independently at the farms, but I provided my own transportation and stayed in Lethbridge for the duration of the research.

On a typical day in San Diego I would begin with a morning telephone conversation with my local contact who would give me my appointment schedule. Many of the employers wished to *meet with me before I actually talked to any workers*, so some days involved travel to farms for meetings with employers and a general orientation in which I would see where the workers worked and lived. I would then return to the same farm another day to do the actual interviews with workers. Most farms only employed a few workers (the average was 4-8 workers per farm), so all of the workers could be interviewed by a single person in one day; however, there were a few cases of farms that received two waves of workers, so that I would return to the same farm to interview the workers that arrived later. Usually a full day would be spent at each farm on each visit, leaving the evening for travel back to my living quarters and working on field notes and transcriptions of tapes.

The situation in Alberta was very similar, except that I was less dependent on my local contact because I knew the area and had my own transportation. I would normally talk to the employer directly in the morning, verifying an appointment made by the local contact or arranging my own appointments when I was referred directly to an employer by other farmers in the area. Also, employers in Alberta did not always request a meeting before the interviews with the actual workers, especially if I had been referred by friends or neighbours; as a result, some farms in Alberta were only visited on one occasion, although this was the exception. In both Alberta and California, interviews were performed on weekdays since the workers had Sundays off and the employers also preferred weekdays because Sundays were their day off as well. In both areas the workers tended to have an experienced worker who was a spokesperson and who could be interviewed repeatedly; most other workers were interviewed only once during breaks in their work schedules.

All of the Mexican workers (and their family members) were asked a standard set of interview questions, although the questions were open-ended enough to allow follow-up questions on the part of the interviewer or elaboration on the part of the interviewee. (See Appendices A and B.) These questions were designed to investigate the effects of working abroad on the lives of Mexican workers (and their families) and on their perceptions of themselves, particularly their perceptions of their lives and families in Mexico. These interviews were performed in Spanish, as most of the workers did not speak English; sixty interviews were performed to provide a substantial sample, twenty of which were performed in the United States.

Different questions were used to discover different indicators of identity. Questions regarding why workers came to Canada or the United States, what the advantages and disadvantages of such work are, and whether or not they wished to continue to migrate (and the reasons for this) were used to extrapolate a sense of place on the part of the workers. Questions concerning family and/or neighbours working abroad were used to discern familial and community connections, and to gain an understanding of how families and community members might view migrant workers or migrant work in general. Several questions concerned the purchase of consumer goods; the purpose of this type of questioning was to determine whether and how the consumption attitudes of the workers had changed, and what devices the workers might use to distinguish themselves from other people in their home communities. In other words, these questions provided insights regarding how workers constructed an identity as a migrant worker. Asking workers whether or not they wished to live abroad also provided insights as to whether workers had begun to identify themselves with Canadians or Americans. A final category of questions dealt with goals of workers and whether and how their lives had changed. This provided information regarding whether workers saw themselves differently than in the past as a result of their migration experiences. Altogether, these questions were designed to provide an indication of the identity that workers give to themselves, and insights regarding how they might construct this identity. (A summary of the responses given to these questions may be found in Appendix O.)

Interviews were also supplemented with some observational techniques, as many of the workers were very hospitable and permitted observation of their living quarters and of things that they had acquired in Canada or the US. Observations were primarily designed to verify the verbalizations provided in interviews. Observations were made of what workers purchased, how they related to one another as compared to their relationships with Canadians or Americans, and what they did in their spare time. Observations were also made of indicators such as language and religion; these indicators were not mentioned by the workers, but the language spoken by the workers in various circumstances could be observed, and their religion could often be observed because their living quarters often contained religious paraphernalia. These observations provided further insights regarding how the workers expressed themselves and whether they felt themselves to be comfortable in their new surroundings or separated from the surrounding population; combined with the interviews, these observations provided a good picture of the situation of the workers in general.

However, because most of the information gathered for this research was the result of verbalizations of Mexican workers, this methodology does have some important limitations. First of all, this method required that the interviewer take the word of the worker at face value. Although some indicators of identity such as religion and language could be observed, most were deduced purely from verbalizations. Secondly, observation of things such as networks formed by workers and use of language and religion was limited because observations were performed on weekdays, not on Sundays which was the only day when the workers could interact freely. Thirdly, because most of the interviewees were temporary migrant workers without families, the familial situation in Mexico had to be interpreted purely on the basis of one individual's point of view. This situation was partially remedied through the interviews with families in Canada, but travelling to Mexico to interview the families left behind would be the only way to obtain the complete picture. Fourthly, this method provides only a current snapshot of the identity (self-perception and self-presentation) of migrant workers. Information regarding the actual formation and/or development of identity could only be obtained through prolonged research in the Mexican

hometowns of the workers among family members and return migrants. All of these limitations must be kept in mind in the interpretation of this data.

C. Related Cases

Several other studies have been performed on Mexican migrant workers in various locations in Canada and the United States. Because many of these studies are similar to the study described above, they provide important and interesting comparative material. Most studies have been done in the United States, but studies in Alberta by Josephine Smart and Martha Rees (1998) and in Ontario by Catherine Colby (1997) provide comparisons for studies in Canada. Smart and Rees (1998) find that the self-identity of Mexican workers within the Canadian economy itself is that of a “work machine” (Smart and Rees 1998: 7). This study suggests that workers come to Canada only for the money (Smart and Rees 1998: 8) and that their hearts are truly in Mexico with their family and friends, an identification with land, country and culture which is not significantly affected by their financial need to work abroad (Smart and Rees 1998: 9).

The study by Catherine Colby (1997) on Oaxacan workers in Ontario gives a more diverse picture, as this study involved interviews of 410 families in Oaxaca (Colby 1997: 20), compared to ten workers interviewed in the previous study. Colby’s study also relates some interesting insights regarding work in Canada compared to work in the United States, since many of the workers interviewed in this study had had experiences in both countries. Colby found that most workers prefer working in Canada to working in the US due to higher wages and job security (Colby 1997: 7-8), although many also found that social opportunities are minimal in Canada as compared to entertainment and social events available in Mexican neighbourhoods in the United States (Colby 1997: 18). Many workers reported feeling inhibited in Canada because of a lack of cultural events (Colby 1997: 18) and cultural barriers, such as misinterpretations of body language by employers and the fact that many Canadian employers do not speak Spanish (Colby 1997: 17). A job in Canada was found to be the favoured migration choice for men with families; the large salaries and job security of contract labour in Canada was found to appeal to family-oriented men interested in

continuing life in the home town (Colby 1997: 23). Working abroad, therefore, may actually be a form of contributing to the maintenance of Mexican identity at home.

Migration of women to Canada or the United States is very rare, usually because women have family and agricultural responsibilities in the absence of their migrating husbands. However, Colby (1987) points out that families dependent upon men working in Canada actually have stronger family ties; this is because the families receive remittances regularly and know when their spouses will return, and women have the financial resources to carry on social obligations in the absence of their husbands (Colby 1997: 26). This is in contrast to workers who migrate to the US and become involved in the Mexican-American culture there, often sending little money home to their families and staying away from their home towns for months or years at a time. Money earned in Canada is used for the construction of houses, investment in land or vehicles, and for the education of children in high school or even college (Colby 1997: 29). Colby therefore concludes that migrants to Canada are the core of cultural continuity in their communities, providing financial resources for investment and emotional and financial security (Colby 1997: 39). These two studies were very valuable for this research because they provided a context for contemporary Mexican migrant work in Canada, a topic which has not been studied in much depth.

Studies of Mexican workers in the United States also provide some interesting information regarding their experiences in that country. Victor Garcia (1997) points out that there has been an increase in both Mexican immigrants (who settle permanently in the US) and Mexican migrants (who are temporary workers) in Pennsylvania (Garcia 1997: 11). This is because there is not a large Mexican community in Pennsylvania and workers there (like workers in Canada) tend to maintain close ties to their families and communities. Some will bring their families to the US to work with them (Garcia 1997: 11); others will maintain ties to their community using the “encargo system”, whereby friends or kin are informed of jobs that are coming available when workers return to Mexico, and are entrusted with those jobs until the original workers return (Garcia 1997: 24). Immigrants who remain in the United States with their families often move from farm work into employment in light

manufacturing and services, providing job openings for new migrant workers from their neighbourhoods (Garcia 1997: 29).

Refugio Rochin's study of Mexican workers in Michigan (1989) brings another variable into the reasons behind Mexican migrant labour. Rochin (1989) points out that earnings instability and family size are basic factors that influence the decision to work abroad (Rochin 1989: 20), but that where workers want to work abroad is influenced by direct contacts between growers and workers (Rochin 1989: 20). In other words, migrants will return to growers who offer good working conditions and opportunities, and will send family members and friends to work for the same employer (Rochin 1989: 21). This trend was found to be true for both single male migrants and young families who travelled and worked together. This connection is seen as particularly important because cultural and linguistic barriers often inhibit the access of migrants to health and social facilities if these things are not a concern of the employer (Rochin 1989: 33).

JoAnna Villone, in her paper on Mexican-Americans in St. Paul (1997), points out that Mexican migrants who come to the US are faced with a "Mexican-American" ethnic identity that is quite different from their own; it is an identity that results from a complex interaction between the external construction of "the Mexican-American" by Americans and the community's own definitions of its ethnicity (Villone 1997: 19). However, this community ethnicity in itself is a mixture of the "ethnicities" of its members, who may come from many different areas of Mexico; Mexican-Americans do not arrive in the US with a shared set of beliefs and traditions, but rather develop some sense of commonality after arriving in the United States (Villone 1997: 33). It is for this reason that Mexican migrants in the United States who become involved in the local "Mexican" culture tend to lose their connections with their families and home towns; they are developing a different self-definition that is not available to workers who are isolated from other Mexicans, as are many workers in Canada and the northern United States.

Despite the possibilities that migrant workers in the United States may become separated (culturally) from their communities in Mexico, Lourdes Gouveia (1997) points out that a majority of Mexican migrant workers in the United States will return to their home

country (Gouveia 1997: 14). The majority of workers also maintain close ties to their home communities and hear about jobs from friends or relatives within the community (Gouveia 1997: 15). This isolation from the surrounding community, even if some Hispanic communities exist in the area, can be exacerbated by a number of factors such as lack of linguistic skills (as surrounding communities may have developed their own dialects and phrases that are unintelligible to Mexicans), ineligibility to receive many services if they are not citizens, a lack of understanding of their rights in the United States, or fear of attracting attention to themselves if they are illegal aliens (Gouveia 1997: 17).

There are, therefore, a complex set of factors that contribute to how migrant work affects each individual. All of the factors mentioned in these case studies were used, in combination with the historical information mentioned previously, to create a context in which this research could be carried out and to form guidelines for interpreting the data gained during this study. It is to the interpretation of this data that the discussion of this paper will now turn.

V. Research Results

A. Mexican Migrant Workers: A Profile

Because migrant workers from Mexico can include a wide variety of individuals, the sample used in this study needs to be clarified. Sixty individuals were interviewed for this study, and one third of these individuals were working in the United States; the remaining interviews were performed with workers employed in Canada. One fifth of the interviewees were members of families who had settled permanently (or semi-permanently) in a place where they had previously performed migrant labour (in this case, all of the families interviewed had moved to Canada); the situation of these individuals is unique and will be dealt with more specifically in a later section. Most of the interviewees were migrant labourers who were travelling without their families or with adult sons; these workers remained in Canada or the United States for a pre-defined period of four to six months and returned to their families in Mexico at the end of the season. All of these temporary migrant workers were male and all had wives and children in Mexico. Because all of the temporary workers were male, only twelve percent of the interviewees were female and all of the females in this study were members of families who had moved permanently to Canada and were either wives or daughters of migrant workers.

A wide distribution of ages existed for both male and female interviewees. Forty percent of all interviewees were between the ages of thirty and thirty-nine, and twenty-six percent were between forty and forty-nine; thus, the majority of informants were middle-aged. This is likely due to the fact that preference is given to men who have families, and also the fact that the worker must provide his own transportation to and from Mexico City both in order to apply for migrant work and to actually travel abroad (and must, therefore, be financially secure enough in Mexico to save money for these trips). Fifteen percent were between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine, and twelve percent were over fifty. The smallest age group consisted of those informants under the age of twenty, which accounted for only seven percent of the total sample; all of these informants were children of workers who had moved to Canada. (See Appendix C.)

The backgrounds of the interviewees varied considerably, especially regarding their places of origin in Mexico. While most workers were from small towns or rural communities, a few were from larger cities, such as Oaxaca and Mexico City. Eighteen percent of informants were from the state of Hidalgo, twelve percent from Tlaxcala, and ten percent from the state of Mexico. Besides these groups, which were the largest, seven percent of informants were from each of Morelos, Baja California, Guanajuato, Coahuila and Jalisco. The remaining informants came from a variety of other locations, including Provincia, Oaxaca, Tamaulipas, Puebla and the Distrito Federal. (See Figure 1.) Most informants (sixty-six percent) had been involved in agricultural work in Mexico before migrating abroad, but a significant number had also been involved in other types of work such as construction (eleven percent), business (eight percent), or work as a “handyman” (fifteen percent). (See Figure 2.)

TABLE 1 - PLACES OF ORIGIN

Places of Origin	Number
Baja California	4
Provincia	2
Hidalgo	11
Estado de Mexico	6
Mexico, D.F.	4
Tlaxcala	7
Guanajuato	4
San Martin	1
Oaxaca	3
Morelos	4
Puebla	3
Coahuila	4
Jalisco	4
Other	3

TABLE 2 - PREVIOUS WORK ABROAD

Previous Work	Number of People
Farm Labour	37
Handyman	7
Business	3
Construction	6
None	7

Most of the workers interviewed had worked abroad before; only eighteen percent reported that it was their first experience working outside of Mexico. On average, migrant workers in this sample had worked outside of Mexico for three years, but many had done migrant work for much longer; thirty-four percent of the interviewees had worked outside of Mexico for nine years or more. (See Appendix D.) Of those workers who had worked abroad previously, forty-three percent had worked in Alberta and thirty-one percent in Ontario, the most common places in which migrant workers are used in Canada. Sixteen

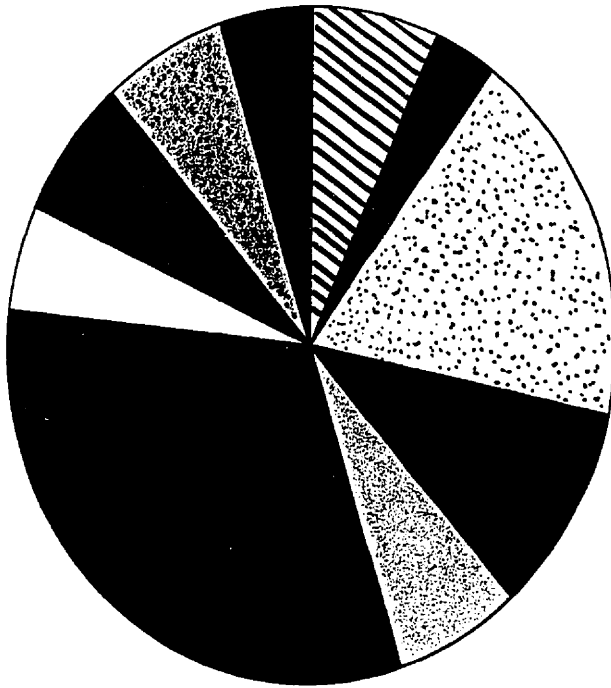
percent had worked in other areas in Canada, specifically Manitoba and Québec, and ten percent in the United States. Although one third of the sample came from the United States, many of the workers working in California had not worked outside of Mexico before. (See Appendix E.)

A “typical” migrant worker in this sample, therefore, may be characterised by a man such as “Ramon” (fictionalised name); beyond the statistics that have been provided above, such a worker would be likely to describe his life this way:

I was born in a small pueblo in the state of Hidalgo where I have lived all of my life. I am thirty-eight years old now, with a wife and three children. I have a small farm in Hidalgo which I bought with money that I earned working on my father’s farm and as a labourer on other farms in the area. I have always done farm work. My farm is doing well now, and my wife hires people to work it while I am away. I learned about migrant work from my brother-in-law; he worked illegally in the United States for a while, but he didn’t like it and when some friends of his said that he could get better work in Canada, he applied and was accepted. I worked in the United States, too, but my wife wanted me to be at home more because sometimes I would have to stay in the United States for a year at a time to earn enough money. My brother-in-law said to apply to work in Canada, and the work is much better here. I have been working at this farm for three years, and I hope to come back next year. I make a lot more money here, and I am saving it to build a bigger house and help my children go to school. Someday I hope to be able to buy a big piece of land in Mexico and retire, knowing that my children have a good future and can be there for me in my old age.

