

Return Migration: Modes of Incorporation for Mixed Nativity Households in
Mexico

by

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ABSTRACT

United States and Mexico population statistics show clear evidence of return migration. This study uses qualitative data collected in a municipality in the State of Mexico during the summer of 2010 from families comprised of Mexican nationals and United States-born children post-relocation to Mexico. Using Portes and Zhou's theoretical framework on modes of incorporation, this study illustrates the government policy, societal reception and coethnic community challenges the first and second generation face in their cases of family return migration. This study finds that the municipal government is indifferent to foreign children and their incorporation in Mexico schools. Furthermore, extended family and community, may not always aid the household's adaptation to Mexico. Despite the lack of a coethnic community, parents eventually acclimate into manual and entrepreneurial positions in society and the children contend to find a place called home.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

“At first [the children] took it like vacation because they were fine, but after one or two weeks, they wanted to go back [to the U.S.], that they didn’t like it, they missed it, and here-- they still don’t want to stay, they want to go back...[and] I am a little depressed, but I also try not to cry in the day while they are awake because if they see me cry it will be more difficult for them, because it is very hard for one to adapt after 10 years, it’s difficult to get accustomed.”¹

Return migration is seldom given adequate attention despite its long history (Reyes 1997; Cassarino 2004; Moran-Taylor and Menjívar 2005). Recent demographic data confirms new international migration trends, specifically with the first and second generation immigrants or what some call ‘the invisible cohort’ (Conway and Potter 2009). The United States (U.S.) Department of Homeland Security reports a 7% decrease in unauthorized immigrants from 2008 to 2009 and Mexico leads as the sending birth country of authorized and unauthorized immigrants (Hoefer 2008). South of the U.S. border, the latest *Instituto Nacional De Estadística Y Geografía (INEGI) Censo de Población y Vivienda 2010* (INEGI 2010), shows Mexico’s national average of 35.5% migrants returning home (2010).² Of these returning migrants³ 83.4% returned to their same residence. Approximately, 61.7% of those who had U.S. migration experiences between 0 months or 1 year returned; 38.3% of those with 7-11 months experienced returned; 41.3% of those 1-3 years returned; and 14.6% of

¹ Nancy, a newly arrived migrant explains the resettlement difficulties for her and her children.

² INEGI defines a return migrant as ‘An international migrant that at the moment of the interview was residing in Mexico yet again’ (2010).

³ Gmelch’s early definition of return migration was the movement of immigrants back to their homelands to resettle with the intention to stay but excludes those vacationing or taking extended visits without resettlement intentions (Gmelch 1980).

those 3-5 years returned. These figures are consistent with earlier findings that 70% of immigrants return home within the first 10 years of migrating to the U.S. (Reyes, 1997), and that longer U.S. residency periods reduce return migration (Massey 1987).

In addition to observable numbers in return migration, Mexico is also experiencing a steady growth in foreign born residents. In 2000, Mexico scored in the top ten countries with the highest foreign populations (Los Extranjeros en Mexico 2007). Of the 496,617 individuals residing in Mexico in 2000, 69.7% were from the United States, 50% of those were less than 15 years of age, and 50.5% were male (Los Extranjeros en Mexico 2007). The foreign born population residing in Mexico has nearly doubled since then (INEGI 2010).

Interestingly, the majority of foreigners residing in Mexico are now children. The INEGI reports that 66% of those foreigners residing in Mexico who were between 5-9 years old were born in the United States (Los Extranjeros en Mexico 2007). Some researchers have suggested that the large number of juveniles is due to their births taking place in the United States but that their permanent residency in the United States was never intended (Los Extranjeros en Mexico 2007). However, studies have shown that having a U.S.-born migrant wife or child significantly decreases the likelihood of return migration (Massey and Espinosa 1997). While reasons for their emigration can be disputed, the latest demographic data clearly confirms that a visible number of 'American' children now live in Mexico.

This return migration study stems from accounts of an escalating return migration population, early evidence suggesting a growing number of foreign born school-aged children are enrolling in Mexican schools (Valdez-Gardea 2010), an overwhelming lack of scholarly literature on family return migration; and the growing need to comprehend the (re)settlement of mixed nativity families. These children are such a unique population that academics have yet to arrive at a taxonomy consensus for them. Scholars in the United States have classified U.S. born children as second generation immigrants, ‘transnational students,’ and the ‘next generations’ (Conway and Potter 2009), but to the receiving country these children are *foreigners* or ‘Americanos’ (Americans). Furthermore, international scholars have defined second generation as children born in the host state or who arrived as children but still carry a foreign passport (Gang and Zimmerman 1999). In this study, a second generation immigrant in Mexico is treated as a U.S. born individual with at least one Mexican born parent. A first generation immigrant or returning migrant, is a Mexican born individual with U.S. experience but was residing in Mexico at the time of this study with at least one U.S.-born child. An analysis on current transnational migration can lead to the better understanding of immigrant movement and composition. As Reyes points out, faulty immigration data may jeopardize U.S. public policy efforts (Reyes 1997). I suggest the same is true of emigration policy efforts in Mexico. Inaccurate demographic data also impact Mexico because of the international recession and limited resources available. If children are returning to their parent’s homelands’, it is essential to understand how they are acclimating themselves to a new country. Particularly

since controlling migration is unrealistic (Bhagwati 2003), and studies have shown that a U.S.-born child living in Mexico has a greater likelihood of remigrating to their birth nation (Dreby 2010).

Unlike former generations, today's second generation have dissimilar assimilation experiences than their parents (Conway and Potter 2009; Zhou 1997). They perceive their host society and relationships from different viewpoints (Zhou 1997; Cardona et al. 2004). How well immigrants assimilate in the United States is also debatable (Gang and Zimmerman 1999; Michael and Glick 2009). Living further from the U.S. borders also polarizes the second generation's experience from their cohort living in the United States. Like 'undocumented children' living in the United States, the second generation in our study have been uprooted from their 'American' homes and taken to a foreign country without a choice, or unwillingly. This study adds to the literature on return migration, international migration, mixed nativity, assimilation, incorporation, and international education.

For this study, I am primarily concerned with settled household units, who previously lived in the United States, but have relocated to Mexico and have at least one U.S. born child living with them. By settled immigrants in the U.S., I use Massey's definition of a migrant having their family with them but not necessarily working in something higher than minimum wage in the host country (Massey 1987).

In response to Rumbaut's call for refined classifications of national origin (Rumbaut 2004), a mixed nativity household for this study consists of minimally,

one first generation parent (capturing all years and phases of arrival to the U.S.) and at least one child born in the U.S. (classified as a second generation immigrant). It is important to categorize the family unit as a mixed nativity household to gain better understanding of how individuals of these complex families adapt simultaneously via the three modes of incorporation.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE

Return Migration Literature

Historically, those who return to their homelands are from rural areas and small towns in developing places (Gmelch 1980), with low education, low wage earners and undocumented immigrants (Reyes 1997). Since then we have learned the return migration decision is just as important as first or later trips (Massey and Espinosa 1997). Massey and Espinosa conducted an event-history analysis on decisions to return and found various factors influencing this migration such as being married, levels of education, human capital, a U.S.-born wife or U.S.-born child, owning land or a home in their homeland, and certain infrastructure items and the economic context of the sending community (Massey and Espinosa 1997). Being undocumented and married positively increased the odds of return migration and negatively impacted those who did. Having a U.S.-born wife or child negatively influenced returned migration as well. Other macroeconomic and policy context variables that were significant included the Mexican inflation rate, real estate, and the availability of visas for the U.S. (Massey and Espinoza 1997).

Longings or illusions of returning also affect immigrants when they are in their host country and play a role in their settlement (Moran-Taylor and Menjívar 2005). Moran-Taylor and Menjívar identify three patterns of how Guatemalan and Salvadorians in the southwest express return migration: assertive, ambivalent, and no desires. Assertive returns are based on family left in their homeland and their experiences in the United States such as discrimination or employment

opportunities. Ambivalent returns refer to those desires or illusions of returning only through careful planning and maneuvering in the host country. For some migrants, this entails purchasing a house or plot of land in their native country or ensuring they are financially stable first before attempting to return (Moran-Taylor and Menjívar 2005). Those with no desire to go back have either established roots (brought children to the United States or formed a family), married in the United States, run successful businesses, or they are concerned with their home countries' economic or political climate (Moran-Taylor and Menjívar 2005). Moran-Taylor and Menjívar's work adds to the scholarship on return migration by illustrating that individual feelings and ideas as well as the conditions in the home country play a role in return migration.

