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JOSÉ FELIPE MARTÍNEZ[*], LUCRECIA SANTIBÁÑEZ[**] Y EDSON SERVÁN[***]

Exploring the Links Between Immigration and Educational Quality and Opportunity in Mexico

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[*] University of California, Los Angeles.
[**] Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas.
[***] Instituto Nacional de Salud Pública.

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Abstract

This paper explores the relationship between education and immigration from two complementary angles: first we explore how educational experiences and opportunities offered to students in the Mexican educational system may be related with individual expectations and decisions to migrate to the United States. Second, we investigate the relationship between rates of migration and a range of indicators of educational quality including student achievement. Our results suggest some patterns of association between migration rates and indices of school quality, opportunity to learn and student achievement at the municipal level. These results are indicative only of potential relationships between variables, but do not support any conclusions about the direction of the relationship. However, the initial results are consistent with the notion that an expectation to migrate lowers incentives for people to continue their schooling. Our findings, also suggest that high migration municipalities may offer fewer schooling opportunities. This raises questions about the degree to which cycles of migration in these communities may be reinforced because lower school quality decreases the rates of return to schooling for individuals in those communities, as well as opportunities for future educational advancement.

Resumen

Este estudio explora la relación entre la educación y la migración desde dos ángulos complementarios. Primero se explora cómo las experiencias educativas y las oportunidades de los alumnos están relacionadas con la expectativa individual y las decisiones de migrar a los Estados Unidos. Segundo, se investiga la relación entre las tasas de migración y una serie de indicadores de calidad educativa incluyendo resultados de aprovechamiento escolar. Los resultados sugieren patrones asociativos entre las tasas de migración y algunos indicadores de calidad educativa, oportunidad de aprendizaje y aprovechamiento escolar a nivel municipal. Los resultados son simplemente indicativos de relaciones entre variables y no denotan ninguna causalidad. Sin embargo, los resultados son consistentes con la noción de que la expectativa de migrar disminuye los incentivos de los individuos para continuar su educación. Los resultados también sugieren que aquellos municipios con altas tasas de migración podrían ofrecer menos oportunidades educativas. Esto sugiere que quizá el ciclo de migración en estas comunidades se podría ver reforzado ya que menor calidad educativa disminuye las tasas de retorno de esta educación para los individuos, así como sus oportunidades futuras para continuar su educación.

Introduction

In the 1980s and 1990s, Mexico went through a series of economic crises and periods of slow growth that took a toll on real salaries and employment. To compensate for deteriorated economic circumstances, families implement various strategies. One of these involves work by household members that traditionally did not participate in the labor market (women, children); another noticeable pattern was an increase in migration to the United States (Canales, 2002)

Mexican migration to the US is not a new phenomenon. According to the Mexican 200 Census, 97% of people who reported they had migrated abroad between 1995 and 2000 had gone to the United States (see Caponi, 2006). Canales (2002) and others note that recent immigration trends reveal three main patterns: *(1)* migration is a growing phenomenon, now representing over 8% of the Mexican population (who lives abroad), compared to fewer than 2% in the 1950s and 60s. Current estimates have 400,000 Mexicans migrating to the US every year for either temporary or permanent settling (Cornelius, 2007). *(2)* That many more women and children are now migrating to the US than before. Women in particular now make up close to 20% of non-permanent (work-related) migration. In the early 1990s they represented only 4%. And *(3)*, that migration is now occurring in many states and urban centers which traditionally had not seen intense migratory patterns. While migration used to be a predominantly rural phenomenon, currently half of migrants come from urban centers, and half from rural areas.

The profile of the Mexican immigrant to the United States is changing and no longer reflects the prototype of middle aged fathers of poor families; today's immigrant is more likely to be younger, single, and to have better education than the national average among the population of Mexico (*i.e.* secondary or some high school). Migration, however, is not merely an economic phenomenon, one triggered mainly by the salary differential between the US and Mexico. Social capital and human capital are important predictors of first-time migration (Massey and Espinosa, 1997). In this view, Migration is a dynamic, self-reinforcing process. Once a person in Mexico migrates to the US for the first time, the probability of return is high, and the probability of returning to Mexico (to settle back) decreases (Massey and Espinosa, 1997).

Education is a factor in this process. Several authors have documented that the rate of return to education is lower for Mexicans in the US than for Mexicans staying in Mexico (Massey and Espinosa, 1997; Caponi, 2006; McKenzie and Rapoport, 2006). A negative rate of return to a Mexican education in the US would tend to lower the probability of migration,

particularly for undocumented workers who, irrespective of education, all appear to take on similar jobs (Massey and Espinosa, 1997).

Education, therefore, plays an important role to both motivate and deter future migration. In the host country, research suggests a strong correlation between the skills of immigrants and the skills of second-generation Americans, so that the skill gap carries over to the next generation (Borjas, 1994). In Mexico, the availability of schooling opportunities could improve rates of return to education in Mexico to a point where migration is no longer such an attractive alternative.