Figure 1 (N = 60)

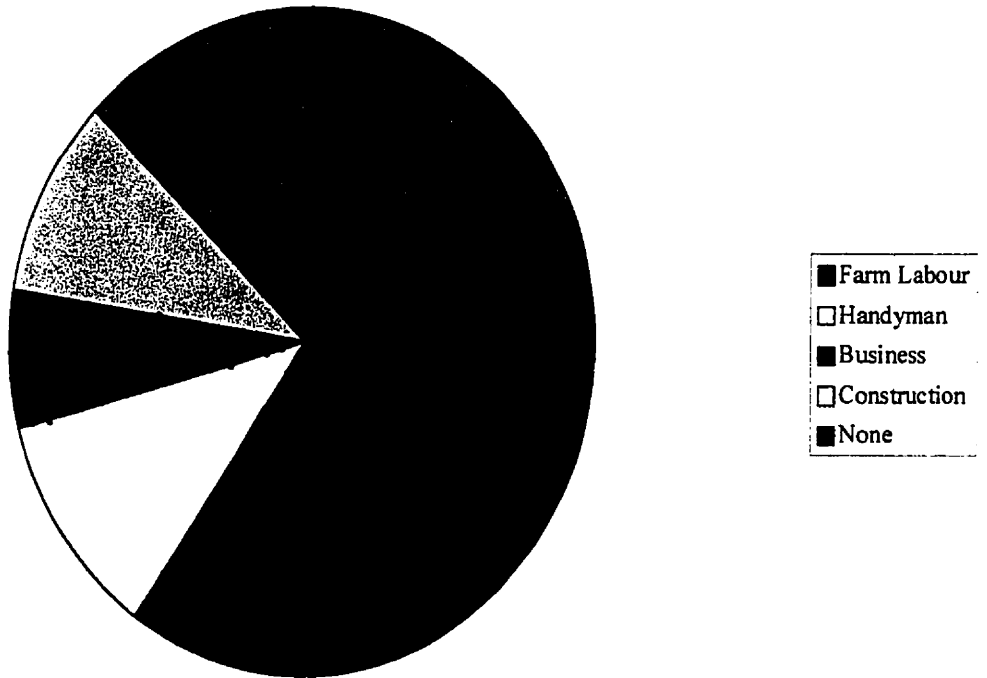
PLACES OF ORIGIN



- ▨ Baja California
- Provincia
- ▩ Hidalgo
- estado de Mexico
- Mexico, D.F.
- Tlaxcala
- Guanojuato
- San Martin
- Oaxaca
- Morelos
- Puebla
- Coahuila
- ▩ Jalisco
- Other

Figure 2 (N = 60)

PREVIOUS WORK



B. Hometown Connections

A significant factor in the lives of temporary migrant workers is their connections to their families and hometowns in Mexico. All of the temporary workers interviewed had families in Mexico, and all sent money from their jobs to their families on a weekly basis. In many cases, these men had farms and raised animals in Mexico, and the money was used to hire other Mexicans to do work on their farms in their absence. Several of the older men who worked abroad (those in their late forties and early fifties) were important men in their pueblos and used their increased wealth from working abroad to buy more land and/or animals and increase their political clout. Using these methods, hometown networks were maintained by workers while they were abroad. As one man mentioned, the maintenance of these networks is important not just for the workers, but also for the members of the community who depend upon them:

It is important for workers to contribute to the community. The best thing about working legally is that the money and the work is steady. People who cannot work abroad because they are not eligible for the government programs depend on families of migrant workers to hire them. Men like me who have political positions in the pueblo have to return so that we can take part in local fiestas, so our work must fit into a specific time frame and we must make enough money to properly host celebrations and fulfill our public roles. This is much easier with migrant work, and more people have the money to participate, so everybody benefits.

Besides connections with people remaining in Mexico, many workers also knew others who were working abroad. Thirty-five percent of interviewees had family members working in Canada or the United States (See Appendices F and G.), and ninety-four percent had friends from their hometowns working in Canada or the United States. (See Appendices H and I.) All of the workers mentioned that they had heard about the possibilities of doing migrant work from friends or relatives, and that workers tend to hear about which areas are the best in terms of wages and working conditions from one another.

TABLE 3 - RELATIVES WORKING ABROAD

Relatives Working Abroad	Number of People
Yes	25
No	35

TABLE 4 - NEIGHBOURS WORKING ABROAD

Neighbours Working Abroad	Number of People
Yes	57
No	3

Men who hold political positions in their hometowns (equivalent to our city councils) would often give their positions as migrant workers to friends or family members when their political duties kept them at home, telling these new workers which patrons were the best; in return, when the political term of the first worker is up, this worker regains his former position on the list of migrant workers to be sent abroad and is able to return to a preferred patron². The small percentage of workers that did not know people working abroad and were not involved in these types of networks consisted of business men who were perhaps in a higher class in Mexico than other migrant workers and did not socialise with them; this issue of class differentiation is an interesting one that will be explored further in a future section of this paper.

While working abroad, the social networks that workers formed with others working in the same area were limited. There were isolated cases in this study of a father and son or uncle and nephew working together on the same farm, but these are rare; usually the networks with others who work abroad are with those who are from the same hometown but work in completely different areas. Because workers on the same farm are usually from different hometowns, they do not know one another unless they work together for the same

² Under the terms of the foreign worker programs in both Canada and the United States, employers could request that certain workers return to their farms. If a worker liked working for a certain patron, he often asked that employer to request him or a friend/family member the following year. As a result, some of the workers had been with the same employer for up to ten years.

patron for several years in a row. Employers who only employ a few workers will often employ the same ones year after year, which allows for social networks to develop; one worker on an Alberta honey farm said:

The three of us have worked together for the past four years, and none of us have ever worked for another patron. Because of this, we know one another and we like to work together. There are very few Mexicans in this area, and we usually do not visit other farms, so it is good to have friends here.

Employers, also, often feel more comfortable if they know the workers, and develop their own social networks with the workers and even the families of the workers. One employer who had been forced to hire more workers because of expanding business explained:

We have hired the same group of workers for the past several years. They are all like the best of friends and always get along and help each other. Two of them have worked for us for ten years, and we treat them like part of the family; our children play with them, and they bring us gifts from their families in Mexico. The wife of one of our regular workers sends us the most beautiful crochet. This year, we have had to hire more workers, and we do not know these new ones. This makes me nervous because you get used to certain workers and come to trust and depend on them. What if these new ones are not the same as the ones we have had before?

However, this kind of social network is rare. Most workers do not have a chance to socialise with one another, even if they work on the same farm. One worker described this situation:

We work long hours, and do not have time for fiestas or other social activities that we would have back home. There are so few Mexicans here, other than those who live with you, and usually we are from different areas and do not know each other; we have different customs and different celebrations because we are from different pueblos. There are several other workers at this farm that we do not even see because they live in a different house and we never have time to visit them. There are Mexicans at other farms around here, too, but I have only seen them briefly in town.

There was one instance in which social networks between workers at different farms were observed; in this case, the two farmers were neighbours who knew one another, and so they allowed their workers to visit one another on Sundays. This, however, was an isolated case; the workers at all of the other farms in the sample mentioned that they knew that other Mexicans worked in the area, but that they never or seldom saw these other workers. The fact that many workers are isolated from other Mexicans and can seldom form networks abroad may contribute to their need to maintain strong networks with family and friends in their hometown. This is more the case in Canada than in the US, although the farms in this study were all small and the workers in the United States did not have as much opportunity to form networks as they would have had they been involved in a larger operation or had they been able to spend more time in the nearby towns.

One strong indication that the social identification of workers abroad remained at home was the fact that sixty-three percent of informants reported that the situation in their hometowns had been improved by migrant labour. No one reported that the situation in their hometowns had become worse, although thirty-seven percent reported that there had been no significant changes. (See Appendices J and K.)

TABLE 5 - CHANGES IN PERSONAL LIFE

Changes in Personal Life	Number of People
Yes	36
No	24

TABLE 6 - AGE AND CHANGES IN PERSONAL LIFE

Age	Changes	No Changes
Under 20	4	0
20 to 29	5	4
30 to 39	14	10
40 to 49	8	8
50 and Over	5	2

A significant number of those who reported no changes had not been doing migrant work for very long and/or did not know very many people who did migrant work; all of the workers who had been doing migrant work for more than ten years reported significant changes. One worker described the changes this way:

Since people in my pueblo started working abroad, things have improved. People have more money, they have nicer houses, and they can buy nice things for their houses. People have fancy cars and big televisions that they could not afford before. Many of my friends have purchased more land and more animals, and have hired labourers to look after their farms. I have purchased more land myself, and plan to build a bigger house. I can buy things for my children that they want, and the children are wearing fashionable clothes, even in small rural towns. Things are better now.

It is, therefore, towards the development of the community that these workers are contributing, and it is the networks in their hometown communities that remain important to their identities as migrant workers. The methods that workers use to express their identities as migrant workers and distinguish themselves to others in their hometown will be the focus of the next section.

C. Consumption and Identity

Closely associated with the fact that the workers in this study maintained strong hometown networks is the fact that they tended to either buy consumer goods in Canada or the United States to take home or use the money earned abroad to buy goods at home. All of the goods purchased abroad or on their return seemed to be associated with a certain level of prestige; many of these goods were mentioned as positive when workers described improved situations in their hometowns, and workers were very consistent in what goods were purchased.

Sixty-seven percent of informants reported purchasing goods abroad. An interesting correlation also existed between age and likelihood of purchasing goods abroad in that older workers were more likely to do so; over eighty percent of workers over the age of forty purchased goods abroad compared to only sixty-four percent of informants between thirty and thirty-nine and twenty-nine percent of informants between twenty and twenty-nine. (See

Appendices L and M.) This is likely because older workers tended to know their way around, especially if they had worked in the area previously; older workers may also have been more financially secure at home and more able to spend extra money earned abroad on luxuries. Nevertheless, many younger workers mentioned that, if they had the money and the opportunity, they would like to purchase some goods to take home in the future.

TABLE 7 - BUYING BEHAVIOUR

Buying Behaviour	Number of People
Buys Goods	44
Does Not Buy Goods	16

The most frequently purchased item abroad was clothing, especially clothing and shoes for children; well-dressed children were also mentioned as being indicative of an improved situation in the hometowns of workers. The second most common items purchased abroad were items for the house, most frequently items for the kitchen (“de la cocina”) or tools and/or materials for construction. Having a nice house, like having well-dressed children, was also mentioned as indicative of improvement, a sign of prestige. Other common items purchased abroad included radios, stereos, ghetto blasters or tape recorders, televisions, bicycles, videos and toys for children. These all seemed to be things that the workers were proud to have and that had previously been unattainable, probably due to the fact that they had been too expensive for a farm worker to buy rather than unavailable³. All of these goods seem to be used by workers to show others that they are migrant workers and, therefore, to establish an identity as a migrant worker. One worker described this new “migrant worker” identity this way:

You know who the migrant workers are in the pueblo. You can see the people who have the bigger houses, more things, televisions, trucks, nice looking children. They are the ones that keep things going, that hire others to work for them and sponsor festivities. Everyone wants to be a “migratorio”.

³ A Mexican farm worker makes a wage which is equivalent to about \$6/day (Canadian); a migrant worker in Canada or the United States makes a wage which is equivalent to \$6/hour (Canadian).

Migrant workers were also very consistent in what they do with the money that they have earned abroad once they are back in Mexico. Forty-six percent of workers used the money to pay for education for their children, improving the opportunities of future generations in Mexico. This was seen as a very important step in making their children into “better Mexicans”, Mexicans who would not have to leave the country to work. As one worker stated:

I want my children to have a good education so that they can have a professional job in Mexico. Farm work is very hard, and I want them to have a better life than that. They can be better Mexicans, educated Mexicans who can contribute to their country by staying there and helping Mexico to develop and compete with the rest of the world.

Twenty-four percent of workers used the money to construct or complete a house, which has already been mentioned as a sign of improvement and prestige. Twelve percent used the money to obtain material goods for themselves and their families, and ten percent used it to directly help their families in some way (usually through the payment of debts). The remaining eight percent used the money to purchase additional land or vehicles in Mexico. (See Appendix N.) As with the goods purchased abroad, these goods are used to create an identity as a migrant worker and as a “better Mexican”, a concept that another worker explained:

I use the money to improve my house and buy things for it. This year, I will buy my wife a new stove. A couple of years ago, we bought a new truck. In a few years, I would like to get more lands and maybe stay home to work my own farm. I want to be a better Mexican, a prosperous Mexican who can help my family and my community; that way, everybody benefits.

These goods, both those purchased in Mexico and abroad, may be said to create a certain identity for migrant workers; not a different identity, but an “improved” Mexican identity.

D. Why Work Abroad?

Most of the workers (and family members) who were interviewed reported certain advantages and disadvantages to working abroad. The most significant advantage was the extra money, which was cited by thirty-six percent of informants. Other advantages that were mentioned include good or interesting work, consistent work, good working conditions and the opportunity to travel. (See Figure 3.) Twenty-nine percent of workers reported no disadvantages at all, and stated that everything about working abroad was positive in their experience. (Whether these workers actually believed that their entire experience was positive or were saying this because they were afraid of how the information would be used is unclear; many of the workers who gave this response were anxious to know about the nature of this research and its purpose.)

TABLE 8 - ADVANTAGES OF WORKING ABROAD

Advantages of Working Abroad	Number of Responses
Money	33
Working Conditions	17
Everything	15
Good Experience	10
Other	17

TABLE 9- DISADVANTAGES OF WORKING ABROAD

Disadvantages of Working Abroad	Number of Responses
None	26
Difficult Work	12
Expensive	6
Separation from Family	13
Cultural Differences	11
No Mexican Community	12
Other	7

In many ways, the disadvantages that were cited were more informative than the advantages. (See Figure 4.) The disadvantages that were cited most often were being far away from family members in Mexico (ten percent), cultural differences between Canada or the US and Mexico (ten percent) and lack of other Mexicans with whom to socialise (ten percent). There was a definite sense that Mexico was where the workers “belonged”, and Canada and the US were “different”; one worker summed up the situation this way:

In Canada, it is very different from Mexico. In my pueblo, my family is there, and my wife’s family, and I know everybody. We have fiestas and celebrations together all the time, with dinners and dances...often the whole town is involved. Here, people don’t seem to socialise much. There is never time to have parties, and there is no one to socialise with because there are so few Mexicans. The Mexicans that are here are mostly temporary workers, and the ones that live here are so few that they seldom get together themselves, and temporary workers never see them. Canadians are different from Mexicans; they don’t have parties and dances. They seem cold and distant...they are always working and never seem to have any fun. I guess it is just the way they are.

There are also some interesting trends regarding positive and negative attitudes towards working abroad. Most workers were quite positive about their experiences working abroad, and many wanted to work for the same patron in the future. Some of the employers seemed to have very good relations with their workers, especially those who employed the same workers every year. At these farms, the workers had pleasant accommodations consisting of small houses or mobile homes that contained four to six workers each; each house or mobile home had two or three bathrooms, a bedroom for every two people and a large kitchen. Often workers were also able to travel to nearby towns or markets with their employers on a regular basis. Many of these employers spoke a bit of Spanish, and communicated with their workers in a friendly way. As one employer stated:

It is important to have good relations with workers. If they have good working and living conditions, they will work hard for you and even volunteer to do extra work or come back another year. I take care of my workers, and I have never had any trouble with them.

Figure 3 (N = 92 = Number of Responses Given)

ADVANTAGES

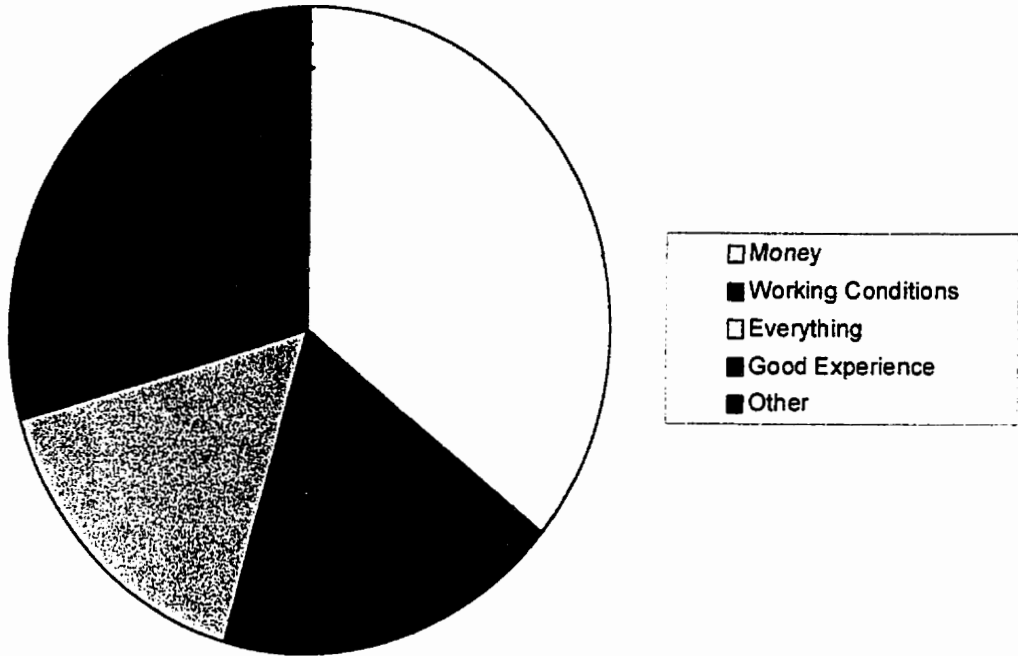
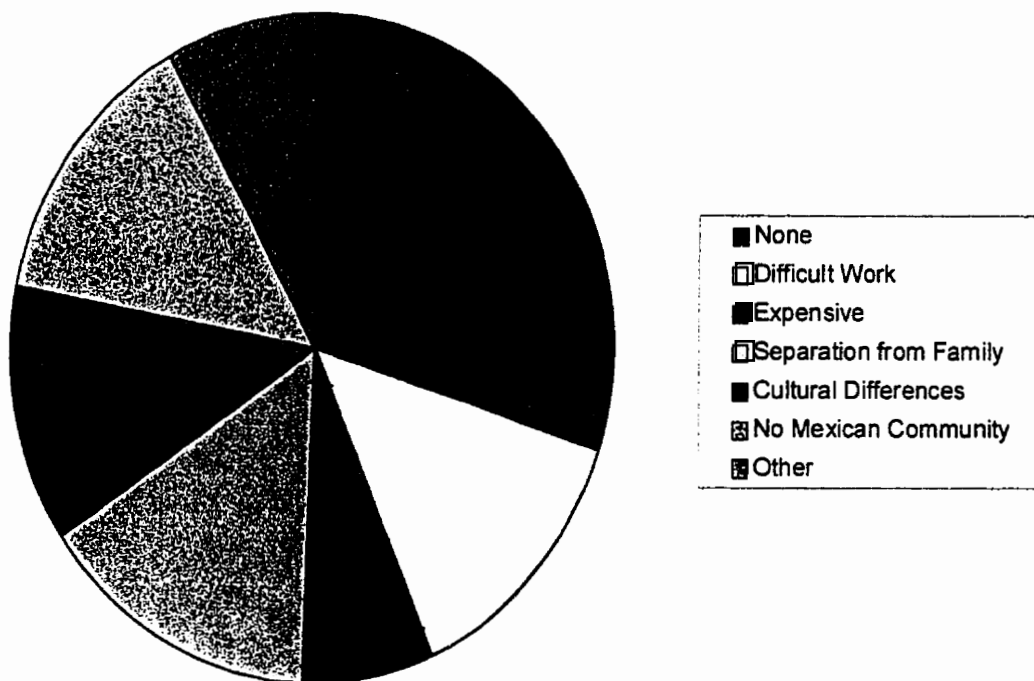


Figure 4 (N = 87 = Number of Responses Given)

DISADVANTAGES



The workers who wanted to remain with the same employers shared these sentiments, even those who were working abroad for the first time. One worker stated:

I would like to come back here again. The patron is good to the workers; we have a nice place to live and can go to town on our days off. Some of the other workers say that conditions are not always this good, and I like it here, so I want to come back to a place where I can work well.

