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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

DEPOPULATION AND EDUCATION IN A MEXICAN MIGRANT TOWN:
SCHOOLS IN VILLA JUAREZ, SAN LUIS POTOSI, 1940-2000

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PROGRAM IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES

BY
MAGDA BANDA
CHICAGO, IL
AUGUST 2011
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ABSTRACT

While educational systems have been governed by the policies of the nation-state and have been contained within state borders, the transformations brought about by the economic, social, and political repercussions of globalization have added layers of complexity to issues in education.\(^1\) This is true in particular of agrarian communities, such as Villa Juarez, San Luis Potosi, Mexico. National educational policies have led to new challenges in agrarian societies as they undergo not only in exchanges of ideas across borders but the movement of populations that have led to international and national demographic shifts. One of the main issues that this research will investigate is the relationship between education and migration, and whether the changing conditions of that rural setting have had any effect on how locals perceive the purpose of education.

This study examines the way teachers, students and government officials view the purpose of education in the agrarian village of Villa Juarez that, like other communities in central Mexico, is undergoing the influence of globalization, manifested most notably in emigration to the United States. If post-basic education competes with international migration as another form of economic mobility, as William A. Kandel discusses in his study of traditional migrant communities,\(^2\) then what is the purpose of education as

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viewed by teachers, students and government officials in a rural community? Villa Juarez, a town with a long-standing history of migration to the United States, has experienced continually diminishing depopulation and school closings since the Bracero Program of 1942, which marked the onset of a pronounced trend of migration to the United States for temporary employment opportunities. The effects of a culture of migration and globalization on education in the municipality and town of Villa Juarez have led to the undermining of education as a vehicle to social and economic mobility for future generations of students.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, education has transformed the societies that have shaped it. Among the many roles that education has played, one of its main tasks has been to link the purpose of the state to urban and rural classrooms. By the twentieth century, Western education became widespread in many parts of the world and was central in developing members of society as individuals and as part of the larger community.\(^1\) Government perceived a fundamental task in the promotion and expansion of public education, in the interest of creating a common “social consensus” and legitimizing particular ideologies among different social groups.\(^2\)

Large-scale education is a modern concept. Before the industrial era, knowledge, relations and financial systems were locally based and most people structured their lives and ideas within their community. Travelling outside the community was an exception rather than the norm.\(^3\) With the formation of nation-states, one of the goals of education as a public institution was the creation of a national identity at the state level; thus it was a critical task of education to reach both rural and urban settings to accomplish this.

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\(^1\) Burbules and Torres, *Globalization and Education*, 3-4.


Today, many rural environments reflect these public institutional policies. Centralized educational systems reinforced recognition and a sense of belonging to a national tradition among rural citizens as well as acknowledgement of the responsibilities of citizen and worker.

While educational systems have been governed by the policies of the nation-state and have been contained within state borders, the transformations brought about by the economic, social, and political repercussions of globalization have added layers of complexity to issues in education.\(^4\) This is true of agrarian communities, in particular, such as Villa Juarez, San Luis Potosi, Mexico. National educational policies have led to new challenges in agrarian societies like Villa Juarez, as they undergo not only ideological exchanges but the movement of populations that has led to international and national demographic shifts. One of the main issues that this research will investigate is the relationship between education and migration, and whether the changing conditions of that rural setting have had any effect on how locals perceive the purpose of education.

This study examines the way teachers, students, and government officials view the purpose of education in the agrarian village of Villa Juarez that, like other communities in central Mexico, is undergoing the influence of globalization, manifested most notably in emigration to the United States. If post-basic education competes with international migration as another form of economic mobility, as William A. Kandel

discusses in his study of traditional migrant communities, then what is the purpose of education as viewed by teachers, students, and government officials in a rural community? Villa Juarez, a town with a long-standing history of migration to the United States, has experienced continually diminishing depopulation and school closings since the Bracero Program of 1942, which marked the onset of a pronounced trend of migration to the United States for temporary employment opportunities.

The central question in the present study is addressed using two analytical frameworks: globalization and the “culture of migration” theory. The definitions of globalization are varied and encompass many topics that transcend national borders, including migration. Globalization is described by one scholar as “what happens when the movement of people, goods, or ideas among countries and regions accelerates.” The “culture of migration” is a concept first put forward by William Kandel and Douglas Massey that posits that, for communities with extended histories and consistently high rates of migration to the United States, the population emigrates as a way of life. Following Kandel and Massey, the young people of Villa Juarez evidence the culture of migration since the goal for many is to ultimately work in the United States. The present study argues that the town of Villa Juarez has developed a culture of migration that, along


7 William Kandel and Douglas S. Massey, “The Culture of Mexican Migration: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis,” Social Forces, 80, no. 3 (March 2002): 981. The phrase “culture of migration” as used throughout this work specifically refers to Kandel’s and Massey’s theory.
with other elements of globalization, has undermined education for future generations of youth.

The current study traces the history of education in Villa Juarez since the inception of the *Bracero* Program in 1942 to explore the nature and direction of demographic changes in the region’s population. It examines the extent to which migration has become a way of life in the town and what role education has played in this context. Although migration has been an on-going phenomenon in Villa Juarez for many decades, as it has in many other traditionally migrant-sending communities in Mexico, this is the first time the voices and perspectives of community members have been examined in an effort to explain the changes in the schools over the years. Archival materials, amplified by oral histories, build the story of the town and its schools, and help to determine how stakeholders’ views of the role of education have changed over time. By examining the experiences of community members in this small migrant town in a state in central Mexico, critically important questions about education are investigated. How have the schools in Mexican migrant towns, as major producers of skilled human capital, responded to the decline in their enrollments? How do these towns view the role of education for students within this changing demographic context? Further, does this decline exemplify Kandel’s and Massey’s idea of a culture of migration? While this study examines the purpose of schooling in Villa Juarez through the history of the primary schools, it also explores the broader context of social and demographic changes
influenced by migration as a facet of globalization, as a means of explaining what is occurring at the school level.

The educational system as it exists today in Villa Juarez and in the nation cannot be understood independently of its history as it has been shaped by the State and society. How educational policies have been carried out at local levels over time and the social, economic, political, and cultural forces that have interplayed with education locally continue to be elusive in the history of Mexican education. The experiences of local actors at the school level uncover a dimension of education that cannot be traced by examining the educational policies put forth officially by the state alone. Just as ideas found in educational literature and laws during a certain time period do not necessarily serve as proof of their acceptance among those who read or execute them, the ideologies and educational policies adopted by the government merely indicate that students at the local level were most likely exposed to them. An investigation of the views of local teachers, students, and government officials can add this local dimension to knowledge of the history and purpose of education in Villa Juarez.

**Significance of the Study**

The research in the present study seeks to uncover the relationship between educational policies, their purpose, those who applied these policies in the past and in the

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present (teachers and administrators), and the generations of student recipients of schooling. It intends to accomplish the following goal: To examine how national educational policies and theories have played out at the local level since 1942 in the specific agrarian society of Villa Juarez, which developed a tradition of migration. To explain this, the present study explores historical trends in the village and in education in order to determine the extent to which perspectives about the purpose of education among former and current teachers, students, and local political figures have changed during this period.

From interviews of teachers, students, and elected town leaders (government officials), this research approach provides first-hand accounts of how these stakeholders had perceived education when Villa Juarez was a vibrant community, compared to the present. Since the 1980s, the town of Villa Juarez has transformed into a “ghost town” except during the winter holiday season. Coupled with oral histories and the literary analysis of archival materials, the present study affords an in depth exploration of the history of Villa Juarez schools and the town itself, investigating the changes occurring in the schools. By incorporating oral histories and examining historical archives to both construct the history of the schools and the town and review formal policy and curriculum decisions, this study explores the relationship of Villa Juarez to education as its population sought its livelihood in another country, undermining the purpose of education in the town. The oral histories expose the voices of the local participants that have not been documented in previously published studies.
The effect of globalizing influences, especially international migration, is evident in the rural community in many ways, particularly in the rural culture itself. International migration by farmers and laborers made lasting impressions on these men, who first were employed temporarily in the United States under the Bracero Program. Migration patterns were initially circular; men worked temporarily or seasonally and returned to their families, bringing back ideas, experiences, and remittances that affected the rural community, over time.

In the past two decades, migration patterns in Mexico have changed considerably, transforming from circular, seasonal, or temporary to permanent migration. More recently, migration patterns have led to depopulation, with children moving to the United States with their parents or family members; the decrease in family size (likely the result of family planning campaigns in the 1970s) has also contributed to lower school enrollments.

Few earlier studies have examined the extent to which the schools or the local educational system have been affected by this phenomenon of migration. Impressions of how local teachers, students, and government see the purpose of education have also gone largely unexplored in previous academic writing. Thus, while historical studies of education in agrarian societies in Mexico are scarce, research on rural education in Mexico in general has received some focus, particularly as it relates to the early 20th century.

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century revolutionary period. Case studies on the history of education in specific rural communities, though not abundant and of limited generalizability, provide a point of reference for the present study.

The role of education in the context of consistently high migration in Mexico is a critically important area of research, given the changes and expansion of migration patterns across the nation, yet only minimal scholarly literature focuses on depopulation in Mexican towns and its effects on local schools. As the current study explores the current phenomenon of depopulation, it may be useful in understanding future generations of both students who may choose to remain in their communities and those who choose to leave.

A related but different manifestation of the effects of transnational migration observed in Villa Juarez is evident in the decline of working-age and school age populations in migrant towns in the United States. However, the depopulation observed in migrant-sending communities in Mexico seems to have the opposite effect across the border. This is apparent in the case of Chicago. The accelerated growth of the Mexican population in the Chicago metropolitan area also saw an increase in the immigrant student population, driving educational institutions to develop strategies to better address their needs.

Regrettably, studies focusing specifically on education and migration have not applied the same scrutiny on both sides of the border. Scholarly research on the challenges to social service and educational systems posed by immigrant populations in traditional U.S. urban ports of entry have addressed both how immigrant students and their families maneuver in the host educational system and student performance in the United States. However, little research has examined the sending communities’ schools and educational structures. The present study of education in Villa Juarez fills this gap and contributes to an understanding of education in this Mexican town, in its historical context and in light of the continuing demographic changes.

**Comparative Perspectives on Rural Education and Depopulation**

Education has been linked with social and economic development by scholars and policy makers. Studies frequently show that an individual’s earnings are proportional to his or her level of schooling. In addition, greater employment opportunities and a higher quality of life are also linked to education. The positive association between education

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and income translates at the national level as an increase in human capital development and higher levels of worker productivity.\textsuperscript{13}

Following this reasoning, the Mexican government since the 1970s set out to improve the availability and quality of education and to draw the country closer to the achievement levels of the most developed countries.\textsuperscript{14} Over the past twenty years, with the impulse of the modernization initiatives launched by President Carlos Salinas de Gortari in 1992, governmental bodies and their educational counterparts in Mexico have followed a model of education aimed at promoting competitiveness to move Mexico into the global economy. This model of educational training for economic development is founded on the premise of life-long learning, focusing on teaching the “learner” to learn continuously, preparing him or her for the future.\textsuperscript{15} Education is conceived as an indispensable means to enhance the overall skill level of the society.\textsuperscript{16} However, not all communities in Mexico view education in this way. In some, schooling reflects a different reality: it does not guarantee increased work opportunities in those particular communities, nor does it signify a higher pay scale. Thus, while modernization theory

\begin{itemize}
\end{itemize}
and development models conceive of education as a primary route to achieve socioeconomic mobility, in some Mexican historically migrant communities, students often have not followed this route in order to secure their financial futures.\textsuperscript{17} Furthermore, while educational policies have accommodated the demands of the state to develop citizens to participate in the nation and contribute to its economy to help it globalize, this strict relationship between nation-state and formal schooling has become more complicated.\textsuperscript{18}

Migration, whether rural to urban or international, has served in many rural and economically underdeveloped communities as an alternative route to making a living there. Migration is not a new phenomenon. Sociologists, for example, have investigated the phenomenon of rural-to-urban migration since industrial times,\textsuperscript{19} and international migration is generally associated with people in developing countries travelling to more developed countries in search of better work opportunities -- an effect of globalization. Villa Juarez and other Mexican migrant communities are similar not only to communities in other developing countries that experience international migration but to rural,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{17} Kandel, “Temporary U.S. Migration,” 1-2.
\end{itemize}
underdeveloped communities in developed countries that undergo rural to urban migration.

Sociologist Alan DeYoung suggests that many researchers in education focus on international environments when working on development projects and “implicitly equate American education with modern education. In dealing with the occasional exception, as in Appalachia, belief in the power of public schooling to bring modernization and progress to the region’s children persists in both the popular media and among politicians.”

Michael Corbett researched schooling in the traditional rural fishing community of Digby Neck in southwestern Nova Scotia and found a relationship between formal education and outmigration in rural settings. In many communities that experience rural to urban migration, formal schooling has been loosely associated with the fall of traditional societies, young people’s outmigration, and the advancement of modernity. In some traditional communities in Nova Scotia, schooling is so far removed from established family practices and the social capital relations that are rooted in the local culture that publicly provided education has become irrelevant for many young students. This is particularly the case for those who have chosen to stay and work in local

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job opportunities.\textsuperscript{23} In Digby Neck, currently experiencing depopulation due to rural to urban migration, students with educational credentials move to urban areas in search of work opportunities in modern settings. Those that choose to remain and work in the local fishing industry are also less engaged in finishing their education. In other words, education prepares students to work outside their traditional communities. Corbett asserts that advanced schooling may mean that the higher-educated move out of their traditional culture to find employment outside the town.

On the one hand, schooling is one of these expert systems that work to disembed and mobilize young people rather than engage them in a process of learning how to live well and carefully within a place (Gruenwald 2002; Theobald 1997). Within such a system, the young person who cannot see or accept the contemporary menu of choices is often defined as deficient.\textsuperscript{24}

Variations on this phenomenon are seen in the cases of rural school closings in Kansas and other rural areas in the United States and internationally.\textsuperscript{25} For example, as a community in Scotland experiences school closures due to depopulation, the closing of the school represents the end of the way of life for the town, since the school has traditionally been central to social cohesion in these areas. The lack of schools also deters

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{23} Corbett, “It Was Fine if You Wanted to Leave,” 466.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{24} Ibid.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{25} John Ross, “Rural Schools Can be Saved From Closure, Says Action Group”, \textit{The Scotsman}, September 21, 2005; John Milburn, “Rural schools in cross-hairs of courts in education debate,” AP, July 2, 2005; “Crucial role of rural schools; closures tear out the heart of small communities,” \textit{The Herald} (Glasgow), July 22, 2005.}
families with children from remaining in those communities, thus further affecting regional stability.\footnote{Crucial role of rural schools; closures tear out the heart of small communities,” \textit{The Herald} (Glasgow), July 22, 2005.}

Within Mexico, numerous rural towns experience international migration and depopulation. Some, like Villa Juarez, have had a tradition of migration for many years; however, the development of new regions of emigration in Oaxaca, Veracruz, and Guerrero, among others, is a fairly recent phenomenon.\footnote{Alba, “Globalización y migración mexicana,” 30.} Research about communities that have developed the tradition of migration, such as those in the states of Jalisco, Michoacán, Guanajuato, Nayarit, and Zacatecas, has contributed to the development of theoretical explanations for migration that note globalization’s effects on the rural sectors.\footnote{Douglas S. Massey and Kristin E. Espinosa, “What’s Driving Mexico-U.S. Migration? A Theoretical, Empirical and Policy Analysis,” \textit{The American Journal of Sociology}, 102, no. 4, (Jan 1997): 941, 990.} Studies based on the culture of migration theory, focus on student aspirations and student networks with migrants in the United States that have incorporated the role of education in the whole equation of student migration.\footnote{Kandel and Massey, “The Culture of Mexican Migration,” 981.}

\section*{Structure of the Dissertation}

This dissertation is organized into nine chapters. The introductory chapter presents the study’s central questions. Chapter 2 explores the conceptual frameworks
used in this study – globalization and the culture of migration theory, and reviews relevant literature about migration and depopulation experienced in Mexico.

Chapter 3 describes the research methodology used in this study and discusses how the idea of exploring Villa Juarez came about. This chapter describes reasons for the choice of using the case study and sampling methods, and the appropriateness both of conducting in-depth oral history interviews and collecting archival data. Two methods, discussed in the methodology section, were used for the interpreting the data collected in this study: literary analysis for the archival material and content analysis for the interviews.

Chapter 4 presents a brief history of education in Mexico. Chapter 5 furnishes archival findings describing the historical context of Villa Juarez, from its inception to the latter half of the 20th century. This includes a description of the Bracero Program specifically in the State of San Luis Potosi. Chapter 6 presents findings from the archival materials describing the schools in Villa Juarez before and after 1940.

Chapters 7 and 8 present a contextual analysis of the interviews, exploring how three groups of stakeholders -- former and current teachers, former students, and government officials -- viewed the purpose of education in Villa Juarez in the context of the changes the town has undergone and how these changes represent the theories of globalization and culture of migration.
Chapter 9 concludes with an overarching analysis of the findings and discussion of the research. It also examines issues and areas for further study, suggested by the results of the present study’s research.
CHAPTER 2
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS:
GLOBALIZATION AND THE CULTURE OF MIGRATION

This chapter reviews relevant literature about education and its relationship to globalization and the culture of migration in the context of schooling in the rural community of Villa Juarez. Globalizing influences (such as the Internet and telecommunications) have recently permeated rural environments, generating exchanges between people and their ideas that were impossible decades ago. The rural setting is no longer a “static, bounded space” maintaining untouched cultural values and traditions.¹ Local and national identities are often deeply disrupted and altered by these supranational elements. As comparativist Robert F. Arnoye argues, “various transnational forces raise significant questions about the viability of the nation-state and the role of public education systems in creating citizens.”² Thus, globalization is a useful conceptual framework in examining the case of education in Villa Juarez, Mexico.


In addition, culture of migration theory, as it applies in some rural communities in Mexico, provides a lens to examine changes resulting from migration and depopulation in that country. A nation’s educational practices reflect its culture, history, social and political traditions, and values. As Judith Torney-Purta and John Schwille contend, traditions are neither immune to foreign influences nor immutable. Examining the cultural and demographic effects of culture of migration theory helps to illuminate whether and how out-migration in Villa Juarez influenced the purpose of schooling in the town. The frameworks of globalization and the culture of migration present ways to understand education and its purpose in settings that are in flux.

Defining Globalization

The extensive literature on globalization offers many definitions of this phenomenon. Globalization describes the transformation of the world system in the recent past as it is characterized by the global economy. Political theorist David Held defines it as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.” Thomas L. Friedman writes that globalization is an “international system,”


displacing the Cold War relationships; a system that abides by its own rules and affects almost every country in the world, directly or indirectly.\textsuperscript{7} Zsuzsa Gille and Seán Ó Riain, who write on global ethnography, claim it “signifies the increasing significance of trans-local relations, local-global relations, and global-global relations at the expense of national-national relations.”\textsuperscript{8} Thus, while the definitions vary, globalization is not a recent development.\textsuperscript{9}

The concept of globalization was preceded by “internationalization,” a term that originated in the nineteenth century and referred to the limitations of nation-states’ sovereignty over their territories, applying specifically to shared control with other states, or with the international community, as in the case of coastal waters.\textsuperscript{10} Some scholars assert that globalization originated over a hundred years ago in the West, and establish a linkage between it and the developments in communication, migration, and capital flows.\textsuperscript{11} Others place it as emerging much earlier, with the formation of a global


\textsuperscript{11} Burbules and Torres, \textit{Globalization and Education}, 12.
economic system in the fourteenth century or with capitalism in the sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{12} While globalization and internationalization refer to geopolitical relationships of international interdependence, Jurgen Schriewer asserts that the use of the term globalization to differentiate from internationalization was a testament to the existence of a completely new historical phenomenon of relationships. Noel McGinn writes that globalization is “the new form of capitalism promoted in globalization.”\textsuperscript{13} The emphasis on the relationship between capitalism and globalization in the present day originated in the work of Immanuel Wallerstein, who proposed that a capitalist world-economy had developed by the eighteenth century. The global division of labor consisted of the levels of core, peripheral, and semi-peripheral zones, at which transfers of surpluses occurred.\textsuperscript{14} Wallerstein maintained that “[c]apitalism was from the beginning an affair of the world-economy and not of nation-states.”\textsuperscript{15}

Business journalists and finance and economics experts used globalization to refer to the integration of the capital markets of nation states and the strategies of transnational companies in Japan, the United States, and Europe. Globalization, defined as the global


\textsuperscript{13} McGinn, “The Impact of Globalization,” 41.


integration of economic systems, has advanced quickly since the 1960s. By the 1990s, the term was often used to describe “a new form of society.” Over time, globalization came to be used to refer to the emergence of a global society, characterized by the disintegration of national boundaries, newly-formed relationships between people and regions across distances, and the transnational or regional movement of people, goods, or ideas at an increasing rate. It includes globalized financial transactions and international financial crises, ecological interdependence, international tourism, international migration, and the media’s instantaneous dissemination of information.

An early feature of internationalization and, later, of globalization, was the development of national educational systems in Europe. The late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw state-sponsored mass schooling in many nations of Europe. By the mid- to late nineteenth century, globalization impacted education in the “transfer and imposition” of educational systems on colonized nations. Numerous scholars assert that

19 Schriewer, “Sistema mundial,” 120.
22 Theodore H. von Laue, The world revolution of westernization: the twentieth century in global perspective (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), stated that “All the peoples of the world were,
the educational systems of advanced nations prior to 1945 had similar “goals, structures and contents” and that many newly independent nations after 1945 retained the systems established by their earlier, colonizing countries. 23 Few changes in “content or process” occurred in education.24 Despite the effects of globalization, McGinn claims that “no national system of education is very different to what it was fifty years ago.”25

Advocates and opponents of globalization differ as to whether its cultural and economic aspects are valuable or detrimental to societies.26 While proponents of globalization credit it as a “triumph” of liberal democracy and Western civilization, its opponents associate it with imperialism and Western hegemony.27 Although globalization has benefitted the economies of some developing countries, particularly East Asia and India, the increasing inequality between wealthier and poorer nations has continued to


25 Ibid.


fuel debate. Education is a key element in this debate, since educational frameworks often reflect the perspectives of proponents from many viewpoints.

McGinn asserts that the current call for reform in education is geared to lead to “global competitiveness” and to meet the need for necessary “knowledge and skills.” For other scholars, education must be used to create “increased awareness of other cultures.” Joel Spring argues that education’s role is to serve the global economy; it is an investment for nations so they can develop human capital to enhance economic growth.

[..] educational discourses around the world often refer to human capital, lifelong learning for improving job skills, and economic development. Also, the global economy is sparking a mass migration of workers resulting in global discussions about multicultural education.

Spring writes that the globalization of education results in local and global contexts interacting and effecting change on one another:

32 Spring, Globalization of Education, 3.
There is a constant dynamic of interaction: global ideas about school practices interact with local school systems while, through mutual interaction, both the local and the global are changed. [...] Nations continue to independently control their school systems while being influenced by this superstructure of global education processes. Today, many nations choose to adopt policies from this global superstructure in order to compete in the global economy.  

However, McGinn contends that few major educational reforms (e.g., in curricula) have taken place despite the movement toward the decentralization of governance of the national education systems, a byproduct of globalization. He adds:

[...] the conclusion drawn from the research to date is that decentralization policies do not lead to increased learning by students, do not lead to increased efficiency in decision-making, and often do not even increase local participation in decision making. Perhaps most important, experiments with governance consistent with the logic of flexible production have not changed in any recognizable way the content and delivery of education.

By describing the skills, knowledge, and talents that people develop and bring with them as they migrate, the idea of human capital has been central to globalization policy development. Human capital theory emerged in the late 1950s and early 1960s and brought forward the idea of education as one of investment rather than a personal commodity. By the 1990s, globalization efforts in education and training centered on the concepts of human capital and social capital and the networks that developed based on

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34 McGinn, “The Impact of Globalization,” 44. McGinn states that decentralization in education was characteristic of the global development model which came about in the late 1950s.

human capital. Over time, nations made massive investments to expand educational opportunities since “increasing the availability of education would produce net social benefits, increasing the total amount of wealth in a society and improving its distribution.”

Sending communities are profoundly affected by globalization, due both to out migration and the strong ties maintained with families that stay behind. The Global Commission on International Migration reported that

In the current era, there is a need to capitalize upon the growth of human mobility by promoting the notion of “brain circulation”, in which migrants return to their own country on a regular or occasional basis, sharing the benefits of the skills and resources they have acquired while living and working abroad.

Thus, globalization can lead to patterns of circular migration and continued communication between migrants and their families in sending countries, as evidenced in towns like Villa Juarez that display forged linkages of remittances; sharing of information, and the exchange of ideas, culture, and language between countries.

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The drain of talent and professionally trained personnel, or “brain drain”, in developing countries is often an issue connected to both globalization and the “culture of migration”, which I describe in the next section of this chapter. Research in the 1960s and 1970s pointed to negative impacts of migration, since remittances that were often invested in education and healthcare, skills learned from returning migrants, and the establishment of social and business networks did not compensate for the loss of the sending nations’ educational investment in the migrant.39 This deprivation of work potential was seen as harmful to the country’s financial welfare and potential development.40 However, more recent studies demonstrate that sending communities indeed benefit from migration in the form of human capital development, because the higher skills gained by those working outside of the country can influence more residents in sending communities to invest in local education.41 In this case, there is a “beneficial brain drain.”42

Nevertheless, consistent migration, over time, of individuals of working and child-bearing ages means less population that will contribute work and talent to the


serving community’s economy and the loss of future generations. These factors can be particularly damaging to rural communities that see a decline in their populations as migrants move away and are topics central to the discussion of globalization.

In summary, however globalization is defined, a growing consensus among scholars avers that globalization will inevitably advance and permeate society at many levels. It has generated social and cultural transformations that have affected central systems of family and work. In addition, because of its rapid development and expansion, globalization has impacted and challenged existing theories to understand the world. Scholars in education have increasingly examined the relationship between globalization and education, producing a growing body of literature. However, analyses of the dynamics of migration at the level of the local sending community continue to be infrequent, though such research will make a critical contribution to understanding how best to manage global change. As Bog Lingard contends, “we also need to understand the

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micro-histories, cultures, and politics of local practices of educational structuring as they are implicated in the multiple flows of globalization.”

**Culture of Migration**

In the last decade, the northern and central regions of Mexico underwent substantial demographic changes due to emigration to the United States, which intensified after the *Bracero* Program in 1942. A total of 12 states in these regions reveal “very high” (red) or “high” (blue) indices of migration intensity (*intensidad migratoria*) (see Figure 1 below). San Luis Potosi is one of seven states with high migration rates. Villa Juarez, a municipality in that state, exhibits all the indicators that qualify it as a high migration zone, with high levels of remittances and high percentages of families with ties to family members working in the United States.

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Among the 58 municipalities that comprise the state of San Luis Potosi, the municipality of Villa Juarez ranks the third highest among those with “very high” migration intensity indices (see Figure 2 below). One indicator of migration intensity is the proportion of families in the municipality who receive remittances from the United States. Villa Juarez ranks number one in the State in this measure, with 37 percent of the 3,019 families in the town receiving remittances.\(^{49}\)

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\(^{48}\) Ibid. Estimates are based on sample of 10 percent from the XII Census (XII Censo General de Población y Vivienda, 2000). States in red are characterized by the CONAPO definition as those with “Very High” Migration Intensity Index, while those in blue are characterized as having a “High” Migration Intensity Index. The migration intensity index is composed of four indicators, including: percentage of homes that receive remittances, percentage of homes with migrants in the U.S. in the previous five years, percentage of homes with circular migrants in the past five years, and percentage of homes with returning migrants in the previous five years.
William Kandel and Douglas Massey provide an explanation for sustained migration in traditional rural migrant towns like Villa Juarez that have experienced emigration patterns to the United States. Their theory posits that in communities with extended histories and high rates of migration to the United States, the population emigrates as a way of life. In their 2001 empirical study, Kandel and Massey created a

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50 Ibid.

culture of migration model for the relationship between “migrant-supporting values,”
defined as values that contribute to the migration aspirations, their reach and influence
across generations, and their effect in sustaining local migrant behavior.52

In studies of Mexican migration to the United States, other research has
contributed to the culture of migration concept. Raymond Wiest links migration to a
“culture of dependency”, Joshua Reichert identifies a “migrant syndrome,” Richard
Mines describes a “community tradition of migration,” and Douglas Massey, Rafael
Alarcón, Jorge Durand, and Hector González describe the “social process of international
migration.” Luin Goldring, Roger Rouse, and other researchers write about the
“transnationalization of social space”, Rafael Alarcon describes the “northernization” of
these communities, and Robert Smith describes them as “transnational localities,” where

“absent migrants are always present.” Jeffrey Cohen also applies the concept of culture of migration to a southern Oaxacan community. These scholars examine Mexican case studies to provide analyses of migrant areas in Mexico and the social conditions that accompany this phenomenon.

Kandel’s and Massey’s theory of the culture of migration offers a lens to examine the extent to which migration has become a way of life in Villa Juárez. The tradition of migration in many Mexican-sending communities has affected multiple aspects of their ways of life, and schools are no exception. Educators in communities with high levels of migration find many potential migrant students in their classrooms. These students often desert their studies, frequently by secondary school-age, to migrate to the U.S.


and Massey identify this phenomenon of school abandonment in migrant communities in order to work as a “rite of passage”, particularly for young men.\textsuperscript{56}

In these communities, young people, influenced by family members or friends who have migrated, grow up aspiring to work and/or live in the United States.\textsuperscript{57} As Kandel and Massey note, “International migration is cultural in the sense that the aspiration to migrate is transmitted across generations and between people through social networks.”\textsuperscript{58} In the culture of migration, economic mobility is a central goal. Locals gauge the “success” of returning migrants by their financial means and the stories they share of their experiences living in the United States. This influences young locals, who then aspire to work in the United States, investing less in creating a life in their hometown and country, and most likely leaving school early.\textsuperscript{59} Kandel and Massey write,

Since education historically has brought high returns for occupational attainment and income within Mexico, but little marginal benefit to undocumented migrants working in the U.S. (Taylor 1987), we expect young people holding aspirations to live and/or work in the U.S., those from families more involved in international migration, and those from communities where U.S. migration is more prevalent to display a


\textsuperscript{56} Kandel and Massey, “The Culture of Mexican Migration,” 982.

\textsuperscript{57} Kandel and Massey, “The Culture of Mexican Migration,” 981-982.

\textsuperscript{58} Kandel and Massey, “The Culture of Mexican Migration,” 981.