On the other hand, the opportunity to migrate, with its effects on alleviating future credit constraints on the family, create positive social capital in the host country, and expectations of better opportunities overall (Massey and Espinosa, 1997), could mean that regardless of schooling opportunities in Mexico, youth will prefer to migrate. Some studies, in fact, support this notion by showing that migration patterns in the community appear to disincentivate youth (particularly males) from acquiring additional education (McKenzie and Rapoport, 2006)

One area that the literature does not cover in nearly as much detail is the potential relationship between immigration and school quality and educational opportunity. As indicated by Macias (1991), educational experiences in the country of origin are important to explain migration and as context for understanding subsequent patterns of school achievement. Moreover, the changing profile of the Mexican immigrant described before means that an increasing proportion of people who immigrate do so when they are still of school age.

This paper explores the relationship between education and immigration from two complementary angles: first we explore how educational experiences and opportunities offered to students in the Mexican educational system may be related with individual expectations and decisions to migrate to the United States. Second, we investigate the relationship between rates of migration and a range of indicators of educational quality including student achievement.

The paper is organized as follows: first section presents a review of research on migration and education focusing on Mexico and the US. Section two describes the conceptual framework and research questions guiding the analysis, and the specific datasets and analytical approaches employed. Section three presents preliminary results of the analysis. We conclude with a discussion of the results and their implications for developing a framework for studying the links between educational quality and immigration, and how some of the research questions raised can be addressed using these and other sources of data available or being developed in Mexico.

1. Literature Review

Several studies have attempted to understand the relationship between migration and education, both in the host country (the US) and in the country of origin. Massey and Espinosa (1997), using data from household field surveys collected in five states in Western Mexico between 1987-1992 find that education (measured by years of schooling) decreases the probability of migration because the rate of return to a Mexican education in the US is negative.[1] This is particularly the case for undocumented workers. Moreover, community schooling infrastructure appears to decrease the probability of first-time migration perhaps indicating that the higher rate of return to high levels of education in Mexico lowers the expected benefit of migrating to the US (Massey and Espinosa, 1997).

The decision to migrate for the first-time is crucial in jumpstarting a migration cycle that will be very hard to break later on. Once people begin to accumulate social capital (through family ties, friendships, relationships, social networks) and US-specific human capital (experience in the US, knowledge of English, knowledge of the US labor market, US labor market experience), it will be very difficult for them to return to Mexico. And, the likelihood that they will attract even more migrants to join them in the US increases. This pattern appears to hold irrespective of tough US immigration laws, legislation preventing undocumented workers from receiving social benefits, and border enforcement.

More recent research by Caponi (2006), using data from the 2000 Mexican Census, analyzed the relationship between human capital (as measured by level of education) and migration choices among Mexicans, and finds that this relationship is U-shaped, meaning that the highest and lowest educated will tend to migrate more than the middle educated (those with 6-9 years of schooling).[2] The author argues that this relationship is due to the fact that the lower educated have essentially no human capital to lose. The paper is not as clear as to the reasons why people with high school degrees would be more likely to migrate (also it does not make a distinction between migrating with and without documents). The author finds that, in general, additional education will tend to deter migration (up to a certain point). An interaction dummy of education and immigration status has negative coefficient

[1] What this means is that Mexican schooling pays less in the US than it does in Mexico. For example, an individual in Mexico with lower secondary (9 years of schooling) will have a greater rate of return for these 9 years, than he would have in the US. The reason is that overall, the population in the US has more years of schooling, so that having lower secondary in Mexico might be an advantage (for job and salary opportunities) over the average individual, but this would not be the case in the US where most people have a high school diploma.

[2] There is also the possibility that both migration and education are related to unemployment in similar terms (i.e. a u-shaped relationship between unemployment and education). However, in this paper we focus only on the relationship between migration and education. Perhaps the dynamics introduced by modeling how unemployment would affect this relationship can be dealt with in future work.

suggesting that there is a loss of human capital when migrating to the US Moreover, the study finds evidence that the rate of return to (a Mexican) education is higher for residents in Mexico, than for Mexican immigrants in the US (this supports earlier findings by Massey and Espinosa).

TABLE 1. MEXICO RESIDENTS COMPARED TO MEXICANS IN THE US, BY GENDER (2000)

	MEN		WOMEN	
	MEXICO RESIDENTS	MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS IN US	MEXICO RESIDENTS	MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS IN US
NO SCHOOL	5.8	12.0	8.1	12.7
COMPLETE OR INCOMPLETE ELEMENTARY	40.3	30.6	43.4	31.6
LOWER SECONDARY	30.9	24.5	27.3	23.4
HIGH SCHOOL	13.4	22.2	14.5	21.5
COLLEGE	9.7	10.7	6.7	10.8

Source: Caponi, 2006 with data from the US Census (PUMS5), 2000 (US Census Bureau), and the XII Censo General de Población y Vivienda, 2000 (INEGI).