Others have also found that children are one of the central reasons for return migration (Dustmann 2003; Blitz et al. 2005). Dustmann found that fathers will consider children's careers (educational attainment) in return migration decisions and that international plans impact more of the generations than they intend to. (Dustmann 2003). In fact, Dustmann found a strong association between fathers staying in the United States and their sons' educational attainments (controlling for age, origin country, and son's cohort).

International literature on family return migration in cases of Afghanistan refugees in Britain, found that parents with children had less positive feelings about returning to Afghanistan (Blitz et al. 2005). However, immigrants who left Afghanistan as children and those who had never been to Afghanistan still felt an emotional attachment to their parents' country, but felt it was also unrealistic to

return due to the situation of Afghanistan (Blitz et al. 2005). The concerns over political conditions back home mirror the apprehension that Salvadorian and Guatemalans have in return migration (Moran-Taylor and Menjívar 2005). Unfortunately, both scholarships have focused on “views or longings” about return migration, as opposed to actual return migration.

In other contexts and cases of actual migration to ancestral lands by second generation, Japanese-Brazilian immigrants, the experience was nothing like what they had imagined. Nostalgic Japanese-Brazilian immigrants searching for ‘home’ in Japan were ethnically rejected in their ancestral lands, experienced assimilation blues, and faced internal conflicts with others in the community (Tsuda 2003). Despite these incorporation issues, Tsuda suggests that the return migration experience has reinforced their Brazilian ethnic and national identity (2003). The Japanese-Brazilian migrants have been resilient to their situation despite their ‘home’ searching disillusionment.

In a related study on transnational students⁴ living in Mexico, Zuníga and Hamann (2009) found differences between Mexican born and U.S. born students in school adaptations. For some, international and returning migrant students, the transnational experience brought drawbacks while for others it became an asset. Administrators also contributed to the issues of adaptation for U.S.-schooled students. Teacher’s perceived U.S. school experienced students as not ‘knowing’ anything, (Zuníga and Hamann 2009). What Zuníga and Hamann point out is that teachers were referring to the lack of knowledge on Mexico history, geography,

⁴ Zuniga and Hamann define transnational students as those who have been enrolled in two countries (Zuniga and Hamann 2009).

etc. and not their actual abilities (Zuníga and Hamann 2009). Negative perceptions of U.S.-born children have also permeated other studies.

During the same time, Valdez-Gardea also found that Sonoran institutions were seeing an influx of children of school age returning to Mexico with their parents, and that some pupils were U.S. born (Valdez-Gardea 2010). In her study, school teachers felt that the second generation students were unprepared to undertake education in Mexico and felt educators also required training on how to assist these students (Valdez-Gardea 2010). The new trends of U.S.-born children migrating to Mexico deserve attention. I argue that second generation immigrants accompanying their parents' return migration will have dissimilar settlement experiences than their counterparts assimilating in the United States because of the context differences between the United States and Mexico. Second generation immigrants in Mexico will also adapt differently than their first generation parents since literature shows they perceive their society from different angles (Zhou 1997).

Assimilation Literature

The term 'assimilation' has evolved over time (Alba and Nee 2003). Early thinkers described assimilation as the influence over a particular group, fusion of two groups, cross-fertilization of heritage, and other hybrid definitions of social processes (Gordon 1964). Milton Gordon attempted to unify the idea, by describing assimilation as an Anglo-Saxon, white Protestant benchmark for immigrants to strive for and completely resign to (Gordon 1964). To Gordon,

assimilation consisted of seven variables (cultural or behavioral and structural changes, marital, identificational, attitude and behavior receptional, and civic participation) (Gordon 1964). Those ideas were critiqued for their one-sided nature and incapability of the ethnic group having a positive role in immigrant adaptation (Alba and Nee 2003). Over the years alternative assimilation theories have continued to develop and markers for assimilation have been identified. Pluralism or transnationalism explores how technology, market integration and mass air transportation have allowed immigrants to maintain their national ties and flourish alongside American society (Alba and Nee 2003). Segmented assimilation on the other hand, refers to the various outcomes of immigrant incorporation (Zhou 1997). Unlike other theories, segmented assimilation allows for three possible multidirectional-patterns – upward mobility, downward mobility, and parallel integration (Zhou 1997).

While no assimilation model takes precedent, one marker for assimilation in contemporary literature is educational attainment. Researchers have turned to educational achievement (academic orientation, aspiration, and performance) to capture levels of adaptation for children of immigrants (Zhou 1997; Zuniga and Hamann 2009). Rumbaut (2004) found that there were "significant generational-cohort differences by nationality origin, suggesting both differences in migration histories as well as potentially significant implications for social and economic adaptation outcomes" (Rumbaut 2004). In a study comparing second generation immigrants to their native cohort, Gang and Zimmerman (1999) also found that parental education had no bearing on their foreign born child's education choices.

These studies are important because they highlight two ideas: 1) Immigrants ‘assimilate’ when they are able to achieve education in the same numbers and levels as their white counterparts 2) Point to other social processes taking place during the adaptation process.

Contemporary literature on segmented assimilation in particular has focused on the *modes of incorporation* (Portes and Rumbaut 1990; Portes and Zhou 1993), a concept referring to ‘policies of the host government; the values and prejudices of the receiving society; and the characteristics of the coethnic community’ (Portes and Zhou 1993). Considering larger social processes such as changing immigration and economic patterns, Portes and Zhou (1993) explained that assimilation is shaped by government policies, societal reception, and ties in the coethnic community. On the governmental policy level, the institution can either be receptive, indifferent, or hostile. The second level of incorporation takes place at the society reception level which can either be prejudiced or non-prejudiced. The third level of adaptation takes place at the level of the coethnic community which can be weak or strong (Portes and Zhou 1993). Nonetheless, these studies have usually focused on U.S.-bound migration and have not been tailored to other contexts.

Adapting Portes and Zhou’s theoretical framework on modes of incorporation - government policy, societal reception, and coethnic community, I apply and extend Portes and Zhou’s conceptualization to cases of Mexican return migration. Since the current literature utilizes various markers of assimilation – such as educational attainment, this study relies heavily on the school adaption

process. I first discuss the indifference of local government policies through school matriculation examples. Second, I discuss how respondents perceive local community's non-prejudices and prejudices against them and how this affects their rural society incorporation. Finally, I point out the lack of coethnic community members for the mixed nativity households and implications.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH SITE

El Estado de Mexico (State of Mexico) is state southwest of Mexico City consisting of 125 municipalities. The state has a population of 15,175,862 while the research site municipality has a population of less than 30,000 persons (INEGI 2010). The average household size in the unnamed municipality consists of approximately 5 members and more households are headed by men than by women. This research site is also a tourist attraction in south-central Mexico and has seen dynamic changes due to gentrification and has struggled to maintain its historical preservation.

In the area of education, this municipality has lower levels of education than the national average of 9.1 years for those 15+ years old. Approximately 70 percent had access to formal primary education (INEGI 2010).

The State of Mexico is one of the states with the highest number of foreigners and has seen an increase of 1,168,372 million people since 2005 (INEGI 2010). It is unknown how many returning migrants exist and how many foreigners now reside in the municipality. Nationally, a quarter of the foreign born individuals live along the Mexico U.S. border and the rest of the Mexico bound migrants settle in the rest of the country (Salgado and Bordi 2007).

The State of Mexico is one of the eight poorest states in the country and has historically sent a larger population to Mexico City than it receives. (Izazola 2004). Izazola also found migrants to Mexico City had higher labor-participation rates than out-migrants, non-migrants, and the national population (Izazola 2004),

suggesting that those from outside the city head to the capital for work. Some of those migrants tended to have prevalence in industrial and service sectors (Izazola 2004).