There was, however, a group of workers that complained about the particular place in which they were working, saying that they would prefer to work abroad at a different location where they had worked previously and had had a better experience. Although some of these workers cited better wages as a reason to work in other areas, it seems that the relationship between the worker and the “patron” was the more compelling reason, since some workers were more than willing to stay in an area that supposedly had lower wages if they could work for a well-liked patron. In the cases in which the workers did not want to return, the living conditions seemed less satisfactory; in one case, twelve workers were packed into a small house that had only three bedrooms and two bathrooms, and the house was not as well kept as most of the accommodations seen in the course of this research. These employers also seemed less able to communicate effectively with workers; they did not speak Spanish and did not make an effort to explain things to the workers. One dissatisfied worker explained the situation with his present employer in this way:

I would rather work somewhere else next year, where I worked before. Previously, working conditions were better and wages were higher. Here, we live too far from town, and the patron never fixes things in the house. We try to tell him things, but he does not understand us, because he does not speak Spanish.

The reasons that workers have for working abroad are, therefore, multidimensional. Workers certainly did not feel that they belonged in Canada or the United States, but worked abroad largely because of the obvious financial advantages and opportunities that were afforded to them by working abroad. However, where workers wanted to be employed and their attitudes towards working abroad in general were greatly influenced by their relationships with their employers; those who had good relationships with their patrons were

much more positive about their overall experiences abroad and about the advantages of migrant work in general.

E. Canada Versus the United States

Some interesting findings developed from interviews of workers who had done migrant work in both Canada and the United States. Many workers who were working in Canada but had worked previously in the United States mentioned the advantages of working in Canada. The biggest advantage was that the wages were higher and the work was guaranteed for a certain period of time, regardless of weather or other mitigating circumstances. Another advantage cited by those workers who had worked illegally in the United States was the fact that it is virtually impossible to work illegally in Canada and it is much easier to obtain legal documentation to work in Canada (compared to obtaining a work permit to enter the US legally). As one worker stated:

I worked in the United States illegally for a couple of years, but it was very difficult. If employers know that you are illegal, the wages are much lower than for legal workers because they know that you have to take it. Also, you cannot get permanent work if you are illegal because employers do not want to get caught...they hire you for a few weeks and then you move on. You never know if there will be more work. To get legal documentation is hard, and immigration officials will harass you, especially in border areas where there are a lot of illegal workers and all Mexicans are assumed to be in the country illegally. In Canada it is so much easier. It was easy to get papers, and no one ever accuses you of being here illegally. You have guaranteed work and guaranteed wages. It is much more secure.

Of the families that were interviewed, two of the three men had worked illegally in the United States and both of them and their wives mentioned that the family felt much more secure with the men working in Canada. The wife of one of these workers explained:

When my husband worked in the United States illegally, it was hard on all of us. He didn't always have work, and when he didn't send money I didn't know where he was or if he was all right. He would stay away for months or even a year or two at a time. I thought that it was too dangerous, because he could have been arrested or deported. I had friends whose

husbands worked in Canada, and I wanted my husband to do that. It seemed so much safer. It was better for the family, too, because I knew where my husband was and when he was coming home, and the children got to see him more. When he worked in Canada, he sent money home regularly and was home for part of the year with us. I felt so much better!

The workers who were interviewed in the United States were all legally employed, and so their situation was different from those who had worked illegally. A few had worked illegally in the past, and said that they felt better working legally because the wages were better and they knew that their jobs were guaranteed for the season. However, the problem of gaining documentation to work in the United States was often cited, even by legal workers.

F. Class and Gender Considerations

Some other significant variables that appeared in this study were those of the class and gender of informants. Those few workers who had previously been involved in business had different opinions than those who had been involved in other types of work. Most workers were not interested in living in Canada or the United States; as previously stated, they did not feel that they belonged. However, those who had been involved in business were more likely to be interested in living in Canada or the United States; in fact, two of the three families who had moved to Canada from Mexico had men who had been involved in business before. One such worker said:

There were so many opportunities for me in Canada. I wanted to live here because I thought that it would be better for me and for my family, especially the children. My children can have a good education and good jobs here, and there is a chance for me to start over again in a better place.

These workers who had been business men were less likely to have social networks with other migrant workers, as previously mentioned, probably because they were in a higher class in Mexico than most migrant workers. However, they may also have been more likely to be promoted and hired full-time by employers because of their better credentials and management skills; these superior qualifications may also have made it easier for them to move to Canada and their connections among higher class Mexicans may have facilitated

their ability to gain proper documentation. All of these issues of class differentiation are significant ones that were only briefly dealt with in this paper because so few business men were available in the sample.

Gender also played a part in the opinions of those informants who were female. Older women, in particular, seem to have more difficulty in adjusting to migratory work and to life in Canada. All of the wives of men who had moved to Canada were unhappy that they had to work in Canada and that they were far away from their families (meaning extended families) and their friends in Mexico. All of them wanted to return to Mexico. One woman explained her situation this way:

It is hard for me in Canada. In Mexico, my husband worked and I looked after things while he was working abroad, but I never had to do much farm work myself because I could afford to hire people. Here I work with my husband every day, and it is necessary to pay for things that we want; everything seems so expensive. In Mexico, we were wealthy, but here we are just middle class, because everyone has jobs and lots of money. I feel so isolated because I don't really know anyone here. There are so few Mexicans and because I work I cannot visit them very often. I used to visit my mother and sisters and friends every day in Mexico, and I miss them. I would like so much to go back to Mexico and see my family again, but we will not be able to do that for a while. I want to move back, but my husband and children like it here, so I don't think that we will go back.

Younger women (daughters of men who had moved to Canada), however, enjoyed living and working in Canada. These women were employed in low-paying jobs, either farm, factory or service industries, but they liked the freedom to work and the potential that they saw in living in Canada; they did not want to return to Mexico because Canada was seen as having more and better opportunities for women. One young woman stated:

Here, I have exactly what I want; I have a job now and I can get a good education and get a professional job in Canada later. I really want to be a doctor, but in Mexico it is difficult for a woman to do something like that. The women in Mexico don't have the same kinds of opportunities as they do here, and there is a lot more prejudice about what women should or shouldn't do. I don't mind visiting my family in

Mexico sometimes, but I don't want to live like they do, because I don't think that their quality of life is as good as mine could be here.

Younger men (sons of men who had moved to Canada) also expressed an interest in staying in Canada, saying that it is easier to get an education and a good job in Canada. However, young men who were the same age as these sons of immigrants but who were involved in temporary migrant work did not want to remain in Canada. Age, therefore, was not the determinant of these attitudes. More likely these preferences were the result of the fact that the men whose fathers had moved to Canada did not really have strong connections in Mexico because their immediate families were in Canada; the young men involved in temporary labour, however, had young families in Mexico, which would prompt their desire to return.

As was the case with class differentiation, these issues of generation and gender were only touched upon in this study because only a small proportion of the sample was female and an even smaller proportion consisted of young women and young men who did not have immediate family in Mexico. These, therefore, are issues which are important variables in the behaviour of Mexican migrants and immigrants and which warrant further study with a larger sample size.

G. Mexicans in Canada

The stories of the Mexican families who had immigrated to Canada provide good examples of all of the issues outlined in the previous sections and may provide a human touch to the data already presented. All of the heads of households were migrant workers originally, and so can provide insights on hometown connections, consumption patterns and reasons for working abroad. Two of the three men in these families also worked in both Canada and the United States. Two of the three families were also of a higher class in Mexico, lending insights into class differentiations, and interviewing families allowed for gender and generational comparisons.

FAMILY #1 - THE RAMIREZ FAMILY (All names are fictional.)

The head of this family, señor Diego Ramirez, is forty years old and lived most of his life in a small town in Hidalgo. Since 1990, he has been doing migrant work in Canada,

specifically in Leamington, Ontario and Alberta. He had a small business in Mexico, but did not seem to be getting ahead; he had friends that worked abroad and felt that he could make more money more quickly by working abroad and using the money to invest in his business in Mexico. He had partners in his business, and they looked after it while he was away. He did not have a lot of time with his family in Mexico, and so when his employer in Canada wanted to hire a permanent foreman who could communicate with the Mexican workers, he asked to be considered. He had worked for this same employer for four years, and had a good relationship with him, so his employer sponsored him and his family to come to Canada in 1996. He maintains a good relationship with his patron, who has provided his family with a small house on the farm and employs his wife and children during the planting and harvesting seasons. The family does not have much of a relationship with the migrant workers who work on the farm because they are there for such a short time and often do not have much time to socialise. Señor Ramirez misses the festivities and strong social networks of his hometown, because it does not exist in Canada; only a few other Mexicans live permanently in the area, and they do not see each other very often. He plans to return to Mexico in a few years to start up a new and, hopefully, more successful business.

Señora Juanita Ramirez, the thirty-four year old wife of Diego Ramirez, finds living in Canada to be better for her children, but not so pleasant for her. She misses her family in Mexico, and is unhappy about the fact that both she and her children have to work. She finds that she does not have time to socialise with the few Mexicans that live in the area, and does not have the same familial support network that she had from her extended family in Mexico. She is looking forward to returning to Mexico in a few years, and wants to move back there permanently.

Monica Ramirez, the fourteen year old daughter of Diego Ramirez, has mixed views regarding life in Canada. In Mexico, she did not see her father very much, but the money that he earned abroad was used to buy her nice clothes, toys and a bicycle. They could afford a nice big house and a big truck. In Canada, they still have nice things, but goods seem more expensive and their house is much smaller than the one in Mexico. She has a lot of friends in Canada, but not Mexican friends. She does not feel that her networks in Mexico have

been lost, since the family still visits Mexico on a regular basis (about once a year). She wants to remain in Canada in order to go to school, because she feels that she has a better chance to get a good education in Canada. She does not know if she will return to Mexico, but if she can find a good job in Canada she will not. Leo Ramirez, the eleven year old son of Diego Ramirez, shares his sister's views; he enjoys visiting his family in Mexico, but would like to go to school and work in Canada. (Ana-Maria, the third child in this family, is too young to be interviewed.)

FAMILY #2 - THE TAPAS FAMILY

The head of this family is fifty-one year old Geraldo Tapas, who was born in raised in a small town in Coahuila, Mexico. He lived in Coahuila until 1980, and during the 1980s he worked illegally in the United States, primarily in New York and in California. He had been a farm worker all of his life, but found that temporary farm work in Mexico did not provide enough money to support his family or expand his own small farm. He found it difficult to work in California because of the immigration officials, and was almost caught and deported several times. He liked the work in New York because the pay was better and he had less trouble from immigration officials. After several years of working in the United States, he was unable to find work and returned to Mexico. He heard from friends in his pueblo that working in Canada was safer and provided more money, so he applied. He began working in Alberta in 1986, and worked for the same employer for three years. He worked in greenhouses in Alberta, but when his employer required a maintenance man, he applied for the job because he had been a sort of handyman in New York and had also done odd jobs in Mexico to earn more money. He moved to Alberta with his family in 1989. He maintains good relations with his employer, who also employs his wife as a farm worker. His family lives in a two bedroom apartment in the town closest to the employer's farm, and the children do not work for the same employer. Their standard of living is good, as all of them are well-dressed, the apartment has nice furniture, and the family has two cars. It is this higher standard of living for his family that is the goal of señor Tapas, who could not provide adequately for his family in Mexico. He does not want to return to Mexico because he feels that there is no future for him there; he liked living in New York and would like to return

here, but he wants to work where his job is secure, so he would only return to the United States if he could do so legally.

Erica Tapas, the forty-six year old wife of Geraldo Tapas, was born in Guatemala but moved with her family to Mexico when she was a child. She worked illegally in California with her husband for a season, but it was very difficult for her because she was afraid of being caught or that her children, who could not attend school, would be caught by immigration officials. She knew of friends whose husbands worked in Canada and wanted her husband to get a job there. She was very glad when he began working in Canada, and now also works for the same employer. She finds the work better than her work in the United States, although she wishes that she did not have to work at all, which was the situation when her husband was doing migrant work in Canada. She misses the large social network of family and friends that she had in Mexico because she finds that she cannot form permanent bonds with the temporary migrant workers who come to the area. She feels very isolated because she knows only her employer's wife and a few other Mexican women in the area, and most of them work and do not have time to socialise. She feels that she has lost much of her connection to Mexico because she has not visited her family for a long time; some family members have moved back to Guatemala, which is what she would like to do, but she fears that this would isolate her from her children, who love life in Canada.

Guadalupe Tapas, the twenty-four year old daughter of Geraldo Tapas, and her twenty-year old brother Biron, both work at a factory in the town in which they live. Guadalupe finds life in Canada to be perfect because the family is able to have more things than they had in Mexico and she is able to work and save money for school. She attends a local college, and hopes to go to university in Canada when she has enough money. She finds the opportunities in Canada much better for women; in Mexico, women who work in factories are subject to a great deal of prejudice and single women most often live with their families. In Canada, she can work without worries of harassment and can have her own house when she moves away to go to school. She wants a professional job in Canada, and has no desire to live in either Mexico or Guatemala, both of which she finds impoverished and lacking in opportunities. Biron, unlike his sister, worked for his father's employer for

a time before gaining employment in a factory with his sister. He also likes the fact that he is able to gain an education in Canada, because in Mexico many young men have to forego school in order to work and help support their families. Like Guadalupe, he finds the standard of living in Mexico lower than in Canada, and wants to have a good job in Canada.

FAMILY #3 - THE BARBIERI FAMILY

Forty-one year old Jose Maria Barbieri lived most of his life in Guadalajara, Mexico, in the state of Jalisco. He had a business there, but it had financial problems and he was forced to seek other means of financial support. He had a brother who worked illegally in the United States and he tried that for a while, but he found it too dangerous. His brother-in-law worked in Canada and seemed to enjoy his work there, so Jose Maria applied for work in Canada. He worked for the same patron in Canada for three years, beginning in 1990. His employer wanted a foreman/manager for his agricultural operations, and Jose Maria applied for the job. His employer thought him intelligent and well qualified, and hired him full time in 1993. He wants to start another business, but he wants to start it in Canada, perhaps with a partner who speaks English more fluently. He is considering moving back to Mexico to retire, but feels that there are no opportunities for him there financially. His problem is with forming networks in Canada so that he can get his business started; other than his employer, he has very few strong social networks because there are very few Mexicans in the area. His main connections are with relatives who still work in Canada and the United States on a temporary basis, and he does not see them very often.

Joanna Barbieri, the thirty-seven year old wife of Jose Maria, feels that her life is much more secure in Canada. When her husband's business was a success, the family had a big house and lots of money, but during the economic crisis in the 1980s, they lost everything. The work in Canada is harder, since the whole family now does farm work, which they never did in Mexico, but the work is steady and the money is good. She misses her family in Mexico, because she is only able to see those relatives who come to Canada occasionally to work, and there are very few Mexicans in the area with whom she can socialise. She misses the parties and dances that she used to go to in Mexico, and the big family celebrations. She wishes that she could live closer to her family, but she knows that

her husband wants to start a business in Canada and she wants a better life for her children, so she knows that she will not be able to return for a long time.