Miranda (2007) examines whether family and community migration patterns affect an individual's probability of graduating from high school in Mexico. It uses longitudinal data from the Mexican Migration Project collected between 1982 and 2005. Its findings do not support the idea that most migrants will tend to come from the top and bottom income and education distributions. Using econometric models that control for unobserved heterogeneity, the author finds that an extra migrant in the family decreases the likelihood of high school graduation by 2.4 percentage points. Similarly, individuals who live far away (an extra 1,000km) from traditional migrant areas, have increased chances of graduating from high school (about 17.4 percentage points higher). The author suggests that individuals behave in a forward-looking fashion. Since having a migrant member of the family, increases the probability of migration for other members, individuals in this situation will tend to dropout of school early and avoid wastage of valuable resources.

The authors' findings contradict other studies (*e.g.* Caponi, 2006) since it predicts that most migrants will come from the middle rather than from the tails of Mexico's income and education distributions. This would suggest that having more education (up to a certain point) increases the probability of migration (hence the rate of return to education would be lower if staying in Mexico). The paper speculates that wealthier families (not necessarily wealthy, but with more income than poor families) can finance both education and migration choices, thus making it possible to create positive migrant selection (*i.e.* the migration of more educated individuals).

McKenzie and Rapoport (2006) explore the impact of migration on educational attainment and education inequality in rural Mexico, using data from the 1997 National Survey of Demographic Dynamics (ENADID). Using historical migration rates by state to instrument for current migration, the authors find that there is a significant negative (disincentive) effect of migration on educational attainment (years of schooling) for youth ages 16-18. This effect is present for both males and females, but it is larger for the first group. Moreover, higher levels of maternal education increase this disincentive. In terms of education inequality, migration appears to lower inequality, but this effect appears to be driven by an overall lower educational attainment at the top of the education distribution, not by improving education at the bottom.

2. Conceptual Framework, Data and Methods

As described before, most research on immigration and education uses raw education outcomes such as years of schooling, and takes the features of the educational system as either constant or unobservable. The econometric literature includes fewer studies investigating the potential relationship between immigration and educational quality and opportunity in the country of origin. One example is the study by Massey and Espinosa (1997) which reported a negative relationship between community schooling infrastructure and probability of first-time migration. The authors found that whenever a community had a high school (*preparatoria*) other things being equal, the person would be less likely to migrate.

This paper explores the relationship between educational quality and immigration from two complementary angles: first we investigate how the educational experiences and opportunities offered to students in the Mexican education system may be related to individual expectations and decisions to migrate to the United States. Second, we investigate the relationship between rates of migration and a range of aggregate indicators of educational quality at the municipal level. In these analyses migration is used as an explanatory variable of various indices of school quality in Mexico.

We focus on three main research questions: *1)* Are factors of educational quality and opportunity related with individual intention or decision to immigrate to the United States? *2)* Is there a relationship between Immigration rates and aggregate measures of educational quality and opportunity? *3)* Is there a relationship between rates of immigration and aggregate measures of student academic achievement?

Importantly, the goal of this work is not to establish causal or directional links between educational quality and immigration, but to provide a descriptive picture of the relationship from different angles and at different levels of aggregation in order to refine a conceptual framework for further

research in this area. Our intention is thus to advance in accurately defining the central research questions of interest when studying the links between immigration and educational quality and opportunity.

An exploratory approach that does not make assumptions about directionality is useful here because the series of incentives commonly assumed to underlie the relationship between education and immigration for individuals may differ at the school or system level, and so can the directionality of the relationship. For example, school quality may influence migration decisions of individuals or family members remaining in Mexico, by altering the rates of return to schooling as well as perceptions about future education and employment opportunities in Mexico. However, a reciprocal relationship could exist if migration rates negatively impact educational quality at the school or educational system levels. While an expectation to migrate may lower investments in education by families and individuals, high migration rates should not in theory discourage investment in education by communities and governments

2.1. Data

Data for this study come from four different sources: the Mexican Family Life Survey (MXFLS), the Oportunidades program, the ENLACE national exams, and the National Population Council (CONAPO).

- *The Mexican Family Life Survey (MXFLS).* The MXFLS is a longitudinal panel developed in collaboration by the Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE), the Universidad Iberoamericana, and UCLA. It collected demographic, socio-economic and anthropometric data from approximately 38 thousand individuals in about 8400 households distributed across 137 municipalities in 16 Mexican states, as well as their neighborhoods, communities, and schools; the data is nationally representative at the regional, and urban-rural levels (Rubalcava and Teruel, 2004). The first wave of MFLS data was collected in 2002[3] and is publicly available. Along with individual level data on cognitive ability, socioeconomic background, and intention to or history of migration to the United States, it offers information about the context of schooling, including school resources and leadership, and teacher background and practices. The second wave (first follow-up) has been collected and will be released in the coming months.

  Variables extracted from the MXFLS household dataset include level of schooling of heads of households and persons under 15 years of age, migration and intention to migrate to the United States, history of grade retention, and reasons for interrupting study if applicable. The household and school datasets were used to create aggregate indicators at the

[3] See http://www.radix.uia.mx/ennvih

municipal level, reflecting teacher education, teacher participation in the national incentive program, availability of financial support and other social programs for students, teacher absenteeism, school infrastructure, resources and materials, as well as indices reflecting, school, teacher and parental involvement in efforts to improve academic outcomes.