\textsuperscript{59} Kandel and Massey, “The Culture of Mexican Migration,” 982.
significantly lower likelihood of aspiring to continue schooling in Mexico.\textsuperscript{60} Thus, the role of education in these communities may have diminished relevance for would-be migrants who plan to work in the United States and greater relevance for those who plan on continuing their education in Mexico. In addition, education in Mexico seems to have lost credibility as a route for economic mobility, undermining schooling in the country for future generations of students.

Further developing the concept of the culture of migration he originated with Kandel, Massey contends that among the most influential determinants in migration are social networks. These networks are built over time in a community and become part of the way of life, providing a form of social capital that can ensure safer migration strategies, job connections, and economic assistance, when necessary. He asserts that migration is dependent on opportunities, unemployment, and economic crises in the local community relative to those in the United States.\textsuperscript{61} “Well documented incentives to migrate include constrained local conditions (e.g. poor job and wage structures) and

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.

rapid, expansive changes in technology and crop production.”62 This is particularly relevant to the case of Villa Juarez, where farming was a primary form of livelihood until around the 1960s.63

Victor Zúñiga identifies four inextricably linked processes that have developed from the nearly sixty year tradition of migration to the United States: (1) the creation of a knowledge capital regarding the job market and contact information in different areas of the United States, communicating experiences that can help migrants land a job and know which talents are needed for a successful trip/migration experience; (2) over approximately four generations, migrants have contributed to the creation of this tradition; (3) knowledge capital has been transferred between parents and children over these four generations, implying that the most recent migrants received that knowledge and should be better prepared to face obstacles along the way; and 4) this passing down


63 Massey, “Understanding Mexican Migration to the United States,” 1378. In this study of Mexican migration process, Massey finds that “In particular, the capitalization of agriculture in the 1960s created widespread unemployment and under-employment in the two rural communities. This development coincided with the maturation of migrant networks at the end of the Bracero Program, and the probability of U. S. migration rose steadily, until by the late 1970s a young man had a 90 percent chance of going to the United States during his lifetime.”
of the migration tradition suggests that those who inherit the tradition from parents and
grandparents -- the younger generations -- will most likely make use of it.64

Not all scholars agree with Kandel’s and Massey’s hypotheses about the tradition,
or culture, of migration sustained over decades in these areas of high migration. Gustavo
Verduzco’s study on the city of Zamora, Michoacán poses a different theory about
migration in that city. Zamora presents a long history of migration throughout the 20th
century that slowed, due to improvement in local employment opportunities, increase in
income, and increased social services and social welfare. Verduzco found that the
majority of migrants to the United States from Zamora were non-“recurring” migrants
(i.e., they travelled to the United States less than four times in their lifetimes). Further,
this group worked outside of the country only to meet pressing economic needs, such as a
wedding or house construction projects. Unlike Kandel and Massey, Verduzco found no
association between familial ties, families’ migration experiences, and the choice to
migrate. He claimed that whether fathers and their sons chose to migrate was not based
on the fathers’ migration experience, but was based instead on the son’s individual,
independent decision.65

However, the situation Zamora describes is dissimilar to the one in Villa Juarez
and other rural towns of high migration, where the opportunities Verduzco describes do

64 Victor Zúñiga, “Tradiciones Migratorias Internacionales y Socialización Familiar: Expectativas
Migratorias de los alumnos de Secundaria de Cuatro Municipios del Norte de Nuevo León” Frontera Norte

65 Gustavo Verduzco, “La migración urbana a Estados Unidos: un caso del occidente de México”
Estudios Sociofotográficos VIII (22) (1990): 117-139, quoted in Zúñiga, “Tradiciones Migratorias
Internacionales y Socialización Familiar,” 52.
not usually exist. Zuñiga refutes Verduzco’s positioning, pointing out that Verduzco’s research did not document whether migrants had been influenced by family members other than parents who had migrated and, thus, did not examine the relationship between broad family ties and decisions to migrate.

Shawn Kanaiaupuni highlights several factors influencing migration aspirations. These include: (1) human capital investments, which include formal education, work history, and, similar to Kandel and Massey, prior migration experiences; (2) ambition, energy, motivation; and (3) socioeconomic status, among others. Migration of educated individuals is dependent on the “relative returns to education in the community of origin and the destination community.” Kanaiaupuni asserts that educated individuals are less likely to migrate abroad, because they can do better economically in their own communities or countries. While the studies of George Borjas and of Edward Taylor found that educated individuals in Mexico, for example, are less likely to get high economic returns in the U.S., due to their legal status and lack of English skills, other reports indicate that migrants from diverse backgrounds (e.g., professionals such as physicians and lawyers) now aspire to migrate because of inadequate opportunities in their own countries. Other research indicates that the expansion of migrant networks

66 Shawn Malia Kanaiaupuni, “Reframing the Migration Question,” 1313.


into urban settings in sending countries has altered the composition of migrant workers -- more recent migration populations included urban workers with higher levels of education, likely due to languishing economic conditions at home.\(^6^9\)

Kanaiaupuni contributes to this interpretation, refuting the notion that Mexican immigrants have lower educational levels, contending that educational investment can be a predictor of migration, because educated women are more likely to migrate, given the gender discrimination they may experience in their own communities and the earning potential in the host community.\(^7^0\) Based on data from the Mexican Migration Project (1999), Kanaiaupuni also asserted that increased educational attainment among males also meant decreased migration.\(^7^1\) The likelihood of high school educated men migrating was 60 percent lower than those males without any schooling, but among high school educated women, these rates were 2.3 times higher compared to their uneducated counterparts. A rise in female migration was evident in the mid-1970s after the end of the \textit{Bracero} Program and the passing in 1986 of immigration reform legislation (IRCA) granting amnesty to illegal workers residing in the United States before 1982. Migration among males, on the other hand, was the highest in the early years of the \textit{Bracero}


\(^{70}\) Kanaiaupuni, “Reframing the Migration Question,” 1336.

\(^{71}\) Ibid. The Mexico Migration Project of 1999 included data from 43 villages in Jalisco, Michoacán, and Guanajuato, the highest traditionally migrant sending region, as well as from Zacatecas, San Luis Potosí, Nayarit, Guerrero, and Oaxaca.
Program. Another factor found to encourage male migration was the increase in the number of children in a family.\textsuperscript{72} This appears to have been the case in Villa Juarez, where larger families generated more male migration, often to support the family back home.

Changes in patterns of migration over the past three decades require further research as the Mexican demographic transforms, due to globalization and national economic crises. New areas of international migration have emerged, along with the traditionally migrant-sending communities. Recent research on migration within Mexico adds to the study of migration from urban as well as rural areas to the U.S. These new patterns are seen as the result of the economic crisis of 1982 that curtailed opportunities in the cities and caused a declining quality of life.\textsuperscript{73}

By the use of the globalization and the culture of migration theories as analytical frameworks, the present study examines the local conceptualizations of education in the context of migration in the rural community of Villa Juarez. Exploring the perspectives of a traditional migrant sending community in Mexico provides useful insight into globalization’s effect on education at the local level, an area of research that has been insufficiently explored.

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\textsuperscript{72} Kanaiaupuni, “Reframing the Migration Question,” 1323-1326.

\textsuperscript{73} Zúñiga, “Tradiciones Migratorias Internacionales y Socialización Familiar,” 51.
Conclusion

This chapter presented the two primary conceptual frameworks -- globalization and the culture of migration – used in the present study. As Robert F. Arnove suggests, “the adoption of a focus on globalization contributes to a greater understanding of the dynamics of school-society relations, as well as the potential and limitations of education systems to contribute to individual and societal advancement.”

The following chapter provides an explanation of the methodology used for this study, including the recruitment of interview subjects and gathering of archival data.

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CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the present study includes oral interviews with former and current teachers, former students, and town officials, and historical and statistical data about the town and schools. Chapter 3 addresses the three main sources of data used for my research and how these data were gathered. Section 1 discusses why I chose a case study approach and why the town of Villa Juarez was selected for this case study; Section 2 presents the reasons for performing oral interviews and the method by which participants in the study were selected; and Section 3 focuses on the use and management of archival materials in order to create a sociohistorical account of education in Villa Juarez over a period of 60 years.

Background: Choosing Villa Juarez as a Case Study

The idea of doing a case study developed through my work as a research assistant for the Institute for Latino Studies of Notre Dame in suburban Chicago. The Institute produced several research briefs on the demographic shift in Chicago’s immigrant population from the City to the suburbs. The shift was significant in that for the first time in the history of immigrant populations in the City, the majority of immigrants were now
living in the suburbs rather than the City.¹ This shift was noteworthy since the
infrastructure of suburban areas that saw an increase in immigrant populations was not
prepared for this demographic change. In particular, schools and social services had to
adapt to meet the needs of the growing immigrant community.² The impact of the
demographic shifts for the schools and other social service agencies were twofold: first,
more services and educational programs, as well as educational support were needed for
immigrants. For example, GED and English-as-a-second-language (ESL) classes would
need to be established where there were none before, or increased where there were only
a few. Secondly, the recommendations of the study highlighted the need for schools and
agencies to provide more support to Latinos in the schools, the largest growing minority
in the suburbs, in order to decrease the gap in academic achievement between them and
other ethnic groups at the state and national levels. These studies addressed the
challenges to schools and the social service infrastructure brought on by the influx of
mostly Mexican immigrants.

On the other hand, from personal observation traveling over the years to my
parents’ home town of Villa Juarez, it was clear to me that the town was undergoing what
seemed to be a depopulation. While the schools in suburban Chicago underwent a
demographic increase, the schools in Villa Juarez were slowly being depleted of students,
and many were closing. Many of the town’s students had family in the United States and

¹ Timothy Ready and Allert Brown-Gort, The State of Latino Chicago, We are Home Now, (Notre Dame, IN: Institute for Latino Studies, University of Notre Dame, 2005), 1.

² Ibid.
planned to migrate. And even if many students one day planned to migrate, they
continued in school until they left. Finding out how and why became the topic of the
present study.

Kandel and Massey develop a theory to reflect the culture of Mexican migration
quantitatively using survey data from random samples of schools in the state of
Zacatecas, which displays a long history of migration. Schools were chosen for their
proximity and access to secondary school in the capital city of Zacatecas, a medium town
and small agrarian communities, with populations ranging between 350 and 150,000
people. Students were given a questionnaire asking demographic information and several
questions to measure aspirations to one day live or work in the United States. The data
were tested for relationships between aspirations and degree of involvement in
international migration. In this study, Villa Juarez can serve as a case study for a town
displaying similar characteristics as those used in Kandel and Massey’s study. Villa
Juarez is part of a state with high indices of migration historically. For this study,
different viewpoints on education were examined in a town with a culture of migration,
providing a qualitative perspective on the culture of migration in a Mexican migrant
town.

A case study of schools in Villa Juarez was the most convenient method of
capturing the histories of the schools during their transition from serving many students
to only a few. It was the best approach to discover whether the perceived purpose of

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education had undergone any changes with the negative shift in population. I was interested in knowing what purpose teachers, students, and town leaders placed on education when Villa Juarez was a vibrant town, relative to the present time when it is a “ghost town” throughout the year, except during the winter holiday season. Using the case study approach, I focused in depth on the town’s schools; through the gathering of oral histories I learned what changes occurred in the schools and why, directly from those who participated in the schools and grew up in the town.

Villa Juarez represents many other towns that have lost their population to the United States, causing several school closings. Through conversations with townspeople of Villa Juarez, colleagues in San Luis Potosi, the state capital, and friends in the United States who were from other areas of Mexico, I found that Villa Juarez was not unique. Several migrant towns had long histories of migration in which school closings were ubiquitous. However, a study of several towns was not feasible, given my limited financial and time constraints.

Although I began my formal interviews and other data collection in Villa Juarez, San Luis Potosi in May 2006, I had done some preliminary research a year earlier. Because of my language fluency, it was not necessary to arrange for interpreters or for translation of my field notes. My first visit to the town for research purposes was in May 2005, when I stayed for a month. The purpose was to introduce myself and perform some informal interviews with the town president and school leaders and inquire about the possibility of doing my research there. I mentioned that it would involve extensive
interviews with members of the town: school leaders, former and current teachers, and former students. The results of the research would be shared with all those involved, as well as with the schools of the town and the *Presidencia*.

Doing preliminary interviews served two purposes. First, I could introduce myself to the town leaders and school heads and gauge whether they were accepting of this research project. The people of Villa Juarez could be distrusting when it came to research studies. It was not that the teachers and town leaders were completely unfamiliar with surveys and interviewing, although it was not too common a practice. Through my initial research, I found that there were other research studies that had been conducted in the town, but they involved government-affiliated persons and, depending on which political party one was affiliated with and whether it was an election year, the political climate of the town could lead to certain distrust of studies and interviews. One factor that facilitated my research was that I was associated with a university in the United States, and I was not affiliated with the politics of the town and, therefore, not seen as a threat. Gaining support for my research was my first concern in deciding whether the case study of the town schools would be possible, and in that first trip in the summer of 2005, the town president seemed amenable to the idea and provided references to the school heads. I did not have any ideas about how political affiliations would play into my gaining access to people for interviews early on, but I later found out that it could have affected those possibilities.
The second reason for travelling to the town a year before conducting the research was to familiarize myself with people and places, so that townspeople were able to identify me later when I returned to conduct my research. This was important because having seen me before, it was likely that the word would spread that a student from the U.S. was conducting interviews with teachers and others, and the idea of the research would be planted, thus making it easier for me to introduce myself and talk to those whom I needed to interview. Although my parents grew up in the town, neither I nor any of my siblings did, so I was not a familiar face. Thus, it was not uncommon for people to question me as to whom my parents were. This happened even when I was younger and would spend my summers in the town. During those summers, whenever I would go to a store, for example, the store owner or another person buying merchandise would not recognize me and ask: ¿De quién es Ud.? (which literally meant, “To whom do you belong?”). When I gave my parents’ names, they would suddenly make the connection and open up to conversation. During the research, I did not approach my interviewees making mention of my parents, but the question frequently arose, and it made interviewees more at ease. I believe this came from knowing that I was someone they indirectly knew.

Through this preliminary visit, it became clear that secondary information on Villa Juarez during the *Bracero* Program in the 1940s did not exist, nor was there much written history of the schools during any time period. To be exact, I found only one book on Villa Juarez history, which provided a cursory account of past events and a few
paragraphs on the educational system in the town. Therefore, the methodology relied heavily on oral history and archival research to examine the research question, document town history and the role of the schools, and recreate a socio-historical account of the educational system that was not found elsewhere.

In the winter of 2005, my dissertation committee approved the research proposal, as did the University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). When it came time to do the oral interviews and review the archival data collection, my job allowed me a window of two months, which I spent in Villa Juarez doing fieldwork. Choosing Villa Juarez was logical to me: I was distant enough from the town and its people that I could remain objective, and yet familiar enough with it, because of my parents’ association, that I would not be completely unfamiliar with navigating the social terrain. It became apparent during my fieldwork that being conversant in the town customs was very important in getting people to talk to me. I also had a place to stay in Villa Juarez, and I had family members. Both of these were advantages: I could set up my research station at my parent’s home without drawing too much attention to myself with my laptop computer and research materials. This made me less threatening or the object of curiosity among family members. In addition, having family members that were privy to information, such as where key interviewees lived, and that were knowledgeable as to whom or where I could get the information I was seeking was of great use. Often, there were brainstorming sessions among some of the family members to recall who the town mayors (presidentes) had been throughout the years and where they or a current family
member lived. I did not rely strictly on information from those brainstorming sessions but they were an invaluable source to get started on my search for people and places and to inquire about directions to the homes of potential participants. They also provided advice on how to access the archives in San Luis Potosi or in the university where I gathered some of my research. Having this internal information was critical in completing my interviewing as quickly as possible in the interest of my limited time frame.

**Choosing a Sample**

This study examined the following research question: To what extent have the views of Villa Juarez teachers and residents changed regarding the role/purpose of the school in developing young people over the past 60 years? In order to answer this question on the purpose of education over time, I collected 38 oral histories from former and current teachers, former students, and former and current town officials/leaders. Interviews targeted teachers and adult residents who had been teachers or students in Villa Juarez in the past 50 years. The criteria for interviewees varied depending on which group they belonged to; for example, teachers who had taught in Villa Juarez were chosen based on whether they had taught in Villa Juarez during most of their teaching careers. The time frame during which these teachers worked in the town was also considered, to make sure that their teaching experience occurred between the years 1940 to 2000. This time frame was chosen based on the oldest generations of living teachers and students that were available for interviewing.
I used a snowball sampling method for choosing my interviewees. Bogdan and Biklen refer to it as purposive sampling, where the researcher chooses the subjects to interview. The snowball sampling method allowed me to get the names of teachers from other teachers I had interviewed and discover who would be more familiar with the criteria I was looking for. It is a method commonly used when doing research with hard to reach or hard to find populations. And in this particular research, finding former teachers in a town of immigrants could prove challenging, given that many would have moved to the United States after retiring. Some Villa Juarez teachers migrated back and forth across the border after retiring if they had children working and living in the United States. Snowball sampling offered a more direct method of finding teachers willing to volunteer for the study, rather than using a random sampling of lists of rosters of teachers working in Villa Juarez since many possible interviewees may have migrated or moved away. It was also not feasible to do random sampling, given the difficulty I anticipated in getting the lists of teachers from all the schools in town and in the two work shifts since the directors of the schools were not very familiar with me (I had introduced my research project to them a year earlier). In addition, the directness of asking for a list of all teachers up front might have caused more reservations among teachers and townspeople about interviewing with me. Most interviews were conducted in Villa Juarez or the neighboring city of Cerritos, where most of the interviewees lived. One interview was conducted in the capital city of San Luis Potosi, since that teacher had moved there.

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shortly after retiring from his teaching career in Villa Juarez. Initially, when I began to develop my research project, I ambitiously proposed to interview former teachers in Chicago and Joliet, as well. That plan was eliminated, given the limitations of resources that I mentioned earlier.

The limitations of snowball sampling were very clear to me: it could permit bias since I was receiving references to teachers that the referring teacher thought valuable to my study. However, the cross section of interviewees from different groups, not only teachers, would allow for the cross-referencing of information from different perspectives, from former and current teachers, as well as from former students and people who had served in municipal government.

Formal oral interviews were conducted with 38 people between May and June of 2006. I planned to interview about 10 people from each of the following groups: current teachers, former teachers, former students, and current and former government officials. I interviewed eleven current teachers (one interview was held with two teachers), who currently worked in Villa Juarez primary, secondary (middle school), and high schools; nine former teachers, who taught in Villa Juarez from between 1957 and 2002; ten former students who attended schools in Villa Juarez between 1956 and 1995; and eight former and current government officials who served in the town from 1962 to the present (see Table 1 below). Current students were not interviewed due to time limitations and the fact that I would have to acquire parental permission for current students, since most of
them were below 18 years of age. In Villa Juarez, this would have been difficult especially for students whose parents were living in the United States.

Table 1. Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher/Directors</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Supervisor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government officials</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interviews lasted an average of 75 minutes and were all conducted in Spanish. In addition to the structured, recorded interviews, I had a number of informal interviews with educational professionals and townspeople who declined to be formally interviewed or who were not referred to me through previous interviewees. Although these informal interviews were not recorded, the information was still valuable, and I took written notes of some of the leads and questions that these informal conversations evoked. In some cases, potential interviewees never clearly stated they were willing to interview with me, but took the time to talk to me about their experiences and answer some informal questions. Some informal conversations lasted about an hour or more, and provided tangential and background information on the schools and their history. This information might have been common knowledge to someone living in Villa Juarez, but it was not to outsiders. Some potential interviewees were very interested in the questions and the research itself but wanted to hear the questions prior to making a decision on whether they would participate in the formal interview.
Some formal interviews were completed in two sessions, given that they became fairly lengthy, or they were scheduled at the interviewee’s place of work. In these cases, interviews were sometimes carried out as people worked and were prone to interruptions. The majority of interviews were conducted at the person’s home. Interviewees were hospitable, and, in most cases, they welcomed the opportunity to share their story and personal ideas as teachers, students, or public servants.

Two teachers declined to have the structured interview tape recorded. For all others, interviews were tape recorded and transcribed upon returning to Chicago. All interviewees were read the interview protocol, as approved by the IRB, in addition to receiving a copy of the description of the research project. All interviewees signed consent forms, of which they received a copy. Anonymity was stressed to the respondents. Identifying information was removed from the transcriptions once these were completed. Interviewees were assigned codes to protect their identities when citing them for this research. Transcriptions had no identifying information about participants, and tapes were destroyed when the analysis of the data was completed, as per directions from the IRB.

Changes in demography and emigration patterns were examined through analysis of both the demographic and qualitative historical data. The interviews provided a qualitative component to answer the inquiry of the present study, which could not be done by statistics alone. These perspectives of the interviewees complemented the historical archival documents and the demographic data of the school and town to explain
the changes that were occurring in the town. They would “fill in the blanks” of the history of the schools, providing background that could not be found elsewhere.

The information collected from the interviews, the archives, and statistical data (including enrollment and migration figures) all were triangulated. This process ensured that, for example, enrollment figures corresponded with archival data, such as letters from the principal to the State Regional Education Inspector, on either needs for teachers or lack of enrollments. The enrollment trends were also compared with interview data, as many interviewees mentioned first the growth in population prior to the 1970s, for example, and then the decrease in population due to migration and the family planning campaign. Statistics could only provide a description of the state of the town at a given moment in time. Though statistics could identify enrollment trends, only through the oral interviews and the archival material was it possible to discern the possible causes for these trends and changes.

**Historical Data**

The time frame addressed in this study was selected based on a salient historical period, the *Bracero* Program, from 1942-1964. The oral histories of those who lived through this period were integrated with historical accounts of the same period. In addition, it was necessary to gather other primary sources to understand the history of education in the town.
I traveled to several areas within the state of San Luis Potosi to gather my research and conduct interviews. I collected archival data related to the educational system in Villa Juarez and the schools from three main sites: the main primary school in Villa Juarez, Heroínas Mexicanas, the municipal government building, and the State’s archives, Archivo Histórico del Estado de San Luis Potosí. At Heroínas Mexicanas, I collected archival data dating back to the early years of the school, beginning in 1892 through 1980. Although the focus of this study is the period during the Bracero Program in 1942, I collected the earliest archival data available to get an idea of the establishment of the school and the roots of education in the town. I sorted more than 300 records, first, chronologically, dividing them into documents and statistical records. The documents were later sorted by themes for content analysis. The archival documents were rich in information and most contained threads of correspondence between the director of the school and his or her superiors in Cerritos or at the State level, or with the town president regarding school needs or projects. Teacher lesson plans, plans for committees, and minutes from various school committee meetings were also among the archival documents. Statistical data included records with tables of student attendance, registration, and demographic data. These data became part of the sociocultural history of the school.

I also spent several weeks in the presidencia municipal (the town’s City Hall), the main government building in Villa Juarez, that housed an enormous archive that was in very poor condition; and the Archivo Histórico del Estado de San Luis Potosí, the state
archives in San Luis Potosi, the capital city, where I was able to gather limited information on Villa Juarez, specifically, but substantial information on educational policies throughout the history of the state.

Access to school data from this time period for Villa Juarez, such as school curricula and other archival material was limited or unavailable. The richest source of archival data was undoubtedly the archives in the Heroínas Mexicanas primary school. The archives at the Presidencia Municipal were substantial but unfortunately in such disarray and deplorable condition that it was impossible to find complete archives for all the years under study. The paperwork itself was in deteriorating condition. I was unsure whether I should be allowed to touch it, lest it be destroyed. The disarray of the town archive impeded methodical research in this area. The archives were housed in a small room of the Presidencia Municipal building in boxes piled up to about six feet in no particular order and absent any filing system. Several informal conversations with townsfolk and with town “historians” alluded to the archive being decimated decades earlier by a fire, and subsequently being moved into several locations in different buildings. Some people that I spoke to believed that some townsfolk kept relevant photographs and other materials from the town’s history.

Records from as early as the 1800s, some even into the late 1700s, were kept in the elementary school and the town municipal building. My searches in other libraries in the state capital confirmed the dearth of written sources on the history of Villa Juarez or
the schools: most, if not all of the information was kept by the people of the town and in the town and school archives.

Coming from a research background where most of my investigations took place in a library, and where historical accounts were unburied from neatly piled stacks on circulation shelves, the archives were a raw reality. There were no historical accounts written out for me, only books of names and records of town accounts in elaborate handwriting. Michael R. Hill points out in his *Archival Strategies and Techniques* that “Your task is to frame or make sense of the uninterpreted materials with a view to writing a sociohistorical account.” But the researcher confronts numerous challenges in trying to reconstruct and interpret the past accurately. Hill defines five major complexities to creating chronological accounts. One is taking the order of the archive for granted.

“Strips comprise the raw, unorganized occurrences to which socialized adults quickly and routinely apply organization and meaning.” The order in which an archivist has set the archival records does not necessarily denote significance for the researcher’s focus. “Noting what is not in the collection may be as important as knowing what survived. Absence of materials does not mean that they or their authors are unimportant. Conversely, the concrete survival of an item does not mean it is significant.”

Second, what a document or archival artifact communicates can be more complex than the researcher can decipher, for example, letters that were not intended to be read by third parties. Third, examination of archival materials leads to new discoveries that will

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continue the reshaping of the sociocultural account that the researcher is building. Fourth, the researcher cannot escape looking at the past of the society she is studying and interpreting the materials with the perspective of the present in which she lives. Although Hill refers in this case to the difference in time perspective, the complexity of construing the past from the archives was compounded by the fact that I was also dealing with a different culture. Finally, Hill alludes to Erving Goffman’s premise that “all knowledge is vulnerable to fabrication.” It may seem discouraging to realize that knowledge is not fixed but is constantly being constructed, as the information is revisited and new findings come to the forefront and add new meaning to the existing sociocultural account.

In the Villa Juarez archive, I primarily consulted records from the town’s history that made reference to education and formal schooling; they often reflected efforts to eradicate illiteracy in the town. Record books were filled with complaints or requests from townspeople regarding an array of issues; many were requests from citizens to the town government. Among these references the schools were sometimes mentioned; this provided some context as to what other events occurred in the town during that time in history, thus furnishing a historical context for events related to education. The town records complimented the records of Heroínas Mexicanas, the school with the longest history in the town and at one point, the only school. At all the sites, I was allowed to peruse archives and most often to make copies of at least some of the records.

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Finally, I also collected statistical data from (1) the Department of Public Education (Secretaría de Educación Pública, SEP) in San Luis Potosi, (2) the regional office of the superintendent in Villa Juarez, and (3) the census bureau offices, Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI), in San Luis Potosi. From the first two offices, I requested student enrollment data from the schools in Villa Juarez for the past 50 years. The SEP claimed that it did not have that data in their archives for all those years but would provide as much as was available. Two weeks later and after several phone calls, I traveled to the SEP offices again and picked up a hardcopy of an Excel spreadsheet with the enrollments for the two main primary schools, Heroínas Mexicanas and Himno Nacional, from 1990-2006. I also travelled to the INEGI offices in the capital, where I gathered general information on the state’s population trends and census data on Villa Juarez, relative to other cities and towns in the state, and a brief history of the town. Demographic and census data from the Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI, National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Information Technology) and school records from Villa Juarez primary and secondary schools provided statistics on town population, student enrollment, and teacher numbers.

Part of the literature review for this study came from materials that I researched while at El Colegio de San Luis in the capital city. I spent several trips to the city gathering literature that could be pertinent to education in the town. Although much of the material was only tangentially related, it provided some context for my own
investigation. Colleagues at the *Colegio de San Luis* showed interest in my research topic and I was referred to Dr. Oresta Lopez, professor of history and education, who helped me access university library resources during my stay.

I used a combination of historical, qualitative, and quantitative data to create a sociohistorical account of the town’s educational system since the time of the *Bracero* Program in the 1940s. Examination of historical data and the oral interviews furnished information about changes in curriculum and the purpose of education during this period. Changes in curriculum reveal two different, but not separate, realities: that changes to the centralized system of education occurred that were to be implemented nationally at all schools, and that there were adaptations to the curriculum applied at the local level in Villa Juarez, in spite of the national curriculum. The oral interviews and the archival data identify some changes to the curriculum, and these, at least in part, addressed the purpose of education in the town as a federal mandate or as driven by the town’s needs, and affected by globalization.

Chapter 4 provides a brief history of education in Mexico, including national educational policies that impacted education on the local level. It examines the broader social and political contexts of these policies to determine how they influenced the formulation of policies and the schools, specifically in the rural town of Villa Juarez.
CHAPTER 4
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MEXICAN EDUCATION
AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

The field of the history of education has only recently developed in Mexico. Before the 1960s, history of education resources included lists of educational institutions and laws, often accompanied by statistics on literacy and numbers of teachers and of students. At best, accounts of the development of pedagogical ideas minimally described the philosophical influences that informed educational policies. According to Josefina Zoraida Vazquez, 1960s scholarship on the history of ideas led to a re-conceptualization of the history of education, which was seen as part of the nation’s social and cultural history. Rather than focusing on past educational reforms, this broader view of education now included “collective ideas, beliefs, values and objectives transmitted by a society to the next generation, in its effort to preserve its culture.” Vazquez writes:

Because of this, the history of education becomes explanatory of any society and should be intimately related with social history, as well as the

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2 Vázquez, La Educación en la Historia de México, xii.


4 Ibid. (All translations are my own, unless otherwise noted). “[…] conjunto de ideas, creencias, valores y objetivos transmitidos por una sociedad a la generación siguiente, en su empeño por preservar su cultura.”

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history of ideas and of politics. This does not make it a lower form of historiography, as it is often considered; to the contrary, it is so complex that in order to reach its ideal it requires substantial background knowledge in order to appreciate the multiple elements that comprise it and to narrate the history of education within the corresponding cultural framework.  

While they have changed over time, nationally determined education policies have defined the parameters of schooling in Mexico at the state and local levels. Though current national education policy has embraced new purposes and meaning, influenced by the forces of modernization and globalization, it continues to adhere to the Constitution and to promote national identity. This chapter presents a general history of national and state educational policies in Mexico to provide a background for the examination of education in Villa Juaréz. And, since primary education was predominant until the second half of the 20th century, I give special attention to that level of schooling.

This chapter begins with a brief history of education over three main periods in Mexican history: after Independence in 1821, after the Revolution in 1910, and the post-1980s modernization period. It then discusses each administration’s plans for education and the political and cultural circumstances that drove their creation.

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5 Vázquez, La Educación en la Historia de México, xii. “Por ello la historia de la educación resulta explicativa de cualquier sociedad y debe estar relacionada íntimamente con la historia social, la de las ideas y la de la política. Esto la hace no una forma menor de la historiografía, como a menudo se la considera, sino por el contrario, tan compleja que para alcanzar su ideal requiere de toda un serie de conocimientos previos para apreciar los múltiples elementos que la conforman y poder historiar a la educación dentro del marco cultural que le corresponda.”