Tanya and Felisa, the fifteen and thirteen year old daughters of Jose Maria and Joanna, both moved away from Mexico when they were quite young. Tanya remembered the big house that they used to have in Mexico, but lost when her father lost his business. They then had to move in with Tanya's grandparents because they did not have enough money for a house. She likes the three-bedroom house that they rent in the town close to Jose Maria's employer because it is neat and much less crowded than her grandparent's house in Mexico. Both Tanya and Felisa work for their father's employer, often doing office work and translating between the employer and the workers, as well as doing farm work. Both get along well with the employer and enjoy doing office work for him. Both want to continue their education in Canada, something that they could not have done in Mexico because their parents would not have had enough money for a good education for them. Tanya, in particular, believes that she has many more opportunities in Canada because she wants to be a doctor, a career which is very difficult for women to have in Mexico because there is still a great deal of prejudice against women. Neither of them want to return to Mexico because they no longer feel that they belong there and because they feel that the standard of living and the opportunities available to them in Canada are much better. (Roberto and Rebeca, the two other children in this family, were too young to be interviewed for this study.)

H. Data Analysis

Mexico, as a country, fits well into the entire concept of globalization outlined in this paper. Mexico is a country that was involved in a colonial relationship with Spain and never developed a means of production that was similar to that of "developed" countries in the 19th century. As a result, Mexico has accumulated massive debts as a country in an attempt to become more developed in this century. It is a country that has generally been considered to be "peripheral", or outside the major countries of production, but has recently become important as a source of cheap labour for industrialised countries such as Canada and the United States. According to world-systems theory, Mexico has become what may be called a semi-peripheral; it is still peripheral to developed countries such as Canada and the United

States, but has become a core for other, less developed countries in Latin America who are still trying to establish their economic importance.

Although much of the literature which deals with globalization in Mexico has a very negative undertone, globalization and development are generally favoured by government and business in Mexico as a way to become a more important country economically. Mexico is a country that has been involved in colonial relationships for several centuries and, as a result, is a country that does not see such uneven economic relationships as damaging to national sovereignty, but as a normal and necessary method of economic development. Workers, when asked if they thought that it was a negative thing to have to depend on countries like Canada or the United States for work, invariably scoffed at the ridiculous nature of such a question:

Why would this be bad? We are not just depending on farmers here for money - they are depending on us to do their work. People who live here do not do this sort of work because they are not used to it. We Mexicans know how to pick peppers and fruit and other delicate foods because we have done it all our lives. We are providing a necessary service. Where would your farmers be without us?

Mexico, as it exists now, also fits into a post-Fordist model. Workers in Mexico, such as the migrant workers interviewed in this study, are being forced to be flexible, to be able to perform many different tasks, as indicated by the number of workers who formerly have worked as “handymen”, doing a little bit of everything to support themselves and their families. New industrial ensembles, such as the “maquiladoras”, have developed in Mexico, a peripheral region. The labour force in Mexico can also be seen as incorporating “core” and “peripheral” groups; the core groups consists of full-time employees in Mexico, and the first peripheral group consists of people doing service work in Mexico. The second peripheral group is the group into which migrant workers would fall; casual workers who work on temporary contracts with limited job security, and whose numbers have increased greatly in the past two decades.

Although migrant work is often used as a second job in addition to farm work or other employment in Mexico, it does not take place outside of formal labour channels in any

of the countries involved when the workers are legal migrants. Because these workers are involved in a government program and their income is recorded and taxed, they cannot be said to be working in the informal economy. They also cannot be said to be part of the so-called “hidden economy”, which is defined as formal work that is not reported (McConnell 1984: 423) because their income is taxed. Therefore, although migrant workers are peripheral to the economies of both Mexico and Canada or the United States due to the temporary nature of their work, their work is informal only insofar as it is a second job and occurs in another country. It would perhaps be more accurate to say that they are participating in what may formerly have been informal work (prior to the Immigration Act of 1917 when migration was not under government control) that has been formalized by government programs and therefore now takes place within formal channels. Only illegal workers can still be said to be involved in the informal or hidden economy.

Regarding the issue of surplus population, all of the migrant workers studied do have jobs in Mexico and therefore have been absorbed into the Mexican economy. However, they tend to see themselves as “surplus” because they say that they need alternative forms of employment and cannot support themselves in Mexico without them. A more accurate description of migrant workers may be “underemployed”, meaning that they are involved in the economy but the economy does not provide adequate subsistence to meet their needs (McConnell 1984: 27).

David Harvey (1987) pointed out that flexible accumulation encourages the collection of symbolic capital, a finding that was also supported by this study. Although Harvey emphasized this as a characteristic of the middle and upper classes, there is evidence that the lower classes have also been influenced by this desire for symbolic capital. Many workers acquired goods abroad to take back to their families in Mexico, such as fashionable clothing, televisions, bicycles, toys and radios. As well, many workers used money earned abroad to buy better goods in Mexico, to buy land or vehicles, or to buy/build a house or improve an existing house. This indicates that they are concerned with the material expression of culture.

The effects of flexible accumulation on households, as cited by Mingione (1991), are also seen among families of Mexican migrant workers, both those who have remained in

Mexico and those who have moved to Canada. Families of migrant workers participate in the first or second strategies cited by Mingione (1991), whereby one person carries out both formal and informal work or different people carry out formal and informal work. In the case of workers whose families live in Mexico, the head of the household has two jobs, one in Mexico and one abroad, while other members of the family usually do not work. This is a variant on the first strategy mentioned above since both jobs may be considered “formal”. In the case of workers whose families have moved to Canada, the head of the household and his wife are generally involved in formal work. Whether or not the children are formally or informally employed is unclear in the cases of children who are involved in agricultural work in Canada, since employers may or may not admit to hiring the children. This may be considered similar to the second strategy outlined above.

Social changes in the structure of households mentioned by Mingione (1991) may be seen in the households of migrant workers. Although the “heads” of all of these households are still considered to be the male migrant workers, the households are actually being managed for at least four to six months of the year by the wives of migrant workers, which corresponds with the idea that more post-Fordist households are managed by females. There is also a drop in employment for children in these households; although many of the children of workers who had moved to Canada worked, they also attended school, and many workers with families in Mexico mentioned that their children did not work and could stay in school longer.

There has definitely been an increase in the geographic mobility of households of migrant workers, where at least one and possibly all members of the family work in a country other than their country of origin. This increased mobility has resulted in reduced resources from communal, kinship and friendship networks for families who have moved to Canada, as mentioned often by the women in these families. However, this is not the case for families remaining in Mexico, where these networks not only remain to support the family members left behind but also help the head of the household to acquire migrant work, as indicated by the number of workers who have friends and relatives working abroad.

Mingione's (1985) statement that households participating in "informal work" cannot achieve real independence from the formal market holds true in the case of migrant workers. Migrant work is used to obtain capital goods, either in Mexico or in Canada or the US; thus, the workers are dependent upon the formal market in order to obtain these goods. These workers do not want to escape from the formal economy in general; only a few workers mention independence as a goal. Most workers want to improve their position within the formal economy, and are simply using migrant work in order to achieve this improved economic position.

Mexican migrant workers tend to agree with Stuart Hall's (1991) positive interpretation of the cultural implications of flexible accumulation. The consumption of more and different goods, enabled by migrant work, is seen by migrant workers as a positive means of improving their economic position and making them better Mexicans. They tend to feel that they are contributing to the development of the community and the country as a whole, and that they are making their children better Mexicans by providing them with an education that will give them the opportunity to contribute more to Mexico in the future (and remain in Mexico to work).

Mexican migrant workers may be said to form a deterritorialized community of sorts; they reside outside of national boundaries, but the state of Mexico still extends authority over them, giving them permission to work, and still recognises them as Mexicans. They are also recognised by others in their communities as contributing to local development in an active way when they are working abroad. However, migrant workers may also be said to form a diaspora of sorts, since they are a dispersed community that maintains a connection with its homeland. However, migrant workers do not form a true diaspora since a full cross-section of community members is usually not involved in migrant work. (For example, women, children and wealthier people do not tend to participate in migrant work.)

The concept of "fluidity of identity" does not seem to apply to migrant workers in Canada, who tend to identify themselves as Mexican and maintain strong ties to their families and their pueblos while they are away, primarily by sending money home regularly. Temporary Mexican migrant workers tend to have a definite sense of place, seeing Mexico

as their “home” and Canada or the United States as someplace “different”; for this reason, very few have a desire to move to Canada or the United States. Some fluidity of identity may be found in workers in the United States, although more so in workers who have been to the US illegally in the past and remained for extended periods of time. Illegal workers, by their own admission, tend to attempt to blend in more with local Mexican-American populations so that they will not be discovered and deported, and therefore may attempt to be more like Mexican-Americans. This indicates, however, that they maintain their own identity because they recognise themselves to be different from Mexican-Americans. They are simply using their identity flexibly, to their own advantage.

Among workers who have moved to Canada, it is the second generation that is more fluid in its identity, wanting to stay in Canada and identifying themselves as primarily “Canadian” in tastes; the former migrant workers themselves tend to remain “Mexican”, at least in their verbalizations about themselves, and maintain stronger ties with family and friends in Mexico. However, Mexican migrant workers cannot be said to be participating in a “revival of ethnicity”, since they are not trying to keep their culture closed from the outside world. Migrant workers may be an example of adaptation and revival of ethnicity occurring simultaneously (as suggested by Blanc (1995)); workers adapt on a global level to the necessity to do migrant work and the advantages that it offers to them, but retain a firm local connection and contribute to the maintenance of a local community identity.

Mexican migrant workers, to an extent, also fit into some of the “postmodern” theories that have been discussed. The migrant worker may be said to be a type of “tourist”, moving from place to place in order to accomplish something, but with a definite home. The migrant worker is also a variety of “postmodern-modern-consumptionist”, with a certain dependence on consumption as a means of constructing a personal identity (for example, through the acquisition of material goods, land, houses and vehicles).

The question still remains as to what indicators of identity are used by Mexican migrant workers to give rise to the conclusions drawn above. One indicator of identity that is mentioned by many authors is that of language. Although most of them did not speak English, and several actually mentioned this as being a disadvantage because it hindered their

communication with their patron in Canada or the United States, the workers did not make an effort to learn English, allowing them to maintain a certain isolation from the surrounding community. Religion is another indicator that some authors consider to be important. Many of the workers were not Catholic, since the private organisation which assisted in their migrant work arrangements was a Protestant religious organisation (which prefers to remain anonymous), and many of the workers had converted. Many of the patrons of the workers were also of this particular religion. Although some of the workers were still Catholic, the fact that many had converted indicates that the workers do have a certain flexibility of identity, as was the case with those who attempted to fit in with the Mexican-American population in the United States.

A sense of place, mentioned by Massey (1995), was a significant indicator among Mexican migrant workers. Except for one or two workers who expressed an interest in living in Canada, all of the workers who were involved in temporary work wanted to return to Mexico and considered Mexico to be their home. Mexican migrant workers also refer to Canada and the United States as someplace other than where they belong, a place where the food and climate is strange and there is no Mexican community like they are used to at "home". Even workers who have moved to Canada mention that it is different from Mexico, that there is no community and no events like those that they would have in Mexico. (This identification with Mexico by sense of place is not, however, true of the children of workers that have moved to Canada; they identify Canada as being the place in which they belong.)

There are no material goods that Mexicans bring with them to identify themselves as "Mexican" while they are in Canada or the US, and the only thing that is mentioned frequently is the need to make (or attempt to make) tortillas while they are in Canada or areas of the US in which Mexican foods are not readily available. However, the material goods that Mexican migrant workers take back to Mexico with them have a certain connection with their identity; the goods brought back, such as clothes, toys, bicycles, radios and televisions, are considered to be high-status goods, and are used to identify the workers to other members of their community as being migrant workers and, as a result, being good and prosperous citizens of the community.

It is worth noting that the discussion of these indicators is based primarily on verbalizations by Mexican migrant workers during interviews, rather than on direct observations. Of course, this approach did have certain limitations in that it was necessary to take the statements of the workers at face values. This method nevertheless offered some coherent conclusions. When workers were able to expand on answers, they further supported the idea that they were largely attached to Mexico as their homes. There was a great deal of emphasis on the way in which money earned abroad was to be used in Mexico to help the family. There were definite trends to these uses, such as the education of children, the improvement of homes, and the acquisition of status goods such as land or vehicles (or other material goods). Many workers also emphasised the fact that their communities were improving because of migrant work; people were becoming more prosperous, and the community was looking better because of nicer houses, farms and vehicles. The money earned abroad was being used by workers to improve their status at home, and to improve the status of their children through higher education. Many workers also stated that they wanted their children to be able to find good jobs in Mexico, indicating that it is the future of Mexico that is considered to be important and that is the main focus of these workers.

Based on the interpretations of the data collected in this study outlined above, the conclusions of this study are that global trends exist and are recognised, since migrant work in itself is part of the phenomenon of globalization and a form of flexible accumulation. However, these global trends and the results of them are used, at least by Mexican migrant workers and perhaps by many groups, to contribute to the development of local (ie - Mexican) identity. There is no “global culture” per se that is encompassing these workers and making them a part of a big universal “melting pot”; rather, they are taking advantage of the opportunities that are being offered to them by global trends and using them as a new strategy to develop a pre-existing identity that has been perpetuated and developed in many different ways for many centuries. If local identity in Mexico changes to a certain extent because new strategies are used to improve the local situation, all of the workers seem to agree that these changes are for the better, and the local identity that results from this new strategy is still unique to the people who are developing it.

VI. Relevance of Research

A. Literary Comparison

This study compares well with other studies of Mexican workers in the US and Canada, and supports many findings. First of all, it supports the idea stated by Smart and Rees (1998) that money is a factor in migrant work, but this study finds that it is not the only factor. This study does not, however, support that idea that Mexican see themselves as only a “work machine”; rather, they see themselves as doing something that is necessary but that most of them also view in a positive light. It is certainly true that most Mexican workers do not believe that they “fit in”, especially in areas with very few Mexicans, but negative attitudes towards working abroad seem to be the result of bad experiences with a particular patron in a particular place that the workers who have had these experiences wish to avoid in the future. Workers who have had good experiences want to continue working in the same place and generally are very positive about their contributions to both the economy in Mexico and the economy in which they work abroad. This study does support the conclusion that the hearts of workers remain in Mexico with their family and friends, even when their attitude towards their work is positive.

This study also supports the conclusions drawn by Colby (1997) which state that workers tend to prefer working in Canada and that workers in Canada tend to be much more oriented towards their families and communities in Mexico. All of the workers (with one exception) who had worked in both Canada and the US preferred working in Canada because it was easier to get documentation and the work was more secure and more profitable. This study also supports the idea that Mexican workers have very few social opportunities and Canada; indeed, that was one of the disadvantages of working in Canada that was often cited by workers in this study.

As in Colby’s study, this study found that very few females work abroad, unless the entire family has moved to Canada or the United States to work. This study supports the idea that family ties remain high even when women remain in Mexico; many of the workers mentioned that they send money to their wives every week to be used for the children and for various expenses. Migrants in this study seem, indeed, to be the “core of cultural continuity

in their communities” (Colby 1997: 39), using the money for the improvement of their lives, their communities and the education of their children. This consistency may, indeed, have a long history since these same things were also the focus of Mexican workers involved in the Bracero Program. Money is used for the same things in both studies: construction of houses, investment in land or vehicles and education of children, indicating a certain consistency in the focus of (Mexican) workers involved in migrant work abroad. Both studies also found that Mexican workers in the United States are less likely to focus on such community and family concerns, being away for longer periods of time and being distracted by Latin American communities and, in some cases, the need to conceal illegal status in the United States. However, all of the workers in this study were legal and returned to Mexico within six months; thus, they also maintained family ties.

However, these conclusions about workers in the United States only apply to workers who are in border areas. Garcia’s (1997) study implies that workers in the northern United States may be more connected to their families and communities than workers near the border because they are isolated from other Mexicans and more likely to be in the country legally. This study was inconclusive in this matter, since the workers in the United States were in border areas in California and most workers who had worked in the United States previously had also worked in border areas. The one worker that had experience working in New York mentioned that he preferred New York to California for both income and job security, but New York also has a large Latin American community, and so is not comparable to Garcia’s (1997) study of Mexican workers in Pennsylvania, where the Latin American community is much smaller.

This study also agrees with Rochin’s (1989), which suggests that contacts between growers and workers are important to determining where workers will want to perform migrant labour. Many of the workers in this study had excellent relationships with their patron in Canada and/or the United States, and wanted to return to the same location. Those workers who did not like their current patron did not want to return to the same place and mentioned that they would prefer to continue their migrant work in another location where they had had better experiences. This fact also has historical consistency as workers during

the Bracero Program often returned voluntarily to the same patron. Workers who had moved to Canada permanently were especially attached to their patrons, who had been instrumental in allowing the workers in this study to move to Canada. This study also supports the idea that good patrons will be recommended by workers to other workers; many of the workers working at the same location were from the same place of origin (that is, from the same pueblo), or at least from the same state, and many were already friends before they began doing migrant work. Also, there were cases of fathers and sons working together for the same patron among temporary workers, or of men working together who were brothers-in-law, cousins, or uncles and nephews.

Finally, this study does support Gouveia's (1997) conclusion that most Mexican workers in the United States will return to their home country even if their attachment to family and friends at home seems weaker than that of workers in Canada. Even though all of the workers who had worked in the United States (especially as illegal workers) mentioned that it was a less secure form of employment that was less beneficial to their families, it is worth noting that all of the workers interviewed in the United States still maintained ties with their families and planned to return to Mexico. All of the workers who had worked illegally in the United States in the past had returned to Mexico (although some after an extended period of absence), and had tried to rectify past negative experiences in the United States by finding legal migrant work in the United States which was more secure or temporary migrant work in Canada. One of the reasons why the workers interviewed wanted more secure work seems to be for the benefit of their families; thus, the experience of single Mexican men in the United States may be somewhat different.