- *The Oportunidades Program Evaluation Datase.* The second source of data for this study comes from the evaluation of the *Oportunidades Program*, one of the largest Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT) programs in the world, reaching over 25 million Mexicans (almost 25% of the population). Through the program, economically disadvantaged families receive a bimonthly monetary transfer conditional on the fulfillment of a series of obligations ("co-responsibilities") designed to increase their health, nutrition, and education. Community eligibility was determined based on a standard measure of poverty based on census and economic data (the *marginality index*). Within communities, households below certain levels of income were deemed eligible and invited to participate (Skoufias, Davis and Behrman, 1999). The 2003 data collection included 34,203 families in rural communities in 281 municipalities in 7 states (Guerrero, Hidalgo, Michoacán, Puebla, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí and Veracruz).

  In addition to extensive information about individuals, families, and communities, information was also collected about the schools attended by individuals in the sample. These variables were used to construct municipal aggregate indices to reflect school infrastructure, resources and climate, teacher background and practices, and availability of support and materials for teachers and students.
- *National Evaluation of Academic Achievement (ENLACE).* The third dataset is the national achievement exams (ENLACE) administered to all children in the country in grades 3rd to 6th and 9th to assess their knowledge of the spanish and mathematics curriculum. The exams are criterion-referenced measures and place students on a four-point scale ranging from 1-insufficient to 4-excellent. Results are available at the individual level, but no individual identifiers are given and students cannot be tracked from one year to the next (in addition, the exams are not vertically equated). At the school and municipal level, identifiers are available allowing linkages with other government datasets. We used the data from the 2006-2007 test administration to estimate average indices of educational attainment for 2467 municipalities in the country.
- *National Population Council (CONAPO).* Finally, immigration and marginality indices were obtained from the National Population Council's (CONAPO) dataset for all municipalities in the country. Both indices are scaled to a standard z-normal scale. The *intensity of immigration* index is a composite of dimensions such as the percentage of households receiving remittances, percentage with members in the United States during past

five and ten years, and the number of circular migrants leaving and returning. The *marginality* index is a composite measure of social and economic well being at the municipal level, based on the proportion of families with access to essential goods and services, including income, adequate housing and education, among others.

2.2. Analytical Approach

Table 2 shows a list of the variables from each of the four datasets used in the analysis. Unfortunately, it is not possible to directly match the MFLS, ENLACE, and Oportunidades samples at the student level; the individual identifiers for these datasets differ, and the data correspond to different and largely non overlapping samples that were not all collected in the same year. While these problems prevent direct matching of the datasets, it is nevertheless possible to construct municipality-level indices using the information from the surveys. Using individual level data along with these municipal indices our paper investigates the relationship between features of quality in Mexican schools that influence the kinds of educational opportunities afforded to students, individual decisions to migrate to the United States, and municipal rates of migration.

TABLE 2. LIST OF VARIABLES FROM DATASETS USED IN THE ANALYSES

MEXICAN FAMILY LIFE SURVEY (MXFLS)	
AGGREGATES OF INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL INDICATORS	
ESCJH	YEARS OF EDUCATION (HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD)
ESC15	YEARS OF EDUCATION (UNDER 15 YEARS OF AGE)
PENSOMIG	HAS THOUGHT OF MIGRATING TO USA
MIGUSA	IMMIGRATED TO USA (SELF OR FAMILY MEMBER)
CAMBIOEDUC	REASON WOULD CONSIDER IMMIGRATING: EDUCATION
NOESCUELA	NO SCHOOL IN COMMUNITY/SCHOOL CLOSED
REPITIO	REPEATED GRADE
AGGREGATES OF SCHOOL-LEVEL INDICATORS	
ESCRECIBAYUDA	STUDENTS IN SCHOOL RECEIVE SUPPORT (FINANCIAL OR IN KIND) TO ATTEND
BECASALUMNOS	STUDENTS IN SCHOOL RECEIVE SCHOLARSHIPS TO ATTEND
RECIBALIM	STUDENTS RECEIVE FREE BREAKFAST OR LUNCH IN SCHOOL
ACTEXTRA	SCHOOL OFFERS EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
TALLEREXTRA	SCHOOL OFFERS VOCATIONAL WORKSHOPS/VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
RRHH	SCHOOL HAS ADEQUATE STAFFING (ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT)
RECMATERIALES	SCHOOL HAS ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE (CLASSROOMS, LABS, LIBRARY)
OTROMATERIAL	STUDENT ACCESS TO MATERIALS (BOOK, CALCULATOR, COMPUTER)
ESCMAESTROS	TEACHER EDUCATION
MAESTCARRMAG	TEACHER ENROLLED IN CARRERA MAGISTERIAL
FALTARON	TEACHER ABSENTEEISM
MAESTPARTICIP	TEACHERS ENGAGED IN ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS
RENDMIG	IMMIGRATION ADVERSELY AFFECTED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
INTERESPADRES	PARENTAL INTEREST AND INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL MATTERS
APOYOCOMUN	COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL
"OPORTUNIDADES" EVALUATION DATASET	
EXTCURR	SCHOOL OFFERS EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
NOCLASES	DAYS CLASSES INTERRUPTED OR CANCELLED
AMBIENTE	TEACHER ENGAGEMENT IN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS
SERVICIOS	SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE
MEJORAS	IMPROVEMENTS TO SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE
MATERIALES	AVAILABILITY OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS IN CLASSROOMS
ENLACE EXAM DATASET	
PROMESP07	AVERAGE SCORE (SPANISH)
PROMMAT07	AVERAGE SCORE (MATHEMATICS)
PERCINSUFESP07	PERCENT INSUFFICIENT (SPANISH)
PERCINSUFMAT07	PERCENT INSUFFICIENT (MATHEMATICS)
PERCEXCELESP07	PERCENT EXCELLENT (SPANISH)
PERCEXCELMAT07	PERCENT EXCELLENT (MATHEMATICS)
CONAPO DATASET	
MARGINACION	MARGINALITY INDEX
INTMIGRA	MIGRATION INTENSITY INDEX