6 Latapí Sarre, Un Siglo de Educación en México, 23.

7 For instance, in Villa Juaréz, primary schooling was the only level of education until the creation of the private middle school (secundaria) in the 1960s.
Brief Overall History of Education in Mexico

Politics and the varying government administrations, over time, have determined the different phases of the educational system in Mexico. For example, schooling during Spanish colonization was geared to assimilating aboriginal peoples, while after Independence in 1821, the philosophy of the Enlightenment era inspired administrations to use education to create national cohesion and lead the nation to progress by combating “residual colonialism” and encouraging interaction among the populace. While education was of central importance to each of the governments that vied for power in shaping the new nation after Independence in 1821, struggles for control between conservative and liberal factions often prevented advancements in education policy. Fernando Solano describes the function of education throughout different periods of the nation’s history:

The history of education in Mexico demonstrates the vicissitudes of its political development: as an instrument of domination and cultural dependency during the colonial period; individualist and rationalist during the first phase of its independence; positivist, scientist and elitist during the period of Porfirio Díaz’s regime; social and popular, from the Revolution to the present. Each phase of its history is a reflection of the political struggles and the national objectives that, during that time, were considered essential and top priority.  

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Despite the difficulties that the new nation confronted in pursuing its educational goals, primary education did expand throughout most of the country. Intent on eliminating the Roman Catholic Church’s monopolization of the schools, liberals in the government tried unsuccessfully to apply their reform of 1833, but conservatives and their strong base of religious support rejected the reform in 1834, and the Church continued to be a major stakeholder in and promoter of education. In 1845, the city councils (ayuntamientos), which were the local governments at the municipal level, were given the responsibility of establishing and financing their own schools, but political and social instability and war deterred many of these efforts. With ratification of the Constitution of 1857 and subsequent reforms, the Liberals pushed forward a decree for public education to be free, mandatory, and secular. Nevertheless, upheaval had created

11 Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos, “Evolución del Sistema Educativo Mexicano,” 3-4. The number of government-funded schools grew very quickly after the liberal victory of Juarez. Between 1843 and 1874, the number of schools increased from 1,310 to 8,103. In four years alone, from 1870 to 1874, the number of schools almost doubled, although this accomplishment was diminished by the fact that even with this growth, only 19 percent of school-age children were being served. In 1874, 72 percent of the schools were publicly funded by the federal government, the states or the municipalities.

12 Over a span of forty years following its independence, Mexico underwent an invasion by the United States, the caste war in the southern peninsula of Yucatan, the war of reform (Guerra de Reforma), an invasion by the French, and battle against Maximilian of Hapsburg, who governed the country briefly before being defeated and executed in 1867.

historia de la educación en México muestra las vicisitudes de su desarrollo político: instrumento de dominación y dependencia cultural en la Colonia: individualista y racionalista durante la primera etapa de su independencia; positivista, cientificista y elitista en la época porfiriana; social y popular, de la Revolución a nuestros días. Cada etapa de su historia es reflejo de las luchas políticas y los objetivos nacionales que, en su momento, se consideraron esenciales y prioritarios.”
instability; schools were highly affected, as most of the funding destined for teacher salaries went to financing the ongoing invasions in the embattled nation.\(^{13}\)

Though they espoused different political ideologies, Mexican leaders, Benito Juarez (served five terms between 1858-1872) and Maximilian (1864-1867) intended to expand education on a national scale, since both believed that basic education would bring progress to the country and eradicate the unhappiness and poverty of the masses. They both aimed to create a strong, modern, and prosperous Mexican state that would have a place among the great civilizations of the time.\(^{14}\)

Although President Porfirio Diaz’s (1876-1911) 35-year dictatorship (also known as the **porfiriato**) saw tremendous economic development, education during Diaz’s regime lagged. According to the 1895 national census, about 14 percent of the population was literate.\(^{15}\) Enrollments of school-age children were extremely low (about 25 percent), and rural education was, for the most part, unaddressed.\(^{16}\) Primary education was concentrated mostly in urban areas and primarily reached the wealthier social classes.

\(^{13}\) See previous footnote.


The centralization of power and resources during the Diaz regime detracted from state and local autonomy and stunted the development of a national and uniform system of public education. As a consequence, between 1878 and 1907, only 162 new schools were created.

The porfiriato marked the beginning of the government’s involvement in the creation and control of public education policy at a national level. Diaz’ policies set the foundation for primary education, and included the most modern pedagogy in coursework. However, these policies focused on the urban areas and on the elites.

Education during the porfiriato followed a positivistic leaning; learning was based on experimentation and observation, and subject to the laws of the scientific method. Justo Sierra, prominent writer and politician, believed that the country needed its own education department. In 1905, the regime created the Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes (Ministry of Public Instruction and Fine Arts), with Sierra serving as its head until 1911. He promoted liberal ideals and advocated that the educational system be increasingly rigorous and expand into all social levels. Sierra proposed that primary schools, “with the direct participation of the State,” should move beyond teaching the

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20 Solana, et. al., Historia de la Educación Pública en México, vi. Attention was directed towards scientific and literary institutes, which appeared in major cities and became the precursors to the universities of today. The first kindergartens, although small in number, also appeared during this period. The regime was responsible for convening four major national conferences to address pedagogy (resulting in the creation of educational policy), developing educational theory and designing different educational approaches (for example, popular education, liberal education, etc.).
rudimentary basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. He aimed at a liberal arts education that would teach students to “think, to feel, and to develop from child to man.”

After the Revolution

Following the Revolution of 1910, the leadership continued to focus on national unity. It viewed education as a remedy to the nation’s problems and literacy as a way to strengthen and modernize the nation. As in other nations, Elsie Rockwell contends that: “popular education gained ascendancy as part of the thrust of a centralized state, intent on forming ‘modern citizens’.” In 1910, Mexico had a national population of over 15 million; 71 percent resided in rural regions and 58 percent of 14 years of age or younger. Most of these had no formal instruction: 80 percent of the population was


illiterate.26 Thus, according to Donald Mabry, the Mexican Revolution sought to bring education to the forefront as one of the country’s most critical issues.27

Despite the commitment of the new government, led by Venustiano Carranza, to education, under the Constitution of 1917 the Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes established under the porfiriato was dissolved, leaving a void in educational leadership. The government gave the municipalities the responsibility for managing primary schools via the Constitution.28 Few legislative initiatives were passed and, because of the lack of resources, many schools closed during this time. In addition, the post-Revolution government administration faced varying governing styles that complicated implementing national mandates in the states and municipalities. The number of rural communities and a chronic lack of teachers in these areas also proved to be major challenges for the new government in developing its educational system.29

The Revolution had fostered the ratification of what became the 1917 Constitution; it called for an education centered on collective development that would “harmoniously develop all a human being’s abilities and at the same time promote love


for the country, an awareness of international solidarity, of independence, and of justice.” 30 While Article 3 of the Constitution granted all individuals a free, secular education and prohibited clergy from organizing or heading primary schools, it also granted states the right to oversee their own educational systems. In 1921, the Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP, Ministry of Public Education) was created with José Vasconcelos as its head. While the porfiriato valued and borrowed foreign ideas, especially, from Europe, Vasconcelos sought to unify the population through a nationalism rooted in indigenous and Hispanic traditions particular to Mexico. Vasconcelos promoted literacy initiatives, rural education, indigenous education, libraries, free textbooks, school breakfasts, the fine arts and international exchange programs. Until he left the position of Minister of Education in 1924, Vasconcelos greatly advanced rural education, promoting the widespread establishment of primary schools and teacher training schools across the nation. In addition to augmenting the primary schools, he created the Misiones Culturales (cultural missions) that brought teams of teachers, professionals and technicians to rural communities to help communities in training local teachers and promote social and health initiatives, such as vaccination campaigns, profitable ventures, and extracurricular activities. 31

30 Juan Francisco Arroyo Herrera, Legislación Educativa, comentada, 4a edición (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1999), 233.

In 1934, President Lázaro Cárdenas’s administration (1934-1940) introduced socialist education by adding a constitutional mandate to Article 3 of the Constitution in 1934, dictating that private schools follow a national program of education and that all education funded by the State would be socialist. The national legislature defined socialist education as “excluding all religious teaching and providing a culture based on scientific truth that shapes the concept of solidarity necessary for the progressive socialization of the means of economic production.” Socialist education provided more opportunities for both urban and rural workers. New schools were tied to production centers and technical education. The Instituto Politécnico Nacional and other technological schools were begun and new regional teacher training schools focused on

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32 Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos, “Evolución del Sistema Educativo Mexicano,” 6. In October of 1928, the Liga Nacional de Maestros Racionalistas (National League of Rationalist Teachers) proposed a change to the Mexican constitution to counteract Catholic educational influence. After much debate, their proposition to amend the 3rd Article read: “The primary school, in addition to excluding all religious teaching, will provide a true response, scientific and rational, to each and every one of the questions that must be resolved in the spirit of the pupils, in order to shape an exact and positive concept of the world around them and of the society in which they live; otherwise the school will not be carrying out its social mission.” Martínez Assad, Los Sentimientos de la Región, 160-1.

33 Martínez Assad, Los Sentimientos de la Región: del viejo centralismo a la nueva pluralidad, (México, D. F.: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana, 2001), 160-1. “[…] excluirá toda enseñanza religiosa y proporcionará una cultura basada en la verdad científica, que forme el concepto de solidaridad necesario para la socialización progresiva de los medios de producción económica.”
agriculture. Schools for indigenous communities were also created during his administration.\textsuperscript{34}

While all levels of education enjoyed considerable growth, by approximately three decades after the Revolution, the expansion of primary schooling was most notable. Primary student enrollment grew almost 200 percent (see Figure 3 below), and the number of primary schools increased from less than 10,000 to over 20,000 (see Figure 4 below). In five years, from 1935 to 1940, primary schools grew by 21 percent, primary school enrollment increased by 30 percent, and primary school teachers by 29 percent. By 1940, the country had an enrollment of almost two million students in approximately 22,000 primary schools, taught by nearly 40,000 teachers.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure3.png}
\caption{Number of Primary Schools, 1907-1940\textsuperscript{35}}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{34} Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos, “Evolución del Sistema Educativo Mexicano,” 6.
World War II was a catalyst for industrialization in Mexico. During this period, the population grew quickly and became more urbanized, decreasing rural population. President Manuel Avila Camacho (1940-1946) led the country on the road to modernization, using industrialization as a means. He promoted the teaching of national unity throughout the education system. As his successor, Miguel Aleman (1946-1952)

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came into office, the Third Article of the Constitution was amended again, to eliminate the socialist direction in education. Now, educational approaches were to emphasize an “integral, scientific, democratic, and nationalist direction, based on liberty, justice, and peace to improve human coexistence”. And, while illiteracy among the adult population decreased by 50 percent between 1940 and 1952, school enrollments at all levels, particularly primary school and kindergarten, grew by 60 percent and 276 percent, respectively. The illiteracy rate was still seen as unacceptably high.

**From 1950 to 2000**

Although education at all levels greatly expanded after the 1910 Revolution, enrollments in primary education increased the most: an average of about 85 percent per decade from 1950 to 1980 (see Figure 5). In addition, the numbers of schools and of teachers increased over 100 percent every decade from 1960-1980 (see Figure 6). This dramatic growth was attributed to factors such as urbanization, industrial development, changes in patterns of consumption among certain populations, and a continuing demographic boom. The demographic explosion was attributed to several factors

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working in conjunction: political stability over a 40-year period (since 1940), increased urbanization, economic development, and advances in health and education.\textsuperscript{42} This demographic increase shifted to a younger age group over three decades: in 1950, students between the ages of 6-24 comprised 45 percent of the entire population (11.7 million people); by 1980 this group was 50 percent of the population (33.2 million people), which translated to a growth of 184 percent in absolute counts. In terms of the entire national population, schools in 1950 enrolled 28 percent of the school-age population; in 1980, they served 62 percent.\textsuperscript{43} Despite social and regional inequities that historically affected education and that the country still faced, between 1970 and 1990 the number of children ages 6-14 that did not attend school diminished from 36 percent of the population to 13 percent by 1990.\textsuperscript{44}


\textsuperscript{43} Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos, “Evolución del Sistema Educativo Mexicano,” 9. Despite a percentage increase in enrollments from 1950 to 1980, in absolute numbers students who were not served by the schools increased considerably more: in 1950 8.5 million school-aged children were not enrolled in school, but in 1980 that figure was 12.5 million.

\textsuperscript{44} Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos, “Evolución del Sistema Educativo Mexicano,” 12.
Figure 5. Primary School Enrollments, 1950-1990

Figure 6. Numbers of Primary School Teachers, 1950-1990

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46 Ibid.
Under President Adolfo Ruiz Cortines (1952-1958), funding to education increased, given the expansion of the educational system, but he did not initiate reforms to curricula, teaching methods, or textbooks. Funding for universities and teacher salaries increased.  

Under Adolfo Lopez Mateos (1958-1964) and his successor, Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964-1970), the Plan para el Mejoramiento y la Expansión de la Educación Primaria en México (Plan for the Improvement and Expansion of Primary Education in Mexico), also known as the Plan de Once Años (Eleven-year Plan), was put into place to address low educational levels in the country, the demographic explosion, the need for schools, and the disparities between rural and urban education. Basic education became a priority for the Lopez Mateos administration, as it was considered the “foundation for democracy” and an “instrument for social homogenization.”  

Under this plan, the Mexican government and the Ministry for Education (SEP), under the direction of Jaime Torres Bodet, expanded the number of schools, increased the number of teacher training centers to furnish more qualified teachers, and increased the number of students served per school by creating morning and evening shifts. Due to growing industrialization, Mexico’s economy required a more highly educated population and one with better specialized and agricultural skills.

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49 Ibid.
In 1956, rural rates of student failure overwhelmingly surpassed those of their urban counterparts: 300 out of every 1,000 students in urban areas completed primary school education (up to 6th grade), but in the rural areas that number was 22. By 1958, 81 percent of rural schools were escuelas unitarias, with one teacher teaching several grades simultaneously. Although rural schools comprised 77 percent of the total primary schools in the country, they had only 37 percent of the teachers. The results of these deficiencies were reflected in student performance. In addition, hundreds of teachers in rural areas lacked teacher certification; many teachers, having only primary or secondary schooling, were contracted during earlier administrations in an effort to address the demands of increased school enrollments. Thus, the new administration was challenged with professionally developing current teachers in addition to training new teachers.  

Under the administration of President Luis Echeverria (1970-1976), the Federal Law of Education in 1973 replaced the Constitutional Law of Public Education of 1941 and defined education as an instalución del bien común (institution for the common good). It emphasized an educational system in which all people could exercise their rights for the same opportunities in education. The reforms were influenced by the social events occurring internationally in the 1960s, as well as the internal discontent made known in the Mexican student protests of 1968. They aimed to: impart an education suited for current times by modernizing curricula and teaching methods; educate students


from early childhood through higher educational levels; and make education a “permanent” process, whereby student learning was continual and based on critical thinking, comprehension, and tolerance for others.52

The educational plan implemented during the administration of Lopez Portillo (1976-1982), known as Programas y Metas del Sector Educativo, 1979-1982, (Programs and Goals for the Educational Sector), included 52 programs tied to 5 overarching objectives, 11 of which were implemented immediately. To provide education for first-grade, the plan used innovative methods, such as travelling teachers, community teachers, providing transportation to remote areas, and boarding schools (albergues escolares). Simultaneously, the educational system began a decentralization process, and SEP offices were created in other states, no longer concentrated in the federal district.53 Under Lopez Portillo, education was directly linked to national economic progress. Education was viewed as “indispensable for productivity,” central in training the individual for a job, and able to form “critical, responsible and creative” individuals.54

The economic recession that the country underwent in the 1980s strongly impacted the educational sector and funding destined for teacher salaries was cut. Though Miguel de la Madrid’s (1982-1988) Programa Nacional de Educación, Cultura,
Recreación y Deporte, 1984-1988 (National Program for Education, Culture, Recreation and Sports) called for an “educational revolution”, few of his objectives were reached and the decentralization begun by earlier administrations was unsuccessful.\textsuperscript{55} In addition, the economic crisis led to a decline in the number of students by 1982.\textsuperscript{56}

Thus, though slow and affected by economic trends, the post-Revolution administrations constructed an educational system that began to address the needs of both the urban and rural populations. The federal government established the function of education in Article 3 of the Constitution of 1917, and the creation of the SEP in 1921 led to a structured educational system, subject to regulations and negotiated by all levels of government (federal, state and local). Over time, education received a significant portion of the nation’s budget to achieve education for all and to professionalize teachers and instruction.\textsuperscript{57}

**Plans for Modernization, 1988-2000**

The Programa de Modernización de la Educación, 1989-1994 (Program for the Modernization of Education) was designed by President Carlos Salinas del Gortari’s (1988-1994) to effect modernization, with education playing a central role. The Program called for compulsory secondary school and updated textbooks and curricula to address

\textsuperscript{55} Martínez Rizo, *La telesecundaria mexicana*, 3.

\textsuperscript{56} Alba and Potter, “Population and Development in Mexico”, 62. The decline could possibly also have been influenced by the family planning campaigns beginning in 1973 during Echeverría’s administration.

\textsuperscript{57} Solana, et. al., *Historia de la Educación Pública en México*, 2.
competency in reading, writing, and mathematics.\textsuperscript{58} The Salinas government rewrote textbook content that had followed a 1970s ideology from the Echeverría administration and was contrary to the values of the Salinas rhetoric.\textsuperscript{59} By 1992, education was decentralized, transferring control to the states to manage their own basic education systems (early childhood, primary, and secondary education) as well as teacher training.\textsuperscript{60} Policy was influenced by the powerful teachers’ union (\textit{Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación}, \textit{SNTE}). With economic improvement in the early 1990s, the Salinas administration increased education funding from 3.56 percent of GDP in 1989 to 5.7 percent in 1994.\textsuperscript{61} He framed education as necessary in developing human capital and contributing to the nation’s competitiveness in global markets and, consequently, to long-term economic development.\textsuperscript{62}

Under the Salinas administration, basic education was expanded to include primary and secondary grades. New projects were launched to improve math, science, reading, and writing. Despite these attainments, the 2000 census still reported that 5


\textsuperscript{60} This occurred under the National Agreement for the Modernization of Basic and Teacher Education (\textit{Acuerdo Nacional para la Modernización de la Educación Básica y Normal}).

\textsuperscript{61} Martínez Rizo, \textit{La telesecundaria mexicana}, 4.

\textsuperscript{62} Trejo, “Educational Reform,” 125.
percent of the population (one million children ages 6-14), primarily rural, were not being served by the schools. Decentralization continued to be elusive in many states, with only superficial administrative changes, while control in the municipalities continuing to reside in the hands of the stakeholders such as the teachers’ union. The succeeding administration of President Ernesto Zedillo (1994-2000) continued many of Salinas’ educational policies for modernization. Zedillo was the secretary of the SEP during the Salinas administration and helped enact the education reforms.

Although President Vicente Fox (2000-2006) represented the first administration of an opposing political party since the Revolution of 1910, he continued the educational modernization policies put in place from 1989-2000. The Fox administration sought to improve quality and equity in education, with the intent of bringing Mexico closer to the position of the most developed countries which globalization had brought into closer interaction. In addition, his goal was to “reduce the ancestral inequalities in Mexican society and strengthen its multicultural identity.”

Conclusion

Jose Miguel Romero de Solis writes that the regional history of education can provide a global perspective and insight into overall national history. The history of education in Mexico, as discerned by examining documents, speeches, laws, and decrees

63 Ibid.

64 Martínez Rizo, *La telesecundaria mexicana*, 9. “[…] reducir las desigualdades ancestrales de la sociedad mexicana y fortalecer su identidad multicultural.”
generated in the nation’s capital, typifies the approach taken in the majority of scholarly studies until the 1960s. However, the local reality demonstrates a more diverse history: 

“Regional histories are generally the ones that have allowed this heterogeneity to be uncovered and described, questioning the biases, the conclusions, and the established periods from central documentation.”

Although national educational policies frame education at the local level, these policies are often interpreted in various ways at the regional and local levels. After education became the responsibility of the state of San Luis Potosi, schools began operating under the state in many rural areas, including Villa Juarez. The following chapter provides the historical background of Villa Juarez to set the context in which schools developed at the local level.

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65 José Miguel Romero de Solís, prologue in Miradas a la historia regional de la educación (México, D. F.: Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2006), 12.

66 Elsie Rockwell, “Mirando hacia el centro de los estados,” in Miradas a la historia regional de la educación, (México, D. F.: Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2006), 51. “Son las historias regionales, generalmente, las que han permitido descubrir y describir esta heterogeneidad, cuestionando los sesgos, las conclusiones y los periodos establecidos a partir de la documentación central.”
CHAPTER 5
ARCHIVAL FINDINGS: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF VILLA JUAREZ

This study examines education in Villa Juarez through the history of the schools, viewed in the context of social and demographic changes influenced by globalization and the culture of migration at the local level. This chapter provides a historical context for the factors that led to not only depopulation but also created an environment where the fastest route to economic mobility was based on migration rather than education. Chapter 5 reviews the history of the town and continuing migration, particularly due to the Bracero Program that contributed to the formation of a culture of migration to the United States in towns such as Villa Juarez. In addition, it explores the influences of national policies and globalization on education and out migration. Although the Bracero Program (1942 to 1964) is the primary focus of the present study, this chapter provides historical background for the period prior to and during this program in Villa Juarez.

Brief Overall History of Villa Juarez before 1940

The town of Villa Juarez was founded in 1643 as a congregación called Santa Gertrudis de la Carbonera.1 By 1829, the government of the State of San Luis Potosi officially categorized Santa Gertrudis de la Carbonera as a town, and in 1859, then

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1 Rafael Montejano y Aguiñaga, “Fundamentos históricos y generales: Villa Juárez,” Fundamentos, Revista de San Luis Potosí, Año I, I, no. 6 (noviembre-diciembre, 1980): 5. Congregación refers to political category for a population group of 100 families or more.
Governor Vicente Chico Sein changed the name to Villa de la Carbonera, or Villa de Carbonera to eliminate the religious connection to the patron saint, Santa Gertrudis.² The town was renamed Villa Juárez in 1928 by Governor Saturnino Cedillo (1927-1931) in honor of Mexican President Benito Juárez.³ In fundamental ways, Villa Juárez before the turn of the twentieth century remained rather like other small agrarian towns in Mexico -- engrossed in its own local issues. Although efforts to integrate the rural areas into the country’s mainstream (through political and economic centralization and through education) were put forth by the federal government, rural development continued to lag. Avenues for alternative forms of economic mobility were manifested in migration options and changed the course of Villa Juárez’ history, and consequently the aspirations of students and the meaning of education for future generations.

Local Governance and Centralization

From the Independence movement in 1821 until the end of the Diaz dictatorship (porfiriato) in 1910, Mexican leadership tried to centralize national power in the Federal District, located in Mexico City. Lorenzo Meyer posited that from a cultural perspective, the nation before the revolution was marked by “social fragmentation and heterogeneity, combined with regionalism,” clear obstacles in the formation of a national polity. While

national political leaders were aware that education would help to resolve economic and social deficits, no short term solutions were put forward and education was not made widely available in the nineteenth century. By the mid-nineteenth century, loyalties among the common people, including Villa Juarez, were tied to Catholic faith and to local and regional communities. The tenets promoted by the liberal leaders of the nation—the ideas of “individual rights, citizenship, democracy, nation, and progress”—were intended to supplant earlier loyalties, but there was little identification with these concepts at the basic individual level.  

Minutes preserved in the local archive from municipal government meetings describe the issues that Villa Juarez faced as a small agrarian town in the early part of the twentieth century. Local governors saw official correspondence from the federal and state government of San Luis Potosi as orders to be carried out, but the inexpertise of the municipal government and the lack of financial or human resources prevented effective action. Nevertheless, the municipal government was entrusted with disseminating pertinent national legislative decisions to its citizens and enforcing them. Information requests, and notices about events and situations that directly or indirectly affected the municipality were also included in the correspondence discussed at meetings. 


5 Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 11 de agosto de 1924. “Circular #82-28-4 fecha 2 del actual de la Secretaría General de Gobierno del Estado […] relativa a Cuestionarios industriales.—Acuerdo. Devolverlo por no existir en esta Municipalidad industriales de esa clase.” Minutes corresponding to ordinary session, August 11, 1924. The minutes from meetings between
The State was to ensure that elections took place and that the municipal president was elected by popular vote. The president and representatives (cabildo) apparently served with a minimal stipend or salary. Minutes seem to indicate that municipal presidents and representatives carried out their duties in tandem with their current occupations. For example, a council member in 1921 asked that meetings be moved to 7 p.m. to allow for working on his fields during the planting season. Financial support from the state to the municipal level was minimal. The municipal government collected some of its funding from local taxes, but the treasury’s low funds were a frequent item on meeting agendas.

Although some correspondence addressed at municipal meetings required responses or that action be taken, some letters and communiqués were simply marked as received and archived, including notices about revised legislation. For example, during the administration of Salvador C. Rivera, minutes of the ordinary meeting of December 26, 1921 record the reading of three pieces of correspondence from the State about recent

1906 and 1968 included several requests for information by the state government. One request to complete an “industrial questionnaire,” was returned by the municipal government because no such industries existed in the municipality. Industry was growing in other areas of the state at this time, but in the municipality of Villa Juarez, a primarily agricultural region, only questionnaires related to crop production and cattle were pertinent.


7 Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 30 de mayo de 1921.

8 Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 1 de agosto de 1921. In this meeting, the council motioned to pursue debts owed over the past five years to the municipal treasury by paying with corn in order to carry out much needed projects in the area.
reforms applied to Article 115. Although these reforms directly affected the sovereignty of the municipality by altering its rights, no discussion is documented -- only a motion to archive the documents is recorded. Failure to engage in discussion on the repercussions of the law at the local level may have indicated a degree of limited comprehension of legal duties between the messages diffused through the layers of governance, from the federal to the state governments, down to the municipal government. Local mayors may have been unfamiliar with governmental procedures before taking office. In addition, while Article 115 was aimed at distributing power to local (municipal) governments, it caused them to “assume financial and administrative responsibility for public services they had neither the resources nor training to provide.”

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9 Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 26 de diciembre de 1921.

10 Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 26 de diciembre de 1921. La sin número girada por el Congreso General de Ayuntamientos de México, refiriéndose a la reforma del Artículo 115 de nuestra Carta Magna, de enterado se archive. […] Circulares: La número 14 girada con fecha 20 del mes pasado, por la Unión de Ayuntamientos, refiriéndose a la reforma del artículo 115 de la Constitución Política de la República; de enterado se archive. La número 19 girada con fecha 19 del corriente, en la que manifiesta no deben ser reformados los artículos 29 fracción XXVIII, 64, 70 y 89 de la Constitución Política del Estado; por esto que dichas reformas atacan la libertad de los Municipios y reducen sus facultades; de enterado, se archive […] Municipal archives, minutes from ordinary session of December 26, 1921. “Unnumbered document from the General Congress for Municipal Governments of Mexico, in reference to the reform of Article 115 of our Constitution, noted and filed […]. Documents: Number 14, dated on the 20th of last month, by the Union of Municipal Governments, in reference to Article 115 of the Political Constitution of the Republic; noted and filed. Number 19, dated the 19th of the current month, which manifest that Articles 29, section XXVIII, 64, 70 and 89 of the Political Constitution of the State cannot be amended; to do so would be an attack on the liberty of the municipalities and reduce their faculties; noted and file […].”

11 INT12, interview with author, June 13, 2006. Anecdotes from interviewee for this project point to “undereducated” or illiterate municipal town presidents and regidores.

Martha Patricia Zamora writes about the legislative system in Mexico, observing that, historically, laws were written by those in power, without regard for popular consensus and created for an “imagined reality”:

Another characteristic of this judicial system is that many of these laws propose a system of rules for a different reality, an imaginary Mexico. They are the basis of a project that is actually about to be carried out. They are laws that institute, not regulate; dogmatic in their formulation, pragmatic in their application, created to last and preserve, but bearing change. This is confirmed in the laws of education, which, while they are very clear and comprehensive, they do not have support for their application: for example, their compulsory nature with the insufficient numbers of schools, the economic deficiencies of the peasant population, the lack of teachers, the requirements of a title [for teachers] in order to give class, in view of the small numbers of teacher training schools in the rural areas, the working conditions for teachers.  

Zamora’s description of this legislative approach seems to carry into the 20th century, particularly in Villa Juárez. According to Zamora, while lawmakers in the 19th century were advanced in their knowledge of constitutional principles, few senators and representatives had parliamentary experience. Groups contending for power during the 19th century believed that the laws in and of themselves were “sufficient to create a new society.” Nevertheless, they would not – or could not – follow through on applying the

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laws, which could lead to promoting change.\textsuperscript{14} The archival minutes of municipal
government meetings reflect this inefficiency at the national level; though local
representatives seem resolute in their intention to follow the instructions and laws sent by
higher authorities, they were unable to comply all the time due to the lack of resources.
Political and economic centralization led to a concentration of resources in the federal
government in Mexico City, with the state and local levels receiving a minimal
proportion. In 1929, the federal government absorbed 71 percent of the nation’s revenue,
with 21 percent destined for the state and eight percent to the municipalities. By 1962, the
federal government allotted itself 91 percent of the national revenue, with eight percent
for the state and merely one percent for the municipalities, increasing impoverishment at
the local levels.\textsuperscript{15}

Some local and state governments also opposed the idea of having the federal
government impose laws on them.\textsuperscript{16} On the other hand, federal government officials
sometimes viewed local governments as ignorant and corrupt.\textsuperscript{17} There were notable
differences among states, with the smaller and poorer ones being more acquiescent to
federal government demands. Jose Vasconcelos, first head of the SEP (Public Education

\textsuperscript{14} Zamora Patiño, “Legislación educativa.”


\textsuperscript{17} Aboites Aguilar, “En busca del centro,” 740.
Ministry, *Secretaría de Educación Pública*), asserted that, as he visited different states to speak about the creation of the SEP, it was easier to convince the governor and legislature in small states; their “provincial resistance” was weaker and the educational needs more urgent. The need to standardize education was urgent in the relatively new nation and posed challenges, as explained by a teacher:

The anarchy that, unfortunately, has reigned in terms of instruction in our country, has been a powerful obstacle for [executing] the effectiveness of our laws and the realization of our ideals of progress. Rather than form children who are “yucatecos, michoacanos, aguascalentenses, potosinos or sonorenses,” we should form Mexican children. This supreme ideal of citizenship has been forgotten by all our past educators and legislators and regional schools have come to sow profound divisions in our country; and the provincialism, on more than one occasion, has turned out to be disastrous for our history.