B. What's New?

This study also provides a number of useful insights that have not been dealt with extensively in related literature. First of all, this study looks more closely at the nature of the relationships between the employer and the worker, and takes these relationships into account as a variable that affects a worker's attitude towards migrant work and their desire to continue it. Secondly, this study looks at the social networks that can be made when abroad, not only with employers but with other Mexicans at the same farm or in nearby locations;

although such networks remain rare, they were observed in this study and were always viewed as positive by the workers who had the opportunity to be involved in such networks.

Thirdly, this study looks more closely at consumption as a means of expressing identity; both the things that are purchased in Canada or the United States and things purchased in Mexico with money earned abroad were examined and compared in this study. Although other studies have mentioned the common goods purchased with money earned abroad, this study looks at these goods as expressions of identity and a means of expressing an identity. The identity being expressed is not a new one, since workers are still Mexicans from the same place doing the same type of work and maintaining the same types of social networks; rather, it is an “improved” identity, whereby the migrant workers see themselves as the same people but as better people and better Mexicans, and as more able to contribute to the community.

This study also brings to light several variables that are not considered in many studies, especially issues of class. Because most migrant workers are working class, class is not assumed to affect their attitudes. However, the few business men who were found doing migrant labour in this study showed very different attitudes towards migrant work, suggesting that class is indeed a factor in how people respond to global trends. Gender, likewise, is suggested as a factor by the responses of the women interviewed in this study; because few women are involved in migrant labour, this is also an area that has not been thoroughly studied. Other variables that have been suggested in this study are those of generation and of generation combined with familial connections as well as generation combined with gender. Young women and older women have very differing responses to working abroad, whereas young men and older men have similar responses if their main familial and social networks remain in Mexico, but differing responses if their families have moved out of Mexico.

In sum, this study adds to the continuously expanding repertoire of variables and issues that can be considered to be significant in understanding the local and the global and the way in which identity fits into the local-global nexus. This study does not create a new ontology or a new epistemology with which to work, but it adds to the ones that have already

been developed, offering insights that may further aid in the understanding of the interplay between the local, the global and identity expression. The findings related to these various issues are by no means conclusive, but this study paves the way for others, as will be discussed in the next section.

C. Future Considerations

Although this study has presented a number of useful insights regarding Mexican migrant workers, there are many other considerations that could be dealt with in future studies. First of all, most studies on migrant workers deal with those from Mexico and the Caribbean. It would be interesting to see if the findings for these groups (which are relatively consistent) hold true for workers who migrate to and from other areas of the world (Asia or Europe, for example).

Secondly, regarding Mexican workers in the US, it would be interesting to compare results for different areas of the United States. For example, the experience of workers in the northern United States may be different from that of workers in the southern United States, since those in the northern areas are more distant from Latin American communities and may be more likely to maintain stronger ties in Mexico. As well, the experiences of single men in the United States may be different from that of married men; most migrant workers interviewed in studies are married, and have a certain attachment to Mexico for that reason which single men would not have. For this reason, most programs that bring legal workers into the United States insist that they are married, but single illegal workers may have very different experiences. Women who do temporary migrant work abroad, especially in the US, would also be a good subject of study; very few women come to Canada to perform migrant work (unless their husbands move to Canada), but women do go to the US to perform temporary labour. Most studies have been of women doing illegal work which requires them to cross the border on a daily or weekly basis (such as work as domestic maids), but there may be women who do contract labour comparable to that of men in this study.

Thirdly, class differences could be an area of study. It may be interesting to attempt to discover why upper class men (who have formerly worked in business or owned

businesses) are less likely to maintain ties at home and more likely to move (or want to move) to Canada or the United States. This may only be true for businessmen in Mexico, who have more access to Canada and the United States, or it may be a consistent class difference whereby different classes respond to global trends in different ways because of their socialisation process. Another aspect of this issue is why the businessmen in this study chose to perform migrant work as farm labourers, a job which they would never perform in Mexico. In the case of one worker, it was because his business failed, but others chose this form of labour deliberately as a means of expanding their financial wealth and improving their prospects as businessmen, either in Mexico or abroad (as many of the businessmen interviewed had already moved to Canada). It may be worthwhile to discover if this is a strategy used commonly by upper class people in developing countries, as one of the many flexible strategies discussed as part of the phenomenon of flexible accumulation.

Finally, the generational factors that have been discussed briefly in this study could also be pursued in more detail. Older women tend to identify with Mexico and pine for family, friends, and community at home. Younger women, on the other hand, relish the opportunities offered to them by higher education and less perceived prejudice abroad, feeling less connection with Mexico as a whole and with family members there. With younger men in the study, this was not true as consistently, although those who were sons of migrant workers who had moved to Canada tended to feel less of a connection with Mexico and more of a desire to remain in Canada. It would be interesting to discover whether or not young men with no family in Mexico would be more likely to move abroad, or to desire to do so.

VII. Conclusion

This research project deals with a traditional concept in anthropology, the concept of identity, but deals with it in the light of a new paradigm, that of globalization. It works within the theoretical framework that has been developed in the area of globalization by various authors, and Mexico may be said to fit into this framework. In keeping with the first objective of this research project, Mexico may be said to fit into the category of a semi-peripheral country, a country which provides cheap labour and has therefore become an essential part of the post-Fordist system of production. Labour markets in Mexico, as in many areas, have become more flexible, causing an increase in migrant labour.

This study recognises that the concept of identity itself has changed in anthropology under the influence of postmodern theory, and that previous concepts of the local and the global have also changed; it is within these new ontological and epistemological assumptions that this study was performed. The local and the global were assumed to be observable, and had been operationalised for the purpose of this study using primarily verbalisations about sense of place and about goals for the future that workers have for themselves and for their families. This study does not support the ontological idea of a “global culture”, and does not accept many of the postmodern ideas about identity being largely fluid to the point of being completely relative to the situation at hand or the way it is discussed in literature. Rather, local identity is viewed as a real, observable phenomenon that may undergo certain changes in the light of global strategies for survival but nevertheless remains largely intact. The “local”, as such, is not threatened by the “global”, as some literature might suggest, but is further developed and maintained through the use of global strategies.

Therefore, in terms of the second objective of this project, it may be said that globalization does have an effect on the identity of the people involved in that new global strategies (such as migrant work) are used in expressing identity. The workers in this study would be unable to do many of the things that they see as contributing to their self-perception of being “better Mexicans” without the benefits of migrant work. However, this is not necessarily a negative effect, since it does not seem to undermine the local identity. There is no evidence of a “fluid” or “global” identity among these workers, as many theorists have

suggested; rather, connections to Mexico and to the hometown remain strong, maintaining a strong local identity. It is the way in which this local identity is expressed that has been affected, rather than the nature of personal identity itself.

This study does not offer conclusions that can necessarily be generalised for all people exposed to the global system. It offers conclusions that are consistent with other studies in a particular area concerning a particular group of people and puts these conclusions into an existing theoretical framework, offering certain hypotheses regarding global and local phenomena and the effects of the global system on local identity. Many variables have been uncovered in this study that may affect the conclusions of similar studies. First of all, social class may affect how people respond to global changes and how they use global strategies. Secondly, the location in which people work abroad may have definite effects on their local identity and their response to global strategies. Thirdly, gender may be a factor, since fewer studies have been done on women and since women tend to be less likely to do the type of contract work performed by people in this study. Fourthly, the experiences of the second generation (that is, the children of temporary workers who have moved to Canada or the United States) may be quite different than that of first generation migrant workers, and their responses to the global system and the opportunities that it offers may be quite different. This is seen to be true for young women in this study, although the sample of women is too small to offer definite conclusions; young men who are not attached to families (who also did not provide a large enough sample to offer definite conclusions in this study) may also respond to global trends differently and have different ways of forming “local” identity.

The world cannot yet be said to be a so-called “global village”, but rather may be a collection of local groups tied together by a global system which offers strategies that are used by all, but which do not, and perhaps cannot, encompass all.

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Appendix A

Research Questions

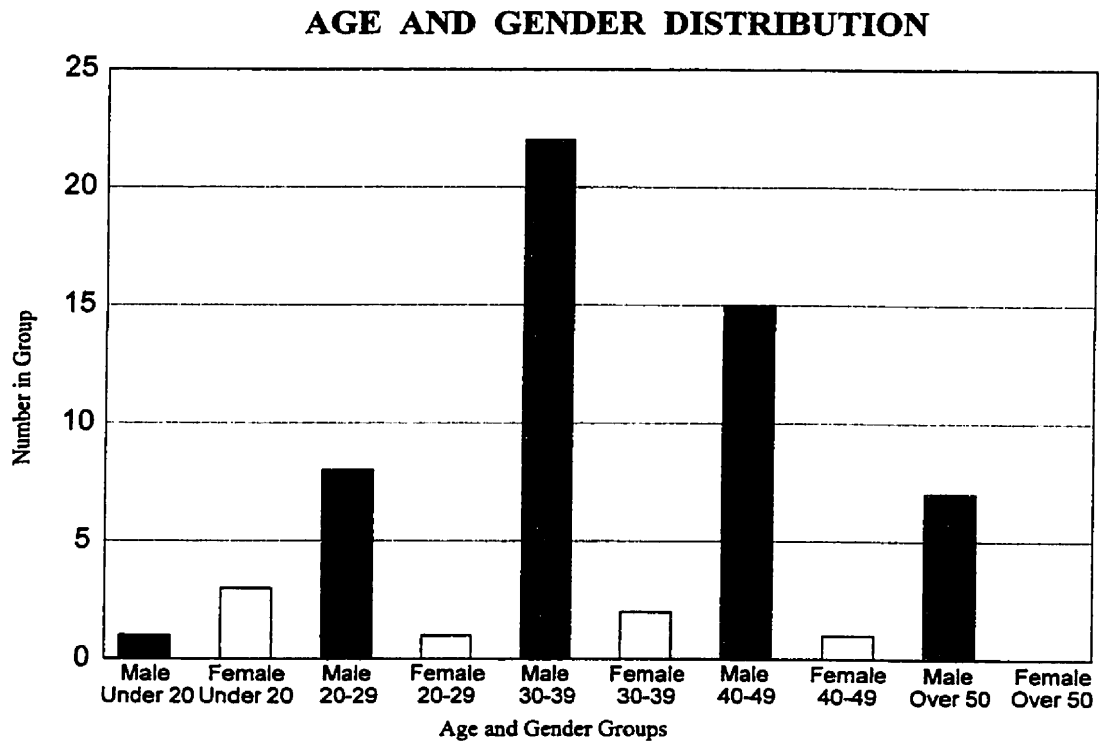
1. Porque quiere usted trabajar en el Canadá o en los Estados Unidos?
2. Cuanto dinero gana usted en el Canadá o en los Estados Unidos?
3. Que hace usted con el dinero que gana en el Canadá o en los Estados Unidos?
4. Trae usted bienes de consumo a Mexico del Canadá o de los Estados Unidos?
 - Que bienes de consumo trae usted?
5. Le gusta a usted el trabajo en el Canadá or en los Estados Unidos?
 - Que son las ventajas y las desventajas de este trabajo?
6. Hay otras personas en su familia que trabajan en el Canadá o en los Estados Unidos?
 - Que hacen ellos con el dinero que ganan en el Canadá o en los Estados Unidos?
 - Traen ellos bienes de consumo del Canadá o de los Estados Unidos? Que traen ellos?
7. Hay otras personas en su pueblo que trabajan en el Canadá o en los Estados Unidos?
 - Traen ellos bienes de consumo del Canadá o de los Estados Unidos? Que traen ellos?
 - Hay muchos cambios en su pueblos a causa de este trabajo migratorio?
8. Quiere usted continuar su trabajo migratorio? Porque o porque no?
 - Quiere usted vivir en el Canadá o en los Estados Unidos? Porque o porque no?
9. Que metas tiene usted para si mismo?
 - Tiene usted mas oportunidades ahora?
10. Que metas tiene usted para sus niños?
 - Asisten sus niños a la escuela?
 - Tienen sus niños mas oportunidades ahora?
11. Es diferente su vida o la vida de su familia a causa del trabajo migratorio? Son diferentes sus metas o sus eseranzas a causa del trabajo migratorio?
12. Que piense usted de estes cambios en general?

Appendix B

Translation of Research Questions

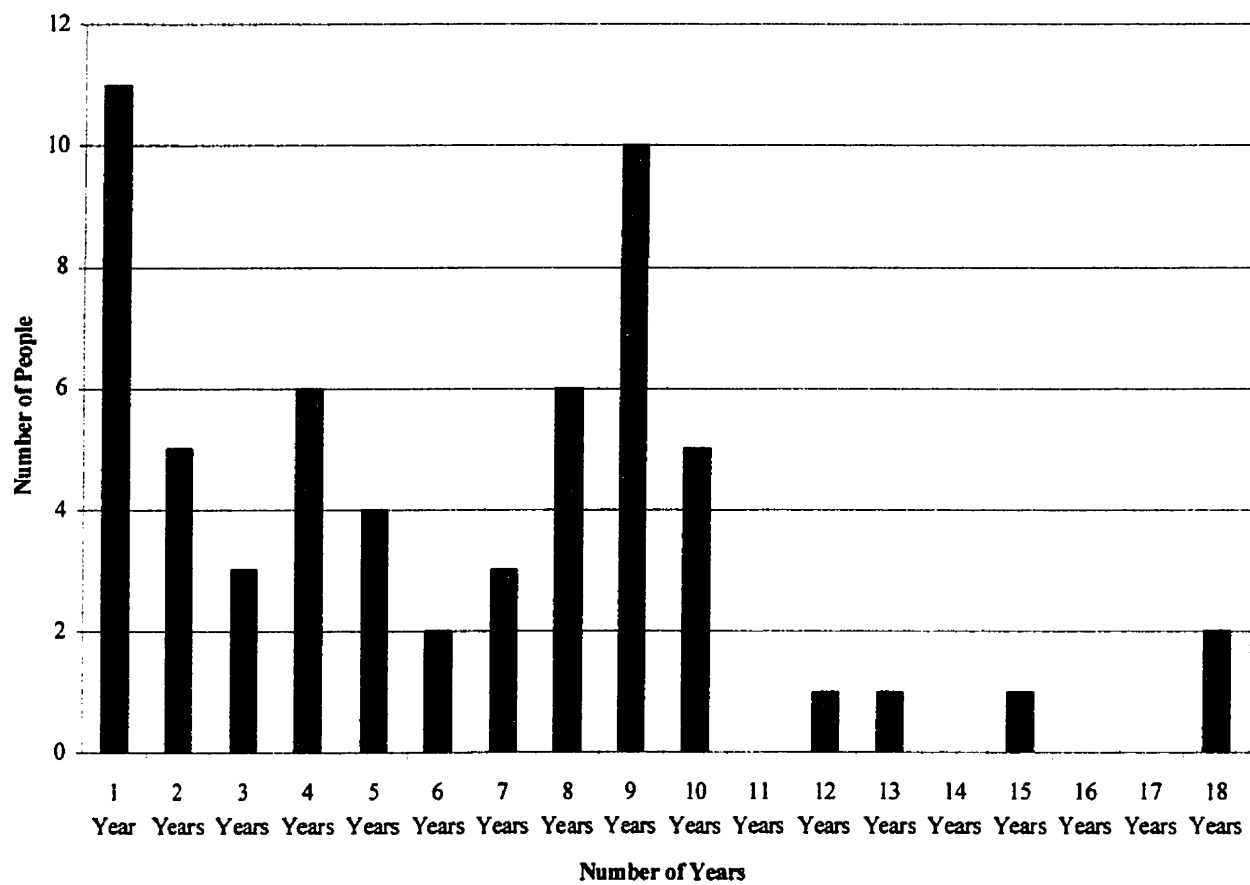
1. Why do you want to work in Canada or in the United States?
2. How much money do you make working in Canada or the United States?
3. What do you do with the money that you make this way?
4. Do you bring goods back to Mexico from Canada or the United States?
 - If so, what things did you bring back last time?
5. Do you like working in Canada or the United States?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages of this work?
6. Do other people in your family work in Canada or the United States?
 - If so, what do they do with the money they earn in Canada or the United States?
 - Do they bring back goods from Canada or the United States? If so, what kinds of goods?
7. Do other people in your village work in Canada or the United States? If so, how many?
 - Do they bring back goods from Canada or the United States? If so, what kinds of goods?
 - Have you noticed a lot of changes in your village as a result of migrant work?
8. Do you plan to continue working in Canada or the United States? Why or why not?
 - Would you want to live in Canada or the United States? Why or why not?
9. What goals do you have for yourself?
 - Do you have more opportunities now than you had when you were younger?
10. What goals do you have for your children?
 - Do your children go to school?
 - Do your children have more opportunities than you did when you were their age?
11. Has the opportunity to do migratory work caused a lot of changes in your life or that of your family? Have your goals or expectations changed as a result?
12. What do you think about these changes in general?