To answer the first research question (are factors of educational quality and opportunity related with individual intention or decision to immigrate to the United States?) we estimate a series logistic regressions using individual level data from the MXFLS. The model represents the relationship between the probability of considering migrating to the US and variables reflecting educational history and experiences:

$$\log(pmig_i) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1,i} + \beta_2 X_{2,i} \quad (1)$$

where X_1 is a measure of parental years of schooling used to control for socioeconomic background, and X_2 is the educational indicators of interest. To answer the second research question (is there a relationship between Immigration rates and aggregate measures of educational quality and opportunity?) we use linear regressions to link municipal immigration rates and aggregate indices of educational quality form the MXFLS and Oportunidades datasets; each relationship is estimated after partialing out the potential effect of regional economic development by simultaneously introducing the municipal marginality index as a covariate. The models follow the general regression form:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1,i} + \beta_2 X_{2,i} \quad (2)$$

where the Ys are a municipal aggregates of educational quality and opportunity, and X_1 and X_2 are the municipal indices of marginality and immigration respectively from the federal CONAPO dataset. As mentioned previously, our analysis do not make assumptions about (or provide a means to test) the directionality of the relationships; the standardized regression coefficients presented are simple partial correlations between immigration rates and each of the indices, after accounting for municipal marginality. Thus, the coefficients could be interpreted as reflecting different directional or recursive links.

The third question concerns the relationship between rates of immigration and aggregate measures of student academic achievement. We estimate the relationship between municipal immigration rates and aggregate indices of student achievement in Spanish and Mathematics from the ENLACE national exams;. The model equation is the same as Equation (2), $Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1,i} + \beta_2 X_{2,i}$ where Y are aggregate levels of student achievement in Spanish and mathematics, X_1 is the municipal index of marginality used as a covariate to extract variance due to differences in economic development across regions, and X_2 is the municipal index of immigration intensity.

3. Results

We first present preliminary analysis investigating the relationship between intention to immigrate and individual indicators from the MXFLS dataset, including repeating grade, having to work during their studies, being forced to interrupt studies because of closed schools, schools in bad conditions, lack of teachers or teacher absenteeism, and willingness to move to continue education.

TABLE 3. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROBABILITY OF CONSIDERING IMMIGRATING TO THE US AND EDUCATIONAL QUALITY

	RELATIONSHIP WITH P(CONSIDER MIGRATING)	
	REGRESSION	P-VALUE
REPEATING GRADE		
ELEMENTARY	-0.023	.780
SECONDARY	0.146	.364
HIGH SCHOOL	0.361*	.003
WORKING DURING STUDIES		
ELEMENTARY	0.923*	.001
SECONDARY	-0.577*	.039
HIGH SCHOOL	0.306	.210
UNIVERSITY	-0.491*	.020
REASON WOULD MOVE: EDUCATION	0.310*	.000
FORCED TO INTERRUPT STUDIES	0.605*	.000

* Denotes coefficients statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

The results of this analysis suggest that repeating grade in high school is associated with a higher likelihood of considering migrating to the United States, as is being forced to interrupt studies by lack of school, closed schools, or absent teachers, and an expressed willingness to move to pursue additional studies. On the contrary, working during secondary school and university is negatively related to likelihood of considering migrating. The second wave of MXFLS data contain information about actual decisions to migrate for the people in the panel which will allow more rigorous examination of this question.