Like U.S. bound migration, (Chavez 1994), internal migration is multifaceted and based on economic, environmental, social, cultural and political factors in both the sending and receiving areas (Irazola 2004). In the last two decades, south central states have sent out large number of agriculture workers to the United States due to the changing economy (Salgado and Bordi 2007). This area now sustains themselves in high proportions from the remittances of migrant relatives in the U.S. and Canada (Salgado and Bordi 2007).

Chapter 4

METHODS AND DATA

Methodology

This study draws on data gathered from July to August of 2010 in a municipality in *El Estado de Mexico*. These months were chosen for data collection because this period is the best timeframe to locate returned migrants with school-aged children since they are on summer vacation and because this season attracts migrants to return for the summer municipality festivities celebrating religious holidays and Mexican independence day.

A purposive sampling strategy was used to obtain formal interviews with parents/guardians and children throughout the municipality via multiple points of entry. Collaboration between a non-profit center serving the migrant population and their families was established as one point of entry a year prior to the fieldwork. Volunteer work at the office was exchanged for the non-profit center's assistance. The second point of entry was through the local *presidencia* (government)⁵. My contact was an employee familiar with the remote areas of the *municipio* (municipality) who offered leads on returning migrants. Participant criteria was based on the following: the family unit must have 'returned' to Mexico, with intentions of permanently staying, within the last 5 years of the interview date, the family had at least 1 U.S. born child (over 6 yrs old for interviewing purposes), and the family unit must have been residing in the municipality during the time of the interview. The 'residing' component was left

⁵ Connection made through the non-profit organization.

up to the initial contacts interpretation. As a result, I obtained interviews with lots of variation.

During the semi-structured interviews, participants were asked about their migration experience, familiarity with the school systems in Mexico, about community reception, and how they perceived their national identity. The interviews ranged from 30 minutes to 3.5 hours depending on how detailed the participant responded to the questions.

Interviews took place at the respondent's homes in the language of their choice – Spanish or English. Participants were also given a non-monetary incentive worth up to \$20 gift at the end of the interview. Children were gifted a flash drive and a calculator and adults were gifted a flashlight. These gifts were socially acceptable and unisex.

Data

Twenty one (N=21) participants were recruited from 11 different households (N=11) which consisted of 11 adults (3 males, 8 females) and 9 children (2 males, 7 females). All families were considered 'mixed nativity' households since each family unit consisted of at least one U.S. born child and one Mexican born parent/guardian. The average age for adults in this sample was 38 years (ranging from 31-48 years old); the average age for the children interviewed was 12 years old⁶ (ranging from 16-15 years old). Two interviews with children were conducted in Spanish and seven were conducted in English. All 11 of the interviews with adults were conducted in Spanish. The average age

⁶ This excludes children ages 6 and 8 which were not interviewed.

of the adult's first migration was 25 years old while the average number of years between their first migration and their return was 12.5 years. Of the 11 parents/guardians, 1 had no education, 3 had *primaria* (primary) education, 6 had *secundaria* (secondary) education, and 1 had *preparatoria* (preparatory) education.

In the area of education, 5 of the 9 children interviewed were currently eligible for the next school year. Two children's provisional enrollment periods had expired and at the time of the interview were ineligible for the following year. One adult was unsure if he was going to enroll the child(ren) at all. The last parent/guardian was waiting for the enrollment period to officially start.

My background

I was born in Mexico and my family migrated to the United States when I was 3 years old to reunite with my father working in California. As a mixed nativity household⁷, we grew up with stories passed down by my parents about Mexico so I personally feel like I know my birth country. I can tell you about the economic struggles my mother's generation faced, the latent effects of NAFTA on my father's agricultural means of survival, and the humble culture of the town's residents. Yet, Mexico is still unfamiliar due to my life in the U.S. This study helps clarify the unexplained feelings I have about mixed nativity household return migration. In a way it previews how our lives would have been if my parents or the U.S. had made us return and walk away from the life my family and I had made north of the border. It is my personal background that allows me to

⁷ My mother had U.S.-born child years after our settlement.

immerse myself in the interviews inquisitively, analytically, and objectively in exploring return migration to my birth country.

In order to analyze the narratives for themes, interviews were transcribed and imported into MAXQDA software. This software is a dedicated application for text analysis and allows the user to code themes, enter memos (notes), and run queries on commonly used codes or for specific words. MAXQDA software was used to code themes that emerged in the return migration narratives and enter memos within the 21 imported interviews.

Although the starting point of this study was exploring the return migration experience, this research developed into an analysis of the various ways returning migrants incorporate into local society based on the overarching theme of matriculation issues collected from parents and children and their collective narratives on community reception. Since return migration is an increasing phenomena embedded in the complexity of immigration policy and the economy (Sjaastad 1962; Cassarino 2004; Cardona 2004; Levitt and Schiller 2004), I consider these macro level processes to comprehend the barriers associated with matriculating U.S. born children and the impacts the community has on parents and children by utilizing the *modes of incorporation*- segmented assimilation framework.

Chapter 5

MODES OF INCORPORATION

Government Policy

Governments are instrumental in migration movements because they can control flows through authorizations (Portes and Rumbaut 1990), formal and informal policies concerning immigrants. This study describes what happens when *Estado de Mexico* returning migrants have mixed nativity families but make note that in some case it may not be this. Return migration interviews with first generation (adult) participants generated clear examples of the local government's indifference or 'legal entry without resettlement assistance' (Rumbaut 1990), with school enrollment. Situating these interviews within the context of the parent's own access to education and how they valued education for their children (U.S. born or not) is essential. Most adults in the study conveyed their inability to complete formal education due to family poverty or other life circumstances. As shown in Figure 1, the highest level reached for those in the sample was preparatory education but most had either primary or secondary levels of education. One had no education at all. Almost all responded that they felt their children have more opportunities today than in their generation. Only one indicated that the opportunities were the same. Mario, a 36 year old father with an 8th grade education elaborated on how opportunities are better today,

The support was not the same in that time. Before we went with ripped pants, all shredded, without notebooks or with one notebook that you took care of because there wasn't any. What we used for our backpack was our *morral* (bag) that was for our machete – that was our bag! Now kids ask

for notebooks for every course, different pens, backpacks with designs, or with circles if we can [afford it]. They ask for new shoes. In education, well in my house they never told me ‘good luck or go do your homework.’ We do say things like that so in that way I say the education is better today.

Almost all the adults in this study came from disadvantaged households and generations where not only were finances tight -- the social support was almost nonexistent. The first generation in our sample valued education, encouraged their children in school as best as they could, and would sacrifice what they had for their children’s futures. Those with enrolled children, met with teachers, attended conferences, complained about drugs on campus, and supported teacher’s disciplining efforts. Economic sacrifices like the one following were quite common:

Well we tell them that, we are going to support them until we can, until they say ‘I’m done, no more.’ I tell them, ‘we do not have money to be giving you just like that,’ but I tell them ‘if we do not have money, we will find it so they you can take advantage and get your studies.

Having gone through a matriculation process with their U.S.-born child before in the United States or in Mexico with Mexican-born children, adults in our interviews described the municipality’s matriculation method for the U.S.-born, as un *relajo* (drama) and un *enredo* (a tangled process). Although federal government policies give clearance for the second generation to enter the country, Mexico’s *CURP*⁸ policies block foreign eligibility to public or private education without going through the complicated matriculation process.

When migrants return to Mexico, registered Mexican nationals, adults and children alike, are eligible for services. In mixed nativity households, however,

⁸ *Clave Única de Registro de Población (CURP)* (Unique Population Registry Code)

foreign children are ineligible for medical care, public services and various enrollment credentials (such as vaccination records, medical files, registry for retirement, employment applications, receipts, social security, drivers license, passports, birth certificates, and other registry paperwork) until they obtain a *CURP*. The *CURP* stems from an *Acuerdo Presidencial* (Presidential Agreement) signed on October 26, 1996 to institute the *Clave Única de Registro de Población (CURP)* administered through the *Administración Pública Federal* (Public Administration Federation) (Norma Que Regula). The CURP registers all persons living in Mexico's national territory, foreigners living in the country, and Mexicans living abroad with the *Registro Nacional de Población (RENAPO)* (National Population Registry) (CONDUSEF). Federal, state and local governments have been highly encouraged to implement the CURP. Today, federal and state websites exist, providing basic information about what a CURP is used for, how to obtain one, and provides a search tool to locate an existing number. Federal and State governments have encouraged CURP use through national and state campaigns and by opening offices at the federal and state level to assist with the identification number process. The local government in this study however, has shown signs of flexibility and strictness on the enforcement of *CURP* policies.