Appendix C (N = 60)



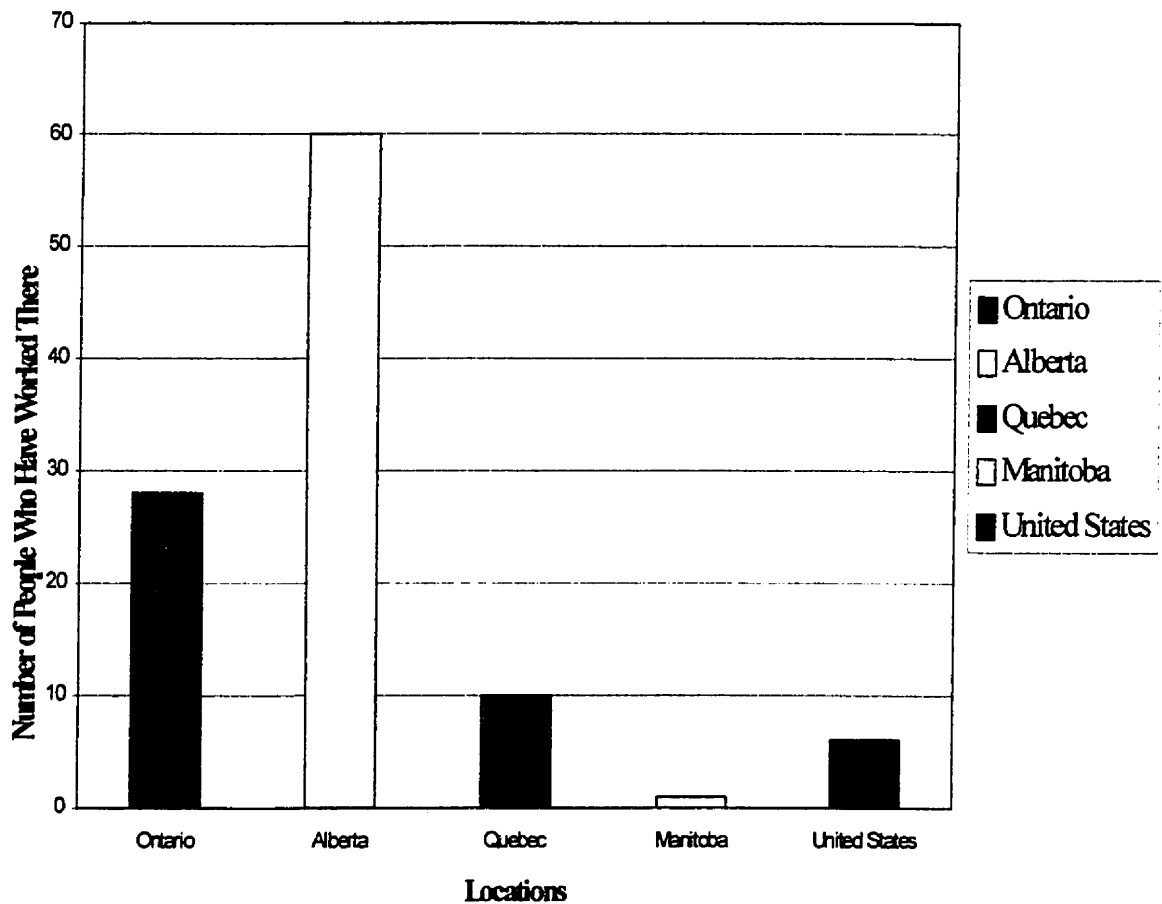
Appendix D (N = 60)

NUMBER OF YEARS WORKING ABROAD



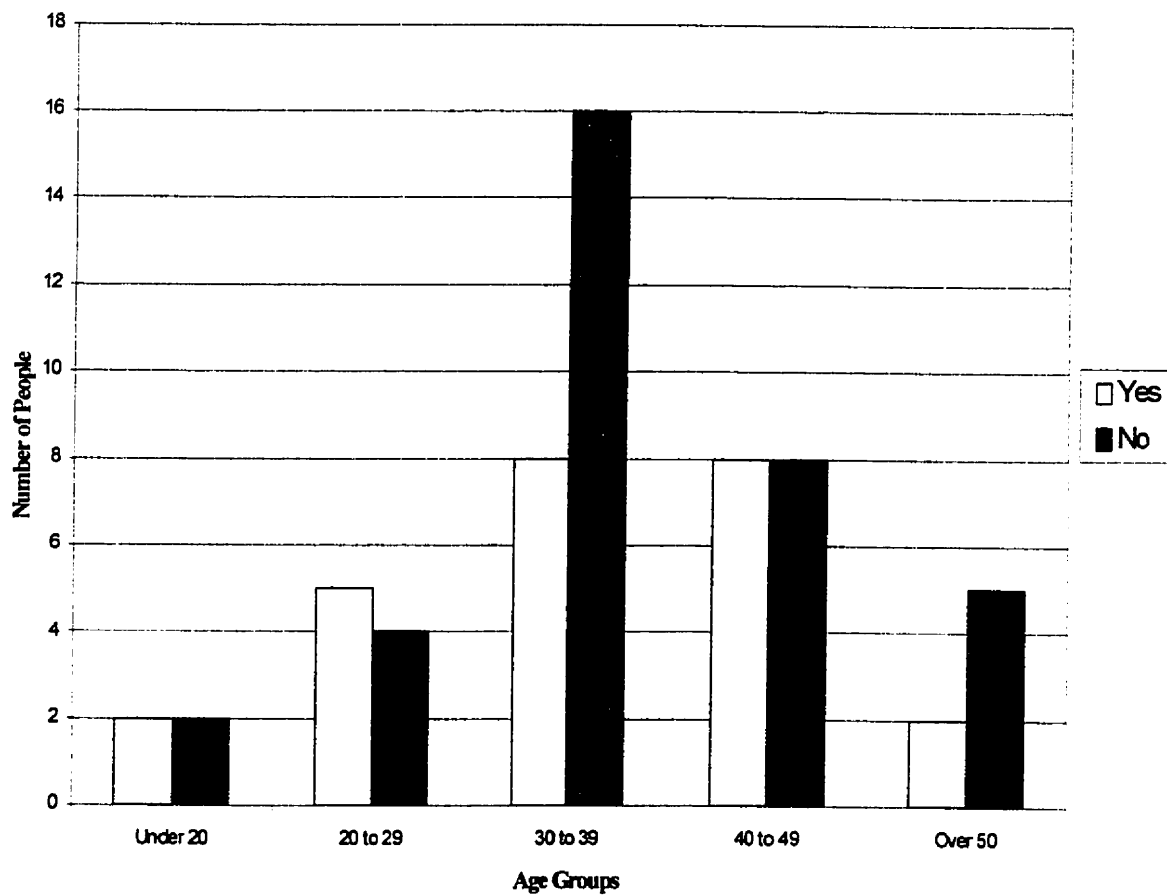
Appendix E (N = 108 = Number of Responses Given)**AREAS WORKED ABROAD**

(Does not add to 60 as most have worked more than one place)



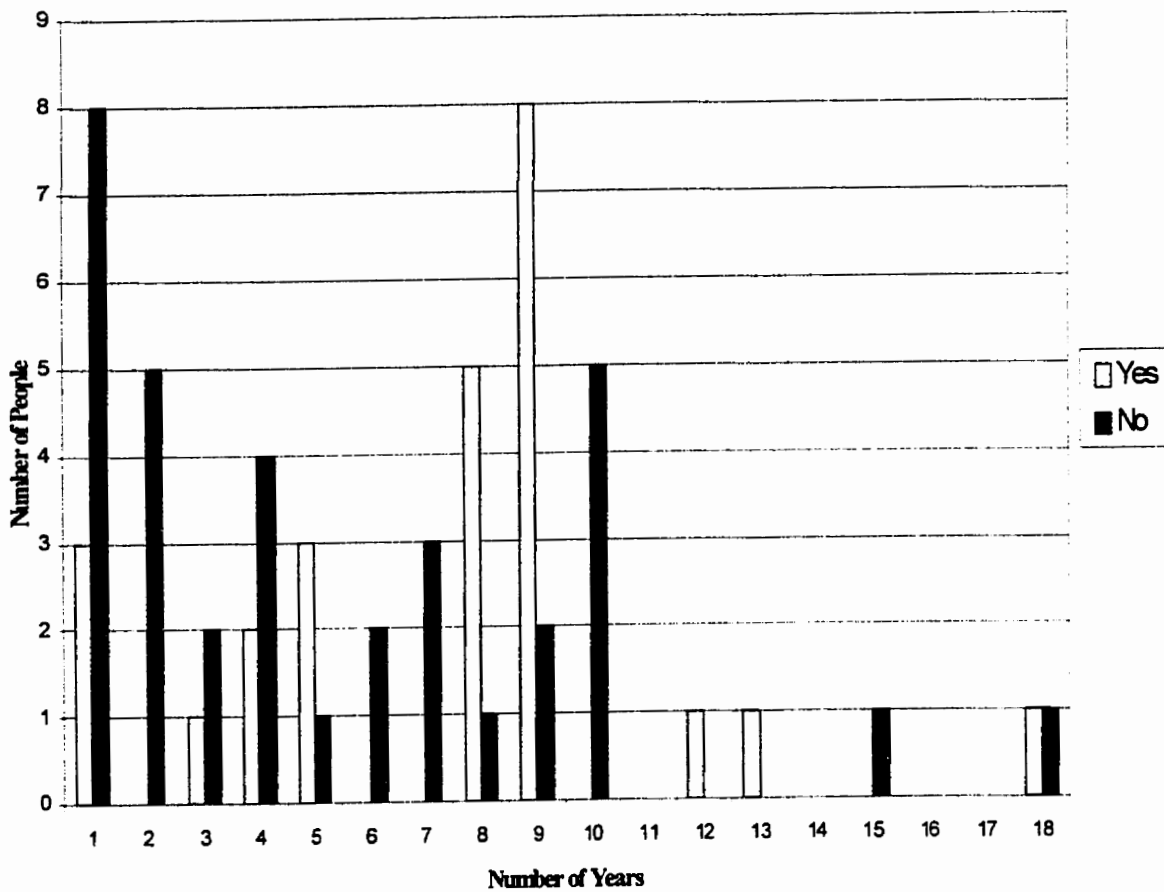
Appendix F (N = 60)

AGE AND RELATIVES WORKING ABROAD



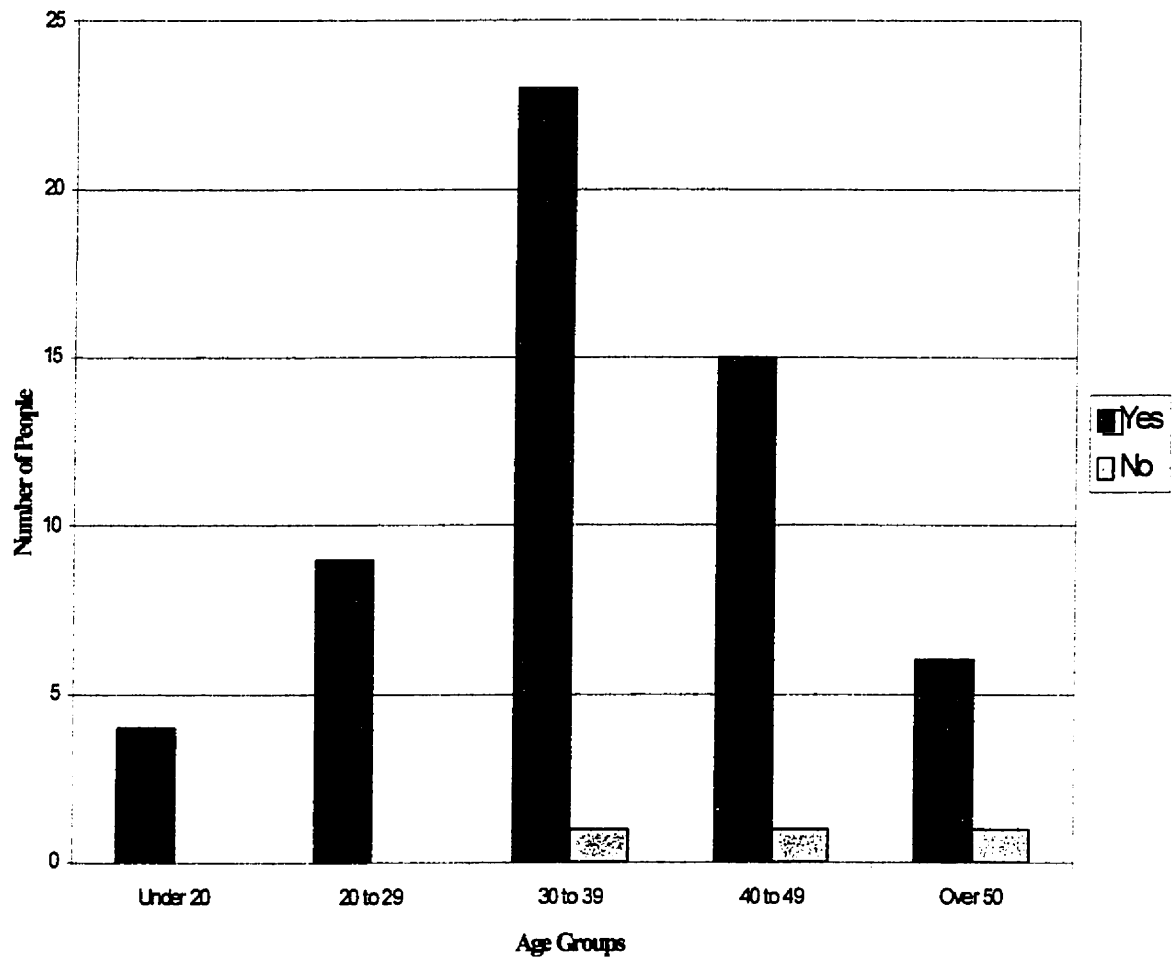
Appendix G (N = 60)

**NUMBER OF YEARS WORKING ABROAD
AND RELATIVES WORKING ABROAD**

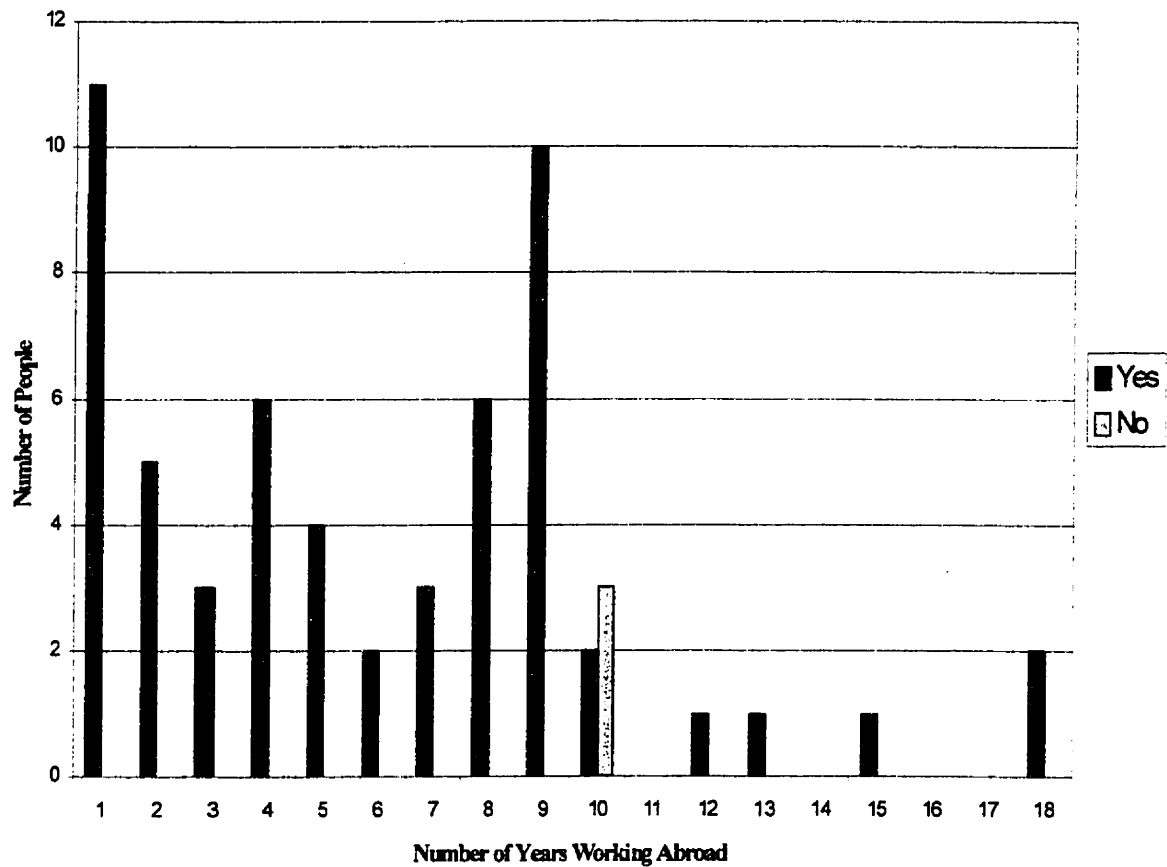


Appendix H (N = 60)