Next we investigate the relationship between municipal immigration rates and aggregate measures of educational quality and educational opportunity. The results in Table 4 correspond to indices obtained from the Mexican Family Life Survey sample of 137 municipalities in 16 states. Each row in the table is a linear regression with the corresponding index as *outcome*, and the municipal immigration rate and marginality index as *predictors*. The partial

coefficients are shown standardized due to the differences in the scales of each index.[4]

Factoring out level of economic development, the average level of education of heads of household is significantly negatively related with the municipal immigration rate (β=-0.404; p<0.001); on the other hand the level of education of household members under 15 years of age is not related with immigration rates. Immigration rates are higher in municipalities where higher proportions of respondents repeated grade at some point during their studies (β=0.171, p=0.025); in addition, immigration rates are higher in municipalities where higher proportions of people report that schools are not available or have been closed in their community (β=0.358, p<0.001), a result consistent with Massey and Espinosa (1997). Interestingly, the degree of willingness among the population to change the place of residency for reasons related to education is negatively related to municipal migration rates, suggesting that value assigned to education is negatively related to likelihood of migrating (β=-0.182; p=0.036).

In terms of school indicators, some significant relationships were also detected. Higher municipal rates of immigration are associated with lower availability of extra-curricular activities (β=-0.236; p=0.002) and vocational workshops or *talleres* (β=-0.179; p=0.026). Similarly rate of immigration is negatively related with school infrastructure (β=-0.165; p=0.059), staffing (β=-0.285; p<0.001), and access to materials (β=-0.322; p=0.000), even among municipalities with similar economic development. On the other hand, no relationship was observed at the municipal level between immigration rate and the availability of programs that support and encourage school attendance, either financial (*e.g.* scholarships) or in kind (*e.g.* breakfast).

Migration rates are not significantly related with average teacher education, teacher absenteeism, or teacher engagement. Interestingly however, the results suggest that in municipalities with higher levels of immigration fewer teachers are enrolled in *Carrera Magisterial* the national incentive program tied to teacher performance (β=-0.187; p=0.036). Moreover, based on teacher reports, parental involvement with and community support for the school are lower in municipalities with high immigration rates. Lastly, higher immigration is associated with more frequent reports from teachers and principals that "Immigration adversely affects student achievement" (β=0.221; p=0.012); while the direction of this relationship may seem clearer on its face, the precise nature or mechanisms of this negative *effect* are not clear.

[4] As noted previously however, the partial correlations estimated do not provide information to assess any assumptions about direction or cause. The possibility remains, for example, that recursive relationships are present at different levels of aggregation.

TABLE 4. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IMMIGRATION RATES AND INDICES OF EDUCATIONAL QUALITY (CONTROLLING FOR MARGINALITY)

MEXICAN FAMILY LIFE SURVEY (MXFLS)		IMMIGRATION RATES ON INDEX	
		PARTIAL STD REGRESSION	P-VALUE
AGGREGATES OF INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL VARIABLES			
ESCJH	YEARS OF EDUCATION (HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD)	-0.404*	.000
ESC_15	YEARS OF EDUCATION (UNDER 15 YEARS OF AGE)	0.015	.499
REPITIO	REPEATED GRADE	0.171*	.025
NOESCUELA	DO NOT ATTEND SCHOOL: NO SCHOOL IN COMMUNITY/SCHOOL CLOSED	0.358*	.000
CAMBIOEDUC	REASON WORLD CONSIDER IMMIGRATING: EDUCATION	-0.182*	.036
SCHOOLS			
ESCRECIBAYUDA	STUDENTS IN SCHOOL RECEIVE SUPPORT TO ATTEND	0.070	.326
BECASALUMNOS	STUDENTS IN SCHOOL RECEIVE SCHOLARSHIPS TO ATTEND	0.051	.579
RECIBALIM	STUDENTS RECEIVE FREE BREAKFAST OR LUNCH IN SCHOOL	-0.054	.558
ACTEXTRA	SCHOOL OFFERS EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	-0.236*	.002
TALLEREXTRA	SCHOOL OFFERS VOCATIONAL WORKSHOPS OR EDUCATION	-0.179*	.026
RRHH	SCHOOL HAS ADEQUATE STAFFING (ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT)	-0.285*	.000
RECMATERIALES	SCHOOL HAS ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE (CLASSROOMS, LABS, LIBRARY)	-0.165	.059
OTROMATERIALUSAN	STUDENT ACCESS TO MATERIALS (BOOK, CALCULATOR, COMPUTER)	-0.322*	.000
TEACHERS			
ESCMAESTROS1	TEACHER EDUCATION	0.049	.582
MAESTCARRMAG	TEACHERS ENROLLED IN CARRERA MAGISTERIAL	-0.187*	.036
FALTARON	TEACHER ABSENTEEISM	0.060	.512
MAESTPARTICIP	TEACHERS ENGAGED IN ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS	0.059	.500
INTERESPADRES	PARENTAL INTEREST AND INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL MATTERS	-0.151	.090
APOYOCOMUN	COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL	-0.165*	.044
RENDMIG	IMMIGRATION ADVERSELY AFFECTED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT	0.221*	.012

* Denotes coefficients statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Table 5 presents the results of analysis similar to those in Table 4, using indices from the Oportunidades dataset for a sample of rural communities in 281 municipalities in 7 states. As before, each row in the table is a linear regression with municipal immigration rate as *predictor* and marginality index as covariate. Once economic development is factored in, municipal immigration rates are not significantly associated with any of the indices of education quality extracted from the Oportunidades dataset. Although the sample of municipalities is larger than MXFLS, it is important to keep in mind that the sample includes only poor rural communities eligible for the program (as the goal was to evaluate the impact of the program on those communities). This will likely restrict the range of variability of the quality indices computed considerably, thus decreasing power. Additional analyses are underway using individual a wider section of variables in the Oportunidades dataset.