In this study, parents first became cognizant of the implications of their child's foreigner status when they attempted to enroll their U.S. born child in school at the local government level. "She told me that without the *apostillado*

you cannot enroll your child in school” said Berta the caramel skin toned woman of her curly haired daughter.

In order to discuss the school enrollment or matriculation process one must understand the various components. Based on findings in this study, foreign minors were able to enroll in local schools upon parents/guardians furnishing proof of dual citizenship (U.S. and Mexican citizenship), *CURP*, school records, and an *acta de nacimiento* (birth certificate) that was *apostillada* (apostilled which means translated and stamped). While there were trends in what documentation was requested by school and local government officials during the registration procedure, each parent was asked to provide quite unique set of credentials composed of the documents aforementioned detailed on Table 2. Of the 6 successful matriculation cases, one family had to obtain dual nationality for their child; three families were asked for the stamped *apostillado*, 6 were asked for the U.S. birth certificate (one had to be translated), 6 were asked for the *CURP*, 1 required previous grades. The child on provisional status did not have the certified *apostillado* and could not obtain a *CURP*. One of the families required an attorney to assist them in the process. Five of the families were given provisional status while they obtained the proper paperwork. One was given an undefined time period. The lack of consistency between processes and the lack of the local or State government’s initiative to help with this important settlement matter illustrates the indifference of local municipal government and the State. This is important to highlight since the *Programa Nacional de Poblacion Por Un Cambio Demografico A Favor Del Desarrollo* (National Population Program for

Changing Demographics for Favorable Development) released by the federal government recommended “[instituting] forms that stimulate the return of the migrants and facilitate their reinsertion in Mexican society” (Programa Nacional de Población 2008-2012 2008-2012). Of the 11 households that were interviewed, 7 parents responded they had issues matriculating or attempting to matriculate their U.S. born children, 2 said they did not, 1 family was newly arrived at the time of our interview and parents had not attempted to enroll the children, and 1 adult was waiting for the enrollment period.

Yolanda was a soft spoken woman of short stature and pixie haircut. She was the mother of three children with the youngest girl being U.S.-born. The family had returned to south central Mexico quite abruptly due to her husband’s trouble with the law. His alcoholic behavior landed him in jail and the family had no choice than to remigrate back home. Although her daughter Erika remembered very little of her U.S. experience or her dad’s pressure to learn English, Yolanda remembered the unique enrollment requirement for her foreign child,

And for her, looking over at the U.S. born child, I had to register her here [her nationality] because they [the school] would not accept her here in Mexico and for her too I was battling a lot here and there to get her birth certificate that now go and pay here and there so they would accept the – the identification that we call here a code CURP the number of identification too so they could accept her in school otherwise they wouldn’t without it. If they admit them it is for a certain time, they tell you it’s for a certain time, because at the end of the year if you have not brought the papers, your daughter -- it’s like she isn’t studying, that she doesn’t exist. They will not create a report card for you.

Other families had similar problems. Marta was one of the few who had the nostalgia to return to Mexico. The native Jalisco woman with light skinned

and curly short hair had migrated to the Midwest 20 years prior with her parents and married her husband from the municipality years later. Over the years, the remittances they sent back to Mexico allowed them to build a house on a corner lot. After three years of pondering the idea of actually moving, 6 months of planning and 2 truckfuls later, the family of five returned to Mexico. The house smelled of *chile rellenos* and was relatively quiet for having 3 children in the house. Marta proceeded to explain the challenging process,

What they asked me for was the dual citizenship, so I had to send for the *apostillamiento* with my brother, that took a long time for him to send, and then I went to Toluca with their birth certificates so they could translate them from English to Spanish... then after that, to get the birth certificate from here, oh God it was a mess, ah, I had to go to Toluca, I went again for them after 8 days and then from there I had to go to the local delegation for the birth certificate for each one of them once I had enough money to pay (400 pesos) for them. Then aside from that they gave us a sheet that they wanted, what is it called, another birth certificate and I don't understand, they give you the original and you have to get it translated or something, the point is that after getting those two birth certificates you can start the CURP process. Because with him [the oldest] they were not going to allow him in the preparatory if he did not have it, the Mexican and that is why I made the effort to go ahead and get it for all three.

The temporary admission statuses in this study varied in length: 2 weeks, to their next educational transition period (completion of *la primaria* (*elementary*), completion of *la secundaria* (middle school)), and in one case it was indefinite. While this short-term enrollment period enabled the child to start school and the adaptation process, this did not alleviate the issue of the parent maneuvering through the complex matriculation system. Per *CURP* guidelines, a child is ineligible to obtain their completion *certificado* (certificate) due to a lack of proper documentation. The five cases of temporary enrollment and the non-

extension provisional status in 2 cases demonstrate the strict enforcement of the *CURP*. While some may argue that temporary enrollment is a passive form of allowing these children to incorporate, I argue that not standardizing the convoluted matriculation process makes the local government unresponsive to the particular assimilation challenges these mixed nativity families face.

The multiple stories of matriculation trials highlight the lack of government assistance. The outspoken woman named Esperanza, one of the three unsuccessful matriculation attempt cases, vocalized her frustration,

And the government here does not support one much with that... they do not help – at least there [in the U.S.] I see that Mexican people who come from here to over there they help a lot [referring to the government assisting people through procedures].

As the mother of two foreign children, Esperanza had attempted to matriculate her 14 year old daughter and 6 year old son multiple times. Using the eldest Mexican born daughter's laptop bought in the U.S. when they returned, the family had tried requesting the *apostillamiento* and the *CURP* online. Esperanza had also visited the suggested offices in various cities and even attended a migrant non-profit center's matriculation workshop for some answers. To no avail, these multiple attempts at formally matriculating her children have left Esperanza bitter. However Esperanza's actual problem is that she only has a copy of her daughter's U.S. birth certificate and the original is essential to obtain an *apostillado* and the *CURP*. Unfortunately, Esperanza also lacks the social contacts with the necessary English skills in the U.S. that could help her recover the needed documents and obtain the *apostillado* at the nearest consulate office. Other adults in the study had

relatives or friends take on the task of navigating the regulations at consulate offices to obtain the *apostillado* and mailing them to Mexico.

The state and local government's ambivalence to the increasing return migrant population also leaves room for confusion and corruption. Mario, a male adult was told by a school director that dual citizenship was required for his daughters' school transition point. Mario had sent his wife and two U.S. born girls to Mexico when his daughters were quite young. Mario followed seasonal work across the west and made multiple trips to Mexico before settling down in the town in 2005. Recently, having heard of stories of parents making legal mistakes in the matriculation process and fearing he might unintentionally rescind his child's American citizenship by mistake, Mario sought help from a local representative in the municipal government.

So we finally found out and when I went and told him [the government official] and began to investigate on how to get them dual nationality because there is man who has three kids from over there too but I'm not sure if they're still here, but they made an error of nationalizing them here because, if you get a birth certificate here and you sign well you're saying that you no longer want to be from there.

Mario's social network contacts in the *presidencia* (local government) alleviated his fears and uncovered school officials were purposely asking for dual citizenship in an effort to make profits off returning migrants. According to his contacts in the local municipal government, individuals were not required to have dual nationality. Learning of this Mario proceeded with Jessica and Melissa's matriculation process. However, had Mario not had the connections he did, he might have given in to the directors pleas. Other cases of corruption included the

local registrar director. According to the information gathered, the registrar director has been requesting funds to streamline the process – even though he is already being paid to do so by the local government. These stories highlight the vulnerability of the returning migrants and how locals try to take advantage of their situation.