AGE AND NEIGHBOURS WORKING ABROAD

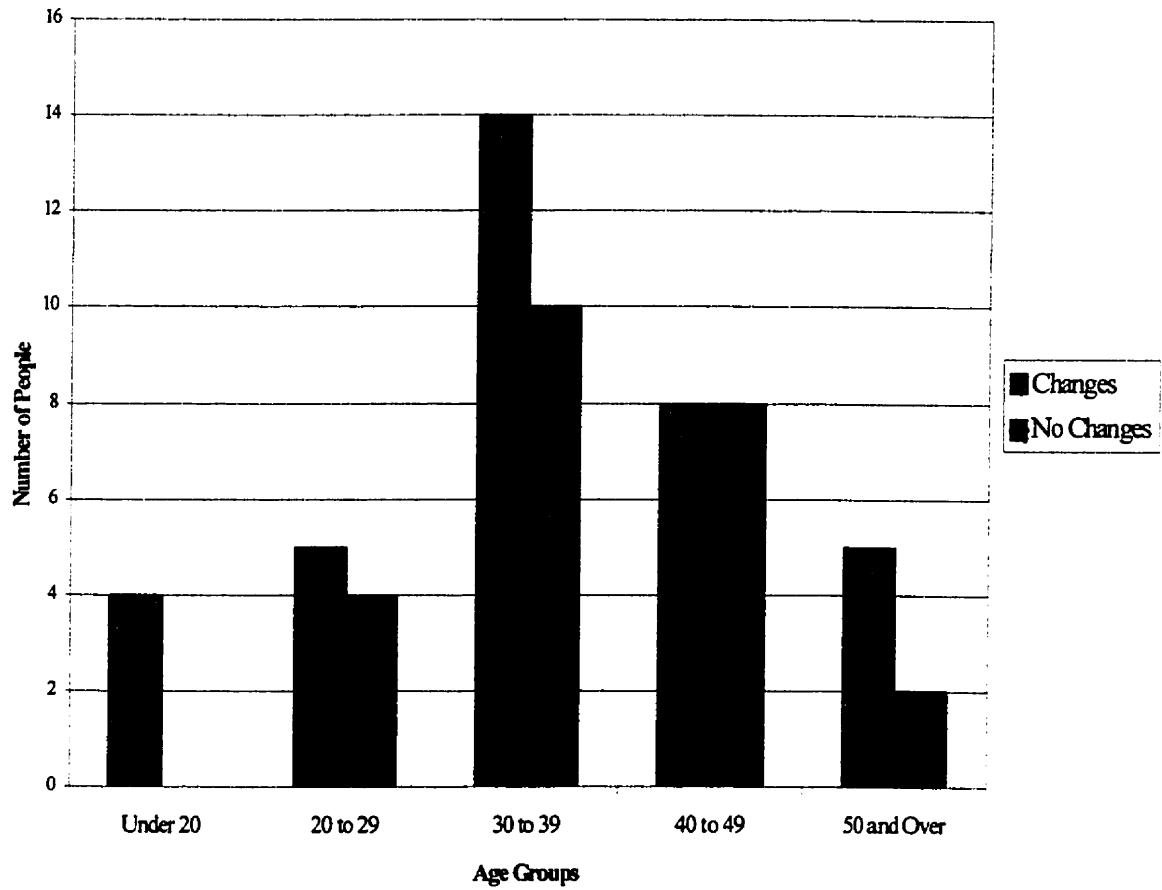


Appendix I (N = 60)

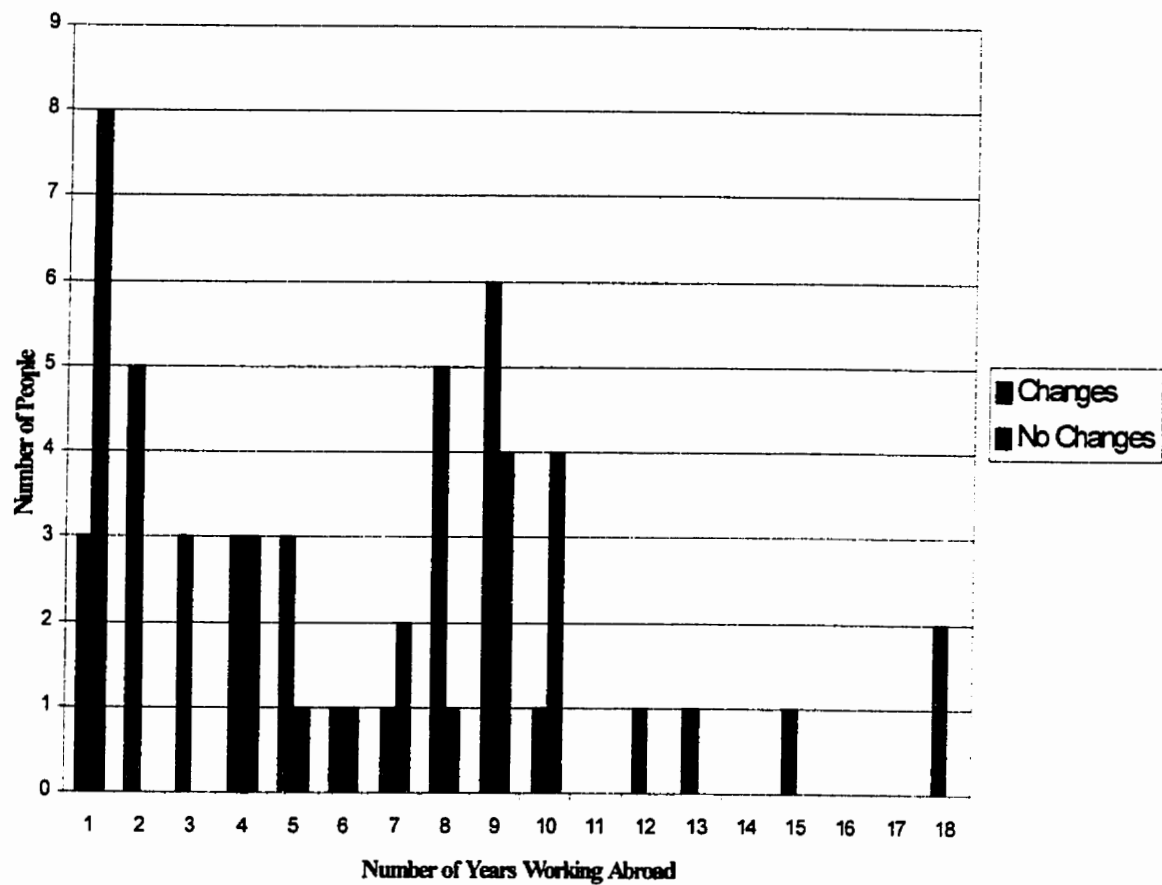
**NUMBER OF YEARS WORKING ABROAD
AND NEIGHBOURS WORKING ABROAD**

Appendix J (N = 60)

AGE AND CHANGES IN PERSONAL LIFE

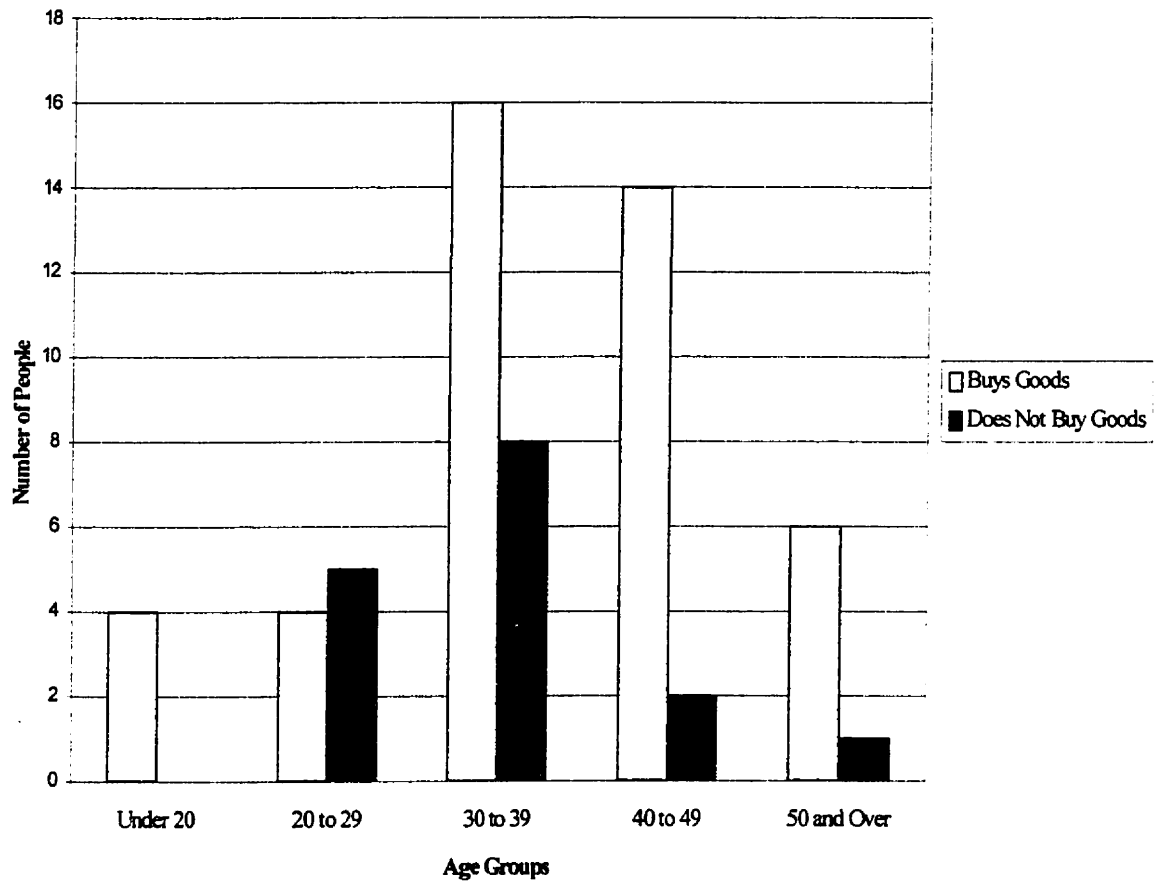


Appendix K (N = 60)

NUMBER OF YEARS WORKING ABROAD
AND CHANGES IN PERSONAL LIFE

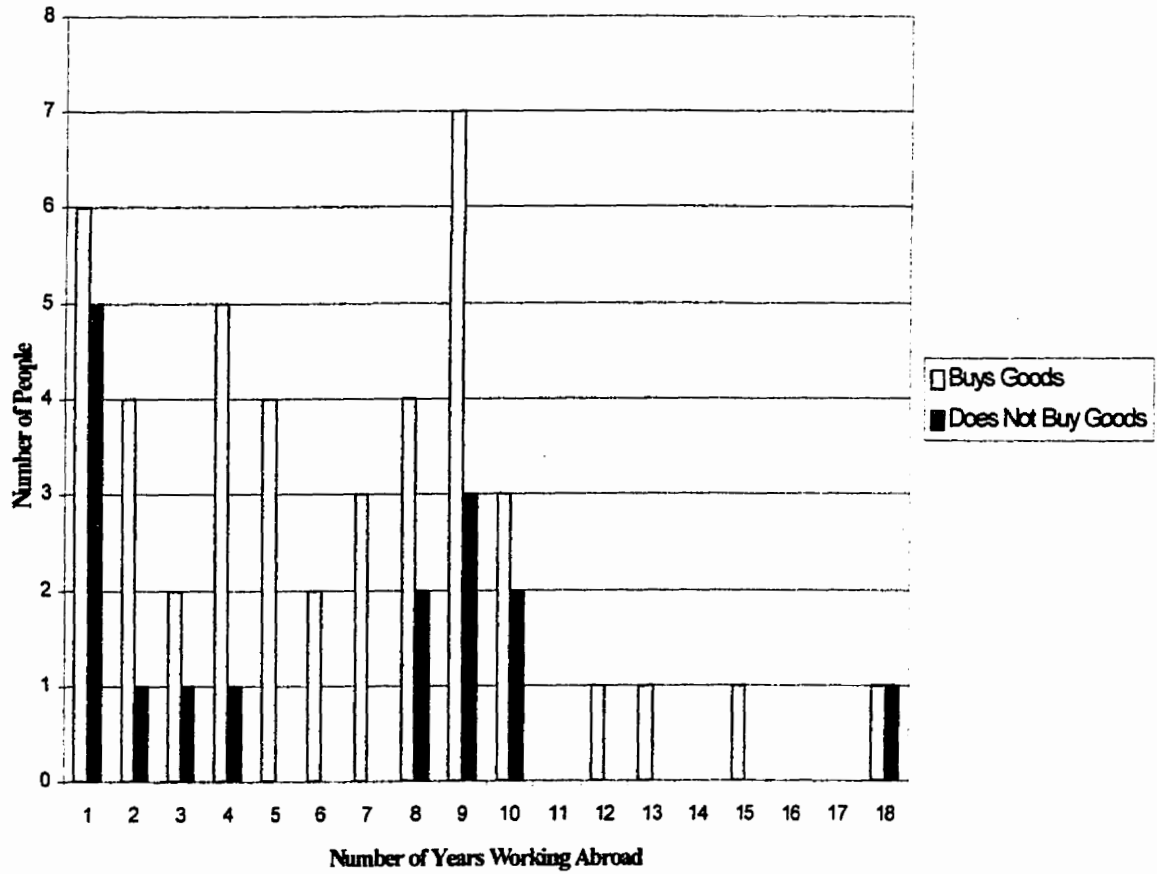
Appendix L (N = 60)

AGE AND BUYING BEHAVIOUR



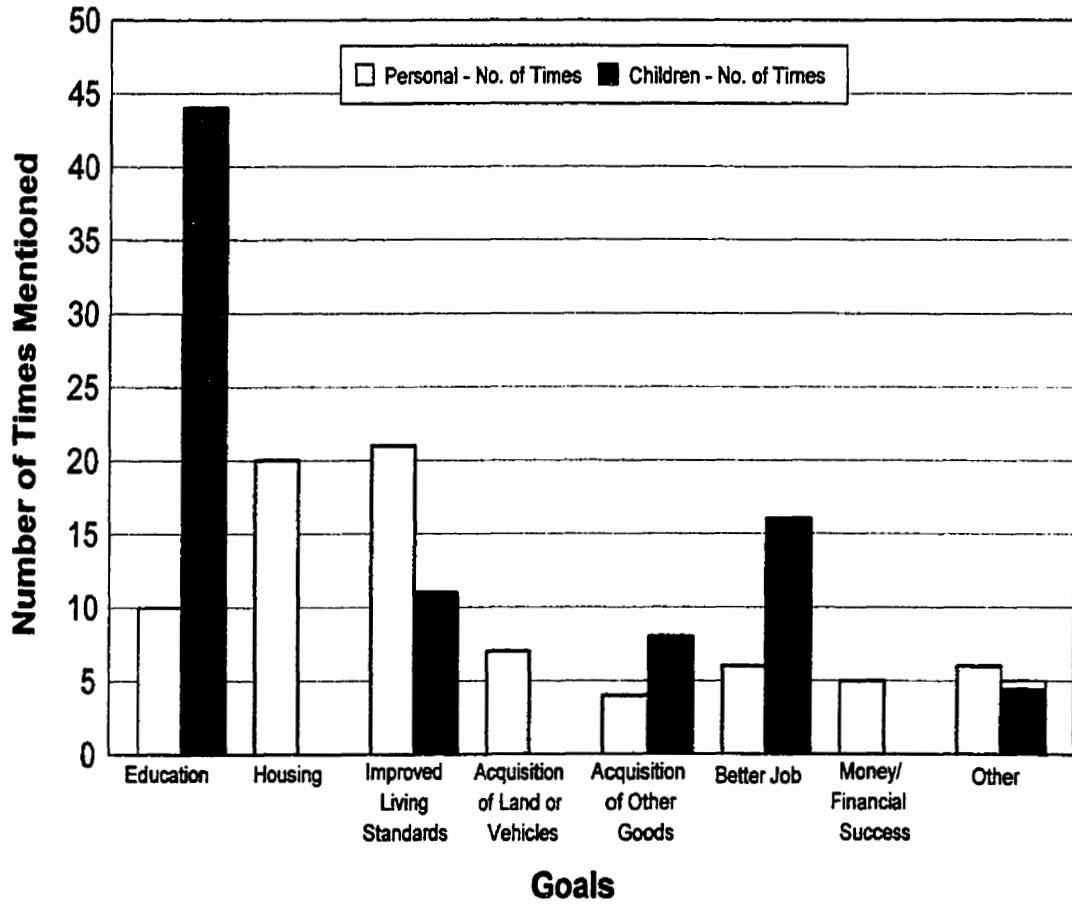
Appendix M (N = 60)

**NUMBER OF YEARS WORKING ABROAD
AND BUYING BEHAVIOUR**



Appendix N (N = 162 = Number of Responses Given)