**Migration**

Though President Porfirio Diaz (1876-1911) advocated foreign investment in Mexico, the effects of concentrated political power and wealth and the increasing wages in urban versus rural areas encouraged emigration to urban areas and to the United States. At the turn of the twentieth-century, Mexican migration to the United States began on a

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mass-scale, with the building of Mexican railways that were financed by the United States. After it joined World War I, labor demands in the United States increased, and with it recruitment of Mexican workers.²⁰ Mexican workers replaced Americans who were fighting overseas during the war.²¹ The Mexican Revolution in 1910 also contributed to emigration, as Mexican families tried to escape violence and the unstable political and social climate of the country.

The completion of the two major railways in 1888 and 1889 marked an important period in the history of San Luis Potosi, since it allowed for *potosinos*²² seeking better opportunities to travel out of the state more easily. The construction of the railroads through San Luis Potosí led to increased movement of population, particularly of *potosinos* working on the railways that travelled into other states and into the United States.²³ In addition, due to the restriction of Chinese immigration by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and exacerbated by railroad strikes in the United States in the same year, demand for Mexican contractual labor in the United States increased.²⁴


²² *Potosino* is a person from San Luis Potosí.


Simultaneously, workers were also in high demand in some Mexican states where the railroads were still being constructed in the country. With the completion of the railroads, traffic between Mexico and the United States intensified, as travelling times improved immensely. In addition, communication became more advanced at this time with increasing access to the telegraph lines, which were erected at the same time as the railroads were built.25

Though traditionally an economically marginalized area, the municipality of Villa Juarez saw some opportunities open when a railway station was built in Villa Juarez in 1890 along the line that ran from the capital of the state, San Luis Potosi, to the city of Tampico on the eastern coast.26 Nevertheless, the municipality of Villa Juarez continued to be an agrarian society whose small farmers were dependent on environmental conditions for their sustenance. Further, dependence on corn as a main crop and staple made Villa Juarez vulnerable to volatile market conditions.

In most cases, emigration was financially motivated. By 1897, the San Luis Potosi newspaper, *El Estandarte*, estimated that some 22,000 *potosinos* had travelled to the neighboring northern city of Monterrey or to the eastern coastal port city of Tampico in search of better opportunities.27 These cities offered superior economic conditions to


26 Instituto Nacional para el Federalismo, “Enciclopedia de los Municipios de México”.

agricultural workers who had experienced several years of droughts and frost. This process of relocation to these and other cities for employment became an intermediate step in migrants’ crossing to the United States. Thus, burgeoning wages in farming and mining in the United States drove immigration across the border, resulting in shortages of workers in the border states by 1902.\textsuperscript{28}

Prompted by the abuses that occurred as companies recruited contract workers and the conditions under which laborers worked, the State Congress in San Luis Potosi moved to address migrant hiring practices via a decree in 1897. Though it did not prevent the breaking of contracts, exploitation, abuse of workers, and dire labor conditions, the resulting mandate for documentation demonstrated the government’s interest in regulating the legal framework through which laborers were hired and migrated.\textsuperscript{29}

The Temporary Admissions Program of 1917-1921 set a precedent for future migration to the United States.\textsuperscript{30} Villa Juarez and San Luis Potosi, and other state and local governments, made greater efforts in the 1920s to protect the rights of citizens who had migrated or who planned to work in the United States or in other regions of Mexico. By the 1920s, the fraudulent practices of company recruiters were denounced by the governor of San Luis Potosi and migrant workers’ rights became a central concern. The Mexican consulate in San Antonio, Texas informed the Mexican government of the

\textsuperscript{28} Monroy Castillo, “Los rastros,” 19-22.

\textsuperscript{29} Monroy Castillo, “Los rastros,” 25.

hourly and daily wages that a worker should receive in the United States, to prevent unjust pay; this information was relayed to the state and municipal levels.\textsuperscript{31}

U.S. company recruiting agents learned that it was more efficient to contract workers from the same area, since workers were more easily retained if they were related, despite separation from their homes and immediate families.\textsuperscript{32} Enclaves of migrants, including \textit{potosinos}, created information networks communicating their various work experiences in different states in the U.S. This information, shared among migrants, facilitated migrants to work in several states before settling in one location in the United States.\textsuperscript{33} While migrants’ skills varied, most were illiterate and worked as farm hands or as farmers themselves. Some learned basic English to comply with a U.S. requisite for entry added in 1917.\textsuperscript{34}

San Luis Potosi faced an unabated labor shortage, exacerbated by the flow of migration that continued until 1921, because of United States labor demands. In October of 1921, the shortage of workers in the northern state of Tamaulipas led the Mexican government to ask local and state governments to restrict immigration of men of working age, though the migration flow to the United States remained strong.\textsuperscript{35} The possibility of

\textsuperscript{31} Monroy Castillo, “Los rastros,” 27.
\textsuperscript{32} Monroy Castillo, “Los rastros,” 24.
\textsuperscript{33} Monroy Castillo, “Los rastros,” 32.
\textsuperscript{34} Manuel Gamio, \textit{Mexican Immigration to the United States. A study of human adjustment} (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1930), 71.
\textsuperscript{35} Monroy Castillo, “Los rastros,” 28.
higher wages, security, and the promise of plentiful work contributed to the idea of the United States as a land of opportunity in the minds of many Mexicans. Camille Guerin describes the “American dream” shared by migrants:

This “American Dream” promised economic opportunities and security as the base of a citizen’s basic rights, and at the same time, it implied that both Mexicans and Americans shared this “dream,” not only conceptually but in a real way: the promise of liberty and of economic opportunities.36

Correspondence from the Secretaría de Gobierno (State Department) to the municipal government, read at a meeting on October 31, 1921, stated that “[…] it is necessary to prevent workers or laborers from leaving to the Puerto de Tampico (Tampico harbor), in response to the employment crisis in that harbor.” Minutes show that the municipal council agreed to comply.37 At the August 18, 1924 town hall meeting, representatives of the municipal government reviewed information from the State government on the American migration law, alerting citizens planning to migrate to the United States to comply with requirements.38 The state government asked the Villa Juarez

36 Camille Guerin-Gonzalez, Mexican Workers and American Dreams. Immigration, Repatriation and California Farm Labor, 1900-1939, 2nd printing (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 34. “Este ‘sueño americano’ prometía oportunidades económicas y seguridad como la base de los derechos elementales de un ciudadano y a la vez implicaba que mexicanos y norteamericanos compartían este ‘sueño,’ no solo conceptualmente sino de una manera efectiva: la promesa de libertad y de oportunidades económicas.”

37 Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 31 de octubre de 1921. “[…] es necesario impedir vayan trabajadores operarios u obreros al Puerto de Tampico, en atención a la crisis de trabajo en aquel Puerto.”

38 Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 18 de agosto de 1924. “Circular #85-124 […] de la Secretaría de Gobierno del Estado, sobre la Ley de Migración Americana, para evitar dificultades a los trabajadores mexicanos que pretendan internarse a Estados Unidos, estableciendo los requisitos necesarios para verificarlo.”
municipality to warn its citizens to be wary of those who might take advantage of would-be *braceros*, charging them for counterfeit documents.\(^{39}\)

Thus, migration appeared to be a route to economic relief before the 1940s in Villa Juarez. Overall, oppressive economic hardship did not abate and financial difficulty was a prominent topic in many municipal meeting sessions in Villa Juarez. This was evidenced by requests of citizens for forgiveness of debts to the municipal government\(^{40}\) and the recurring mention of the ubiquitous poverty and need across the communities in the municipality. In addition, minutes reflect that the treasury was consistently low in funds and unable to pay for even a few of the most basic services and necessary infrastructural projects in the town of Villa Juarez.\(^ {41}\)

\(^{39}\) Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 5 de noviembre de 1925. Official document #74-27-8 records: “[...] from the state government, transcribing a document from the [federal] government regarding the surveillance of individuals who exploit *braceros* who wish to migrate to the United States, providing false documents to evade the Immigration Office, charging them exorbitant fees.” “Circular #74-27-8 [...] de la Secretaría General de Gobierno del Estado, transcribiendo Circular de la Secretaría de Gobernación relativo a que se ejerza vigilancia sobre individuos que explotan a nuestros braceros que desean emigrar a Estados Unidos Americanos proporcionándoles cartas falsas y otros documentos para burlar la vigilancia de las Oficinas de Migración, y cobrándoles fuertes cantidades en numerario.”

\(^{40}\) Presidencia Municipal, Villa Juarez, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 30 de mayo de 1935. General Saturnino Cedillo, Mexican revolutionary and later governor of the state from 1927-1931, wrote a letter requesting the municipal government of Villa Juarez to pardon a widow’s taxes and extend a small loan until she was on her feet, to which the council agreed, but only for a short time period.

\(^{41}\) Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 7 de septiembre de 1925. In response to a fundraising campaign that asks for the selling of tickets to raise money, the council responds that the sale of tickets is not possible due to the difficult circumstances that the citizens of Villa Juarez are undergoing at the time.
Many of the local conversations during the municipal meetings in the 1930s and the 1950s focused on major town events, such as the *Fiesta de Santa Gertrudis*, the patron saint’s celebration held November 16th, and the construction or maintenance of major town projects and public buildings, such as the *plaza de toros* (bullring), the municipal government building, wells, ponds, and reservoirs, streets, and the school, among others. During the late 1930s, the municipal president and other government officials contributed funding or materials to town projects when lack of federal and state funding to the municipal governments forced them to be self-sufficient.

**Brief Overall History of Villa Juarez after 1940**

After the 1940s, the municipality of Villa Juarez experienced both population growth and demographic shifts, accompanied by the effects of governmental decentralization, mandated by the national government. The growing population was compounded by factors affecting agriculture, such as drought. Migration presented another option for livelihood while migrants who returned to live in the town introduced American influences and the possibility of a different way of life in the United States. In addition, the *Bracero* Program prompted legal and illegal migration at a time when Mexico was undergoing unprecedented population expansion.

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42 Municipal meeting records from 1940-1949 were unavailable.
Population Growth

Between the 1930 and 1960, the census recorded an increase in population in the Villa Juarez municipality as a whole -- from 4,620 to 12,778, an increase of 177 percent (see Figure 7 below). This growth was fairly consistent with a population increase in the entire country as well, which rose by 157 percent over the thirty-year period from 1940 to 1970⁴³, and was attributed, in part, to a rise in birth rates. The growing population required more social services, including primary education for young children, which was nationally mandated. By the 1980s, the demand for schools for school-age children led to the creation of four public primary schools and several private schools in the town of Villa Juarez (more on the history of the schools will be discussed in Chapter 7). A steady decline in population became evident in the decades after 1980.

⁴³ Alba and Potter, “Population and Development in Mexico,” 49.
After peaking in 1957, registered births began a gradual decline that continues currently (see Figure 8 below). Thus, over the duration of the *Bracero* Program (1942-1964), the municipality of Villa Juarez saw changes in its population, due to increased birth rates (an increase of over 144 percent between 1940 and 1957, year when birth rates peaked), increased population, and circular migration patterns, i.e., men would work temporarily in the United States and then return. The high number of registered births in Villa Juarez was reflective of the population boom occurring nationally.\(^{45}\)

Francisco Alba and Joseph E. Potter examined early policies that stimulated and sustained economic development in Mexico during the 1940s, and found they were no longer effective by the end of the 1960s as the population burgeoned. The increasing population impacted families and the educational system differently. Public primary

Figure 8. Registered Births in the Municipality of Villa Juarez, 1940-2005

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45 Manuel Ordorica Mellado, “La Población, sus ondas y su momentum demográfico”, Boletín de los Sistemas Nacionales Estadístico y de Información Geográfica 1, no. 1 (mayo-agosto 2005): 18. During a 30 year period, between 1940 and 1970, Mexico more than doubled its population from 20.2 million to 50.7 million, and continued to sustain 3.5 percent birth rate, while also seeing declines in its death rates. In 2004, the population was just over 105 million. At this time, Mexico underwent a decline in fertility rates, although the effects of this decline may not be felt for years to come. Manuel Ordorica Mellado discusses how social institutions were affected by the population increases beginning in the 1940s, creating an immediate need for increased health services in pre- and post-natal care, and for children of preschool and kindergarten age.


schooling (1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade) was made compulsory by federal law school during the 30-year population growth period that began in 1940. Accommodating the increase in students required that schools build larger infrastructures and hire more teachers. For parents, the expense of educating more children became increasingly burdensome. This was especially true in farming communities that depended on large families as free labor. In farming towns, sending children to work in the fields took precedence over sending them to school.

While agrarian and agricultural policies provided government subsidies for larger farmers and contributed to the support of rural economies, helping local peasantry take over their own lands, these reforms also contributed to the creation of the larger families that were necessary to work in the farms. Although family members furnished cheap or free labor, agricultural workers also had the option of working as braceros under the Bracero Program in the United States, thus supplementing the income of the family farm. In this way, large families had more options that could supply additional sources of income. Over time, however, the disadvantage of the limited schooling required to maintain family farms became more pronounced as the labor market demanded increasingly skilled labor and proof of educational credentials. Already scarce employment was exacerbated in rural areas and small farmers and large families sought economic solutions. Figure 9 below shows the sharp rise in total population in the State

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48 Although schooling was public, supplies were not free and parents had to make contributions to the school for cleaning supplies and other needs.

49 Alba and Potter, “Population and Development in Mexico,” 64.
of San Luis Potosi after 1930, with the urban population increasing over rural population around the 1980s.

![Graph showing urban, rural, and total population in San Luis Potosi, 1910-2000]

**Figure 9. Urban, Rural and Total Population in the State of San Luis Potosi, 1910-2000**

### Migration after 1940

Villa Juarez began its history of emigration before the 1940s, but the Mexican Farm Labor Program Agreement (1942), commonly known as the *Bracero Program* intensified the movement of residents into the United States labor force. The *Bracero* Program is a manifestation not only of how the culture of migration became rooted in towns like Villa Juarez but also evidence of how globalization affected even rural areas in

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Mexico. The Bracero Program was an agreement between the United States and Mexico to ease immigration restrictions in order to provide manual labor in the United States in agriculture.\textsuperscript{51} Immigration became more pronounced during World War II, in part, due to the enactment of this guest worker program in 1942-1964.\textsuperscript{52} United States railroad companies also petitioned the U.S. government and another agreement was formalized between both nations from 1943-1945 to provide manual labor in this industry.\textsuperscript{53} Migration continued over the years, driven by demands for labor in the United States and by unemployment and underemployment in Mexico, particularly in the agricultural sector.

By the 1970s, San Luis Potosi ranked among the top six states in Mexico in migration to the United States.\textsuperscript{54} Of the towns and cities within the state of San Luis Potosi that have the highest rates of immigration, Villa Juarez, Cerritos, and Vanegas are particularly noteworthy for the high proportions in their populations of women, children and the elderly. In addition, unofficial figures estimate that over 300,000 potosinos currently reside in the United States. According to Fernando Alanis, this demographic situation has drawn the increasing attention of agencies and scholars in Mexico to the

\textsuperscript{51} Lee Stacy, \textit{Mexico and the United States} (Malaysia: Marshall Cavendish Corporation, 2003): 29, 104. The United States and Mexico signed the Mexican Farm Labor Agreement in 1942, establishing a guest worker program to satisfy labor shortages in the United States during World War II. However, the program ran until 1964.

\textsuperscript{52} Durand, et. al., “Mexican Immigration to the United States,” 110.

\textsuperscript{53} Gamboa, “Mexican Braceros,” 275.

\textsuperscript{54} Durand, et. al., “Mexican Immigration to the United States,” 111.
social, economic, and demographic implications of the migration trend evidenced in towns such as Villa Juarez.  

The *Bracero Program in San Luis Potosí*

The *Bracero* Program had considerable impact on stimulating migration to the United States from San Luis Potosí, and railways that connected major Mexican cities to those in the United States facilitated this movement. The two major railroads in the country connected Mexico City with the U.S. border towns of Laredo and El Paso, and the east coast port city of Tampico with Aguascalientes. Both railroads, run by the *Ferrocarril Nacional Mexicano* and the *Ferrocarril Central Mexicano*, American companies that were granted concessions, intersected in the capital city of San Luis Potosi. In addition, the Program provided Mexican workers the opportunity to work in the United States and return to their lands and families on a temporary basis. This movement generated information networks among working men and people in the town about job opportunities. Using information networks about job opportunities, for instance, many men continued to work in the United States even after the *Bracero* Program ended in 1964.

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56 Monroy Castillo, “Los rastros,” 15, 18; Fred Wilbur Powell, *The Railroads of Mexico* (Boston: The Stratford Company Publishers, 1921): 168. The concessions that American railroad companies arranged with the Mexican government were essentially leases to build and run the railways for a number of years.
After the United States entered World War II in 1941, increased production of weapons, manufacturing, and transportation, in particular, heightened the need for workers. In addition, opportunities for workers in industrial urban areas in the United States deeply impacted agriculture. American farmers solicited the help of the government to recruit people to work in the fields, which by 1941 had lost approximately one million workers. Railroad companies were also in dire need of workers and solicited the government to establish a program to import labor. The lack of railroad workers was affecting the war effort, and led to the creation of the Programa Bracero Ferroviario, modeled after the agricultural Bracero Program, developed by the United States government in response to the needs of private railways. Both programs developed under the umbrella of Bracero Programs begun in 1942 and lasted 22 years; during this time, they underwent many modifications. Although potosinos participated in both agricultural and railroad Bracero Programs from their inception, the Programa Bracero Ferroviario (Railway Bracero Program) briefly brought the bracero recruitment office to the state of San Luis Potosí. This left a lasting impression on the city and the state, as men from all over the country came to the state in hopes of being recruited.

Recruitment was selective; only unemployed men or those who worked on their own land were considered. Those with jobs or professions would not be contracted, in order to protect local industry. The exodus of potosino workers to the United States

57 Alanis Enciso, La emigración de San Luis Potosí, 45.
during this time drew mixed emotions from those who saw their family members and fellow countrymen leave. Most of the workers were young and aspired to make more money; they hoped to embark on an adventurous journey and often wanted to support the allies in the War.\textsuperscript{59} Others were disappointed with the direction Mexico was taking since they were unable to find opportunities for well-paying jobs. Some could not subsist from their lands, which had become unproductive. Many intended to return to Mexico and reinvest their fortunes in their lands, and to send money back to their families. Salaries in the United States were much higher and countered the increasing inflation in Mexico.\textsuperscript{60}

Influenced by stories of success from other migrants in the \textit{Bracero Program}, a sense of adventure to see another land, the demanding economic situations, and a tradition of migration from the beginning of the century, the migration of \textit{potosinos} to the United States increased.\textsuperscript{61}

Illegal migration occurred concurrently with legal migration, though illegal migration was highly discouraged by the Mexican government. Although official statistics about illegal immigration during this period are unavailable, scholars have documented figures for the \textit{Bracero Program}, which lasted until 1964. Figure 10 below


\textsuperscript{59} Research of those contracted during 1944 demonstrated that out of 118,182 workers, 70 percent were 21. Fernández del Campo, \textit{Los Braceros}. Quoted in Alanís Enciso, \textit{La emigración de San Luis Potosí}, 61.

\textsuperscript{60} Alanís Enciso, \textit{La emigración de San Luis Potosí}, 51.

\textsuperscript{61} Alanís Enciso, \textit{La emigración de San Luis Potosí}, 52.
presents data from the Committee on Agriculture in 1963 showing illegal and legal migration during the Program; *bracero* admissions into the United States totaled over 4.6 million, while apprehensions (illegal migration) totaled over 5.3 million (note that this figure numbers frequency, not individuals). According to Philip Martin, legal migrants, those who entered the country legally with a Visa, numbered 546,000. Martin noted that legal migration rose almost ten times between the mid-1940s and early 1960s, from about 6,000 to 7,000 a year to 55,000 a year. During 1953 and 1954, immigration apprehensions peaked, averaging about one million per year.

![Figure 10. Mexican Braceros, Apprehensions and Legal Immigrants, 1942-1964](image)

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Local Government Responses to Migration and the Dynamics of Globalization

Alejandro Portes argues that in response to the globalization of capitalism occurring in the world, the working-class has created communities that sit astride political borders and that, in a very real sense, are ‘neither here nor there’ but in both places simultaneously. The economic activities that sustain these communities are grounded precisely on the differentials of advantage created by state boundaries. In this respect, they are no different from the large global corporations, except that these enterprises emerge at the grassroots level and its activities are often informal.64

The dynamics of globalization seem to be evident early on in Villa Juarez, as migrants begin to create and experience working in the United States and establish a cycle of migration among that endures today. The responses from local and national governments to migration all seek to protect the migrant and even deter him/her. However, as Portes contends, globalization forces affect locals as “Contrary to widespread perceptions, immigrants come to the wealthier nations less because they want to than because they are needed.”65 In other words, the possibility of better remunerated labor planted by the Bracero Program compounded by labor shortages and underemployment, created a pattern that responded to globalizing forces and endures today among younger generations.

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Municipal government meetings convened throughout the 1950s frequently discussed the state and federal policy mandates for the municipality of Villa Juarez. In 1951, the federal Secretary of Foreign Affairs advised the municipal governments that “they [the Secretary of Foreign Affairs department] expect and hope that North American authorities do not allow private interests to circumvent immigration laws, allowing United States farmers to freely contract Mexican workers that enter the country illegally.”\textsuperscript{66} The government council agreed that they would share this notification publicly in the town, over the public address system. In the same meeting, council minutes recorded an alert from the state about the high number of \textit{bracero} candidates in the border state of Chihuahua and in Monterrey. The state asked for a concerted effort by local government to prevent interested workers from leaving their communities. In November of 1951, correspondence from government offices in Monterrey called for an indefinite suspension of \textit{bracero} mobilization until further notice, which the Villa Juarez council again agreed to announce publicly through the public address system.\textsuperscript{67}

In his state of the union address on September 1953, President Adolfo Ruiz Cortines (1952-1958), spoke about the spirit of self-improvement and called for citizen involvement; ironically, immigration was growing.\textsuperscript{68} Subsequently, the Villa Juarez

\textsuperscript{66} Presidencia Municipal, Villa Juárez, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 7 de julio de 1951.

\textsuperscript{67} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{68} Dirección de Servicios de Investigación y Análisis, Cámara de Diputados, LX Legislatura, \textit{Diario de los Debates de la Cámara de Diputados del Congreso de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos}. XLII Legislatura, Año 2, Núm. 2, 1\textdegree{} de septiembre de 1953. Informes Presidenciales, Adolfo Ruiz Cortines, “I
council received correspondence from the State urging it to form community groups that would involve all citizens and generate community progress. In the presidential address, Ruiz Cortines made reference to the increase in Mexican migration exacerbated by recent extreme weather conditions that reduced crop yields, partial and false information about the United States, and myths about earnings:

Regretfully, the distressing national problem of migration to the United States—particularly illegally—of our compatriots, has increased, even in spite of the federal government’s and the State’s consistent warnings of the dangers that they are being exposed to, above all those who are not protected by the current agreements. It has not been possible to contain this migration trend, in which adverse weather conditions, non-reliable information and the dream of fictitious profits have had influence. This year, 94,200 workers have been contracted until July 31st. Deeply concerned about this situation, which has prevailed since 1942 and which is determined in large part due to our extraordinary demographic growth, marked in the decade 1940-1950, in which there was a registered growth of 6 million, in other words, a 30 percent of the total, it has been suggested, among other measures, the urgent need to open employment in areas of scarce population [in Mexico], such as the tropical and the coastal areas, so that they can absorb the excess population in several states.

Informes Presidencial,‖ 5-6. Dirección de Servicios de Investigación y Análisis, “Informe Presidencial,” 5-6. “Penosamente ha aumentado el angustioso problema nacional que constituye la salida - sobre todo la ilegal - de nuestros compatriotas con destino a los Estados Unidos. No obstante que el Gobierno de la República y de los Estados en forma sistemática les advierten los peligros a que estarán expuestos - sobre todo los que no salen amparados por los convenios vigentes que cada vez los protegen más - no ha sido posible contener esa corriente migratoria en la que influyen condiciones meteorológicas adversas, informaciones tendenciosas y el señuelo de ficticias ganancias. En este año han sido contratados 94,200 trabajadores hasta el 31 de julio último. Hondamente preocupado el Gobierno por esta situación, prevaleciente desde 1942, y que es determinada en gran parte por nuestro extraordinario crecimiento demográfico - acentuado en la década 1940-1950, en que se registró un aumento de seis millones, o sea el 30% de total - , se ha planteado entre otras medidas, la urgente imposición de abrir fuentes de trabajo en zonas escasamente pobladas, como son las tropicales y costeras, para que absorban la población excedente en varias entidades federativas.”

Despite government warnings about the dangers of migrating illegally, both legal and illegal migration continued. In 1955, the municipal president of Villa Juarez, Antonio Avila R. submitted a list of candidates for the *braceros* program in the United States to the General Secretary of the State government (*Secretario General de Gobierno*). Fifty men were on the list which was signed by both the municipal president and the secretary; it was composed of agricultural workers or peasants who left behind no other work commitments and who, due to lack of harvests, were pressured to leave in search of work opportunities.\(^71\)

A former teacher explained that the process of recruiting for the *Bracero* Program was at the discretion of the Villa Juarez mayor. The mayor would receive a request for a certain number of men, which he would share first with his friends. Once the lists were complete, they were sent back to the government, which would advise the mayor of the location in Monterrey where the workers would be picked up by the employers from the United States. After about three months, the workers would return since few stayed permanently during those early years of migration. Those who chose to remain were primarily single men who returned to Villa Juarez during November for the festivities of Santa Gertrudis. They carried large quantities of money with them; according to one interviewee, this behavior influenced the townspeople, who began to think: “I should get a visa, too”.\(^72\)

By 1960, sulfur production in the community of Huaxcama in Villa Juarez ranked second in the nation and the mines were a significant source of income and employment for the municipality. The mines of Huaxcama were accidentally destroyed by fire in November 1972, leading to numerous job losses. The burning of the mines contributed to migration, one former student explained, as they were a primary source of employment for many years. Another source of prosperity was Villa Juarez’s production of corn, which reached 6,500 tons annually around 1969 and ranked among the richest in the State of San Luis Potosi. According to Angel Castillo Torres, the well-being of the municipality was also attributable in part to the active rural life in the haciendas. In the municipality of Villa Juarez, haciendas produced local crops and mezcal, a distilled alcoholic beverage made from the maguey plant that grows in the region. Nevertheless, these main sources of income (the mines and the haciendas) either disappeared or were not profitable enough to maintain families.

The Bracero Program brought work opportunities in an agrarian setting with high levels of unemployment. Figure 11 below shows the number of employed residents in Villa Juarez between 1930 and 1960. In 1940, this percentage was 23 percent. The

72 INT31, interview.

73 Antonio Almazán Cadena, Síntesis geográfica del estado de San Luis Potosí (México: Ediciones del Ateneo Nacional de Investigaciones Geográficas, 1985), 199. Quoted in Ángel Castillo Torres, Villa Juárez, 25, archival material copies from the Archivo Histórico del Estado de San Luis Potosí.


75 Cabrera Ipiña, Monografía del Estado, San Luis Potosí, 229.

76 Castillo Torres, Villa Juárez, 18.
numbers increased slightly in the following two decades, but the percentage of the working-age population at these different points in time averaged 28 percent. Thus, the possibility of work in migrant labor may have been a welcome choice for villajuarenzes searching for work opportunities to improve their quality of life. They influenced future generations of villajuarenzes with aspirations of migration. The unattached workers recruited for labor were typical of the kind of mobile labor force that became pronounced in the 1990s and early 2000s.

![Bar chart showing Economically Active and Inactive Population in the Municipality of Villa Juarez, 1930-1960](image)

**Figure 11. Economically Active and Inactive Population in the Municipality of Villa Juarez, 1930-1960**

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77 INEGI, VII Censo General de Población. “Población Activa e Inactiva, 1930-1960”. 
Constitutional Reform and Municipal Power

The Mexican political system is a structure of federal, state, and local government, with the municipalities composing the lowest rung -- the local level. Since the colonial era, political and economic resources have been concentrated in the federal government, located in Mexico City, though constitutional reforms have sought to alter this. After the Revolution, the Constitution of 1917 technically expanded the sovereignty of the states, creating a free municipality (*municipio libre*) in Villa Juarez, per Article 115. The constitutional reform meant that the states could make their own decisions and allocate resources to areas they deemed most important, one of these being education.

Initially, centralization served to promote economic and political stability as the new nation was formed. By the 1960s, the value of centralization was called into question, anticipating the later emphasis on decentralization that was fundamental to globalization; by the 1980s, Presidents Miguel de la Madrid and Carlos Salinas de Gortari instituted concrete decentralization initiatives. Due to the centralization of resources over time, 19 million people -- a quarter of Mexico’s entire population -- lived in the capitol, Mexico City, in which over 50 percent of the nation’s industry was concentrated.  

The government of Miguel de la Madrid (1982-1988) brought forward two major initiatives in an effort to delegate more economic and legislative power to the municipalities: a reform to Article 115 of the Constitution and the creation of *Convenios*

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Únicos de Desarrollo (CUD) -- agreements between the state and federal governments to decentralize financial resources from the federal government that had previously been administered by the states themselves, and assign these resources directly to the municipalities. De la Madrid’s National Plan for Development of 1983-1988 (Plan Nacional de Desarrollo, 1983-1988) included three major efforts aimed at strengthening federalism, promoting regional development, and invigorating municipal life. To achieve decentralization he developed a series of programs whereby federal agencies would be relocated throughout the country and duties redistributed, rather than remain centralized in the capital, Mexico City. As a result of this initiative, the fields of education and health saw major, constructive changes as federal agencies moved to state government levels.79

The Plan Nacional reinforced municipalities as autonomous with regard to their finances and services, which were now officially independent of the federal and state governments. As such, the reform theoretically reinforced the power of the municipalities; in practice, the reform had little effect. Local governments continued to rely on the federal government and the states to make the decisions about the financial resources to be allocated to municipalities.80

The Salinas administration (1988-1994) supported de la Madrid’s policies and established the Programa Nacional de Solidaridad (PRONASOL, National Solidarity


Program), targeting social welfare, production, and regional development. The intended recipients of this program were marginalized and rural communities and poor urban areas. Under PRONASOL, any group or organization that presented their proposal to the federal government was eligible to receive government funding. One year after its inception, the program’s funding primarily targeted “education, roads and highways, potable water, and health and social assistance.” PRONASOL thus supported decentralization by funneling financial resources directly to the municipalities, or any group in need who requested it, side-stepping the involvement of the State government. Nevertheless, Victoria Rodriguez contended that decentralization as a way to democratize -- a goal that Salinas espoused -- and the “municipal reform’s promise to empower the lower levels of government” remained unfulfilled.