Another technique schools use to exclude children of migrants is by excluding them from government educational assistance programs even when children have all their necessary paperwork in order. Brenda, a student with dual nationality, *CURP*, and a certified U.S. birth certificate was disqualified from obtaining books and notebooks items for which Mexican-born peers were eligible. Basic education is free in Mexico (McKenzie 2006), but enrollment fees, supplies, transportation costs, lunch, and other associated costs create a burden on the families. Despite the child's dual citizenship, the parents had to purchase these items themselves. Marta explains,

They give preference to those from here than the ones from over there...like with my daughter, they were given opportunities but not to me because they [my children] are not from here. At the school they would say because she is a foreigner, the teachers [would say that] in school... I have my sister in laws here and they give her kids -- let's say what the government sends, like books and notebooks all of that, my daughter doesn't get.

Interestingly, there are parallels between the lack of 'proper documents' in Mexico and the United States. The *CURP* and a social security card are utilized by the government in the same manner. Although foreigners can obtain a *CURP* in Mexico, the process is ambiguous. The only requirement to obtain a *CURP* is to have an appropriate form of identification such as a birth certificate, a

naturalization card, or a document verifying migratory status (Gobierno Federal). Yet an *apostillado* of the U.S. birth certificate has also been requested and/or a Mexican birth certificate by state and local officials. In some cases, the local government has kept the original U.S. birth certificate when parents obtained their child's double nationality citing that 'those are the rules.'

But they kept the one [birth certificate] from over there...and they only gave me the one from here and I asked the delegate why they were taking it and they said those are the rules, that is what they say there...I only have the copies that I asked the teachers for during the enrollment process...but the original they took --of all three [children]...and another person that came also fixed [obtained dual nationality for] their son and I asked them if they took the birth certificate from over there [the United States] and they said 'yes they took it,' she said that yes they do take them.

If parents exited the United States without any of the required documents such as the *apostillado*, the procedure to obtain the right documentation can be very extended. Without social contacts in the United States, such documents like the *apostillado* would be difficult to obtain. Without a *CURP*, persons are ineligible for most institutional services or even public services - "Here they ask you for it all over, they ask you when you register a cell [phone] – they ask for the *CURP* like over there when they ask you for a social [social security card]" explained Esperanza. The *CURP* resembles the credential verifying legal status (the outcomes of the various pathways to legal immigration⁹) in the United States. An individual lacking legal entry documentation is ineligible for a social security card, government benefits, and a driver's license in some states. However,

⁹ The seven pathways to legal immigration include illegal border crossers, visa abusers, non-resident visitors, non-resident workers, students and exchange visitors, and refugees/asylees (Massey and Malone 2002).

instituted by an unprecedented case, Plyler v. Doe (1982), K-12 schools cannot deny education to unauthorized school aged children (U.S. Supreme Court 1982). Mexico on the other hand, is preventing foreigners without a CURP to access long term education. These institutional barriers prevent second generation students from settling into their new home via government policy.

To date, only one non-profit organization has been proactive in assisting these mixed status families. In December of 2009, the non-profit center teamed up with the municipal and state governments to organize a free public workshop on how to obtain *apostillado* after recognizing that mixed nativity families were having difficulty enrolling their children in school particularly in the step of getting their U.S. birth certificate apostilled or certified for use in Mexico.

Societal Reception

Portes and Zhou's typology on societal reception is binary – either prejudiced or nonprejudiced. However, the cases in this study inductively demonstrate that relationships cannot always be categorized in negative or positive terms. In fact, respondent narratives are nuanced, complex, and not always positive. To illustrate societal reception, I subcategorize this mode of incorporation into two areas – 1) immediate and extended family and 2) community, to show the simultaneous adaptation patterns that first and second generation immigrant's face when relocating to Mexico.

Immediate and Extended Family

Relatives of the returning migrants played a major role in how the study participants (adults and children) perceived societal reception at the time of the interview. According to both first and second generation immigrants, they felt well received from those immediately around them –their kinfolk.

Amanda, a teenager explains how the community received her and her family,

“Some people were happy you know. [laughs] I guess it’s all family. And they welcomed us back. I remember when we got here, everyone kept coming by. Oh you guys are back, that’s good you know... Like for the first month. Sometimes when we walk to [the soccer] games, we see people, ‘oh how are you, how have you been?’ I feel like a huge welcome from everybody.”

When asked where she calls home, Amanda said Wichita¹⁰ but also said she could call this municipality ‘home’ too because of the number of family members she has there, but lacked in the United States. Other parent explained how her children were “happy to see their grandparents, their cousins, their uncles, meeting, some would come, others would leave and ‘this is your uncle’- because here he has lots of family.” The second generation’s perception of positive reception was common in the narratives. Children of immigrants shared positive feelings toward their extended relatives and wanted to get to know them.

Other adults felt the same welcome from their immediate and extended family upon their return. Yolanda explained her return migration,

Again we assimilated again, our family received us well, our acquaintances...would say welcome, welcome...well thanks, welcome again to

¹⁰ Location name has been altered.

the town ...yes all the people received us well but our family more, they were happy that we had returned. My father was elated because one day he came to visit here and Pedro was over here and he said, 'its great kids, that you found me with life still,' he said. Since he used to come over here a lot [before] he often stopped by to see his grandchildren and was sad when we left but now that we returned he is really happy.

Other returning migrants described their family as being *contentisimos* (happy) when they returned. Ignacia, a previous housekeeper turned meat merchant upon returning to Mexico, described how her immediate family wanted to impress the U.S.-born children with a present and ended up gifting them a hamster. These small gestures made Ignacia and her mixed nativity family feel welcome.

However, not all returning migrants perceived a positive welcome. Juan, a 46 year old man that migrated to the United States when he was 22 years old had no formal education but had managed to be economically successful in the United States. He sent remittances to Mexico and had built himself a brick house on a mountain-side lot that his parents had promised him. The house was similar to those in the United States – with an indoor kitchen and bathroom, commodities that some Mexican houses fail to have. The plumbing was still unfinished and the family improvised with the water they collected via an open cistern next to the house. Despite its gorgeous masonry, grey building structures blocked the view of Juan's brick house. This eyesore was not what Juan anticipated coming home to. While he was away in the United States, Juan's parents had sold part of the lot and never bothered to tell Juan even though he was under the impression it was fully his and was already building a house on it. Juan's immediate family

relationship was clouded and frail due to the property issue and Juan felt his family was attempting to take advantage of his economic wellbeing and kindness. Juan explained his negative family relationships and how his relatives ‘turned’ against him. “We do not get along. I don’t have any ‘family’. You know very well, [how it goes] here -- if you don’t let someone borrow money, they are no longer your family and they do not want you.” As a result of this family fight, Juan’s U.S.-born children have only met some relatives but hardly speak to any. Unfriendly and negative relationships like this one hinder the family support system that otherwise would be there upon their return.

Although Juan’s case was one of the most extreme cases of family relationships, this points to the issue of what happens to family relationships when so much time, milestones, and events have passed. A woman named Nancy who had recently returned to Mexico after being gone for 12 years did not feel well received from her immediate family also. All this time, she and her husband romanticized about returning only to face a cold shoulder from her family.

I don’t know what happened I tell you I don’t know. Maybe they recalled that I had been away a long time, I felt like a little, like I don’t know how to say, like if they were still mad or like they were still hurt but I really think that it was because it had been a long time and that I was not there with my dad when my father died, yes...one would like to be in good circumstances with all your family, with all my, with all the world, but if one is on good terms with the family and with the rest of the people one feels much better.

Nancy’s migration period had greatly impacted her family bonds. Building their dream house was not worth the lost time and severed kinfolk connections. The bruised relationships were one of several reasons for Nancy to regret making the move back to Mexico. The adaptation of her children also worried her and

even though they were with her, Nancy felt a strong desire to re-migrate to the United States for the family well being.

In conclusion, there were differences in the perceptions of reception between first and second generation immigrants. U.S.-born children felt well received by their extended family in the local municipality. The children were taken in by their relatives and were appreciative. Their parents, individuals with former lives in Mexico, had more variation in their perceptions on being well received. Their migration histories had changed their relationships, modified their roles in their family relationships, and were no longer perceived the same by their relatives and vice versa.