GOALS - PERSONAL AND FOR CHILDREN



Appendix O

	<u>Age</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Place of Origin</u>	<u>Work in Mexico</u>	<u>Number of Years Working Abroad</u>
#1	44	male	el norte	en el campo	9
#2	40	male	Baja California	diferentes trabajos	9
#3	49	male	Provincia	en el campo	5
#4	31	male	Provincia	en el campo	4
#5	28	male	Hidalgo	en el barrio	4
#6	40	male	estado de Mexico	en el campo	4
#7	38	male	Baja California	en el campo	6
#8	54	male	estado de Mexico	en el campo	18
#9	44	male	Mexico City	lo comercial	9
#10	48	male	estado de Mexico	en el campo	9
#11	39	male	Tlaxcala	en el campo	8
#12	50	male	Distrito Federal	del mano	10
#13	37	male	Tlaxcala	de todo un poco	primera vez
#14	46	male	Guanajuato	en el campo	7
#15	52	male	Tlaxcala	en el campo	10
#16	38	male	estado de Mexico	en el campo	10
#17	37	male	estado de Mexico	la construccion	primer ano
#18	49	male	Guanajuato	el banderia	10
#19	36	male	Tlaxcala	en el campo	7
#20	32	male	Hidalgo	en el campo	primer ano
#21	30	male	San Martin	en el campo, la construccion	primera vez
#22	28	male	Oaxaca	en el campo	primera vez
#23	28	male	Tlaxcala	en el campo	3
#24	27	male	Morelos	en el campo	primer ano
#25	34	male	estado de Mexico	en el campo	8
#26	30	male	Oaxaca	ayudando	primer ano
#27	26	male	Hidalgo	en el campo	primera vez
#28	33	male	Puebla	en el campo	primera vez
#29	33	male	San Antonio	en el campo	primera vez
#30	29	male	Hidalgo	en el campo	primera vez
#31	34	male	Hidalgo	trabajo temporaria	3
#32	38	male	Tlaxcala	en el campo	4
#33	28	male	Morelos	en el campo	9
#34	35	male	Morelos	en el campo	9
#35	54	male	Puebla	en el campo	13
#36	42	male	Hidalgo	en el campo	7
#37	51	male	Baja California	en el campo, la construccion	15
#38	43	male	Morelos	en el campo	12
#39	49	male	Guanajuato	en el campo	6
#40	30	male	Hidalgo	en el campo	2
#41	52	male	Mexico City	la construccion	4
#42	35	male	Mexico City	el comercio	10
#43	31	male	Guanajuato	en el campo	8
#44	41	male	Tamaulipas	carpintero	8
#45	37	male	Puebla	en el campo	4
#46	40	male	Oaxaca	en el campo	9
#47	32	male	Baja California	la construccion	2
#48	35	male	Tlaxcala	en el campo	3
#49	40	male	Hidalgo	el comercio	8
#50	34	female	Hidalgo		2
#51	14	female	Hidalgo		2
#52	11	male	Hidalgo		2
#53	51	male	Coahuila	trabajos diferentes	18
#54	46	female	Coahuila	en el campo	9
#55	24	female	Coahuila		9
#56	20	male	Coahuila		9
#57	41	male	Jalisco	el comercio	8
#58	37	female	Jalisco		5
#59	15	female	Jalisco		5
#60	13	female	Jalisco		5

<u>Areas Worked Abroad</u>	<u>Why Work Abroad</u>	<u>Uses for Money Earned</u>
Ontario, Alberta	conocer Canada, situacion economica	construir, plantar
Ontario, Quebec, Alberta	mantener la familia	construccion, comprar el comer
Ontario, Quebec, Alberta	oportunidad mejor	pagar renta y ropa
Quebec, Leamington, Alberta	mejor dinero	comprar una casa
Alberta	situacion economica, experiencia	la familia
Alberta	lo economico	la familia
Ontario, Alberta	mejor pagado	la familia
Ontario, Alberta	necesita economica	los hijos
Ontario, Alberta	gana un poquito mas	los hijos, el estudio, la ropa
Ontario, Alberta	el economico	cosas para la casa, los hijos
Alberta	esta bonito, mejor pagado	mejor la casa, educacion para los hijos
Ontario, Alberta	muy bonito, es magnifico	comprar cosas
Alberta	mejor para la familia	para la familia
Alberta	gana mas dinero	para los 5 hijos
Alberta	la necesidad, el dinero	hijos en la escuela, casa grande, la familia
Quebec, Alberta	una crisis en Mexico, para trabajar	para sobrevivir
Alberta	pagar mejor	la familia
Alberta	una crisis en Mexico, gana mas dinero	la casa
Quebec, Alberta	mas dinero	el estudio de los hijos, la casa
Alberta	para la casa en Mexico	pagar todo
Alberta	un poquito mas de dinero	una casita
Alberta	ganar un poquito mas	pagar todo
Ontario, Quebec, Alberta	la economica en Mexico no es buena	la familia
Alberta	para hacer algo	tener cosas
Alberta	mejor la vida	una casita
Alberta	los hijos tengan comer	para los hijos, para comprar cosas
Alberta	una casita, para la familia	comprar cosas, comer
Alberta	trabajo para mantener	una casita
Alberta	dar estudio a los hijos	la casita
Alberta	mas dinero	mas para comer
Ontario, Alberta	trabajo bueno, mas dinero	para la familia
Ontario, Alberta	gana mas dinero, compra cosas	comprar cosas
Ontario, Alberta	mas dinero	paga acomodacion, compra cosas
Ontario, Alberta	pagar la educacion de los hijos	pagar todo, la educacion de los hijos
Ontario, Alberta	la necesidad	compra cosas y animales
Ontario, Alberta	para comprar cosas, para tener un trabajo	comprar cosas
Ontario, Quebec, Alberta	mas dinero, para la familia	comprar cosas, comprar tierra, la educacion
Ontario, Alberta	no hay trabajo en Mexico, gana mas dinero	comprar cosas, la educacion de los hijos
Sherrington, London, Alberta, US	mas dinero	educacion para los hijos, necesidades
Alberta	mas dinero	para la familia
Leamington, Rueben	el trabajo de construccion es temporaria	comprar tierra, construir una casa, comprar cosas
Ontario, Quebec, Alberta	mas dinero, mas oportunidades	comprar una casa mas grande, un camion
Quebec, Alberta, US	mas dinero que Mexico	comprar cosas
Ontario, Quebec, Alberta	necesidad, trabajo en Mexico es temporaria	comprar cosas para la casa
Ontario, Alberta	mas dinero, crisis economica en Mexico	comprar cosas, construir una casa, un camion
Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, US	gana mas dinero, es posible ser legal	construir una casa, comprar cosas
Ontario, Alberta	mas dinero, bien estar de la familia	cosas para la familia, pagar acomodacion
Ontario, Alberta	trabajo constante, no gana mucho en Mexico	construir una casa, comprar cosas para los hijos
Leamington, Alberta	mas dinero, la oportunidad	empezar un comercio en Mexico
Alberta	vino con su esposo, las condiciones son mejores	
Alberta	vino con su familia	
Alberta	vino con su familia	
New York, California, Alberta	es posible tener un trabajo seguro	crear una vida mejor para la familia
California, Alberta	vino con su esposo	crear una vida mejor para la familia
Alberta	vino con su familia	
Alberta	vino con su familia	
Alberta, US	tenia problemas economicos en Mexico	empezar un comercio aqui
Alberta	vino con su esposo	
Alberta	vino con su familia	
Alberta	vino con su familia	

Buys Goods Abroad Advantages

yes	mas dinero
no	mas dinero
yes	mas dinero
yes	mas dinero
no	mas dinero
yes	mas dinero
yes	mas dinero
no	trabajo bien
yes	mas dinero
yes	mas dinero
no	pagado mejor
yes	todo
yes	todo es perfecto
yes	todo
yes	buen trabajo
no	trabaja todos los dias
yes	mas dinero
no	muchos
yes	mas dinero
no	bien trabajo
yes	todo le gusta
no	muchos
yes	trabajo bien
no	mas dinero
yes	todo esta bien
yes	todo esta bien
yes	todo va bien
yes	es lo mismo
no	trabajo bien
no	todo le gusta
no	condiciones buenas, trabajo bueno, mas dinero
yes	condiciones buenas, mas dinero
no	mas dinero
no	mas dinero
yes	mas dinero
yes	mas dinero, trabajo todo los dias
yes	mas dinero, todo es bueno
yes	mas dinero, saber que tiene trabajo
yes	mas dinero
no	mas dinero
yes	mas dinero, buena experiencia
yes	mas dinero, mas oportunidades
no	mas dinero, mejor vida para la familia
yes	mas dinero, trabajo todo los dias
yes	mas dinero, trabajo bueno
yes	muy bonita, experiencia buena, trabajo bueno, mas dinero
yes	mas dinero, saber que tenga trabajo
yes	dinero para comprar cosas, mas trabajo
yes	mas dinero, los hijos aprenden ingles
yes	mas oportunidades, menos violencia, mejor para los hijos
yes	oportunidades mejores, aprender ingles, buena educacion
yes	la familia es junto, muchas oportunidades
yes	trabajo seguro, es posible ser legal, bueno para los hijos
yes	trabajo mejor que los EU, vida buena para los hijos
yes	es posible tener una educacion y ganar dinero, mas oportunidades para la mujeres
yes	es posible tener una educacion y tener un buen trabajo
yes	mas dinero aqui, mas oportunidades
yes	vida mas segura, muchas oportunidades, mejor para los hijos
yes	muchas oportunidades, es posible continura la educacion, puede tener un trabajo
yes	tiene un trabajo, puede continuar su educacion

<u>Disadvantages</u>	<u>Relatives Working Abroad</u>	<u>Neighbours Working Abroad</u>
no mucho paser	yes	yes
trabajo pesado	no	yes
	no	yes
	no	yes
	yes	yes
	no	yes
	no	yes
	no	yes
	yes	yes
la comida, no esta con la familia, la clima	yes	yes
la papa	no	casi ninguno
	no	yes
	no	yes
	no	yes
trabajo duro	no	yes
preparacion de alimentos	no	yes
	no	no
el idioma	no	yes
lejos de la familia	yes	yes
	yes	yes
	no	yes
un poco duro	yes	yes
	no	yes
	yes	yes
	no	yes
	no	yes
	no	yes
	no	yes
	yes	yes
la comida, el idioma, no hay mexicanos	no	yes
trabajo duro, es caro	yes	yes
muy caro, mas dinero en Ontario	yes	yes
condiciones bruscas, la clima, trabajo duro, la comida	yes	yes
mas caro	yes	yes
la clima, no hay muchos mexicanos	no	yes
	no	yes
la clima, la comida, es necesario hacer todo en la casa	yes	yes
es puro trabajo, lejos de la familia	no	yes
lejos de la familia, no habla ingles, no hay mexicanos	no	yes
lejos de la familia, no hay muchos mexicanos	no	yes
lejos de la familia	no	no
es caro, es necesario cocinar, no hay mexicanos	yes	yes
el idioma	yes	yes
no hay muchos mexicanos	no	yes
lejos de la familia	yes	yes
trabajo duro	no	yes
lejos de la familia	no	yes
no hay comida mexicana, no hay fiestas, la comunidad es muy pequena	no	yes
la familia y las costumbres mexicanas faltan	no	yes
la familia en Mexico falta, es necesario trabajar, casa pequena	no	yes
	no	yes
mas dinero en New York	yes	yes
es necesario trabajar, no hay mexicanos, no es posible ver a la familia	yes	yes
	yes	yes
no hay muchos mexicanos	yes	yes
no hay muchos mexicanos, los parientes son a Mexico	yes	yes
es necesario trabajar, no hay mexicanos, no es posible ver a la familia	yes	yes
	yes	yes
	yes	yes

Changes in Pueblo

buenas casas	yes
no	yes
casas, animales	yes
caminos, fiestas, cooperacion	yes
calidad de vida	yes
pocos	yes
bien estar de vida	yes
no	yes
muchos, mas dinero	yes
muchos, mas dinero	yes
casas bonitas	yes
	yes
no mucho	yes
no mucho	yes
mas dinero	yes
buenos cambios	yes
no mucho	yes
	yes
campos mas grandes	yes
mas dinero	yes
mejor en su casa	yes
creciendo un poco	yes
casas bonitas	yes
no	yes
casas bonitas, vive mejor	yes
no	yes
no mucho	yes
casas mejores, mas trabajo	yes
mas dinero, mas casas	yes
no mucho	yes
mas dinero	yes
mas dinero, mas tierra, casa mas grandes	yes
mas dinero, mas cosas	en Ontario
mas dinero, mas oportunidad para los hijos	otro lugar
mas dinero, mas cosas, mas animales	en Ontario
casas bonitas, mas cosas	yes
mas cosas	yes
casas bonitas, mas animales	yes
casas nuevas, camiones nuevos	en Ontario
no mucho	yes
mas cosas, mas dinero	yes
	yes
casas mejores, mas camiones, ropa mejor	otro lugar
mas cosas, casas bonitas	yes
casas bonitas, ropa buena, mas cosas	en Ontario
casas grandes, campos grandes, mas animales	yes
casas bonitas, mas cosas	yes
mejor calidad de vida	yes
	quiere regresar a Mexico
	quiere regresar a Mexico
	quiere asistir a la escuela aqui
	quiere quedarse en el Canada
	quiere vivir en los EU
	quiere regresar a Guatemala
	quiere quedarse en el Canada
	quiere quedarse en el Canada
	quiere quedarse en el Canada
	quiere regresar a Mexico
	quiere quedarse en el Canada
	quiere quedarse en el Canada

Want to Continue Work AbroadPersonal Goals

familia, buena vida
trabajar bien
construir una casa
casa, exito en la vida
ser independiente sin patron
vive mejor
viva mejor, ser independiente
vivir en la provincia
bien estar
bella casa, cosas para la familia
hijos tienen una profesion
el dinero, prestar tierras
lo economico
una casita
hijos estudiante
salir adelante
ayudar a los ninos
algo para la casa
mas dinero, una casa
progresar, trabaja aqui
una casita
construir una casa
ayudar a la familia
sembrar en mi pais
ayudar a la familia
tener algo para pasando
una casita propia
trabajando
da estudia a los hijos, un casa
seguir adelante
una casa, el mejor para la familia
una casa, mas tierra
una casa, mas cosas
educacion de los hijos, lo mejor para la familia
mas tierra
el bien estar de la familia
una casa bonita, lo mejor para la familia
mas tierra, un camion nuevo
mas cosas, la mejor para los hijos
le mejor para la familia
una casa bonita, la educacion de los hijos
muchas casas para alquilerlas
le mejor para la familia
casa bonita, lo mejor para los hijos
casa bonita, le mejor posible
casa grande, compra mas tierra
casa bonita, mas cosas
casa bonita, vida mejor para los hijos
un comercio en Mexico
vive en Mexico con la familia
una educacion buena, un buen trabajo
una educacion buena
una vida mejor
una vida con su familia y una comunidad grande
una educacion buena, un trabajo profesionista
es posible encontrar un buen trabajo aqui
un comercio aqui
una vida con su familia y una comunidad grande
una educacion, ser un medico
una educacion, estudia el comercio

Goals for Children

buena vida
 la escuela
 educacion
 ropa, casa, bien estar
 buena educacion, lo mejor
 educacion
 estudio, cosas mejores
 vestir bien, tener cosas
 trabajo
 educacion, buen trabajo
 profesionistas
 profesionistas, no es duro
 mejor futuro
 educacion
 ayudarle
 vida un poco mejor
 estudiar, ayudarle
 estudian
 estudian
 el exito, estudian
 estudio, mejor que pueden
 lo mejor, estudios
 estudian mas
 dales estudios, un profesion
 dales estudios
 comendido bien
 estudios, tengan que come
 trabajando, mantener estudio
 estudia
 lo mejor, darles algo
 educacion, un trabajo
 educacion
 educacion
 educacion, son profesionist
 lo mejor, buen trabajo
 educacion, trabajo bueno
 educacion mas
 educacion, profesionistas
 educacion
 educacion
 educacion, trabajo bueno
 educacion en el colegio
 educacion
 educacion, todo que quieren
 educacion
 educacion, buen trabajo
 educacion, buen trabajo
 educacion, lo que quieren
 aprenden ingles, educacion
 educacion, oportunidades

educacion, lo que quieren
 educacion, oportunidades

educacion, trabajo profesionista
 educacion, buen trabajo

Changes in Personal Life

la vida es la misma

mejor forma de ganar dinero

mas oportunidad

es lo mismo

constumbrar a la familia

buenas posibilidades

mas oportunidad, mas dinero
 mas oportunidad
 es normal
 es mejor
 es lo mismo
 mas oportunidad
 oportunidad
 mas oportunidad
 los hijos no necesitan trabajar, tienen mas educacion, la vida es mejor
 es lo mismo
 puede hacer mas, pero menos tiempo con la familia
 mas oportunidades, puede comprar cosas, los hijos continuan la educacion
 tiene mas ahora, no es tan pobre
 mas oportunidades, los hijos pueden continuar la educacion
 los hijos no necesitan trabajar, mas dinero para la familia
 mas oportunidades, los hijos pueden continuar la educacion
 tiene mas ahora
 mas oportunidades, mejor nivel de vida
 mas oportunidades para los ninos y para ganar dinero
 mas oportunidades para los ninos
 mas oportunidades para obtener una educacion
 muchas oportunidades
 mas oportunidades para los ninos
 mas oportunidades para los ninos
 mas oportunidades para las mujeres aqui
 mas oportunidades aqui
 mas oportunidades economicas aqui
 mas oportunidades para los ninos
 mas oportunidades para las mujeres aqui
 muchas oportunidades aqui

View of Changes

buenos cambios
 buenos cambios
 buenos cambios
 es bueno
 es bueno
 es bueno
 es bueno
 es bueno
 muy bueno
 es bueno
 vale la pena
 es bueno
 es bueno
 muy bueno
 es bueno
 muy bueno
 es bueno
 es bueno
 muy bueno
 no es mal
 es bueno
 muy bueno
 es bueno
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 es bueno
 esta bien
 esta bien
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 es bueno
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 es bueno
 es bueno
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 todo es bueno
 es bueno
 muy bueno
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 es bueno
 muy bueno
 muy bueno
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 es bueno
 muy bueno
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