TABLE 5. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IMMIGRATION RATES AND INDICES OF EDUCATIONAL QUALITY (CONTROLLING FOR MARGINALITY)

OPORTUNIDADES		IMMIGRATION RATES	
		PARTIAL STD REGRESSION	P-VALUE
EXTCURR	SCHOOL OFFERS EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	0.107	.140
NOCLASES	DAYS CLASSES INTERRUPTED OR CANCELLED	0.065	.290
AMBIENTE	TEACHER ENGAGEMENT IN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS	0.231	.102
SERVICIOS	SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE	0.184	.113
MEJORAS	IMPROVEMENTS TO SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE	0.058	.405
MATERIALES	CLASSROOM MATERIALS (DYDACTIC)	0.239	.072

* Denotes coefficients statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

The final set of analyses presented here explores the potential for a relationship between immigration and student attainment. As reported in Table 4 above for example, teachers in high immigration areas report that "immigration adversely affects achievement". Table 6 presents the results of regression analysis investigating the relationship of municipal immigration rates and average student achievement in the ENLACE Spanish and mathematics national exams. Two separate results are reported, one using overall aggregates across grades, and other focusing on 3rd grade of secondary school. As before, the regression coefficients presented in the table are net of the effect of municipal *marginality* (*i.e.* level of socio-economic development).

TABLE 6. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IMMIGRATION RATES AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (CONTROLLING FOR MARGINALITY)

ENLACE EXAMS	IMMIGRATION RATE	
	PARTIAL STD REGRESSION	P-VALUE
OVERALL		
AVERAGE SCORE		
SPANISH	-0.012	.398
MATHEMATICS	0.008	.615
PERCENT INSUFFICIENT		
SPANISH	0.029*	.058
MATHEMATICS	0.030*	.060
PERCENT EXCELLENT		
SPANISH	-0.098*	.000
MATHEMATICS	-0.035*	.071
SECONDARY		
AVERAGE SCORE		
SPANISH	0.002	.894
MATHEMATICS	0.033	.120
PERCENT INSUFFICIENT		
SPANISH	0.020	.233
MATHEMATICS	0.035	.103
PERCENT EXCELLENT		
SPANISH	-0.086*	.000
MATHEMATICS	-0.022	.328

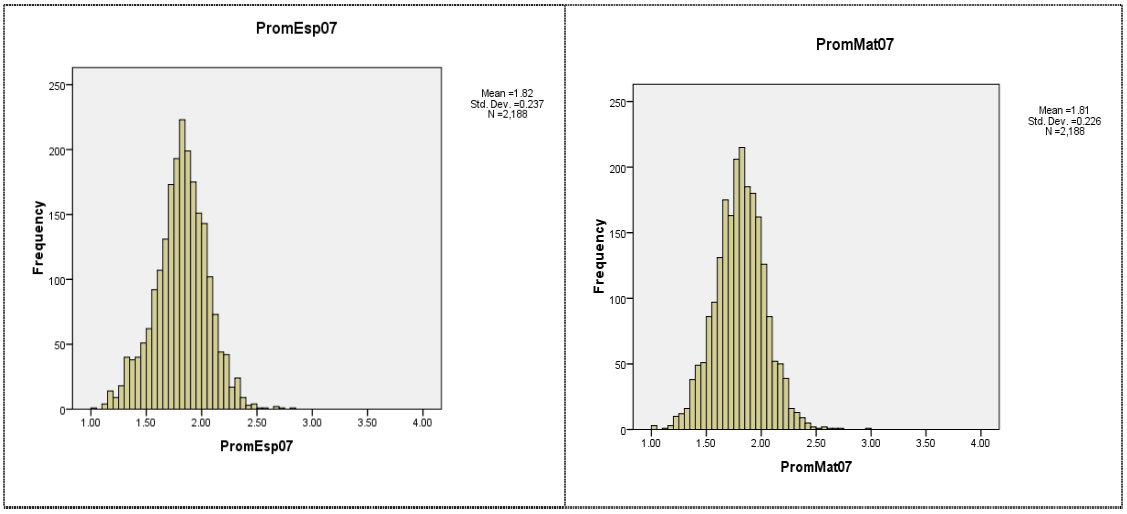
* Denotes coefficients statistically significant at the 90% con fidence level.

The results using the average criterion-referenced score as the dependent variable reveal no significant relationship between immigration and achievement once variance due to marginality is partialed out. However, further analysis of the ENLACE scores suggest that considerable range restriction in the distribution of average achievement across municipalities may attenuate any relationships of these variables with other variables —as presented in Figure 1 cases are heavily concentrated in a narrow band of the 1-4 scale, with nearly three in four cases in the 1.5 to 2.0 range.