Community

Communities have been said to play a powerful role in immigrant settlement. Some have argued that integrating a new sense of community takes place in the adaptation process (Bathum and Baumann 2007). In U.S.-bound migration, those less likely to permanently stay were those who did not feel a part of the community, experienced discrimination in the host state, and had issues with their legal status (Chavez 1994). Social systems within groups are also essential in adaptation and without these immigrants can feel negative psychological outcomes (Sonn 2002). In this study, I suggest that negative, prejudiced attitudes toward returning migrants also affect their feelings of belonging and adaptation.

Outside of the immediate or extended family, the society was fairly positive against the returning migrants; only one expressed feeling prejudiced

against. Almost all returning migrants perceived a positive welcome and felt at home. Johana explains how she felt welcome even a year after her arrival,

People still talked to me when I returned and I would go out in the afternoons when we had nothing to do and would go out and all the people would invite us ‘come have some coffee, come get a drink.

However, for a single mother, the societal reception was negative even before her arrival. Selena migrated to the United States in search of work to support her children, build a house in Mexico and to rekindle a marriage. As successful as she was in finding employment, her marriage was not. Selena moved on with her life in the States but eventually got pregnant. Due to a lack of social support, high costs of childcare and medical needs in the United States, Selena made the journey to Mexico to leave the child with her grandmother.

And despite everything, you know that people here are very, they like to talk a lot... because it does affect [me] you know...it affects you but despite everything at times you show them [that] much more that you can [make it] – [compared to]another person...And it did upset me because they would tell my mom, ‘your daughter is going to bring you another child, and another, and another and you are going to take care of them’. They would give her ideas and my mom believed them at first but when she saw it was not true she stopped listening. But the people were not on my mind, I had another mentality and the people had another – a bad conception of me. What the people thought was not it, and sometimes that helps too because you say no, let me demonstrate to the people that I can [be better] and I am not like any other [loose woman] that they can speak bad of me. Especially being a single mom, that is when they want to bring you down

Five years ago, Selena finished building the house of her dreams in Mexico with the remittances she was sending – a large enough house for her four children. When she returned to the municipality, three of her four children came to live with her (including the U.S.-born child), but one decided to stay with her

grandmother who had raised her. Now the community snickers at Selena for remarrying and bringing her new husband to live with her – something out of the ordinary in the local culture.

Although few adults faced community critiques, children faced other culture challenges in society. This has been the case in other contexts as well. For instance, second and third generation Japanese-Brazilians returning to Japan have also experienced disaffection from their ethnic homeland (Tsuda 2003). In this study most of the negativity came from children in school and teachers.

Johana and her family returned to Mexico due immigration issues¹¹ and her husband's aging parent. Although Johana felt the family was mentally prepared for their return, they did not anticipate the school bullying. Sitting on some chairs below a fruit tree in the middle of a dirt courtyard behind a yellow painted convenient store they had opened upon their return, Johana explained,

It was difficult because like I mention it was that they played jokes on the kids, but a lot and I would complain to the teachers and one time I believe they tied Emily's hair to the chair, ahh, since she had it long (her hair to her backpack)...and when she tried to get up the chair went too. And she also has the habit of taking off a shoe and I think they took her shoe from underneath and would throw it on the azotea (roof). So she would come crying from the things they would tell her uhmm, they hit her one time, she said a boy named Juan spit in her food too.

Emily, Johana's 11 year old daughter broke down when I asked about the differences between the schools in the U.S. and in the local municipality. The sound of Emily's voice was identical to her mother's, "In the school, I don't think it is the same like over there, over there they would tell you keep trying and everything...[here] the teachers say 'you're dumb' and only like certain kids - like

¹¹ Selena and her husband were victims of immigration attorney fraud.

they give favoritism to some.” The children in town also ostracized her. “I only have one friend. Many are mad at me because I was born over there on the other side, but now I hold it in, but there are some that understand me and they do not put me to the side like the rest.”

For Emily, the differences in learning style and culture played an important role in the way she has been adapting. Emily’s case more closely resembles those of first generation immigrants in the United States. First generation immigrant children are unable to adapt to the changes in learning styles and are often said to have learning disorders (Partida 1996). Emily’s grades suffered at first but over the last two years, her grades have improved.

Another youth named Kevin, enjoyed Mexico’s scenery but felt strongly negative about the community. The soft spoken boy expressed his distaste of the people, “they are *criticonas* (like to criticize).” They have called him lanky, *Mogly* (mosquito), and *chango* (monkey). Kevin does not feel well liked by the people and feels they are *muy llevados* (people that cross the boundaries) and *groseros* (*mean*). Kevin’s father, Juan expanded on their children’s challenges in adapting,

It may be because, we also always have, have held back a bit about going from house to house and over there, um I think this is why it can be said that they may not feel okay here because it is a different system of life well, so society or the community in some way they shelter themselves too because sometimes I hear them talk to other people and they ask what that signifies and well no, they do not know [it] well, them [know] Spanish – no.

Selena, Johana, and Juan’s cases illustrate lack of community support and understanding. For others, the language conversion was one of the greatest difficulties for children attending classes. Parents urged local municipality

educators to have patience with their children because of their lack of Spanish skills. Nancy, a concerned mother, had gone to the extent of enrolling her son named Victor in Spanish tutoring prior to the start of the school year to ease her child's transition. "Right now, I am sending him to Spanish classes because he does not know how to speak it, speak yes but write it no, but to write and read he does not know. So I am sending him to Spanish classes, and he said he made 2 friends, but that he does not like living here." Victor her son faced more adaptation issues that this sociological study could explain. The child became silent when I attempted to recruit him for the study and tears trickled down his face when his mother explained to me that he was homesick, was having difficulty adjusting to his new home, and that the physical separation from his father, who was in the process of joining them, was taking a toll on him. The mother shared the same sentiments and emotions and regretted her and her husband's decision to return migrate. The challenges these families face, first and second generation alike, go beyond the government and community modes of incorporation. The psychological impacts of coming to terms with the international relocation are an area that needs to be further explored in future return migration studies.

The language adjustments children in this study face resemble the challenges of the first and second generation cohorts in the U.S. School assimilation has been historically difficult for the second generation (Partida 1996). The same holds true today for the second generation in south central Mexico. As a consequence of not being able to successfully integrate

linguistically, one of the teenagers in the study dropped out of *la secundaria*. “Stephanie had become bored because she flunked all her *materias* (courses) and had to repeat the grade” according to Esperanza. This was also one of the reasons for her mother’s decision to stop pursuing the formal matriculation process. On a larger scale, however, U.S.-born children with transnational experience do more poorly than their peers. Zuniga and Hamann found that 26% of U.S. born children have repeated a grade and were behind in Spanish (2009). When I asked Stephanie, the 14 year old aspiring pediatrician about whether or not she wanted to return to school she quickly replied, “Not here. I wanted to go back [but] I don’t want to go here.” If classes were in English she would reconsider, but for now, she would not. At the time of the interview, she was searching for a job since she had eloped with a boy she met in middle school.

Coethnic Community

In U.S. bound studies, the term coethnic refers to ethnic concentrations (Smith and Elliot 2002). In Mexico bound studies like this one, the coethnic community is more complicated to define because migrants are returning with U.S.-born children. The question then becomes, who is the coethnic community for mixed nativity households? The first generation is native born and the mainstream group is Mexican so a coethnic community term would not traditionally apply here. However, I suggest that migrant experiences make them dissimilar to non-migrants. Migrants in this study have stories of suffrage in their migration journey, emotional strains from being away from their family and friends in Mexico, and accounts of their financial success and failure. Their U.S.-

born children are testaments of this passage in the United States. On the other hand, the second generation's coethnic community would be other U.S.-born individuals. Yet, although state demographic data is available on returning migrants, no data exist on how many U.S.-born children there are in the municipality. Understanding the complexity of mixed nativity households, allows me to treat both first and second generation immigrants as separate cohorts in Mexico but also treat them as an separate group in Mexican society when discussing the coethnic community.