A retired teacher and primary school principal explained that before the reform of Article 115, during his 35-year tenure as teacher in Villa Juarez, from 1957 to 1992, it was very difficult to find candidates for the presidency of the municipality. He recalled the fundraising efforts to support the building of a secundaria (also referred to as secondary or middle school in this work) in Villa Juarez in the early 1970s:

[...] the financial assistance that the town of Villa Juarez received was a three-part contribution--in other words, one part came from the state government, another from the federal government, and another from the town, the municipality. But the municipality still did not have sufficient resources to do it, because, during that time, the municipality did not get

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funding from the federal government. And to get a [municipal] president we found it difficult, because nobody wanted to [do the job], because there was [no money] to take. And after the reform to Article [115], that Article mandated the government to fund the municipalities, to strengthen them, so that they became truly independent, so that they would not depend on the State or on anyone. So, it forced [the federal government] to send funding [to the municipality] and then large quantities of money started coming in, quantities that we were not used to here. A lot of money started coming. But before this time, when I was secretary of the municipal government, sometimes the town president and I were going around collecting 100 pesos to […] pay the police officers [of the town] because [the treasury] did not have enough.83

The contributions that the municipal government received as a result of the reform had additional consequences. In Villa Juarez, they led to more competitive election campaigns for the position of municipal president and allegations of corruption among members of respective administrations. Political battles intensified between the different political parties, which in Villa Juarez were the PRI (*Partido Revolucionario Institucional*) and the PAN (*Partido Acción Nacional*), the more conservative faction.

**Recent Demographic Trends in Villa Juarez**

Today, Villa Juarez is sparsely populated, with many of its former residents now temporary visitors to the town during winter holidays and summer vacations. The decline

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83 INT31, interview. “[…] la cooperación que le toco a Villa Juárez, al pueblo, porque era, era una cooperación tripartita, o sea una parte la ponía el gobierno del estado, otra el gobierno federal, y otra el pueblo, el municipio. Pero el municipio tampoco tenía medios suficientes para hacerlo, porque antes en aquel tiempo, el municipio no tenía participaciones del gobierno federal. Y… para poner a un presidente batallábamos, porque nadie quería, porque pues no había nada que agarrar. Y después de que se reformo el Artículo [115], el que habla del municipio, ese Artículo obligaba al gobierno a mandar participación a los municipios, para darles fuerza, para que realmente fueran libres, que no dependieran del estado ni de nadie. Entonces lo obligo a mandarles participaciones, entonces empezó a llegar cantidades enormes de dinero que no conocíamos ahí. Empezó a llegar mucho, mucho dinero. Y cuando yo fui secretario del ayuntamiento [antes de este tiempo] a veces andábamos colectando el presidente y yo 100 pesos para pagarle a los policías porque no ajustábamos.”
in the number of full-time residents has accelerated over the past twenty years. From 1990 to 2000, the Villa Juarez municipality saw a 14 percent decrease in its population, from 12,734 to 10,956. Adults over the age of 65, many of whom retired after working in the United States, comprise a growing proportion of this population. In 2000, the municipality registered 12 percent of its population over the age of 65, the third highest among the 52 municipalities in the state of San Luis Potosi. In addition, the portion of the population that is working-age has dropped considerably.

The municipality of Villa Juarez was among those registering lower mean annual growth in population between 1990 and 2000, ranking 25th among 52 municipalities, with -1.50 rate of population growth. The drop in children ages 0-14 became most evident from 1995 to 2005 when this population diminished, from 4335 in 1995 to 2901 in 2005, a drop of 33 percent (see Figure 13 below). This population drop, in turn, has had profound repercussions on school enrollments in the town. The decrease in school age children led to the closure of the evening session of the Himno Nacional primary school in 1995. The morning shift at Himno Nacional also struggles to maintain enough enrollments in each grade in order to retain at least one teacher in each grade.


86 INT3, interview with author, Villa Juarez, San Luis Potosi, Mexico, May 11, 2006. A minimum enrollment of 15-20 students per grade is required to keep a teacher; a minimum of six teachers is required to maintain a director in an institution of primary education.
In general, the demographic composition of migrants has also shifted. Even more dramatically, in their study of population depletion in the migrant town of Guadalupe, Josh Reichert and Douglas Massey found that by 1975, 66 percent of migrants were less than 15 years of age. Between 1940 and 1978, the average age of migrants had dropped from 30 to 10.\(^{87}\) These findings agree with those of Alejandro Garay, who, using national census data from 2002 and 2004 in his 2008 study contends that Mexican migration to the United States is composed of a population that is increasingly younger among those of working-age. This suggests that migration depletes the sending communities’ very population that has the highest potential for productivity and generating income. Almost 42 percent of the Mexican population that migrates to the United States is between 15 and 24 years old; 26 percent is between 25 and 43 years old; and 19 percent is between 35 and 49.\(^{88}\)

Since 1960, the population of the town of Villa Juarez has experienced a steady decline of 14 percent per year over this 40-year period (see Figure 12). This is in part due to migration, lower birth rates and the “Amnesty Act” in the 1980s. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (U.S. Public Law 99-603), also known as the “Amnesty Act,” granted legal status to many immigrants, including villajuarenzes living illegally in the United States, and made family reunification possible.\(^{89}\) This legislation was pivotal

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in the population trends that became established in Villa Juarez, making it possible for women and children to join their working husbands in the United States. Previous to the 1986 law, many working men migrated back and forth across the border to the United States, returning to Villa Juarez periodically to see their families. In addition, the national campaign on family planning begun in the 1970s with the motto, “La Familia Pequeña Vive Mejor” (The Small Family Lives a Better Life), contributed to smaller families. While Villa Juarez registered a 2.68 birth rate for the municipality, births dropped to 0 in 1980 and to -1.58 in 2000. Though the municipality as a whole demonstrated a population decline of over 10 percent over this 40 year period, the town of Villa Juarez saw an even sharper decline of 25 percent (see figure 12).


The demographic changes occurring in Villa Juarez imply that fewer school age children will be travelling through the school pipeline and that the significant proportion of the population that will soon be over the age of 65 will require increasing health and other services, with fewer younger people available to pay taxes to pay for these services or take care of the elderly. In addition, the limited number of the working-age population that can fill skilled positions in the health services the aging population will need poses challenges. Figure 13 below indicates a 33 percent decrease in the population age 0 to 14 years and an increase of 30 percent in the population over 65 years of age.

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The effects of globalization are visible in Villa Juarez, economically and culturally. Small farmers cannot compete with larger markets for main crops like corn. Changes to the local economy have had a major effect on local residents; since it is in an agricultural region, the town depends heavily on maize and bean crops for sustenance. In 1990, 74 percent of those who were “economically active” worked in the agricultural sector in the municipality of Villa Juarez; in 1998, that number was 63 percent. Farming

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as a form of subsistence has been endangered by the falling price of corn, the major crop in the area, and government subsidies cannot support large numbers of small growers.\textsuperscript{94}

Although agriculture has slowly dwindled as the main occupation for many workers, it is still practiced, but remittances from the United States have replaced it as a major source of income. Financial support from relatives in the United States has created some businesses in Villa Juarez, such as currency exchanges, and many businesses also use US dollars in day to day transactions. The earning power of migrant labor is most evident in Villa Juarez in the construction of modern houses, which also has fueled the construction industry. Returning to the town mainly during the winter and summer months, migrants have transformed Villa Juarez by fusing American and Mexican culture. These seasons are key opportunities for the small businesses in the town: the occupancy of the returning migrants means greatly increased economic activity. Some sources claim money from the United States makes up the third largest source of income for Mexico, after oil exports and tourism.\textsuperscript{95} One source indicates that families in Villa Juarez receive, on average, between $200 and $300 a month.\textsuperscript{96} However, most of these monies are used for daily subsistence, to buy food and clothes. While labeling migrants as “heroes,” former Mexican President Vicente Fox acknowledged in 2002 the need for rural development. In an interview, he stated that instead “[A]n overwhelming majority


\textsuperscript{95} Thompson, “An Exodus of Migrant Families”.

\textsuperscript{96} Hochmuth, “Mexican towns benefit from U.S. Connections.”
of immigrant dollars sent to Mexico were used to provide for the day-to-day survival of the poorest families. Little is saved. Even less is invested in projects that could stimulate economic growth”.

More recently, hometown organizations in the United States have been influential in Villa Juárez. Migration has strongly influenced town life, but the hometown organizations in the United States have added another layer of immigrant participation to the culture of the town. Villajuarenze living in the United States wanted to make improvements or continue participating in town life. As a result, they formed hometown organizations in their communities in the United States and sent contributions back to their home towns. Manuel Orozco researched hometown organizations from various countries that exist in the United States, describing them as “small, philanthropic organizations” formed “to raise thousands of dollars to support small local development projects” in the places of origin. Hometown organizations formed in the United States by villajuarenze have contributed substantially to projects in the town. For example, the Houston club partially funded the construction of the town market, el Mercado Municipal in 2005. These organizations exist today in Texas (in Dallas and in Houston), Illinois and

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Nebraska, California, and recently, Georgia. Finally, some hometown organizations attempt to exert more influence in town life. The organization in Illinois, for example, became immersed in town activities, organizing a science contest in collaboration with the *Heroínas Mexicanas* schools and a traditional “baile de poetas,”* and working with the municipal government to host town-hall discussions about critical issues in Villa Juarez.

**Conclusion**

Though powerfully affected by globalization, Villa Juarez retains many aspects of its traditions and history. However, prompted by the steady migration of the populace for economic opportunity, the town has been deeply influenced by migrants living in the United States. Portes asserts that globalization has influenced potential immigrants, particularly those of the working or middle classes who are most exposed to cultural and marketing influences:

> Among them are the remoulding of popular culture on the basis of external forms and art forms and the introduction of consumption standards bearing little relation to local wage levels (Alba 1978). This process simultaneously pre-socializes future immigrants in what to expect

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99 Through my participation as a member and former newsletter editor for the Organization de Villa Juarez en Illinois from September 2006 to June 2008, the names and contact information of the different organizations in other cities were gathered to serve as a communication network to share the newsletter produced for the organization in Illinois.

100 The tradition of the “baile de poetas” had been lost for many years before it was resurrected in the town in December 2006 by the Illinois Villa Juarez organization. It featured competitions between local musicians, many of indigenous descent, who compose verses that often address political and social situations. The “match” typically runs from sun down until sun rise.
of their lives abroad, and increases the drive to move through the growing gap between local realities and imported consumption aspirations.\textsuperscript{101}

Transnational migration in Villa Juarez and increased and more rapid communication (telephones, cell phones, Internet, media) have allowed a mutual exchange: not only has the small town been touched by American (and other) music, culture and ideas, but also the local traditions and culture have travelled with those who migrate back to the United States. Some hometown organizations are evolving, from mainly philanthropic orientations to demanding more civic participation in the town. Remittances have made a major impact in the economy of the town, as well, with American dollars fueling the construction businesses in the town as migrants build new homes and invest in the town in other ways. Businesses in the town have changed gears to serve local and migrants’ needs: bus lines that facilitate travel from Villa Juarez to cities in the United States that are home to villajuarenzes, as well as travel agencies. Globalization, exemplified by the introduction of policies to decentralize government, the spread of mass media, and transnational migration exchanges, has influenced Villa Juarez residents, reinforcing the idea of migration as a plausible economic avenue and a way of life for future generations. In Villa Juarez, the culture of migration has also competed with schooling, undermining education as the best vehicle to social mobility.

Teaching moral values, love for one’s family, especially honoring the parents, and respect for the homeland had ranked high on the list of duties for teachers and for

\textsuperscript{101} Portes, “Globalization from Below,” 6.
educational institutions in Villa Juarez. In recent decades, teachers and townspeople have proclaimed their concern for the shift from core values they see in local young people, which they often associate with influence from *el otro lado* (the other side). In fact, Villa Juarez and the United States are inextricably bound. The following chapter summarizes the history of schools in Villa Juarez and the effects of local, national, and globalizing influences on the purpose of education.

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CHAPTER 6

ARCHIVAL FINDINGS: HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN VILLA JUAREZ

Although the current study focuses on education in Villa Juarez from 1942 to 2000, an understanding of the history of education in the town prior to this period is necessary. Thus, this chapter explores archival documents from 1892 to 1980 from the school known today as Heroínas Mexicanas and minutes of municipal government meetings that addressed schools, public instruction, and local and national education policies. According to Mary Kay Vaughan, “school programs and methods varied widely in Mexico, not only because teacher training varied but because what happened in the classroom represented a negotiation between teachers, pupils, parents and power holders in small towns…”\(^1\) This variation in the availability and quality of education and the dynamics between the school and town is a key element present in the archival materials that pertain to education from the town of Villa Juarez. This chapter also examines the interplay of globalization and the culture of migration in the development of education in Villa Juarez.

**History of Villa Juarez Schools before 1940**

In the early 19th century, the ayuntamientos (town councils) of the municipalities of the states were made responsible for the creation, administration, and in most cases

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funding of schools, while still maintaining oversight from the state government.\textsuperscript{2} National constitutional ordinances came about in 1824, 1857, and 1917 in support of education and schools, but left the administration to the municipalities and in certain cases to the states themselves.

Schools in Villa Juarez and across Mexico were subject to the laws of the State. The 1857 Constitution mandated that the State and municipal governments establish and support primary schools and private instruction. Each congregación, hacienda and rancho\textsuperscript{3} whose population exceeded 50 families was to establish a primary school funded by the families therein or funded by the owners in haciendas and ranchos.\textsuperscript{4}

In 1858, Governor Chico Sein introduced a decree to make primary instruction uniform throughout San Luis Potosí.\textsuperscript{5} Since schools were separated by large distances, he assigned a state board to oversee the schools and to coordinate communication between the capital city of San Luis Potosí and local governments to “promot[e] the towns’

\textsuperscript{2} Vaughan, “Primary Education and Literacy in Nineteenth-Century Mexico,” 34, 39.

\textsuperscript{3} Montejano y Aguiñaga, “Fundamentos históricos y generales,” 5. Congregación refers to political category for a population group of 100 families or more.

\textsuperscript{4} Inocencio Noyola, coord. Reglamento para uniformar la instrucción primaria en el Estado de San Luis Potosí, Cuadernos del Archivo, Serie Leyes y decretos, 1(San Luis Potosí, México: Archivo Histórico del Estado, 2002), 6. Where the population exceeded 100 families, the ayuntamiento (town council/government) was to appoint a school headmaster and establish a school for boys and a separate school for girls; those local governments, haciendas, or congregations that did not comply with this law were to be assessed a fine of 100 pesos every month until this provision was met, with fines to be used for the advancement of youth education. The school headmaster (principal), vice-principal, and town mayor were to adhere to this law and provide updates to the Board of Inspection about the number of new schools established, their current state, and the fines collected (Junta Inspectora de Instrucción Primaria, 1857).

\textsuperscript{5} María Guadalupe García Alcaraz, introduction to Reglamento para uniformar la instrucción primaria en el Estado de San Luis Potosí, Cuadernos del Archivo, Serie Leyes y decretos, 1(San Luis Potosí, México: Archivo Histórico del Estado, 2002), 6.
education and by this means improve their social condition.⁶ The board was to secure funding for the schools and create standards for subjects and teaching methods.⁷ The establishment of State boards allowing local participation in education was a novelty in 1858, but the boards endured over time, despite the instability produced by changing government administrations. In addition to locating education funding in the State, the board was to institute measures to create uniformity within the schools and promote open access to children throughout the State.⁸ According to Maria Guadalupe Garcia Alcaraz, Governor Chico Sein’s decree was an important, well-intended document that became the basis for future educational planning throughout the State. Nevertheless, its successful implementation was hindered by political and social instability in Mexico in this period.⁹

Throughout the 19th century, the national government viewed education as a way to develop citizens with common values and a national identity. While education was seen as critically important to the country’s leadership, the number and quality of schools depended on the economy and culture in each State and local population. Since the State government often funded schools in the cities, excluding rural schools, municipal governments, parents’ associations, missionaries, and sometimes local hacendados or

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⁷ García Alcaraz, introduction, 10.

⁸ García Alcaraz, *Reglamento para uniformar*, 12. The board oversaw teacher training, school schedules, authors for texts and school materials, subjects to be taught, the system of teaching, and the establishment of student examinations, among others.

⁹ García Alcaraz, *Reglamento para uniformar*, 12. The Guerra de Tres Años and the French Intervention were major events shortly after the *Reglamento*, in 1857 and 1861.
progressive businessmen provided for them and became their principal supporters.\textsuperscript{10} In the latter half of the 19th century, instruction focused primarily on reading and writing, with the goal of mastering religious catechism. Later, lessons became infused with politics and Mexican history in an effort to expand boys’ civic knowledge and the sewing class became an essential part of girls’ lessons.\textsuperscript{11}

Public schools in Villa Juarez are mentioned in secondary source literature as early as June 1874. In his memoirs, General Mariano Escobedo, governor of San Luis Potosi, wrote that there were two schools for boys with a total enrollment of 140 students in the municipality of Villa Juarez in 1874.\textsuperscript{12} Writing in 1899, Manuel Muro contended that by 1886 schools existed in even the smallest communities of the state.\textsuperscript{13} Muro states that in Carbonera (today Villa Juarez), there were two principals, Celestino Silva and Natalia Lopez, most likely for a boys’ and a girls’ school, respectively.\textsuperscript{14} The textbooks used by all public schools focused on grammar, state, national, and world geography, the

\textsuperscript{10} García Alcaraz, \textit{Reglamento para uniformar}, 9.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{12} Consejo Nacional de la Población (CONAPO), \textit{La población de los municipios en México, 1950-1990, 1994 and INAFED, sistema Nacional de Información Municipal, México, 2002}. Quoted in Instituto Nacional para el Federalismo y el Desarrollo Municipal, Gobierno del Estado de San Luis Potosí, “\textit{Enciclopedia de los Municipios de México, Estado de San Luis Potosí, Villa Juárez,}” http://www.elocal.gob.mx/work/templates/enciclo/sanluispotosi/ municipios/24052a.htm (accessed May 20, 2007). “This is the first time in which officially the traditional name of the municipality, Santa Gertrudis de la Carbonera, ceased to be used. Shortly afterwards, the article “la” was also removed, and it was simply named the municipality of Carbonera. This is how it appears in 1874, in a list of public schools of the municipalities, in the memoir written under the administration of General Mariano Escobedo, Governor of the State of San Luis Potosí, in 1874.”

\textsuperscript{13} Manuel Muro, \textit{Historia de la Instrucción Pública en San Luis Potosí} (San Luis Potosí: Imprenta, Litografía, Encuadernación y Librería de M. Esquível y Compañía, 1899), 209.

\textsuperscript{14} Muro, \textit{Historia de la Instrucción Pública}, 242.
history of Mexico and the State, and drawing, music, and physical education
gimnástica). According to Muro, all students received these textbooks as the
government tried to follow in the teaching methods of the most “civilized” countries. In
1901, according to then governor, Blas Escontría, several improvements took place in the
municipality of Carbonera. Among these was the rebuilding of the Municipal Town Hall
building, the structure where the Boys’ School met and the municipal government held its
meetings.

In Villa Juárez, the municipal archives reveal the local government’s efforts to
secure economic support for education in the town. Whether representatives shared the
idea that education was a means to build the nation and transform society or they simply
intended to adhere to the mandate to provide schooling, the municipal government of
Villa Juárez promoted education and established the necessary structures to support it.
Minutes from a meeting of the municipal government in 1875 document communication
between the Secretary of the Board of Inspection for Primary Instruction of San Luis
Potosí and the municipal government in which the government agreed to the formation
of a subordinate board to manage primary education. Minutes report: “[...] that because
of its honesty, talent, and enthusiasm in the education of the youth, it deserves the
confidence so that it can form the subordinate boards of this municipality.”

15 Muro, Historia de la Instrucción Pública, 248.
17 Castillo Torres, Villa Juárez, 21.
Records of attendance lists from schools in other communities of the municipality indicate that the municipal schools in Villa Juarez, as the cabecera (government of the municipality), also reported on all the schools in rural locations within the municipality, following the law of 1899 on public instruction. These records demonstrate that efforts were being made at the municipal level to bring education to even the most remote and marginalized areas and that those remote areas had begun their own schools. Thus, it is clear that local governments took mandates from state educational authorities seriously and enacted them to the extent that financial resources allowed. School enrollment lists present in the archives include one from the “Boys’ School in the Community of la Trinidad in the Municipality of Carbonera,” written by the school principal, showing 33 students, and lists of male and female students, their parents, and attendance records submitted in 1902 by a teacher or principal in the local villages of Granjenal and the Hacienda de Guascama.

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18 Correspondence with “Secretario de la Junta Inspector de Instrucción Primaria de S.L. Potosí,” to the Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, 08 de noviembre de 1875. “[...] que por su honradez, aptitud y entusiasmo en la educación de la juventud, le merece la confianza para que formen la subalterna de este municipio [...]”

19 “Ley Reglamentaria del Artículo 104 de la Constitución del Estado sobre Instrucción Primaria vigente en 1899, Capítulo III, Sección 1a, Artículo 32,” in Muro, Historia de la Instrucción Pública, VII.

20 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: “Lista de los niños que han concurrido a la escuela en la última del mes de febrero de 1902,” Rafael Pérez (principal?), Granjenal, febrero 26, 1902; “Lista de faltas de los alumnos de la Escuela Rural de esta fracción,” Rafael Pérez, Granjenal, octubre 26, 1902; “Lista de faltas de asistencia de los alumnos que concurrieron a la Escuela Rural de niños,” Granjenal, junio 26, julio 26, 1902, and agosto 26, 1902.

21 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: “Lista de las faltas de asistencia de los alumnos que concurren a la Escuela de niños,” Macario Cruz (principal?), Hacienda Guascama, mayo 30, 1902; junio 30, 1902; julio 30, 1902; agosto 30, 1902; and September 30, 1902; “Establecimiento de Escuela de niños de la fracción de la Trinidad de la Municipalidad de Carbonera,” Víctor Cerbantes [sic], principal, octubre
In 1902, the matriculation number in the public school for boys in Villa Juarez reached 130, with the surrounding community schools ranging in registration between 30 and 10 male students. Although records indicate the students’ fathers (and sometimes the mothers) employment as day laborers or farmers, other occupations included shopkeepers, merchants, and butchers. A second school, School Number 2 for Girls (Escuela Número 2 para niñas), existed concurrently with the boys’ school and matriculated 57 that same year. Records showed an enrollment of 14 and 13 girls, respectively, in schools from the rural school communities of Granjenal and San José del Matorral in 1902. Final exams in both the boys’ and girls’ schools were proctored by the mayor and included subjects such as history, ethics (Moral), and lessons in courtesy (Urbanidad) for all students. Girls’ exams included sewing.

Attendance was inconsistent in the early 1900s, showing varying fluctuation and attrition rates. In March 1902, the principal of the boys’ school wrote to the president of the municipality requesting that he provide more seating, since 11 students were forced to stand through their classes. In another document, the principal pleaded for the support

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27, 1902. (Establishment of the Boys’ School of La Trinidad of the Municipality of Carbonera (later known as Villa Juarez)).

22 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: “Noticias de faltas de asistencia a la Escuela no. 2 de la Municipalidad de Carbonera en la fracción de San José Matorral,” Concepción P. de Tristán, directora de la Escuela, abril 1902.


24 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: Letter from Principal Isaac Grimaldo to municipal government, March 10, 1902. “Atentamente manifiesto a Ud. que la asistencia de niños en este Plantel es de 35, y como el viernes pasado fue de 60 educandos […] ignoro la razón […] para eso, motivo por el cual
of the local government to intervene in asking parents to abide by the law and send their children to school:

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\text{I sincerely write to express to you that children’s attendance in this establishment is 35, and because last Friday attendance was 60 students [...] I am unsure as to the reasons [...] for this [drop]; for this reason and because of the proximity of the exam, I communicate this to you so that you may proceed as you see best.}^{25}
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The reasons for the inconsistency in attendance in the boys’ school are not clear. Having a largely agriculturally-based economy, Villa Juarez families employed their children in the fields and in household chores. It is possible that the fluctuation in attendance was due to young people’s work on the farm during planting or harvesting seasons. Andres Lira Gonzalez researched schools in Mexico City, offering another perspective for students’ absenteeism and illiteracy during the period just before the Revolution in 1910: resistance to schooling. Although his study was specific to Mexico City in this period, elements of his discussion may pertain to other settings like Villa Juarez.

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\text{[...] those attending often remained illiterate because the school was so incompatible with their interests, needs, and values. Whether for reasons of poverty, the viability of old integrations, lack of need for Spanish literacy skills, or defense of cultural autonomy among the indigenous, many Mexicans shunned official secular schooling, if not all formal schooling.}^{26}
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\[y \text{ por estar próximo el examen, se lo comunico para los fines que la respetable autoridad de Ud. lo crea conveniente.}^{''}\]

\[25 \text{ Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: Letter from Isaac Grimaldo, principal of the boys’ school to the municipal government, noviembre 3, 1902. “I sincerely inform you that the attendance of the boys’ of this school is of 35, and while last Friday the attendance was of 60 pupils [...] I do not know the reason [...] for this reason, the motive of which is the upcoming exam, I am communicating this to you so that the respectable administration can address this as they see fit.”}\]
Similarly, Stephen Lassonde’s research of the limited schooling of Italian immigrant families in the United States and parents’ lack of confidence in the usefulness of education during 1910-1940 offers another perspective. Working class Italian families resisted sending their children to school in part because of their lack of familiarity with schooling and the fact that it was irrelevant in the economies of their home towns in Italy. In addition, Lassonde describes the “traditional, agrarian attitude,” of the families, which placed high priority on youths’ contributions to the family’s economy, which was considered more important than schooling.27

Beyond compliance with the law, it is not clear what parents’ motivations were for sending their children to school at this time. Although Lira’s research is particular to indigenous barrios in Mexico City, his findings point to a link between literacy and integration into urban economy. Because Villa Juarez was not an urban economy, schooling may have thus been perceived as having less relevance in the lives of the townspeople. As literacy became accessible to families in the urban centers, it may have been viewed as more important in that setting. Although literacy was important in Villa Juarez, it initially may not have been viewed this way. Elsie Rockwell describes the appropriation of literacy in rural societies, positing that:

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\text{as people select and appropriate the tools of literacy from the available stock, they reshape them to fit into cultural practices and to accomplish}\]

26 Andres Lira Gonzalez, “Indian Communities in Mexico City: The Parcialidades of Tenochtitlan and Tlatelolco, 1812-1919” (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York, Stony Brook, 1982).

particular social tasks. It is only then that these resources acquire meaning and are of consequence in a given society, or indeed become part of social history.  

In 1904 the State Inspector of Primary Instruction (*Inspector de Instrucción Primaria*) visited schools in Villa Juarez and chastised the municipal government and school administrators for their low registration of the school-age population. The Inspector recommended that the local government take a census of school-age children and require that parents follow the law and enroll their children. The State made similar recommendations throughout the early 1900s; school leadership periodically asked local government to find ways to keep attendance consistent.

Municipal government meetings were held in the same building as the *Escuela de Niños No. 1* school throughout 1906. Minutes record discussion about correspondence exchanges between the municipal government and the principals of the local schools, the local inspector of education (*inspector local de instrucción pública*), the state government, and the federal government. The municipal government and citizens were present at these discussions and education policy decisions were often the topic of dialogue.

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29 *Heroínas Mexicanas* School Archive: Letter to the “Secretaría de la Dirección General de Educación Primaria del Estado” from the Inspector to the local government on his visit to Villa Juarez (then *Carbonera*), febrero 8, 1904.
The municipal government established a commission to oversee public instruction at the municipal level, though it is unclear whether the creation of this committee was mandated by education authorities at the state level or was a provision of the local government. The administrations after 1906 continued to maintain this committee; the “Public Instruction Committee” (Comité de Instrucción Pública) was first mentioned in 1906 archives, but it may have existed prior to this time.

State and regional educational authorities assigned teachers to the schools; teacher scarcity is evidenced by the frequent opening and closure of schools that had no teachers to serve their students. Whether these closures were due to the municipal government’s inability to provide salaries or for other reasons is unclear from the minutes. For example, in 1906, the municipal government alerted the State Inspector of Public Instruction that the two schools in San Jose del Matorral were closed due to lack of principals.\(^{31}\) By May of that same year, one of the schools reopened with a new principal.\(^{32}\)

The Revolution served to alter education in the rural areas. No records were available from Villa Juarez school archives between 1907 and 1921, though the municipal government meeting minutes from this time mention the boys’ school occasionally. The turmoil of the Revolution caused many school closings throughout Mexico, and it is unclear whether both the boys’ and girls’ schools in Villa Juarez

\(^{30}\) Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 8 de enero de 1906. Weekly Monday meetings were voted as the days for ordinary municipal government meetings by the municipal president and the representatives.

\(^{31}\) Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 16 de febrero de 1906.

\(^{32}\) Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 19 de abril de 1906.
continued to operate. When the conflicts from the Revolution died down in the 1920s, national attention was brought to rural education, since the majority of people lived in rural areas where illiteracy rates were high. The Revolution generated demands for land and schools by the populace and the federal government launched initiatives emphasizing education and improved quality of life, particularly for the peasants. Jose Vasconcelos, secretary of the SEP (Secretaría de Educación Pública, the Ministry of Education), presented education for peasants as “inseparably linked to economic betterment,” to appeal to the vast majority of rural people who lived at a subsistence level. “The educational ideals of those responsible for the new Mexican era thus included practical economic benefits as well as mental stimulation for peasants.”