We conducted two additional sets of analyses using the percentage of students demonstrating *insufficient* and *excellent* achievement in the Spanish and mathematics tests —that is, the proportion of students at the extremes of the scales. The results reveal significant relationships ($p<0.07$) and suggest the proportion of students below proficient levels in Spanish and mathematics is higher in municipalities with higher immigration rates, while the percent of

high achieving students is lower. Thus, even taking economic development into account, differences are detected between high and low immigration municipalities at the extremes of the achievement scale.

FIGURE 1. DISTRIBUTION OF AVERAGE LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT IN ENLACE SPANISH AND MATHEMATICS EXAMS, ACROSS MUNICIPALITIES



While the mechanisms of this relationship remain unclear (however, see teacher reports in the same sense in Table 4), one possibility is that higher immigration influences achievement negatively by increasing student turnout and absenteeism and making classrooms less stable environments. In addition, it is possible that students are disincentivated in their schooling decisions (including the decision to study and improve their achievement) because of the possibility to migrate in the future. McKenzie and Rapoport (2006) found disincentive effects for older boys (aged 16-19).

We ran regressions separately for secondary (9^{th} grade) students. This allows a closer look at patterns evident only for a population of youth closer in age to where individual migration decisions happen (secondary students are mostly between 15-16 years of age). Results suggest the differences fade away and remain significant only for the highest scoring group in the Spanish test. The patterns of self selection that drive decisions to drop out of school by the end of secondary education may help explain this pattern at least in part.

Concluding Remarks and Next Steps

Using quantitative analyses of four publicly available Mexican datasets, this paper revealed some patterns of association between migration rates and indices of school quality, opportunity to learn, and student achievement at the municipal level. Results from the MXFLS dataset suggest that municipalities with higher rates of migration to the US tend to have lower indices of school quality and opportunity. Municipalities with higher migration rates to the US have, on average, more reported school closings or no schools. In addition, they are associated with lower availability of extra-curricular activities, vocational workshops or *talleres*, and lower levels of school infrastructure, staffing, and access to educational materials. Moreover, based on teacher reports, parental involvement with and community support for the school are lower in municipalities with high immigration rates. And, higher immigration is associated with more frequent reports from teachers and principals that "immigration adversely affects student achievement." With respect to student achievement, the analysis of ENLACE data suggests that there are more students in the lowest proficiency levels, and fewer in the highest proficiency in high migration rate municipalities.

Interpretation of the results in this paper is limited by the reach of the datasets employed, and the descriptive nature of the analysis. Also, while the results cover more than half the states in the country, they are still clearly not nationally representative (note however, that most of the states with highest rates of immigration were included). Finally, by controlling for *marginality* (which includes access to educational services) in municipal level analyses we might have in effect partialed out some of the variation that we were interested in; more direct measures of economic development.

Most importantly, the results are indicative only of potential relationships between variables, but do not support any conclusions about the direction of the relationship; thus, we cannot speculate about potential effects of migration on indices of school quality and opportunity, or effects of educational quality as a factor driving or attenuating immigration. However, the initial results are consistent with the notion that an expectation to migrate lowers incentives for people to continue their schooling, and that living in a community with high immigration rates may impact educational attainment among children and youth (McKenzie and Rapoport, 2006; Miranda, 2007; Massey and Espinosa, 1997). The relationships furthermore suggest that high migration municipalities may offer fewer schooling opportunities and lower quality education overall. This raises questions about the degree to which cycles of migration in these communities may be reinforced because lower school quality lowers rates of return to schooling for individuals in those communities, as well as opportunities for future educational advancement.

Moreover, high migration communities could have fewer incentives to pressure educational authorities to improve school quality and opportunity, as suggested already in these initial analyses, which point to lower levels of parental involvement and community support for school, lower indices of school infrastructure, and more school closings in high migration communities.

Thus, as intended, our analysis raise interesting questions for delineating a framework for studying educational quality and immigration: such framework should consider that not only individuals may have a lower incentive to further their schooling, but communities and even authorities may also have a lower incentive to improve school quality and opportunity. Educational authorities in particular could see little incentive in improving education in communities that are experiencing high migration to the US, and consequently, low levels of demand for quality education. In light of other research suggesting that immigration is a self-reinforcing, dynamic cycle, our developing framework would insert educational quality as part of strengthening cycles of migration funneled by worsening education indicators and opportunity at home.

Again, these are not findings that we have tested with these models; they are more aptly conceived as questions and notions that emerge from our analyses, which in combination with related issues raised by immigration researchers, can help delineate a framework for studying the relationship between immigration and school quality. Further analyses with the new wave of data from the Mexican Family Life Survey and sources that are not publicly available yet (*i.e.* INEEs datasets containing data on educational achievement and detailed information about the school environment and opportunity to learn) will allow us to test this effect using more rigorous statistical techniques such as instrumental variables or other models allowing for endogenous effects.

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