In this study, no current enclaves of mixed nativity households existed in the municipality – returning migrants and their children lived side by side other Mexican nationals. Nonetheless, not much is known about these distinctive households. This is the first known study regarding mixed nativity households in the area or the state. The results of this study show that households have relocated to Mexico for various reasons: their desire to return, to take care of aging parents, and fears of deportation or the actual deportation of at least one family member.¹² In the early stages of their arrival, mixed nativity households almost always bring with them earnings from the U.S., automobiles filled with the essentials, and in a few cases – furniture, electronics, and household items to make their living standards closely resemble what they had in the United States. Most adults made the making of their home their first priority once setting foot on their native lands. They finished building their homes or in a couple of cases – started the construction or made renovations to the structure they would call home. Over the

¹² These reasons were consistent with other cases of return migration in the area but could not be included due to the study's narrow methodology approach.

course of their settlement, adults entered the workforce while some opened up businesses or small enterprises. Since returning migrants are able to obtain such occupations, Portes and Zhou's framework on coethnic communities must be adapted. First, the coethnic community in the cases of return migration refers to other mixed nativity households. Second, the typology of the coethnic community cannot be binary in Mexico bound studies. According to Portes and Zhou's (1993) adapted definition, weak coethnic communities "are small in numbers or composed of primarily of manual workers" while strong communities are those larger groups with 'diversified occupational structure including entrepreneurs and professionals." In this study nonetheless, returning migrants entered manual labor positions¹³ but also started their own businesses such as convenient or game stores and others became merchants at the farmers market. Yet without a true number of mixed nativity households it may be premature to describe the coethnic community for the first generation as weak or strong because they occupy both areas at the time of the study. However, I categorize the first generation's coethnic community mode of incorporation as 'Both' to accurately depict what was found in this study.

Unlike their parents, the children of migrants are foreigners in Mexico and they are dissimilar to their Mexican-born peers. Although they share the same roots, Mexican traditions, and even religion –their U.S. lifestyle and American culture makes them different. Their Spanish is weak but their English is also

¹³ Manual positions in this study refer to positions where manual labor is required or when the individual is hired as a laborer.

halting. Only two of the nine children preferred their interviews in English, but some had levels of English skills prior to their arrival according to their parents. In addition to their language skills, first generation immigrants also had different customs and expectations. At the beginning, children dressed in clothes they had brought with them from the United States but over the years, their clothes were indistinguishable from their Mexican counterparts. Culturally speaking, recent arrivals missed U.S. style bathrooms, chain stores and a variety of products, and technology – items that local natives had little or no experience with. Based on their nativity and U.S. culture, the second generation’s coethnic community must refer to other U.S.-born children or persons but other mixed nativity households as well. While returning migrants and their children are physically indistinguishable from their Mexican neighbors, first and second generation immigrants have histories that make them unlike the native population. This distinction prevents the natives from being the coethnic community. In this study, other returning migrants and their children are the mixed nativity household’s coethnic community.

Although return migration is multifaceted, U.S.-bound immigration frameworks can be utilized to investigate how mixed nativity households adapt in Mexico after residing in the United States. This study lays the foundation for future studies and has shown that that the governmental conditions are unfavorable to these first and second generation immigrants because these policies are neither completely hostile nor receptive. The complexity of the mixed nativity households also makes societal reception more difficult to understand. In

many ways, the children of returning migrants endure the historical adaptation challenges their parents faced in the United States if they were undocumented. Their lack of identification disallows them to enter schools, obtain commodities such as cell phones or even medical services. Furthermore, since the population of returning migrants and foreign born children is quite new to the area, no laws or resources have been previously instituted to benefit this population. As a result, returning migrants and their foreign born children at this phase of their settlement lack a true coethnic community. However, despite the initial adaptation challenges, parents and children prevail over the hurdles or institutional barriers to education, reception challenges, and minimal support.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

Upon return migration, families incorporate into society through various mediums. Per Portes and Zhou, three forms of incorporation are through government policies, community reception, and their coethnic community. Their framework can be adapted to the return migration experience of first generation immigrants and their U.S.-born children that relocate with them. I find that Mexican government policies created barriers for U.S.-born children to access long term education. The cases in this study illustrate the obstacles in matriculating children into primary, secondary, and *preparatoria* schools. Since there is no standard way of enrolling a U.S.-born child in south central Mexico schools, adults are forced to navigate the process of admission on their own. The multilevel procedure is convoluted, lengthy, and sometimes unsuccessful. Parents travel to numerous government offices throughout the state in order to obtain the forms and identifications required to matriculate their child. The lack of initiative by the local government to standardize the admission process of foreign students hinders the adaptation process of returning migrants and their children. Parents are affected because they are the actors in the process as the guardians of the child's education and the children are the ones who have their education interrupted. The second generation ultimately pays the price for unsuccessful matriculation processes since enrollment provision periods expire and the schools enforce the federal rules. Up until the point of this field work, the local government had not taken any initiative to streamline the process. However, the

municipal government's support for this study and the resource contact they provided me with does makes them receptive to the knowledge gained from this research.

One of the second forms of integration is societal reception. Mixed nativity families that returned to their homelands were not always openly received by relatives who were non-prejudiced. The first generation had more complicated ties with their family and community. Their times away from Mexico hindered their societal reception and were not always received well by their family. However, most of the returning migrants felt well received by the general community. The second generation on the other hand, was less impacted by the history of their family. U.S.-born children felt positively about the relatives they gained upon their move and felt their extended family treated them well and was welcoming. However, general community members were prejudiced against the foreign children and affected their adaptation. The second generation were teased, bullied, and picked on by other Mexican national children in school. Overall, children faced more challenges in the community than parents due to their lack of history in the area, lack of established ties, and experience in differences in school systems.

The third level of incorporation is through the coethnic community. However, there is no actual data on how many mixed nativity households that now live in Mexico after duration in the United States. These mixed nativity families are also culturally different than their non-migrant counterparts so their own ethnic group cannot be considered their coethnic community. Despite earlier

a lack of earlier mixed nativity households to the municipality, the families in this study are adapting. First generation adults are entering the workforce and taking manual positions and also opening up their own small businesses as entrepreneurs. Children on the other hand, experience difficulties in both school and in the community.

Despite the institutional barriers to long term education, lack of family or community support, or an ethnic community – the cases of returning migrants in this study show some signs of ‘settlement’ but at different paces. Early arrivals¹⁴ expressed settlement issues. Esteban who was deported in 2009 describes his teenager’s attitudes, “they just got here and they already want to leave, they say that it is not pretty here.” Yet Jose, a teenager who had migrated four years prior to the interview and had serious adaptation issues in school at the beginning¹⁵, preferred to interview in Spanish – showing signs of language adaptation.

Language loss of children was also present in the narratives. Johana and her family relocated to Mexico in 2008 but she suggests that her daughter is already experiencing English language loss.

She is already forgetting English, but with the kids that came the other day, she came home excited, she had not sat down to speak English like that with anyone. And the other day we found a boy around her age and she told me she talked to them in English...but yes she is starting to forget.

¹⁴ In this study, recent arrivals refer to those to mixed nativity households that arrived within the last year of being interviewed (between 2009-2010).

¹⁵ Marta explains her son’s displacement in school, “[My teenager] did not like it [school], that it was too hard for him, that over there it was different, here they had lots of, they graded differently, that over there he did not have to go out so much to buy this, to buy that, to do this or that. I say that it was hard for them at the beginning.”

Esperanza who returned to Mexico in 2008, explains the process of coping with financial differences,

At first it was difficult too because I wasn't used to living here again. Because I was used to making my own money, to have it every two weeks -- every Friday. And here I could not work because I was not used to earning 100 pesos, 120 a day.

Coming to terms with the pay differences, she prefers to be a stay at home mom instead of working for low pay.

The role of social networks in the matriculation process also deserves attention. Returning migrants with relatives in the United States were able to obtain the documents they were missing more easily than those who did not. Relatives made trips to consulate offices to inquire and obtain the *apostillado* the participants in our study were missing to enroll their child in school. Without these social contacts in the United States, families may be unable to complete the matriculation process. Furthermore, the returning migrants' social networks in the United States suggest signs of cumulative migration experience (Massey 1997). Returning migrants had ties with immediate families in the United States that could assist them. Returning migrants also had friends that allowed them to use their mailing address for any important mail.