However, as was seen in Villa Juarez, rural families did not yet embrace education as essential. Similarly, Alicia Civera asserts that during the first half of the twentieth century, rural communities across Mexico, especially those whose schools were first established during the Revolution, were slow to take “ownership” of their schools. While schools in Villa Juarez were established prior to the Revolution, student attendance was still low in the 1920s. A key factor may have been parents who valued schooling less than the work children provided in the fields. Indeed, the work of the children may have been essential to the family’s survival. In addition, as Civera suggests, parents may have objected to the materials their children encountered in school or they were unable or

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unwilling to help maintain the school and keep it open.\textsuperscript{34} After the Revolution, the shortage of teachers continued, contributing to temporary school closures that disrupted students’ regular attendance. Finally, teachers were often considered “outsiders” in rural areas and parents distrusted instructors placed in their children’s gender-divided schools who were not the same gender as their students. Male teachers in the girls’ schools were suspect and female teachers were thought to be unlikely to control male students.\textsuperscript{35}

Due to the consistent financial problems of the municipality, public officials in Villa Juarez steadily explored ideas about how to subsidize the school, which was in dire need of furniture, supplies, teachers, and additional space. Until the 1950s, the school was located in the same building as the municipal government and facilities were shared for town hall meetings, as mentioned above. The municipal government initially subsidized its own schools in order to satisfy the provisions of the law. No indication of state or federal funding for the schools appears in minutes of municipal government meetings or in school records, although federal funding was provided for salaries for those teachers who were certified to teach as federal teachers. Although the 3rd Article of the constitution guaranteed that education was free and secular, the cost of maintaining the schools was so egregious that in January 1921 the municipal government agreed that parents of children attending the Boys’ School would be responsible for a fee:


\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.
being that the Boys’ School is an urgent necessity, fundamental base for the progress and enlightenment of the town, and which requires heavy costs for repairs, which at the moment [the local government] cannot cover the total costs on its own, it suggests the following plan: that heads of household pay a fee of 1 or 1.50, at the discretion of the municipal treasurer; each taxpayer should be considered in an equitable way, depending on their circumstances. After discussing [the measure], it was approved unanimously.  

By 1924, minutes of the municipal council meetings indicated that schools encountered several persistent and important challenges. These included finding steady principals, the continual shortage of teachers, ongoing financial difficulties faced by the municipal government to pay the principal and municipal teachers, and student absences, which was attributed to low parental commitment to sending their children to school.

Given the teacher shortages, the municipal government recruited municipal teachers who were not credentialed by the teacher training schools. These teachers had completed their basic education and were contracted to teach and be paid by the municipal government.

The boys’ and girls’ schools in Villa Juarez merged into one institution that was then closed, sometime between 1926 and 1930. The lack of teaching personnel likely influenced the closure. By January of 1930, however, representatives at Villa Juarez

36 Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 10 de enero de 1921. Ordinary session of the town hall meeting. “[…] siendo de urgente necesidad la separación de la Escuela de Niños base fundamental para el progreso e ilustración del pueblo, y cuya compostura demanda fuertes gastos, los que de momento no puede solventar en su totalidad el herario Municipal, pone a su consideración el siguiente proyecto: que se les suponga una cuota de 1 y 1.50 a cada jefe de casa, quedando a criterio del C. Tesorero Municipal señalarles la que deba pagar, cada uno de los contribuyentes en forma equitativa según las circunstancias de cada uno de estos. Lo que después de discutirse por unanimidad fue aprobado unánimemente [sic].”

37 No municipal or school archives were found for the five year lapse. In December 1925, the municipal government meetings still made reference to the Escuela Rural Federal de Niñas (Girls’ Rural Federal School) and needed to determine how to fill the vacancy of principal for the boys’ school.
municipal meetings discussed the need to re-open the schools. In February of the same year, the Escuela Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez school appears in the minutes of municipal government meetings.

Throughout the 1930s, the name of the school was changed. While the school was referred to as the Escuela Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez in official documents from 1930, by 1933, the school appears as the Escuela Primaria Federal Semiurbana “Ilhuicamina,” a name chosen to honor the Aztec emperor, Moctezuma I. By 1937, the current name, Heroínas Mexicanas, appears in school and municipal documentation. This school was the only government-financed school in Villa Juárez at the time. It was categorized by the educational Inspection office as semi-urban, perhaps because the town’s population was not large enough to be considered urban.

Difficulties sustaining attendance and finding and retaining principals continued to be critical issues for the public school throughout the 1930s and 1940s. In addition, the school was also limited to the financial support that the municipal government could provide for teachers, supplies, and structural repairs to the school building, which was in poor condition. In a letter to the town president, Sabino Castillo, the Principal Francisca

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38 Presidencia Municipal, Villa de Carbonera, S.L.P, Sesión ordinaria, 1 de enero de 1930.

39 Heroínas Mexicanas School archive: “Forma para la rendición de datos de fin de curso de las escuelas primarias establecidas en la Republica Mexicana.” 2 de enero al 30 de noviembre de 1940. The official date of the federal school’s establishment in Villa Juárez later appeared in this document as August 1, 1930.

40 Heroínas Mexicanas School archive: “Informe de los trabajos desarrollados en la Escuela Primaria Federal Semi-Urbana “Ilhuicamina” de esta Villa, correspondiente al mes de agosto del corriente año. Villa Juárez, SLP. 31 de agosto de 1933. Director, M. Franco. This document presents the first time and only time that this particular name of the school appears.
C. Camberos requested attention to much needed structural improvements in the school building, since the Education Committee had failed to convince parents to collaborate with the school. She wrote:

[…] since they [parents] believe that the government is the only one that has an obligation to provide a building, furniture, supplies, etc., and you know that, in places where a federal school is established, the federation [federal government] pays only for personnel and the community gets to defray the remaining costs, with the support of the municipal authority, which should allot 20 percent [of its budget] for public instruction […] 41

Cerritos, Villa Juarez’ neighbor city 12 kilometers to the north, oversaw education in other municipalities in the region, also known as a zone. Inspection of schools was centralized in Cerritos and correspondence from the Inspector of the Zone (Inspector de la Zona) in April 1939 outlined the distribution of teachers to the federal school in Villa Juarez, which served mostly the town of Villa Juarez. By this time, the census taken by the principals in the town identified the large pool of school-age children. The Inspector specifically assigned teachers to each grade, divided the school day into morning and evening shifts due to the high number of students, and attached a schedule and details about how fourth and fifth grades should be taught. Student attendance records from July to October of 1939 (see Table 2 below) demonstrate fluctuations. 42

41 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: Letter from principal, Francisca C. Camberos to the municipal president, Sabino Castillo, febrero 6, 1937. “[…] pues creen que el Gobierno es el único que tiene obligación de darles edificio, muebles, útiles, etc., y Usted sabe que, en los lugares donde se instala una escuela federal, la Federación paga solamente al personal que lo atiende y a la comunidad le toca sufragar los demás gastos, ayudada por la Autoridad Municipal, que debe disponer 20% para Instrucción Pública…”.

42 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: August 1, 1939; October 1, 1939.
students; the day shift both males and females. Interestingly, the concentration of students in both day and evening shifts (over 70 percent of attendance) was in the first grade. Other than one fifth-grader, no students appeared in fifth and sixth grades from July to October of 1939.

Table 2. Villa Juarez Heroínas Mexicanas Primary School Student Attendance at End of the Month, Morning and Evening Shifts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of record</th>
<th>Morning</th>
<th>Evening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07/01/1939</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/01/1939</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/01/1939</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/01/1939</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**History of Villa Juarez Schools after 1940**

Between 1937 and 1941, the Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP, Public Education Ministry) urged the principal of Heroínas Mexicanas in nine separate communications to increase the average school attendance. However, the principals that served during this time period and teachers of the public school encountered difficulty in gaining the confidence of the community, in the town of Villa Juarez. In a 1941 letter to the local Inspector of the schools, Samuel Ordaz Aguilar, the principal of Heroínas Mexicanas, María De Jesús Chávez, asked for additional teachers since she had three teachers overseeing several grades in each room and enrollment had recently increased to 185 students. Chavez attributed the increased enrollment to a change in the perspective of

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43 *Heroínas Mexicanas* School Archive: July 1, 1939; August 1, 1939; September 1, 1939; October 1, 1939.
parents about the school. Chavez claimed that the community no longer felt hostility toward the school and that it now enjoyed the confidence of the parents.\textsuperscript{44} Correspondence indicates that the principal often urged the local government to advise parents to send their children to school.\textsuperscript{45} The transition from reluctance to acceptance of schooling is noted in Lassonde’s research of Italian immigrant families, that begin sending their children to school in the United States despite an initial trend of skepticism in the usefulness of education. The reversal of this tendency happened over a span of several decades, from 1910-1940.\textsuperscript{46} Similarly, in the case of Villa Juarez, acceptance of the school and sending children to become educated probably happened over a transition period.

Beyond its primary function as an educational institution, \textit{Heroínas Mexicanas} served a central social function in Villa Juarez. Federal and local governments frequently delegated important projects, such as the collection of the census, the creation of an environmental scan of the area, vaccination of students, hygiene campaigns, and the planning of civic events, such as the celebrations of national holidays, to the principal and school faculty.\textsuperscript{47} The \textit{Heroínas Mexicanas} School therefore communicated frequently

\textsuperscript{44} \textit{Heroínas Mexicanas} School Archive: 1941? Complete date unavailable.

\textsuperscript{45} \textit{Heroínas Mexicanas} School Archive: Letter from principal, Maria de Jesus Chavez to president of parents’ committee, Praxedis Silva, January 13, 1941.


with the local inspection office located in Cerritos. Mandatory attendance records, reports on the curriculum about government holidays, and reports on activities organized by the principal were requested by the local inspection office. Civic activities celebrated national heroes and national holidays that were publicly performed for the community. For example, the student philharmonic orchestra was organized through the school and played at special events and holiday celebrations throughout the municipality, becoming an important means of cultural engagement among the populace. Thus, among the many roles the school played, it served to convey national culture and civic pride to the surrounding community.

Some teachers, like Aurelio Esquevel, averred that “the school should provide the peasant with the techniques and knowledge that the peasant needs for his work, and not more [sic]… the peasant child must be educated in his environment and acquire or discover knowledge useful to his life as a peasant.” Thus, the education of the peasant, or campesino, was limited to what pedagogues believed was appropriate to their rural lifestyle, but national identity and civics were central to the purpose of the school.

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Abolishing Illiteracy

In 1945, the principal of Heroínas Mexicanas received a notice from the municipal government regarding the “Emergency Law establishing the literacy campaign of our country”.

The federal government mandated that school principals carry out a census of the community, documenting the number of illiterate school-age and adult individuals. At the same time, principals were also instructed to maintain two class shifts (morning and afternoon) to serve both school children and to establish literacy courses in the evenings for adults. In addition, principals were directed to develop social activities to fulfill other community needs.

As part of the literacy campaign, the Ministry of Education in 1945 (Dirección General de Educación Federal) mandated that all federal public schools set up “Centros Alfabetizantes” (Literacy Centers) to replace earlier, unsuccessful night courses (Cursos Nocturnos para Adultos), and that each teacher would be responsible for 50 illiterate adults.

Records from 1945 indicate that the

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50 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: “Ley de Emergencia que establece la campaña alfabetizadora de nuestro país,” febrero 17, 1945.

51 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: Letter from the Inspector of the Zone, Jose B. Gonzalez to the principals of schools under his jurisdiction, January 28, 1937; Letter from Inspector of the Zone, Magdaleno Vazquez L., to principal, March 18, 1937; “Instrucciones generales,” San Luis Potosi, SLP, Februray 1, 1944; Letter from General Director of Federal Education, Hilarion Rubalcaba regarding literacy centers in place of night courses for adults, March 14, 1945.

52 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: 02/01/1944. “Instrucciones generales a los C.C. Directores y Auxiliares de las escuelas dependientes de esta dirección; de la Dirección de Educación Federal en San Luis Potosi.” 1ro de febrero de 1944. Director de Educación Federal, Prof. Hilarion Rubalcaba.

In 1947, under the presidency of Miguel Aleman Valdes (1946-1952), another literacy campaign was initiated. The vigorous promotion of literacy across the country was closely tied to the progress of the nation and to the prospect of improved quality of life of the town. In addition, literacy was identified as a “call to patriotism for all citizens.”

A document sent to the local government on behalf of the federal campaign stated that the masses of the literate would live in a better world than the current, post-war one, and that the country’s place alongside other developed nations was in the hands of the literate. The call to tackle the enormous illiteracy problem in the nation targeted rural and indigenous populations, and local governments were encouraged to promote the campaign enthusiastically. They were to organize propaganda speeches to recruit literate individuals who had used the campaign’s services to learn to read and write in “this Noble Crusade against ignorance.” In addition, local governments were obliged to

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provide housing to visiting teachers working on the campaign’s behalf who were sent twice weekly to peasant communities where no schools existed. Further, they were to distribute propaganda and develop events to promote the campaign, as well as to create a local committee to collect financial gratuities for the instructors. The organizers of the campaign proposed the formation of youth brigades (*Brigadas Infantiles de Alfabetización*), which were promoted in student lessons on civic education. Night courses were to continue in order to “reach the cultural emancipation of our country in the shortest time.”

The literacy campaigns continued into the 1950s. In his presidential address in 1953, with illiteracy still unabated, Mexican President, Adolfo Ruiz Cortines remarked that though the campaign had lost ground it was still a national goal, given the country’s illiteracy rate at 42 percent.

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57 *Heroínas Mexicanas* School Archive: 01/31/1947. Circular No. 003, “We recognize beforehand that it is an arduous task and full of specific problems, inherent to each region; but we are convinced that each and every one of the human elements that participate in this Great Work of National Salvation, which is the third phase…”

58 Dirección de Servicios de Investigación y Análisis, “Informes Presidenciales, Adolfo Ruiz Cortines. 5-6. http://www.diputados.gob.mx/cedia/sia/re/RE-ISS-09-06-11.pdf, (accessed 08/01/2010). “The Literacy Campaign, begun in 1944 with a deep civic-mindedness, has waned lately, in spite of 10,710 centers that are functioning with an approximate assistance of 326,412 students. It is essential that the community give a new and vigorous impulse—with a personal effort and economic support- to this great task, a national goal- because we still have 42% illiterates.”
Local and State Dynamics

Requests by the Principal of Heroínas Mexicanas, Gil Lopez Villanueva, and teachers in Villa Juarez for support from the educational authorities at the state level, the Dirección de Educación Federal, often did not bring about the requested help in a timely manner. The increase in the provision of primary education and the literacy initiatives generated demands for more teaching personnel and for teachers who were better prepared to address the needs of rural and indigenous communities. Teacher shortages were still dire; “Principal Lopez Villanueva’s requests for more teachers received negative responses from the Inspector of education on many occasions. Because teaching personnel could not be increased and classrooms were scarce, the Inspector suggested that several groups be taught in the same room, with one group of students attending in the morning and another in the afternoon. To the principal, this was an unwelcome response since he desperately needed the support. Nevertheless, Principal Lopez

59 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: 02/17/1947, Inspección de Educación Federal, IX Zona Escolar, Cerritos, SLP, 17 de febrero de 1947, “Se le dan instrucciones sobre matrícula de alumnos,” a C. Prof. Rodolfo Díaz de León, Director de la Escuela Federal, Villa Juárez, SLP, a Inspector de la Zona, Prof. José B. González; School archive, 02/14/1949, Oficio No. 11, “Licencia de Auxiliares de este plantel a mi cargo,” Villa Juárez, SLP, 14 de febrero de 1949, a Director de Educación Federal en SLP, Prof. Godofredo Guzmán Peláez, de Director, Prof. Gil López Villanueva; School archive, 03/03/1949, Oficio No. 22 “Campaña Alfabetizante,” Villa Juárez, SLP, 3 de marzo de 1949 a Director de Educación Federal, Prof. Godofredo Guzmán Peláez, a Director, Prof. Gil López Villanueva; School archive, 03/11/1949, Circular No. 1416, “Relativo a plaza de maestros Alfabetizantes que solicita para esta escuela, SLP, 11 de marzo de 1949, a Director de la Escuela Semiurbana de Villa Juárez, SLP, Prof. Gil López Villanueva de Director Federal de Educación, Prof. Godofredo Guzmán Peláez; School archive, 04/03/1949, Inspección Federal de Educación, Cerritos, SLP, “IX Zona Escolar, Distribución del Personal Docente en la Escuela Federal de Villa Juárez, SLP durante el presente año lectivo,” Inspector de la Zona, Prof. José B. González, 3 de abril de 1949. One example involved Principal Lopez Villanueva who asked the Director of Federal Educación (Director de Educación Federal), Godofredo Guzmán Peláez, for two teachers to replace those who had requested a leave of absence and had left a total of 160 students without instruction. He asserted that it was critical for the school to receive this support “en estos momentos en que estoy organizando y tratando de levantar esta escuela la que desde años anteriores por muchas causas iba
Villanueva continued to insist on the urgency of the situation at his school, advocating for a proper education for the students. He claimed that parents opposed the idea of a school schedule with two shifts of students, and argued that this shorter schedule would contribute to more students failing.\textsuperscript{60} This was something he could not afford, given that failure rates were already quite high.\textsuperscript{61}

At the same time, the school staff sought assistance from the federal education department, as it struggled to gain the trust of the town. The lack of teachers, their erratic attendance and replacement may have led to some sense of distrust in the system and its personnel and to friction between parents and the school. In a letter to the Director of Federal Education, Guzman Pelaez, Principal Lopez Villanueva asked for direction in disciplining parents and their children. He claimed there was no cooperation from the

\textit{descendiendo.} ("during this time in which I am organizing this school and trying to uplift it, a school which for many years due to many reasons, had been faltering."). This request led to continued correspondence with similar requests in attempt to get the necessary teaching personnel. In 1949, Principal Lopez Villanueva wrote again to Godofredo Guzmán Peláez urgently requesting that funds destined towards the Literacy Campaign be used instead to pay for three teachers to teach the youth, since the school-age population had risen to 1,000 children and the federal public school was only capable of accepting 240. The director responded that he could not accommodate him, since all teachers for the campaign had been assigned and that one would be sent as soon as was available. This scenario repeated itself in April, when State Inspector, Jose B. Gonzalez, suggested the redistribution of four teachers and the principal to accommodate morning and afternoon shifts of students in order to be able to service all students.

\textsuperscript{60} Lopez Villanueva also solicited help in either disciplining or firing an irresponsible teacher who lacked a work ethic.

\textsuperscript{61} \textit{Heroínas Mexicanas} School Archive: 05/25/1949, “Ayudantía,” Villa Juárez, SLP a 25 de mayo de 1949, a Inspector de 9a Zona Escolar Federal, Prof. José B. González; School archives: 06/08/1949, Oficio No. 123, “Referente a mi Oficio No. 99 fechado el 19 de Julio de año en curso,” Villa Juárez, SLP a 6 de agosto de 1949, a Director de Educación Federal, Godofredo Guzmán Peláez de Director, Prof. Gil López Villanueva. In May of that year, Principal Lopez Villanueva addressed the State Inspector, Jose B. Gonzalez, alleging that 60 students remained without a teacher since February of that year. He demanded that the teacher or teacher’s aide be replaced or that he be authorized to dismiss the 60 students. To add to Principal Lopez Villanueva’s frustration, the Inspector assumed no responsibility for the school’s situation in Villa Juarez and blamed it on the principal for matriculating more students than the teachers could handle.
parents, who claimed it was the government’s responsibility to build their schools and meet their needs. Lopez Villanueva asserted to Guzman Pelaez that what was needed were teachers who could uplift the morale of the parents, given the obstinate reaction of the townspeople.

As more parents sent their children to school and the student population continued to grow. Lopez Villanueva contended that the effect of so few teachers servicing so many students would be damaging to the children and to the school’s reputation:

[…] We cannot attend even half of the students because of lack of personnel, which is diminishing […]. [Some] classrooms have been fixed [and], as is evident, parents have responded to duties that years ago they had not […] It is antipedagogical that two teachers attend 251 students from 1st to 6th grade.

Teachers often taught several grades at one time, with student groups with wide ranges of age and skill levels in one room. Different grades were taught concurrently in one classroom. In addition, classes were sometimes held in the homes of those who

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63 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: 05/10/1949, Oficio No. 70, “Asunto: el que se indica,” Villa Juárez, SLP a 10 de mayo de 1949, a Director de Educación Federal, Prof. Godofredo Guzmán Peláez, de Director, Prof. Gil López Villanueva.

64 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: 08/15/1949, Oficio No. 129, “Asunto: Ayudantía,” Villa Juárez, SLP a 15 de agosto de 1949, a Prof. José B. González, de Director Gil López Villanueva; School Archive: 08/18/1949, Oficio No. 129, “Asunto: Auxiliares que han sido restados a esta escuela a mi cargo,” Villa Juárez, SLP, a Director de Educación Federal, Prof. Godofredo Guzmán Peláez, de Director, Gil López Villanueva. “[…] No se pueden atender ni la mitad de [los niños] por carencia de personal que va disminuyendo […]. [Algunos] salones se han arreglado [y], como se ve los padres de familia han respondido a deberes que años atrás estuvo en abandono […] pero “es antipedagógico que dos maestros atendamos a 251 niños abarcando desde el 1ro hasta el 6to grado”.


volunteered a space or in different buildings throughout the town. From the time of the founding of the *Heroínas Mexicanas* school in 1930, the need for plant maintenance and more classrooms was ongoing. By the late 1940s, the “*salon ejidatario*” (a community hall) was lent to the school to conduct classes, in addition to the school building itself. Nevertheless, the principal urged the Inspector of the school zone to consider all the children who were still without schooling. He contended that interests of parents in their children receiving an education had grown and the continuous shortage of teachers exacerbated the demand for education.⁶⁵

**Home-based Private Schools**

Throughout the 1940s, several private, home-based schools emerged. Although no documentation is available to trace the reasons for the founding of these schools, oral testimonies indicate that the need for teachers and the demands of parents and students led to their development and growth. The 1949 census showed the number of school-aged children, ages 6-14, was 1,000 and the school could only service 240.⁶⁶ Thus, the private, home-based schools appear to have emerged to meet the demands of basic literacy for children the school could not serve. Perhaps another factor in the sprouting of these schools was the federal government’s campaign against illiteracy in 1944.

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⁶⁶ *Heroínas Mexicanas* School Archive: 03/03/1949, Oficio No. 22, “Asunto: Campaña Alfabetizante,” Villa Juárez, SLP a 3 de marzo de 1949 a Director de Educación Federal, Prof. Godofredo Guzmán Peláez, de Director Gil López Villanueva.
The private, home-based schools, also referred to as *escuelas particulares* (private schools), were housed in the “teachers” homes, where they taught children the three R’s, i.e., the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. These teachers were usually women who had knowledge of the three R’s and who may have completed their basic education. They would usually gather children of all ages in one room and guide them through their lessons using ‘*la cartilla*’, a phonics-based reading and writing system. The women who set up the *escuelas particulares* in their homes had few resources and students were required to share books, bring their own chairs, slates, and chalk for writing.

In the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, approximately eight different private schools existed in Villa Juarez although not concurrently.67 One school, Evangelina Maldonado’s, taught English and appears to have been the only school of its kind in the early 1960s. In an interview with a former teacher and principal of *Heroínas Mexicanas*, he posited that this school’s focus on English was due to the growing migration to the United States: “perhaps that is why the idea to learn English [emerged]; they (those in the United States) would tell the family here: send him/her to study English, because I see that those who know English have more opportunities”.68 Thus, the private school was

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67 INT28, interview with author, May 19, 2006. These classes were directed by several women: Vidal Lorta, Natividad Lorta, Doña Petra, Rosa Mojica, Ignacia Martínez, Gregoria Moreno, Doña Catalina, and Evangelina Maldonado. Possibly more schools may have existed but were not documented from the interviews and anecdotal evidence.

68 INT28, interview. “*tal vez por eso empezó el sentimiento de aprender inglés [...]*: allá le decían a la familia acá, mándemelo a estudiar inglés, porque yo veo que el que sabe inglés tiene más posibilidades.” Although no exact dates exist for the Maldonado school, Salamanca asserts that it still existed when he retired from teaching in Villa Juarez in 1962.
influenced by globalization, as it capitalized on the growing demand of students to learn English.

These home-based schools were also a form of business and the teachers charged a small monthly fee to their students. Although the public school in Villa Juarez was free, some teachers in interviews for the present study speculated that parents opted to send their children to these private schools for a number of reasons: (1) parents were interested in having their children learn the basics of reading and writing from people they knew and trusted; (2) the public school was not entirely free of charge, given that parents were still responsible for some contributions to support the teachers, buy supplies, or assist in paying for school maintenance; (3) the home-based school was taught by a person from the community, as opposed to an outside teacher funded by the federal government with whom the parents were unfamiliar; (4) some parents distrusted the federal government’s motive in providing “free” education, and they believed their children would be obligated to join the nation’s armies in return for that education;\textsuperscript{69} (5) rivalries between students of different neighborhoods in the town led to parents sending their children to the local home-based school rather than public school.\textsuperscript{70}

Biases against the public school were apparent in some interviewee testimonies. A student compared his experience in the small, private schools of women such as Catalina and Rosa Mojica to that of the \textit{Heroínas Mexicanas} federal primary school. This

\textsuperscript{69} INT28, interview.

\textsuperscript{70} INT15, interview.
student’s parents, like other parents, had believed it arguably provided a more
personalized and better quality education.

In the beginning they sent us Catalina’s private school; more than anything it was so that she could watch over us. We were too young, at the time, to enter school at six years of age; that was a novelty. Today, kindergarten is completely different. In those days, it didn’t exist. […] Apparently, in the federal primary school performance was poor. For us to receive a better education, my parents sent us with Rosita Mojica. […] There we interacted with people that never attended federal school. They were educated [by Rosita Mojica] and it was the only education they received. […] It is quite different because the attention that Rosita Mojica or Catalina provided was personalized. And that personalized attention is very different from what was provided, at that time, in the federal primary school that oversaw an average of 50 children per group. So it was impossible for the teacher to teach so many students. […] It was worrisome [and difficult] for teachers to adequately attend to 50 children, five of which even came completely barefoot.71

Nevertheless, the home-based schools were not necessarily in competition with
the federal public school, Heroínas Mexicanas. Many transferred to the public school to
complete their basic education certificates as the private schools were not authorized to
award graduation from 6th grade. Further, the public school principal invited the
participation of the private schools in national holiday celebration parades, and

71 Ibid. “Nos mandaban en principio [a la escuela privada de] Catalina; fue más que nada para que
nos cuidaran. Porque estábamos muy pequeños, para esa época, entrar a la escuela a los seis años, pues era
una novedad. Ahora en la actualidad el Kínder, el Jardín de Niños, pues ya es otro mundo. En esa época no
había. […] Aparentemente, en la primaria federal no se obtenían buen resultados. Entonces para que nos
prepararan mejor [mis padres] nos mandaron con Rosita Mojica. […] Allí convivimos con personas que
inclusive no estuvieron nunca en la escuela primaria Federal. Allí se educaron y fue la única instrucción
que tuvieron a través de Rosita. […] Es muy diferente porque allí la atención de Rosita Mojica, o [la
maestra] Catalina, era una atención personalizada. Y esa atención personalizada es muy diferente a lo que,
para esa época, era la primaria federal, debido a que la primaria Federal se atendía un promedio de 50 niños
por grupo. Entonces era imposible para la maestra o el maestro atender a tantos alumnos. […] Era
preocupante para los maestros atender adecuadamente a 50 niños, porque de 50 había 5 que iban
completamente hasta descalzos.” (Catalina’s private school seemed to be a basic day care and literacy
center.)
maintained communication with some of them. Education in the escuelas particulares in the very least ensured that children were literate, even for those who did not complete their basic education. According to one former teacher who taught at Heroínas Mexicanas during the 1950s, many parents had not yet accepted the need for schooling and education. The growing population of school-age children increased school attendance, although some parents’ resistance to schooling continued. He explained that education in this period was thought of as a novelty and not given the importance it has today. In addition, a report by the principal of Heroínas Mexicanas in 1951 pointed to unsatisfactory performance of the school children in reading and writing which was attributed to constant absences related to the critical agricultural situation. The students were required by law to complete their primary education, but few continued on in their studies.

There were no students that dedicated themselves to continue studying, because there were no schools... I feel that at the time, the idea [of education], the financial situation of the parents was not enough, the desire to provide for their children was not very strong in terms of education, but they took them to the fields, to perform the work in the fields; that was what they were born to do. The [municipal] president of Cerritos claimed that: “you were born for this, to work in the fields.” So, the parents had already psychologically bought into the fact that children had to [only] finish primary school because it was mandatory.

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72 INT28, interview.

73 *Heroínas Mexicanas* School Archive: 1951, School report, “Informe General de labores que rinde la dirección de la escuela federal “Heroínas Mexicanas” de este lugar desarrolladas durante el año escolar de 1951.”

74 INT28, interview. “No había estudiantes que se dedicaran mas a estudiar, porque no había escuelas, no había... Yo siento q en ese tiempo pus la idea, la situación económica de los padres no era muy grande, el deseo de darles a los niños no era muy fuerte en cuanto a estudiar, sino que se los llevaban...
Resistance to Schooling

From the time of its inception, *Heroínas Mexicanas*’ administrators encountered resistance from some parents as they tried to establish the school as a centrally important part of the town. Administrators strove not only to provide an education for Villa Juarez’s students, but to convince the town of the importance of schooling. Resistance did not come from parents alone, however. The school also encountered a reluctance to cooperate from the Church. Teofilo Nava Vargas, who was principal of *Heroínas Mexicanas* in 1959, sent an official letter to the influential church pastor, Juan Antonio Benitez, requesting the following:

I would greatly appreciate that in the future you kindly not interrupt the work of the school, such as you have been doing by way of the pulpit. Take into account that the education of a town is a priority and that no man on earth has the right whatsoever to prevent it.\(^75\)

Mario Salamanca Marquez, principal in 1961, faced similar church interference; he addressed it with a letter to the priest demanding the following:

[…] certain people have informed me that in the last few days you have made use of your profession to undermine the work of the teachers, as well as to completely discredit the parents of the schoolchildren: This school administration in my charge kindly requests that you not meddle in

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\(^75\) *Heroínas Mexicanas* School Archive: 05/07/1959, Escuela Primaria Federal “Heroínas Mexicanas,” Educación. Correspondencia 016/1959, “Con relación a la organización escolar,” Villa Juárez, SLP a 7 de mayo de 1959 a Sr. Cura, Juan Antonio Benitez de Director, Prof. Teófilo Nava Vargas. “He de agradecer atentamente, que en sucesivo, tenga la bondad de no interrumpir los trabajos de la escuela, como lo ha venido haciendo por medio del pulpito. Tome Ud. en cuenta que la educación de un pueblo es lo primero y que ningún hombre sobre la tierra tiene derecho alguno en detenerla.”
the problems and activities of the school; as well as, to keep from disorienting people that sacrifice so much to send their children to school to receive the sacred Eucharistic bread of education”.76

It is unclear whether the church’s lack of support of the school and parents’ apprehension about sending their children to school are directly connected. Given the town’s closeness to the Catholic Church and its prominent presence, if the church had shown more support for education, the schools and teachers may have positively influenced parents’ and children’s initial reception to it.