The increases in return migration and foreign populations in Mexico are telling of larger social, economic, and political processes taking place between Mexico and the United States. What demands further attention here are the second generation immigrants who feel displaced in return migration cases. What are the long term consequences of government indifference to their situation? Will their

parent's kin continue to have positive interactions with them? How will Mexican communities respond to them over the years? These are questions that both countries need to consider. Mexico is at a pivotal place where it can either continue ignoring the issue or play a role in helping the foreign children integrate. The cultural capital these U.S.-born children possess is enormous. As the INEGI (2010) indicates, the overall returning migrant population has high levels of education (Salgado and Bordi 2007). Aside from this, the children in this study possess English reading and writing skills that Mexico can utilize in the right circumstances or job industries. Their Mexican-born, U.S. educated siblings also bring with them those skills. As Dustmann and Weiss suggest in a study conducted on returning student migrants to the U.K, "with a sufficiently high rate of return migration, the source country can actually gain from the opportunity that its citizens have to acquire experience abroad..." (Dustmann and Weiss 2007).

This study also serves to clarify that children of Mexican nationals relocating to Mexico are not returning migrants -their U.S. experienced parents are. Children of migrants should not be categorized as returning migrants because they were never born in Mexico, they were born in the United States.

Finally, while slight modifications were made to Portes and Zhou's modes of incorporation framework; this study exemplifies how U.S.-bound theories can be utilized to study return migration in the absence of one. This is useful because to date, relatively no studies have utilized assimilation frameworks created for U.S.-bound migration to explore return migration in particular. Portes and Zhou's theoretical framework was used in the following ways to suit the circumstances of

returning migrants: 'Government Policies', the first mode of incorporation was utilized to illustrate how both returning migrants and their foreign born children may both be affected in their (re)settlement; 'Societal Reception' was subcategorized into 'Family and Community' to illustrate the complexity of the return migration experience; and the 'Coethnic' term was reconceptualized to fit the return migration settlement situation. Since census statistics suggest that the mixed nativity family population is steadily growing, future studies should focus on the coethnic community in Mexico and whether or not it will develop the same support patterns as the traditional coethnic community has in the United States.

Chapter 7

RECOMMENDATIONS

Unlike their second generation counterparts in the United States, the second generation children of returning migrants experience intensified resettlement experiences than their parents. While they may speak limited Spanish and have higher levels of education compared to the national average, the second generation's levels of Spanish understanding come nowhere near their Mexican national counterparts. Understanding the descriptive statistics of the returning migrant population is an essential step to start with. Currently, INEGI statistics do not differentiate between the language returning migrants read and write (Salgado and Bordi 2007). Yet as we have seen in the cases of this study – language plays a role in community adaptation. Non-thorough interpretations of this information can lead to incorrect policy decisions. Another flaw in the INEGI report is the foreigner's age distribution. They only capture fully matriculated students (Salgado and Bordi 2007) – not the ones living in the shadows. A better methodological method is required to obtain true estimates of returning migrants.

At the local level, governments can gather data through a questionnaire that would take place at the time of enrollment. This survey should contain basic demographic questions such as age, sex, and a country of origin. Self-reported language proficiency questions should also be included to determine which age group requires additional attention. The survey must have a way to distinguish which students are fully matriculated and which ones are provisionally enrolled.

By doing this, it will allow local *presidencias* to obtain accurate numbers of how many school-aged children there are in Mexico.

Determining the numbers of actual returning migrants and foreigners there are can allow the local municipality to implement projects geared toward this ‘growing population.’ For one, results of this study show that language and education is a major concern to parents – the first generation. A bilingual education program may be necessary to help incorporate the new arrivals, the U.S.-born children. Less expensive alternatives can include implementing tutoring in English –by a native English speaker, which may soften the challenges that students face in their Spanish studies.

State and local policies can also redirect their attention to restructuring the matriculation process. This would entail local, state and federal government offices coming together to standardize the process for everyone. The second step would be to create a step-by-step guide with a ‘commonly asked questions’ section on matriculating U.S.-born students. This is a relatively inexpensive way to solve a problem that is forthcoming based on the population statistics. This will lessen the traffic at local agencies and provides the audience with a written process to follow. A thoroughly written process (at the appropriate reading level for the general population) will also alleviate the confusion on what the requirements are; provide readers with the entire matriculation fees, and a list of office addressees for the various services they will need. Since contact is initially made at local schools or government agencies, distributing these step-by-step

guides at local and federal offices as well as schools will increase the chances of individuals following the process from the very first step.

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TABLE 1.
HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

HH Members ¹	Adult Sex	Adult Age	Child Sex	Childs Ages ²	Age at First Migration ³	Years Away ⁴	Year of Return ⁵	Adult Level of Education	Edu Opp. ⁶
Mario (Adult), Jessica & Melissa	M	36	F	13* , 12*, 8	20	16	Child 1999/ Adult 2005	Secundaria	Yes
Esteban (Adult) & Amanda	M	38	F	17*, 15* , 13, 12*	19	19	2009	Secundaria	NA
Johana (Adult) & Emily	F	31	F	11* ,6*,2*	21	10	2008	Primaria	Same
Yolanda (Adult) & Erika - son pedro	F	48	F	17, 14, 8*	45	3	2007	Primaria	Yes
Selena (Adult)	F	38	F	17, 17, 16, 12*	31	7	2005	Secundaria	Yes
Berta (Adult)& Kimberly	F	33	F	17,14, 7*	25	8	2008	Secundaria	Yes
Nancy (Adult)and Victor	F	36	M	8* ,3*,2*	24	12	2010	Secundaria	Yes
Esperanza(Adult), Stephanie, & Alan	F	41	F	19, 14* ,6*	26	15	2008	Preparatoria	Yes
Marta (Adult)& Jose	F	38	M	15* ,10*,5*	22	16	2006	Primaria	Yes
Juan (Adult)& Kevin	M	46	M	12*, 14* , 15*	22	24	2005	None	N/A
Ignacia (Adult)	F	32	F	10, 6* ,2 Mo.	24	8	2008	Secundaria	Yes

Total N=21; Adults: 3 females, 8 males (N=11), Children: 2 males, 7 females (N=9)

¹ Names have been altered to protect confidentiality.

² Ages of children in the household. Interviewed child is in bold. Asterisks indicate U.S.-born child.

³ Adult age at the time of their first migration.

⁴ Years between the adults' first migration and their settlement to Mexico.

⁵ Year migrant returned to Mexico with mixed nativity household.

⁶ Adult's response to whether or not children they perceive there are more educational opportunities today compared to their childhood.

TABLE 2.
MATRICULATION REQUIREMENTS

HH Members	Provisional Enrollment	Issues ¹	No issues ²	No Attempt	Dual Citizenship	<i>Apostillado</i>	<i>Acta</i>	CURP	Grades	Process Successful	Process Unsuccessful
Mario (Adult), Jessica & Melissa			X				X	X		X	
Esteban (Adult) & Amanda				X ³							
Johana (Adult) & Emily			X		X		X			X	
Yolanda (Adult) & Erika, Pedro	1 year provision	X				X	X	X	X	X	
Selena (Adult)		X						X		X	
Berta (Adult)& Kimberly		X				X	X	X	X	X	
Nancy (Adult) & Victor				X ⁴							
Esperanza(Adult) & Stephanie, Alan	Provision until secundaria graduation	X				X	X	X			X
Marta (Adult)& Jose	Provision until secundaria graduation	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	
Juan (Adult)& Kevin	2 week provision	X									X
Ignacia (Adult)	Indefinite	X						X			X

¹ Adult encountered issues with the matriculation processes.

² Adults experienced no issues with the matriculation process.

³ Esteban was unsure if he would be enrolling his teens in Mexico schools.

⁴ Nancy was waiting for the enrollment period to begin. Her matriculation responses were based off the documents requested by a teacher.