The school asked for support from parents but could not enforce their participation, financial and otherwise in part because some parents believed that a “free” education should be completely free. Others simply did not have the means to pay the fees requested of them. For large families, lack of cooperation most often meant that they had difficulty affording the extra costs for all their children to attend the public school. However, the recurring concern of principals throughout the history of the school was less about the parents’ financial contributions than about their proactive participation in their children’s education. To the school administrators, this included sending them to school, supporting them in their academic success, and taking part in parent meetings. In his annual report submitted to the SEP, the principal of Heroínas Mexicanas in 1967 cited parents’ disinclination to help the school. He saw the exploitation of child labor as

76 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: Dir. Mario Salamanca Márquez to the priest of the church, May 8, 1961; “En virtud de que ciertas personas me han comunicado que usted en estos últimos días ha hecho uso de su profesión para menoscabar la labor de los maestros así como para descreditar por completo a los padres de familia: Esta Dirección a mi cargo le suplica de la manera más atenta se sirva no inmiscuirse en los problemas y actividades que desarrolla la escuela; así como también no desorientar a las personas que con tanto sacrificio mandan a sus niños a la escuela para que reciban el sagrado pan Eucarístico de la educación.”
the cause for truancy and absences of students and attributed the children’s multiple educational problems to their parents’ negligence.\textsuperscript{77} By the 1970s, the school administration suggested that school desertion was correlated with the abuse of child labor and, for the first time documented migration of families as a concern. Among the sources of diminishing attendance, he listed:

\[
[\ldots] \text{the exploitation of child labor and the migration of families that leave to other regions of the country or abroad, which results in absences and school desertion } [\ldots]; \text{ the apathy of the majority of parents with the problems that face the school.}\textsuperscript{78}
\]

The culture of migration was clearly a visible component of the life of the town and a factor in the town’s depopulation, and consequently, affected its educational system.

The need for financial support continued through the 1970s. School funding and salaries for municipal teachers challenged the limited resources of \textit{Heroínas Mexicanas} and the municipality in Villa Juarez, though the town tried to carry out the law and the mandates required by the Federal Department of Education. The level of insufficiency became dire, and both the school and the municipality sought new avenues to raise funds to support the school and the municipal teachers. Some support came from the sulfur mining company, \textit{Negociación Minera de Azufre, S.A.}, a major employer in Villa Juarez in the 1970s that donated the salary for at least one auxiliary teacher for \textit{Heroínas}

\begin{flushleft}

\textsuperscript{78} \textit{Heroínas Mexicanas} School Archive: “Plan de Trabajo, Heroínas Mexicanas, Año escolar 1971-1972,” Principal Rafael Martínez Almazan. “[\ldots] La explotación del trabajo infantil y la salida de familias que van a otras regiones del país o al extranjero, lo cual da por resultado la inasistencia y la deserción escolar; [\ldots] apatía de mayoría de padres de familia con problemas que afronta escuela.”
\end{flushleft}
Throughout these years, the school planned fundraising festivals and raffles, and continued to seek donations from the Negociación Minera de Azufre, and the plaster company, Yesera Mexicana, in addition to asking for school fees from parents. Home-town organizations, formed in the United States, became increasingly important because of their philanthropic focus and their interest in improving Villa Juarez. The school included these organizations of villajuarezes living in the United States as a possibility for support.

By 1976, the municipality of Villa Juarez had a total of 33 teachers, with 22 of them assigned to Heroínas Mexicanas. Several first grade groups were formed, limited to 54 students, and grades 2 through 6 were limited to 47 students per class. The school administration made concerted efforts to increase enrollment and attendance. In 1977, it registered 948 students, after proactively seeking out absentee students. Teachers visited the homes of these students to investigate the causes for their nonattendance and held

79 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: 09/30/1959. A receipt for 100 pesos addressed to Principal Teofilo Nava Vargas from the Negociación Minera de Azufre, S.A., for aid provided to auxiliary teacher at Heroínas Mexicanas, Ms. Almazan.


81 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive: 03/18/1976.

parents responsible for their children’s absences. In his report on school activities during the 1976-1977 school year, Principal Eugenio Quintero Chavira noted that the absence of students due to parents’ lack of responsibility was a critical obstacle to carrying out his plans for education. He asserted that parents put their personal interests before their duty to send their children to school and cited parents’ apathy in their planning meetings.

**Cultural Missions**

*Misiones culturales* (literally, cultural missions) were another aspect of the Villa Juarez educational landscape. The *mision cultural* was a national program, founded in October 1923 by Mexican President General Alvaro Obregon, to find and train teachers in rural areas as the demand for education grew after the Revolution of 1910. A Mission teacher needed to have knowledge of the rural community in which he or she would be working, know the language, and possess pedagogical skills to adequately train teachers to work in the rural schools.

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84 Ibid.


86 Many of the rural areas were indigenous communities where the native language predominated.
The rural school will not be able to fulfill its educational mission if teachers do not base their teaching on manual jobs, such as the cultivation of the land and the varied small industries and occupations derived from agriculture, if teachers do not make the most of children’s aptitudes, channeling them conveniently to secure habits of cooperation and good work ethic, and if teachers do not comprehend the real mission of the school in the field and villages, which is none other than to create an environment of greater comfort and greater progress for rural life.  

The *misiones culturales* were designed as “traveling” schools, that would remain in the rural community on a temporary basis, focusing on training teachers and instilling a mindset in the population, which the organizers (the SEP) believed promoted a “civilizing” influence. The Mission teachers would thus teach a strong work ethic and help the community explore trades and industrial arts that could better their situation and bring them closer to the rest of Mexican “civilization.” Alfonso Fabila described the cultural missions as schools without walls -- their classrooms were in the fields, shops, and homes, among those who most need them. Their purpose was not to create professionals or experts, but citizens who were able to improve their conditions and life in their homes and in their society. Jorge Tinajero Berrueta contends that the educators

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87 Lucas Ortiz Benítez. Conclusiones de la reunión de maestros federales. “Breve información sobre las Misiones Culturales Mexicanas,” CREFAL, 1952, quoted in Tinajero Berrueta, Misiones Culturales Mexicanas, 111. “La escuela rural no podrá llenar su misión educativa si los maestros no basan su enseñanza en los trabajos manuales, tales como el cultivo de la tierra y las variadas pequeñas industrias y ocupaciones que se derivan de la agricultura; si los maestros no aprovechan las aptitudes de los niños, encauzándolas convenientemente para procurar hábitos de cooperación y de trabajo, y si los maestros no llegan a entender cuál es la verdadera misión de la escuela de los campos y aldeas, que no es otra que la de conseguir para la vida rural un ambiente de mayor comodidad y de mayor progreso.”


of the *misiones culturales* acquired a social status as influential social educators, promoting rural development and providing tools for overcoming educational, economic, and social problems in the rural sector.\(^{90}\)

Thus, the Cultural Missions took a different approach to education, in an effort to engage the community -- particularly student youth and adults -- in learning. One cultural missionary in Villa Juarez taught apiculture (beekeeping) in such a way that it would complement their primary instruction and they would be better prepared to improve their quality of life. His lesson plans emphasized the need to “collaborate and serve our town more” and highlighted problem-solving techniques designed to meet the needs in the region and the interests of the students.\(^{91}\)

**Professional Development**

Professional development for teachers became more important as the nation underwent multiple reforms in education. Each incoming presidential administration over time had introduced changes to educational methods and goals. By 1976, the regional education office organized professional development for teachers on Saturdays, introducing the workings of the educational reform and concentrating on teaching and

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\(^{90}\) Tinajero Berrueta, “Misiones Culturales Mexicanas,” 123.

planning methods. In a professional development session in 1980, the training also focused on educators’ own understanding of and articulation about education itself and being a teacher. An orientation course for principals participating in a new program for first graders emphasized what education could accomplish:

The education that we hope to give the people should be aimed at improving quality of life of the Mexican people and at building the most free and just homeland that we all want. Education is indispensable to achieve the development of the country. Education is a priority for the current administration. […] The general objectives of the SEP are to: ensure basic education for all the population; link terminal education with the production system and social services necessary on a national scale; raise the quality of education; improve the cultural atmosphere of the country; and increase the efficiency of the system.

The move away from rote memorization to new methods of learning caused some consternation for teachers who had earlier training. A former teacher and principal of the Heroínas Mexicanas remembered the reforms:

We did not modify the Eleven-Year Plan […] officially. […] I can’t remember which president tried to introduce reforms, to imitate the French schools, French education, and that reform, “the natural method of structural analysis,” we never understood as teachers. But it was French, and it did not apply in Mexico, of course! Teachers never understood it. It

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93 Heroínas Mexicanas School Archive, 08/20/1980. Dirección Federal de Educación, Oficina Técnica, “Dirección General de Capacitación y Mejoramiento Profesional del Magisterio, San Luis Potosí,” Curso de orientación para directores técnicos de educación primaria, sobre el nuevo programa integrado del primer grado. “La educación que pretendemos dar al pueblo debe estar encaminada a mejorar la calidad de vida de los mexicanos y a construir la patria más libre y más justa que todos queremos. La educación es indispensable para lograr el desarrollo del país. La educación es tarea prioritaria para gobierno actual. En este marco, la SEP se ha fijado los siguientes objetivos de carácter general: Asegurar educación básica a toda la población; vincular la educación terminal con el sistema productivo de bienes y servicios social y nacionalmente necesarios; elevar la calidad de la educación; mejorar la atmósfera cultural del país; aumentar la eficiencia del sistema.”
was to teach reading; the teacher did not need to teach the letters, students only needed to recognize the phrase to read […]. And those teachers who did apply [that technique] could never teach his/her first graders to read. The entire year would go by and children did not learn to read. It was impossible to teach reading [with this method], or we simply did not know how to apply it. So I would tell the teacher: you can follow the old technique if you want; if you want to teach them to read follow the same technique you used before […]. So that reform, instead of benefitting us, was detrimental.  

**Beyond Primary Schools**

From the 1970s to the 1990s, educational options increased in Villa Juarez, with the formation of a private, and later public, secondary school, and the creation of four primary schools with morning and evening shifts. This growth in school facilities enabled Villa Juarez to meet the demand for education of school children. The timeline below (Table 3) indicates major events in education in Villa Juarez. In 1977, *Heroínas Mexicanas* divided into two primary schools: the *Heroínas Mexicanas, Turno Matutino* (Morning Shift) and *Heroínas Mexicanas, Turno Vespertino* (Afternoon Shift). Although students attended the same school building, each shift had a different principal and principal’s office, and retained its own records. In 1986, another two primary schools were founded: *Himno Nacional, Turno Matutino* and *Himno Nacional, Turno Vespertino.*

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94 INT31, interview. “[…] el programa del plan de 11 años, no lo modificábamos […] oficialmente. […] Un presidente, no recuerdo quien, empezó a agarrar reformas, a imitar las escuelas francesas, a la educación francesa, entonces esa reforma, que se llamaba “el método natural de análisis estructural”, nunca le entendimos los maestros. Pero esa era francesa, ¡y desde luego, no era aplicable a México, pues! […] Nunca le entendieron los maestros. Y era para enseñar a leer, no necesitaba [el maestro] enseñar las letras, nada más con ver una frase, aquí dice esto, el niño tenía qué saber que decía ahí. […] Y el maestro que aplicaba eso nunca podía enseñar a leer a sus [alumnos] en […] primer año de primaria. […] Se paso el año y los muchachos no aprendieron a leer. […] No se podía enseñar a leer. O no lo sabíamos aplicar […]. Entonces yo le decía al maestro, no Ud. siga con el método de antes si quiere; si quiere enseñarlos a leer sigale con eso. […] Entonces esa reforma, en vez de beneficiarnos nos perjudicaba.”
Table 3. Timeline of the Establishment of Schools in the Town of Villa Juarez

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>First time school appears with name of <em>Heroínas Mexicanas</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Construction of the <em>Heroínas Mexicanas</em> school building(^{95})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td><em>Secundaria</em> Juan Sarabia initiative is abandoned; the building is later used for the primary school <em>Heroínas Mexicanas</em>(^{96})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1980</td>
<td>A private secondary school, Benito Juarez, is created.(^{97})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Agricultural Cultural Mission instructor is sent to Villa Juarez.(^{98})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td><em>Heroínas Mexicanas</em> is divided into morning and afternoon shifts.(^{99})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Federal secondary school, <em>Secundaria Técnica No. 27</em>, (7-9(^{\text{th}}) grades) is formed after being solicited from Governor Carlos Jongitud Barrios.(^{100})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Private <em>preparatoria</em> is formed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986-1987</td>
<td>New schools emerge: <em>Himno Nacional</em> Primary school is formed with two shifts, morning and evening and <em>Heroínas Mexicanas</em> with two shifts runs concurrently.(^{101})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The demands for higher education led to the establishment of a private secondary school and *preparatoria* (high school) in the 1970s and 1980s. The 1980s also saw

\(^{95}\) *Heroínas Mexicanas* School Archive 05/23/1959

\(^{96}\) INT31, interview.

\(^{97}\) INT31, interview; INT15 interview.

\(^{98}\) *Heroínas Mexicanas* School Archive, 10/05/1971, Misión cultural rural, “Plan de Trabajo. Maestro de agricultura, y jefe de la misión.”

\(^{99}\) INT3, interview.

\(^{100}\) INT15, interview; INT28, interview.

\(^{101}\) Ibid.
political strife among teachers, principals, and teachers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that nepotism and corruption existed and struggles over the school leadership and over securing positions at the schools were rampant.\textsuperscript{102} Conflict between both principals at the Himno Nacional primary school led to parental involvement and the dismissal of one of the directors.\textsuperscript{103}

**Secundaria (Middle School)**

Before secondary education, or middle school, in Villa Juarez, students who wanted to pursue schooling beyond the 6th grade were required to travel to the neighboring city of Cerritos to attend that secundaria, which had opened its doors in 1958.\textsuperscript{104} This opportunity was available to those who had the financial means and could afford to travel on a daily basis. During the administration of municipal President Urbano Mata Zapata (1980-1982), parents and several teachers requested a secundaria (equivalent to middle school, grades 7\textsuperscript{th} to 9\textsuperscript{th}) in Villa Juarez from then governor Carlos Jongitud Barrios. Jongitud Barrios promised a federally-funded secondary school to Villa Juarez during his campaign speech for governor of the state of San Luis Potosi.\textsuperscript{105} Immediately after winning the governorship of the state in 1979, construction of the federal secondary school, Secundaria Técnica No. 27, began in 1980. The first generation

\textsuperscript{102} One source alleges an educational supervisor of the school zone facilitated the creation of the Himno Nacional schools to provide principal positions to some of his friends, thus creating four schools.

\textsuperscript{103} INT31, interview.

\textsuperscript{104} INT28, interview.

\textsuperscript{105} INT31, interview.
of middle school students began classes in several locations throughout the town until the new structure was completed in 1981.  

The year that the Secundaria 27 opened in 1980, the incoming freshman class was relatively large, consisting of four groups of about 50 students each. This initial class included several elementary school graduating classes from the Heroínas Mexicanas primary school. Each incoming class of each year that followed was a smaller group, and it became progressively more difficult to fill classes. Some generations later, it became difficult to gather a group of 20 students for an entering class. To stimulate enrollment, the principal and some teachers and students organized recruitment fairs in different communities within and outside the municipality of Villa Juarez to encourage young people and their families to enroll. However, it became increasingly difficult to recruit students once distance education, or telesecundaria, made its appearance in their communities, and families re-considered the increased expenses for their children to travel to the Secundaria No. 27 in Villa Juarez. Thus, many opted for the telesecundaria, though the quality of instruction was poor, given its nature.

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106 High school student research paper on history of the Escuela Secundaria Técnica, Número 27.

107 Telesecundaria is a system of distance education that employs a teacher facilitator to guide students (often as few as two or three) through televised lessons. It is usually available in rural areas where there are not enough teachers. In 1993, secondary school became obligatory for students on a national level. Because secondary schools did not exist in many rural areas, the telesecundaria was created to provide education to students via satellite and through recorded lessons watched on television. INT31, interview. One teacher oversees each grade and teaches all lessons, using didactical guides. According to one teacher interviewee, it is a program that was not well-developed, although those instructors teaching in telesecundaria were paid more than secundaria teachers since they were sent to rural communities.

108 INT31, interview.
In Villa Juarez, the first telesecundaria was initiated in 1981, and ran concurrently with the Secundaria 27. According to one source, it was counterproductive to have both of these educational vehicles, the secundaria and telesecundaria, in the same area since by this time schools were competing for the limited number of students. Opening the telesecundaria in Villa Juarez was convenient for a few teachers, since they preferred to work with the telesecundaria in the town to stay close to home rather than travel. The telesecundaria was jeopardizing attendance at the already existent Secundaria 27. However, the telesecundaria in Villa Juarez eventually closed.\textsuperscript{109} Distance learning became an option for using limited resources to reach students even in marginal areas, as the nation attempted to emerge into the global market with a competent workforce.

**Preparatoria (High School)**

In 1983, the high school, Preparatoria Juan Sarabia, opened its doors in Villa Juarez.\textsuperscript{110} This school was intended for those pursuing higher education at the university level. The preparatoria has traditionally been private; it was founded to provide continuing education to secundaria graduates who wanted to continue their studies but were forced to travel to Cerritos. Cerritos offered classes to prepare for university in the evening shift. Aside from the inconvenience and cost of travel for students, parents and teachers shared a concern for young female students who attended classes from 4 to 11 at night. This motivated the principal of one of the primary schools to solicit information on

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{110} The high school, also known as preparatoria, is equivalent to high school 10-12\textsuperscript{th} grades.
establishing a high school affiliated with the University of San Luis, which led to its subsequent establishment. The high school is challenged by a teacher shortage and, because it is private, it is funded almost entirely on student fees and financial support from the municipal government.

**Schools in Villa Juarez Today**

A total of seven educational institutions, public and private, currently exist in the town of Villa Juarez in 2005 (see Table 4 below). These include a Kindergarten (*Quetzalcoatl*), three elementary schools operating in two school buildings, a secondary school (*Escuela Secundaria Técnica No. 27*), a private high school (*Escuela Preparatoria Juan Sarabia*), and a hostel for children who live outside the town (*el albergue*). The municipality registered an 18 percent illiteracy rate among residents aged 15 and older (numbering 7128); 62 percent of the population 15 and over had not completed the primary education in 2000.

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111 INT31, interview.


113 Consejo Nacional de la Población, “San Luis Potosí: población total, indicadores socioeconómicos, índice y grado de marginación por localidad, 2000.”
Table 4. Villa Juarez Schools in 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools (2005)</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Quetzalcoatl Preschool</em></td>
<td>97</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Heroínas Mexicanas</em> (morning)</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Heroínas Mexicanas</em> (evening)</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Himno Nacional</em> (morning)</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior High School—<em>Escuela Secundaria Técnica #27</em></td>
<td>180</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School—<em>Escuela preparatoria Juan Sarabia</em></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>El Albergue</em> (hostel)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A study of the social, economic and geographic aspects of the municipality performed for the municipal administration in 2000 outlined the state of education and indicated that once students reach 15 years of age or complete *secundaria* they migrate to the United States or to other states in Mexico in search of a better life for themselves and for their families that remain. This environmental scan indicated the average level of education in Villa Juarez was 4.8 grades. This indicated that the culture of migration was also evident to the new political administration coming into office in 2000, and that they viewed it as a condition that perhaps required some attention.

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114 Azua Barron, “Plan Rector,” 41. The boarding school is similar to a shelter for students and provides some training to mostly children from other communities. Children also attend *Heroínas Mexicanas* evening shift.

115 Ibid.

Conclusion

The schools in Villa Juarez were challenged by financial and teacher personnel shortages as well as dramatic fluctuations in student attendance throughout their history. Efforts at national and state levels to improve rural education continue today. Influenced by political and social changes, the purpose of education underwent transformations at the national level.

While education was influenced by the national agenda, at the local levels teachers continued to teach basic education principles, though they struggled to find the resources and encountered the resistance by or inability of parents to send their children to school. Thus, at some historical moments, the purpose of education in the national agenda may have appeared incongruous to rural families. In the following chapter, the perspectives of Villa Juarez’ educators, students, and policy makers on the purpose of education will be examined.
CHAPTER 7

INTERVIEW RESULTS AND ANALYSIS:

CULTURE OF MIGRATION

La educación [podría] liberar a sus hijos [para] tener una vida diferente… [Education [could] liberate their children so they could have a different life…]
-INT28, June 2006

The present study investigated whether a culture of migration exists in Villa Juarez, and whether the purpose for and the role of education in the town of Villa Juarez were altered, as out-migration became prevalent over several generations. Through interviews with former and current teachers, former students, and government officials, this chapter presents current views on the meaning and purpose of education for students now, and in the future. The conceptual frameworks of globalization and the culture of migration theory were employed to analyze this original research, to provide insight into the changes that the town of Villa Juarez has undergone. The interviews suggest that the culture of migration and globalization have generated competition between migration and education in terms of students advancing economically. In communities, such as Villa Juarez, exhibiting these characteristics, the culture of migration has become a way of life, or a tradition of migration, as expressed by Richard Mines.¹ Education is affected directly in the culture of migration as students grow up aspiring to work and live in the United

¹ Mines, Developing a Community Tradition of Migration, Quoted in Kandel and Massey, “The Culture of Mexican Migration,” 982.
States, an influence which is transmitted over generations and across social networks. Thus, even while the nation promotes education and national and civic values through its system, Mexican education is undermined in this rural, agrarian setting where the benefits of migrating seem to supersede those of staying in school and achieving an education for a career in the country.

The following chapter examines interviews with former and current teachers, former students, and government officials about the purpose of education in the context of the demographic changes and globalizing influences in Villa Juarez. The perspectives of these groups of stakeholders, captured through interviews, are included throughout this chapter to illustrate their experiences in the educational system in Villa Juarez. The chapter is divided into stakeholder profiles and findings that relate to the culture of migration, i.e., the goals of education and changes caused by the culture of migration, and how these changes affected education in Villa Juarez.

**Interviewee Profiles**

**Former Teachers**

Of a total of 38 interviewees, nine (24 percent) were former teachers or school administrators in Villa Juarez at one point in their teaching careers. The group consisted of six teachers, two teacher/principals, and a teacher/primary school director/preparatoria (high school) director/secondary school teacher. One had served as a municipal teacher. Two educators had worked in the position of teachers and then as
principals at the *Heroínas Mexicanas* School and one held four different positions, two of these concurrently, during his career—as a municipal and federal primary school teacher; a principal of the *Himno Nacional* primary school, morning session; director of the private *preparatoria*; and as a teacher at the secondary school level.

Two former teachers were born in the Villa Juarez municipality, five were born in the neighboring city of Cerritos, and two teachers came from the state of Jalisco and the state of Tamaulipas, respectively. Only two former teachers resided in Villa Juarez at the time of the interviews, five lived in the neighboring town of Cerritos, and one resided in the capital city of San Luis Potosi. Many taught in rural communities outside of the municipality before working in Villa Juarez. The former teachers’ overall years of service ranged from 5 to 41 years, teaching in various parts of the state throughout their careers, from 1957 to 2002. Their experience teaching in the town ranged from less than 1 year to 37 years. The ages of the former teachers at the time of the interviews for the present study ranged from 49 to 83. The group consisted of seven males and two females.

**Current Teachers**

A total of eleven teachers (29 percent of all 38 interviewees) were teaching at the time of their interviews for the present study. Some of this group also held positions as school administrators. All of these respondents were interviewed in Villa Juarez and Cerritos. The group consisted of five teachers, five teacher/principals, and a supervisor of the school zone. All had worked in Villa Juarez schools for varying lengths of time in the primary, secondary, and high school levels. Two of the teachers participated in the same
interview and worked in the *albergue*, the children’s hostel. Five teachers from this group were born in the municipality of Villa Juarez, five were born in the state of San Luis Potosi in municipalities outside Villa Juarez, and one was from out of state. Six lived in Villa Juarez at the time of the interviews: three resided in Cerritos, and the other two resided in municipalities in the San Luis Potosi but outside Villa Juarez. Teachers’ years in service ranged from 16 to 37 years. All teachers had taught in other areas before teaching in the municipality of Villa Juarez; their years teaching in Villa Juarez ranged from 10 to 30. The average age of current teachers at the time of their interviews was 46 years old; ages ranged from 38 to 50. The group consisted of seven males and four females.

**Former Students**

Ten former students of Villa Juarez schools, 26 percent of the total participants, were interviewed for the present study. All had attended or graduated from the *Heroínas Mexicanas* primary school. Three of the interviewees had gone to *primaria, secundaria* and *preparatoria* in Villa Juarez. Six had attended *secundaria* or *preparatoria* outside of Villa Juarez since they were educated before these schools were available in the town. Former students attended Villa Juarez schools between the years of 1956 to 1995; they grew up in Villa Juarez and had varying professions and jobs. Two had completed their *preparatoria* in Villa Juarez; one was trained as a private accountant while the other practiced in apiculture. Both worked in the local government at the time of the interviews, although these positions were temporary (typically, positions serving in the
municipal government were held for three years, the term of each new administration, and changed with each incoming administration). Former students included other professions: veterinarian, nurse, architect, *secundaria* and *preparatoria* teacher, business owner/housewife, and retirees. Three of the student interviewees had lived and worked in the United States at one point in their lives. One former student had returned to the town from the United States and was working odd jobs until he could return. One of the interviewees worked in the capital, San Luis Potosi, and had returned to run for a government position in the town (interviewing occurred during campaign season). Former students ranged in ages from 26 to 63, with an average age of 42 years. The group was comprised of three women and seven men.

**Government Officials/Workers**

Eight of the interviewees (21 percent) were local government officials. These included five municipal town presidents, one in an interim position, and three other interviewees serving as councilman, general secretary, and secretary. One group interview was conducted with four members of the local government. All government officials were from the municipality of Villa Juarez and had attended schools in the municipality. The average age of this group was 44 years, ranging from 33 to 83 years of age. The group was composed of two women and six men.
Value and Goals of Education in Villa Juarez, Past and Present

An entrenched culture of migration as described by Kandel and Massey is apparent in Villa Juarez, not only from the very high migration indices, and the long history of migration in the town, but also from many of the interviews with stakeholders that demonstrate changes in how informants viewed the goals of education.

The purpose of education in Mexico has changed over time. Fernando Solana, et. al., have argued that education and culture are inextricably linked and influence each other reciprocally. Although this appears to be the reality in Villa Juarez, where the State government has responded to the local environment, adapting the educational system to provide training in agriculture thus stimulating the rural economy by creating jobs and options for future generations, this has not deterred migration. The establishment of an agricultural secundaria in the town can be viewed as an indication that the educational system intended to decentralize and adapt its curricula, mindful of the local economy and environment. However, the culture of migration that developed over time continues to compete with schools as a vehicle for social and economic mobility. This has left students with the possibilities of a future in the United States as their most promising aspiration for a good future.

The changing views of education of Villa Juarez informants were strongly influenced by migration. Over 60 percent of interviewees mentioned that education was

2 See Chapter 2 of this work for more on migration indices.

3 Solano, et. al., Historia de la Educación Pública en México, v.
affected by migration in several ways. Many parents sent their children to school both because it was mandatory and because the value of education rested primarily in gaining literacy skills to be functional in rural society. The culture of migration that developed in Villa Juarez over the years, however, added another layer of complexity to education that was meant to develop citizens to contribute to Mexican society. Thus, education’s role in this changing setting became more ambiguous.

Former Teachers

According to former teachers, children who attended school after the early 1960s, when many of the former teacher interviewees taught in Villa Juarez, went in order to prepare for higher education and have a career. They hoped to stay in the community and work as a farmer, apiculturalist (beekeeper), or in a local business; “to get ahead” so as not to migrate to the United States; or to get an education so as to later migrate to the United States.

Six former teachers reported that the initial reason parents sent their children to school was because it was mandatory and because they wanted them to be literate. However, parents who failed to comply with the law were rarely assessed the designated fines. The overcrowding of classrooms and the need for teachers kept this law from being applied. According to one teacher, sending the child to school was not because the child saw any value in it, but because the parents did. Parents wanted children to receive the

basics so they could continue into higher education and work towards a career. However, one former teacher did not see higher education in many students’ futures, given the influence of migration:

The goal now is getting to the U.S., that’s the problem. Before, there were people to go study a career at the University in San Luis [the capital]. Nowadays, there is hardly anyone.\(^5\)

Despite the influence of migration on students’ aspirations, all of the former teachers saw education as important because of its transformative power: it made human beings more critical. It made people more knowledgeable and allowed them to better themselves. They viewed education as a means to help students work towards their, or their parents’, goals of achieving a higher education and consequently a better life. Education was seen as fundamental in all aspects of life, social and economic, aiding farmers and workers who opted to remain in the town. It helped people “triumph in life” and contributed to community progress. In the 1980s, for instance, the curricula at Heroíñas Mexicanas primary school emphasized national identity and teacher training described education not only as playing an “indispensable role” in the country’s development, a task which contributed to the creation of a stronger nation, but also as a route to improving the Mexican people’s quality of life.\(^6\) Thus, these responses reflected

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\(^5\) INT31. “Ya la meta es Estados Unidos, ese es el problema. Antes si había quienes se venían a estudiar una carrera a San Luis, a la universidad. Ahora casi ya no hay.”

\(^6\) Heroíñas Mexicanas Archive: August 20, 1980. Dirección Federal de Educación, Dirección general de capacitación y mejoramiento profesional del magisterio. Curso de orientación para directores técnico de educación primaria, sobre nuevo programa integrado del 1er año.
the value of education as prescribed by national curricula, which since the inception of the SEP sought to promote national identity among citizens.

Former teachers varied in what they believed were the most important skills students should learn in school. Some believed in general skills that could be applied anywhere students decided to work, even in the United States.

All these skills and characteristics are transferrable in other settings beyond the rural, agrarian settings. Thus, what former teachers viewed as valuable skills learned in school suggests that they believed in an education that might prepare them to leave one day and successfully survive outside Villa Juarez. Whether this was a dominant intention or not, educators were aware that the skills they provided assisted students who would become part of the global workforce one day.

Current Teachers

Current teachers asserted there were several bases for education in Villa Juarez: to preserve culture, to be self sufficient, to learn the academic basics and for personal development, to continue an education culminating in a career/profession, to “get ahead,” and to not work in manual labor. The reasons why parents sent their children to school or why students chose to attend also varied, depending on what level of schooling students attended. For example, according to these respondents, the reasons for going to primary and secondary school were, once again, because it was mandatory for parents to send their children. However, the majority of current teachers also agreed that the value of
attending school was because parents wanted their children to learn in order to be prepared for life, the future, a job, or all of these. These perceptions were similar to those of former teachers. Significantly, however, unlike some former teachers, most current educators did not mention agriculture or staying in Villa Juarez as a benefit from acquiring an education. Informants in this group viewed the purpose of education in general terms, teaching life skills, such as independence, that could benefit young people in creating whatever future they chose. Overall, education was viewed as a means to an end. In addition, unlike in the past, one female informant believed young women would benefit highly from changes in how townspeople viewed schooling and gender roles. Part of this change in views suggest a “modern” trend that may have been influenced by the effects of the culture of migration, as more women migrated to the United States in search for a livelihood, as well as the separation of families caused migration that left women as heads of household in the town.

[They go to school] to learn, it’s good since they are not of age to carry out any other activity. That’s it, to educate oneself, prepare oneself for life’s challenges.7

[I send my children to school] and if they get educated they won’t depend on me any longer, they will become independent.8

We are working with younger parents, so today’s parents are realizing the importance of having well-educated children so that in a future they could

7 INT17, interview by author, Villa Juarez, San Luis Potosi, May 12, 2006. “[Van a la escuela] para aprender, aprovechando de que su edad no es propia para, para realizar cualquier otra actividad. Eso es, aprender, prepararse para la vida. También, [algunos padres lo mandan a sus hijos] para quitarse la presión que tienen al tener a sus hijos en la casa.”

8 INT17, interview. “[Yo mando a mis hijos a la escuela] y si ellos se preparan ya no van a depender de mí; ya van a ser autónomos.”
look after themselves, because several [of the parents] only completed second and third grades. In fact, there were some parents who would say that school was only for boys, that girls should only complete middle school, that after all they wouldn’t be needing the education. Many parents back then [would say girls] would find a husband to support them. And now they don’t; today young parents realize that they, too, need the education, because one never knows how the marriage will turn out and so that they can support themselves.\(^9\)

Up until secondary school, six teachers agreed that students attended because their parents sent them or because of the compulsory attendance law. At the *preparatoria* level, however, students attended due to personal choice, although the purpose for going to school was ambiguous:

[They attend] because they want to learn, or they want to be in school. I don’t know if the reason is because they want to continue studying, or because they don’t want to stay at home, or because they don’t want to go with their fathers to work the fields or bricklaying. But they come at will.\(^{10}\)

Two teachers did not feel that parents were deeply engaged in their children’s education, and believed many parents did not see the purpose of attendance past the compulsory level of *secundaria*: “Through comments they have made to me, parents ask

\(^9\) INT25, interview by author, Villa Juarez, San Luis Potosi, May 22, 2006. “Tenemos padres más jóvenes, entonces los padres ahora se están dando cuenta de la necesidad de que los niños tengan los conocimientos para que ellos se puedan valer por ellos mismos en un futuro; porque varios de ellos nada más llegaban hasta segundo o tercero. Incluso había unos padres de familia que decían que la escuela nada más era para los niños, que las niñas nada más llegaran hasta la secundaria, que al fin ellas ya no iban a necesitar el estudio. Muchos padres de familia de antes [decían] que porque al fin ellas iban a encontrarse un marido que las mantuviera. Y ahora no, ahora los padres jóvenes se dan cuenta de que ellas necesitan también el estudio porque en el futuro no se sabe cómo les vaya a ir en su matrimonio y para que ellas puedan salir adelante.”

\(^{10}\) INT35, interview by author, Villa Juarez, San Luis Potosi, May 9 and May 11, 2006. “[Vienen porque] quieren estudiar. O quieren estar aquí en la escuela. No sé si el motivo es porque quieran seguir estudiando, o porque no quieran estar en su casa, o porque no quieren irse con su papa a la milpa a hacer trabajos agrícolas o albañilería. Pero vienen por su propia voluntad.”
how [further education is] useful…” This implied that parents may have been
influenced by the culture of migration as they observed greater benefits from doing
menial labor in the United States than from investing in education in Mexico. The almost
immediate reward of making money in the United States with little education was proven
by the success stories of many other villajuarenzes, thus education appeared to be less
profitable and a longer, costly venture not only for students but also for parents, who may
have needed financial support for the family from their children.

One of the government efforts in the 1990s to support education and contribute to
increased enrollments and sustained attendance proved fruitful in the eyes of two
 principals. The *Oportunidades* Program, previously known as *PROGRESA* under
President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, provided a per child stipend to the mother of
children enrolled, beginning in third grade through *preparatoria*, if children remained in
school with less than four absences and maintained a passing academic performance.12
This scholarship program became another reason for attending school, according to
current teachers. It was of great support to families, and had kept enrollments stable at the
schools. This program was an incentive for many students and families and a way for the
government to provide economic support to families in need as well as ensure that
children were receiving an education. Although the program was not instituted to
counteract migration in Villa Juarez, it did appear to be one of the reasons that families

11 INT35, interview: “Por comentarios que me han hecho con los padres de familia, que dicen que
para qué sirve eso…”

12 INT35, interview; INT15, interview.
kept their children in school, at least until the point of some of their departures to the United States.

Former Students

Similarly to their teachers, the purpose for going to school for all of the former students interviewed was because it was mandatory and their parents enforced it. All saw a great value to education for several reasons, although not all former students had the opportunity to complete their basic education. Despite this, even as former students saw value in education, some still acknowledged that migration lured them into leaving their studies and “trying their luck” in the United States. At least two student informants were lured into migrating and working, although not necessarily because of dire economic need. In fact, the ideas of travel, adventure, and knowing that you can be independent and make good money were all driving forces in their decisions. These responses suggest that the influence over time of a deeply imbedded culture of migration is present in the town. They also suggest that the younger generations of students who grew up when the secundaria and preparatoria were already established in Villa Juarez in the early 1980s had the opportunity to further their education, unlike their older counterparts, but did not necessarily continue it because of their choice to migrate. This may suggest that the influence of the culture of migration on the younger generations increased with time.

One student attributed not continuing his education to his family members and friends in the United States, who portrayed a grand image of the country and their experiences there, and “you forget how important school is.” In addition, since his
parents had not gone to school, he did not have the parental guidance or encouragement to continue on to higher education. For another student, though his parents were supportive of his continuing his education, and he never planned on leaving Villa Juarez, he was invited to the United States by family members: “Perhaps it was not need because in my house we have never been that needy … but it was the goal of making more money.”

Government Officials

According to one government worker, the motives for attending school had undergone a transformation from decades before the most recent era of migration. Parents sent their children to school for three to four years before they joined their father working in the fields. Today, students are encouraged to finish their basic education before leaving to the United States. Those that send their children to the university expect their children to continue their studies and stay.

Among town officials interviewed for this project, the role education played in the lives of younger generations at the time of the study was not well defined. Although everyone agreed that education was important, it was unclear what the function of schooling had in the lives of students, most of who, they all agreed, aspired to leave: “No one explains to the child why he/she has to know math, why he/she has to know

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Spanish.”\textsuperscript{16} As one government official put it, the reasons for students attending school were not clear to students or even some teachers.

Another official reported that some students attended because their parents had not had those opportunities, and they wanted a future so that their children “will not suffer.”\textsuperscript{17} This could be avoided, the official asserted, by preparing for a better future as a professional. To be successful, however, the student typically had to practice his or her profession or begin a business in a city or large municipality.

One informant described the development of education as a complex enterprise of experts and professionals, leading to a more holistic approach to a student’s education. Students could take advantage of other services provided by the school. The schools’ functions were not confined to teaching content knowledge, but many also had counselors that students could go to for help. In addition, the schools had vocational orientation summits where professionals came to speak to students.\textsuperscript{18} Importantly, despite the complexity of the educational system and the increased services it provided for students, education in the town could not compete with migration, according to informants. One government official pointed out that despite the promotion of vocational training, migration was still deeply imbedded in the student. Comparisons between Villa Juarez and the neighboring city of Cerritos, where more work opportunities exist for

\textsuperscript{16} INT21, interview by author, Villa Juarez, San Luis Potosi, May 29, 2006. “No se le explica al niño porqué tienen que saber matemáticas, porque tiene que saber español.”

\textsuperscript{17} INT11, interview by author, Villa Juarez, San Luis Potosi, June 5, 2006. “No sufran.”

graduating students, abounded: “Cerritos has another point of view; we are still lost here.” In other words, the respondent felt that Cerritos was more developed in terms of keeping its students and economic development. Thus, the impetus to migrate – even to a neighboring town – is an established component of Villa Juarez’ culture of migration.

Demographic and Societal Trends in Education in the Culture of Migration in Villa Juarez

As Kandel and Massey argue in their culture of migration theory, communities with extended histories of migration to the United States sustain aspirations and behavior that tends towards migration as a way of life. In Villa Juarez, this tendency to migrate is particularly evident among younger generations that see migration as a means to a livelihood which has proved to be successful for their fellow villajuarenzes. They learn this from returning migrants in their families or in the town. The culture of migration became rooted over several generations; these changes in the town have affected education demographically and societally.

Former Teachers

Former teachers identified several changes in the schools during their time teaching or supervising in Villa Juarez. They noted the growth of student enrollments, and later, the increase and professionalization of teachers to address increasing student enrollments, migration trends and family planning campaigns that contributed to

19 INT20, interview. “Cerritos tiene otra manera de ver cosas; aquí todavía estamos perdidos.”
subsequent diminishing student enrollments, the introduction of computer technology, and the changing conduct of the student body.

Although former teachers had been retired four or more years, at least two teachers had visited Villa Juarez schools since retirement. Thus they were prepared to offer their views on the changes they saw, particularly in the student population and enrollments. Teachers mentioned the limited educational resources available to them during their tenure. They also noted the increased funding from the federal government for certified teacher salaries, during the 1960s, to help fill positions when Villa Juarez’ student enrollments increased (See Chapter 6 for more on the history of Villa Juarez schools). At this time, undocumented and Bracero Program migration had already begun but it was primarily adult males who migrated initially. Thus, younger generations remained in the town and continued in school, although the influence of migration was being felt in families where migrant heads of households sent remittances from the United States. Thus, the student population was mostly unaffected in the 1960s and the federal government channeled increasing resources to sustain a growing student population, while private schools also flourished in order to help meet demands for literacy. One former teacher and director of Heroínas Mexicanas explains:

       [...] there were changes because there was more attention from the federal government towards education, more financial participation [...] to provide more classes for teachers, create more classrooms, and have more means for teaching.20
During the three years that he supervised the school, from 1959-1962, the municipal government hired five to six additional municipal teachers, with the *Heroínas Mexicanas* alone increasing its teaching staff by two municipal teachers.

[...] there were many students and the federation did not have sufficient means to cover more teaching positions, more teachers. So [...] I requested [...] the financial participation of the municipality to pay for the two persons that would help me with the students. In other words, the population did grow [...] the groups were more or less of 70 students per grade. And with the help of these teachers, it was slightly reduced to 55.\(^{21}\)

A teacher who taught in Villa Juárez after 1961 saw the increase in federal teachers as a transformation.

As the schools transformed, all else also became transformed, the organization changed and more teachers arrived. Then, [...] we had only two groups each.\(^{22}\)

The increased teacher hiring was accompanied by additional emphasis on teacher preparation, training, the presence of specialists in child psychology, and areas, such as music, computers, or physical education. One teacher recalls the cadre of five teachers from the teacher training school, *Normal de San Marcos en Zacatecas* that influenced the farming mentality of Villa Juárez students and their families. This teacher training school

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\(^{20}\) INT28, interview. “[...] si hubo cambios porque hubo más atención en el gobierno federal hacia la educación, dando más participación económica [...] para dar más clases para los maestros, para hacer más aulas, y para tener más medios de enseñanza.”

\(^{21}\) Ibid. “Porque había bastantes alumnos y la federación no tenía suficientes medios para cubrir más plazas, más maestros. Entonces [...] yo solicité [...] la participación del municipio económicamente para pagar las dos personas que me ayudaran a atender los alumnos. O sea, que si creció la población. [...] los grupos eran más o menos de 70 alumnos por grado. Y con esta ayuda de maestros se redujo un poquito, a 55.”

\(^{22}\) INT34, interview. “Después que se fueron transformando las escuelas, se fue transformando todo, la organización cambio y llegaron más maestros. Entonces [...] ya podíamos tener nada mas dos grupos cada quien.”
stressed the transformative power of education in children’s futures, an idea of leading a better life through increased schooling, and one that was not yet affected by the culture of migration.

[They taught us] adequately, so that we could get into the minds of the humble people from the countryside, to help them understand that only through education their children could be better citizens. And [parents] understood this and they began […] to trust this […]. Besides they saw that [from the municipality] someone […] from la Gavia (a rural community in Villa Juarez) became a teacher. And so that teacher inspired the other students and these same parents to realize that it was possible, that it did not matter from what part of the world the child came from, or to what economic status he belonged, but that with effort he could be at the very least a teacher, not to mention a university graduate, and those things […]. They could be a teacher because they already had the example […]. It helped that we received better training to make [the parents] understand that one of the bases for coming out of misery and leading a better life was education.\textsuperscript{23}

However, teachers were very aware of decreased student enrollment in the 1970s and 1980s. They identified the enrollment decrease as stemming from two major causes – migration of families to the United States and the Mexican government’s campaign for family planning. A former teacher, who spent the majority of his teaching career working in the municipality from 1957 to the early 1990s made particular note of this.

\textsuperscript{23} INT28, interview. “Y [nos educaron] en una forma muy adecuada, para podernos meter en la mente de las gentes humildes, del campo, para poderles hacer entender que solamente con la educación su hijo podría ser un ciudadano mejor. Y eso lo entendieron [los padres de familia], y empezaron […] a tener confianza en esto. […] Además de que ya vieron que de aquí [del municipio] salió, de los que llegamos, salió uno aquí de la Gavia que fue maestro también. Y entonces ese maestro les daba confianza mas a los otros alumnos y a los mismos padres de familia que si se podía, que no importara de que parte del mundo pudiera salir ese niño, o de que parte económica pudiera salir, pero que echándole ganas si podía ser mínimo un maestro, ya no digamos un licenciado, y esas cosas […]. Pero un maestro si podían porque ya tenían el ejemplo […]. No, esos maestros anteriores no podían explicar el futuro porque no sabían. […] Influyó el que nosotros tuviéramos mejor preparación para poder hacer que entendieran [los padres de familia] que una de las bases para salir de la miseria y [tener] una vida mejor, sería la educación.”
Immigration was the beginning […] it initiated the absence of students, the lack of students. During that time, we would also blame the pill […] the family planning phenomenon of women taking care of themselves because at that time that phenomenon also began. Then they would say: “you see, for taking care of yourselves […] now we do not have students”.24

The situation was aggravated in the schools by the establishment of four primary school options. The *Himno Nacional* primary school was created around 1986. Shortly thereafter, both *Heroínas Mexicanas* and *Himno Nacional* added an evening shift.25

The groups were very large. […] It lasted for a very long time, until the school was divided into four. During that time the evening shift already had very small classes […] especially among the 5th and 6th grades because they were leaving. And to complete the first shift, as director, I struggled a lot. We were knocking from door to door [looking for students] to enroll. Then we took students from kindergarten, because we would enroll them even at 5 years of age to complete our enrollment, [when] they needed to be 6. […] That was the problem. And the situation continued to be challenging: the evening shift at *[Heroínas Mexicanas]* remained because of the [50] students that were sent to them from the children’s hostel […] But at the *Himno Nacional*, where I worked, we struggled to get students; we had no students.26

24 INT31, interview. “La inmigración fue el principio […] con lo que inicio la falta de alumnos, la escasez de alumnos. Decíamos en aquel tiempo que era también la píldora […] la situación de cuidarse las mujeres porque también en ese tiempo empezó. Entonces decían: ‘ya ven, por cuidarse […] ahora ya no tenemos alumnos.’”

25 INT31, interview.

School depopulation affected teachers and administrators of the institutions more than students. As one teacher suggested, school closings meant teachers would simply be relocated:

The impact was against the institution, which ran the risk of disappearing. The school’s evening shift disappeared at *Himno [Nacional]* primary school […]. The *Heroínas [Mexicanas]* evening shift had eight teachers during its inception. Now I believe it only has five; in other words it is decreasing. There are no more students. Therefore, they place that teacher in another location.\(^{27}\)

Before the decline in student enrollments, proliferating employment options led to most teachers holding more than one position—teachers had many options and many taught double shifts in *primaria* and *secundaria*, or in *preparatoria*. If a shift was closed, due to lower enrollment, some teachers had to be relocated to other areas or give up one of their positions.\(^{28}\) Thus, diminishing student population -- a key element of the culture of migration present in Villa Juarez -- also became a concern for those with teaching positions in the town.

Current Teachers

In their careers in Villa Juarez, all of the current teachers noted changes in the schools, including the drop in the student population, decrease in the number of teachers, changes in parents’ and students’ motives for education, the access to technology, the

\(^{27}\) INT31, interview. “El impacto era contra la institución, que tiende a desaparecer. Desapareció la [primaria] *Himno [Nacional]*, la vespertina. […] La vespertina de la *Heroínas [Mexicanas]* tenía ocho maestros cuando empezó. Ahorita creo que ya no mas tiene cinco, o sea que va disminuyendo. Ya no hay alumnos. Entonces a ese maestro lo mandan a otro lugar, lo acomodan en otro lugar.”

\(^{28}\) INT34, interview and INT28, interview.
influence of the media, and the influence of American ideas, and the influence of returning migrants. Although former teachers had spoken in retrospect, mentioning changes in the town due to migration, current teachers were experiencing these changes in the classroom currently, and it was a salient point during the interviews. Eight of the eleven current teachers mentioned migration as one of the factors that had effected changes in the school population. In addition to migration, three of these teachers also attributed family planning to compounding the decrease in student population.

Change is natural. [There have been] changes—there has been a large decrease in students. It’s not only migration; that’s part of it. But every day people have new expectations—there’s a different mentality, young marriages want to have two, three or four children. In our grandparents’ time, families had six or eight children. Nowadays, families are not as large […]. It’s believed that small families live better, when it used to be that families had as many children as God gave them. 29

Throughout the 1990s, the town of Villa Juarez had four primary schools. Since 2003, the decrease in student population led to the discontinuation of the evening shift of one of the primary schools, Himno Nacional. The enrollment at Himno Nacional morning shift also decreased, prompting the Education Ministry, SEP (Secretaría de Educación Pública), to reduce teaching personnel. In order to justify keeping a teacher at the school, at least 10 students were needed. 30

29 INT3, interview. “La evolución es natural. [Ha habido] cambios—se ha reducido mucho en estudiantes. No solo es la emigración; eso es en parte. Pero también cada día hay otras expectativas de la gente—ahora la forma de pensar de la gente, los matrimonios jóvenes quieren tener dos, tres, o cuatro de familia. En tiempo de nuestros abuelos eran de seis a ocho hijos. Ahora las familias no son tan numerosas. […] Se piensa que la familia pequeña vive mejor, cuando antes eran los hijos que Dios me dė.”

30 INT3, interview; INT17, interview.
The downsizing in teachers affected the quality of education in schools, as human resources were stretched across classrooms, classrooms were combined, or one person was assigned two positions. For instance, the principal of Himno Nacional Primary School at the time of the interviews had the added responsibility of teaching sixth grade. According to one teacher: “[the principal] teaches a class and he neglects it because he also has to oversee the principal’s office, to attend to the needs that present themselves.”31 Two current teachers claimed that the evening shift at Heroínas Mexicanas was also likely to disappear. As of late 2006, the school continued to operate, due largely to the student enrollments from the children’s hostel, which housed students from low-income families in the region and provided about 40 students to Heroínas Mexicanas, evening shift. These personnel cuts were significant, according to one teacher, since the municipality had lost 25 out of 100 teachers in the three years previous to the time of the interview, due to lack of students.32

Although most of the current teachers did not see the student shortage affecting families, in particular because children could simply be transferred to another classroom once their class became too small to justify a teacher, the changes may have affected the quality of education for students. The repercussions of eliminating teachers and cutting

31 INT25, interview. “tiene grupo y él desatiende el grupo por estar en la dirección, por atender a las necesidades que se presentan o que se necesitan.”

down on class sizes meant that different grades in the school had to be combined under a single teacher.\textsuperscript{33} According to one teacher, parents did not agree with the changes:

[...] they show their discontent but, we make them understand that the government can’t keep a teacher with only two or three students [...] In a way, [the lack of students] is having an effect because we are losing teachers, which means that now our service won’t be the same.\textsuperscript{34}

Another teacher agreed that simply having more personnel made a school better able to serve students and parents.\textsuperscript{35}

Current teachers believed the dwindling numbers of students who traveled up the educational pipeline into \textit{preparatoria} and higher education reflected parental disinterest. They did not necessarily believe the family had to make children stay in school rather than having the student migrate with their family, but that education was not given the importance it warranted. Out of an average class of 60 \textit{secundaria} graduates, only 20 continued to the \textit{preparatoria}. One teacher explained the process: “The other 40 [students] were lost. They were left behind. Waiting for what? To reach their 18th, 17th or 16th birthday and leave to the U.S. That was the goal.”\textsuperscript{36} Many teachers believed

\textsuperscript{33} INT17, interview.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid. “[...] manifiestan su inconformidad pero, pero se les hace ver que no es posible q el gobierno esté sosteniendo un maestro que tenga dos o tres niños. [...] En cierta forma [la falta de alumnos] si está afectando porque, se está retirando un maestro. Entonces ya el servicio prácticamente no sería lo mismo.”

\textsuperscript{35} INT25, interview.

students’ plans to migrate should not interfere with their acquisition of a good education to prepare them for the future, wherever they chose to live:

Student’s expectations are very low. They wait for the time to leave to the U.S. Very little is expected of the school. [Students] go to [school] to be entertained as they wait to leave to the U.S., and they see the U.S. as their salvation. Whether they leave or stay, they should be well-educated, they need preparation. Although they could care less if they pass or fail.37

Many current and former teachers experienced the migration of their students directly, as one former teacher and principal explains of the situation in the preparatoria in the 1970s:

As director of the high school […] I had challenges. A student would enroll at the beginning of the school year in August-September […] And in December, Christmas break, they would request proof of enrollment, and with this document they would go to the border, to Monterrey and obtain a tourist visa, and their families would bring them [to the United States]. And we would notice that beginning Christmas break to January when classes started again, many students were missing. […] It would reduce our number of students. […] It must have been around the 70s when this issue of migration began to be felt.38

One teacher explained the changes in students’ expectations about education by the influence of migration:

The reason for going [to school] was precisely […] that parents believed

37 INT3, interview. “Las expectativas de alumnos son muy bajas. El tiempo espera para mandarlos a Estados Unidos. Es poco lo que se espera para la escuela. Van como para que uno los entretenga mientras se van a Estados Unidos, y ven a Estados Unidos como la salvación. Si se van o se quedan, deben estar preparados, se necesita preparación. [Aunque] les da igual si reprueban o sacan mala calificación.”

38 INT31, interview by author, Villa Juarez, San Luis Potosí, June 6, 2006. “Yo tenía problemas […] como director en la prepa. Se inscribía un alumno al iniciar el curso escolar en agosto-septiembre […] Y en diciembre, las vacaciones de navidad, pedían una constancia de que estaban estudiando, y con esa constancia se iban a la frontera, se iban a Monterrey y arreglaban una visa de turista, y se los traían para acá [Estados Unidos]. Y observábamos que desde vacaciones de navidad a enero que iniciábamos otra vez las clases, faltaban ya muchos alumnos. […] Nos bajaba la existencia de alumnos. […] Más o menos en el 70 empezaría […] la cuestión de la migración a sentirse más.”
that receiving an education was the only way their children could escape leading a difficult life, because life working in the fields is not easy. Parents began talking to their children about school. However, after they left to the U.S., they began to see that school didn’t mean much, because if you were a teacher and you left to the U.S, the amount you would earn in two days in the U.S., would take a half a month to earn here. So, why be a teacher? It’s better if I go to the U.S., work in a factory, and in a week earn what I would earn here as a teacher.³⁹

The lure of migration notwithstanding, the school curricula continued to include elements to educate and train people to work and contribute to the local economy. The secundaria in Villa Juarez, for example, was geared towards preparing students to work in agriculture, improving and increasing production methods.

[…]. Agricultural workers also benefitted from education because during that time, those working the fields only knew what their parents and experience taught them. But the creation of the agricultural vocational school provided more knowledge on the implementation of certain products, how to grow seeds on time, beekeeping was developed.⁴⁰

Despite the increased levels of education in Villa Juarez and despite the opportunity to learn about the local environment through the agricultural secundaria, students continued to aspire to migrate given the strong competing belief that working in the United States

³⁹ INT28, interview. “La razón que iban [a la escuela] es precisamente […] que empezaron a tener confianza los padres de familia en que la educación era el único medio que los podía salvar [a sus hijos] de una vida difícil, difícil porque la vida de campo no es fácil. […] Los padres de familia les empezaron a hablar a sus hijos de la educación. En cuanto a después que se fueron a Estados Unidos, empezaron a ver que la educación, pues, valía un cacahuate, porque si fueras maestra, te ibas a Estados Unidos, y con dos días de ganar allá, lo que ibas a ganarte lo ganabas aquí dentro de un medio mes. Entonces, ¿para que soy maestro? Mejor me voy para Estados Unidos, trabajo en una compañía, y en una semana yo gano lo que gano aquí de maestro.”

⁴⁰ Ibid., “[…] A los agricultores, por ejemplo, les beneficio también la educación porque en ese tiempo, el que salía del campo nomas con lo que sabía su papá y su mamá y la experiencia. Pero se crearon las escuelas técnicas agropecuarias en donde ya hubo más conocimiento para la implementación de ciertos productos, ciertas semillas sembradas a tiempo, se desarrolló mucho la apicultura.”
was a better option economically than investing in an educational preparation and staying in Mexico. Thus, the culture of migration is displayed in the behavior of students across generations who abandon school to work in the United States.

Current teachers also viewed the migration of students and families as uncontested in the town as an economic vehicle:

There have been changes because students have emigrated. […] For financial reasons whole families leave to other places. […] Families that stay may not feel [bad] because they know of the necessities that those who migrate have. […] And so those who stay say nothing, but it does affect [them].

Even so, some teachers still believed that students should stay. Two teachers emphasized the importance of education preparing students to find jobs and to stay in their community. Although one of the teachers emphasized the importance of basic education (reading, arithmetic, knowing your history and roots, and knowledge about nature) as valuable no matter where students chose to live, he lamented that education did not prepare and alert students to what they could face in the United States, if they decided to leave. He also regretted that schools did not encourage students to return:

In fact, I think that only their own family who lived in the United States is capable […] of making young people aware of the conditions they would be facing if they migrated, because they know the terrain. I did not know the United States; I could not tell them the United States is like this, because I wasn’t certain, I could [only] speculate. […] I have always been in favor of people coming back to their hometown and helping it grow. If I was to leave and work in another [country], I would return and start working hard for my

INT25, interview. “Pues sí ha habido cambios porque los niños han emigrado […] a otros lugares. […] Por lo económico más que nada, yo creo que las familias completas se van para otros lugares. […] [Las familias que se quedan] no lo [sienten] porque ellos saben de las necesidades que tienen los que se van, los que emigran, ellos saben de esas necesidades y los que se quedan aquí, pues no dicen nada, pero sí afecta...”
Thus, while this educator believed that students should contribute to the town and local economy, the culture of migration existing in Villa Juarez demonstrates a sustained behavior of migration aspirations among students that has been difficult to break despite the intervention of teachers that encourage students to remain in the region.

Former Students

Former students noted several major changes in Villa Juarez schools, student population, and the social environment, since their time as students. Almost all of the nine interviewees noted the population changes in the town and mentioned the migration of entire families to the United States as one of the major impacts on the town and school. Although some described migration as a problem given that entire families left and depopulation was more pronounced, others saw it as a positive change because of the remittances. All of the respondents understood that those who migrated did so for economic reasons or to reunite families.

The composition of the population was also noteworthy, as one student mentioned:

42 INT34, interview. “De hecho yo creo que quien […] tenía en sus manos […] la posibilidad de poder hacerles ver a los muchachos las condiciones en las que se habrían enfrentado, pues más que nada era su propia familia que estaban en Estados Unidos, porque ellos si conocían el terreno. Yo no sabía a Estados Unidos, yo no podría decirles Estados Unidos es así, porque no me consta, hablar [solamente] supuestos. Yo pienso que nosotros los campesinos todavía alcanzamos a tener una preparación. Nuestra meta era prepararnos. Era llegar a alcanzar a lo que pudiéramos pero [regresar] a nuestro pueblo a desarrollarnos. Yo siempre he estado a favor de que la gente regrese a su pueblo y lo haga crecer. Si yo voy a trabajar a otro lugar, me regreso y de allí le hecho ganas a mi país. Pero Villa Juárez no tiene esa mentalidad.”
[I notice] perhaps a few more new houses, and I notice less people, and no people my age. Those of us who were friends and got together, or those of us who graduated together, most of them are gone. [...] But the majority of women who went to school with me remain in Villa Juarez. Maybe men have to emigrate more than women.43

One of the influences of migration was the effect on language. English became more important in school and in the town, variations of the language appeared, as one student explained:

There has been an influence in the customs and dress and behavior from the United States. We have a lot, mainly in Villa Juarez because we don’t see that in Cerritos, of espanglish.44

The increased migration in Villa Juarez heavily impacted young people. As migration became a trend and families were separated between the town and the United States, strong ties were established across the distance. As a result, young people migrated across the border to work with their family members or their friends in enclaves previously established in the United States. Though some networks were established during the Bracero Program, they were limited, since most Bracero participants before the 1970s and 1980s returned to their homes in Mexico. (See Chapter 5 for more on the

43 INT24, interview. “[Yo noto] quizás un poco de más casas nuevas. Bueno, yo noto menos gente, y como personas de mi edad no. Todos los que éramos amigos, los que nos juntábamos, o los que salimos de la escuela juntos, casi la mayoría de ellos ya no está nadie. [...] Pero casi la mayoría de mujeres si están en Villa Juárez, de las que estaban conmigo [en la escuela...] Quizás los hombres tengan que emigrar más que las mujeres.”

44 INT32, interview. “El cambio en comportamiento, si ha habido un cambio de mucho influencia de las costumbres y las formas de vestir y comportarse de Estados Unidos. Tenemos mucho, se dan por allí, principalmente en Villa Juárez porque no lo vemos en Cerritos, el espanglish.” (Espanglish, or Spanglish, refers to words the use of English words that have been converted to Spanish, but are not proper to the Spanish language. For example, the verb “park” in Spanglish would be “parquear.”).”
bracero networks.) By the early 2000s, many in the younger generations aspired to migrate, negatively affecting school enrollments in the secundaria and preparatoria, and the development of young professionals or workers in Villa Juarez. Former students explained the drops in enrollments, school closures, and migration:

I am part of the board of the Parents Council and when [students] get to high school, at the end of the three years, the number is much lower [because] of the students who do not finish. Normally, it is because they have left, entire families leave […] All are looking to the United States. Before we saw only older people leave or young adults, older than 20 years of age, but not now. Kids younger than 15 years leave.45

Yes, I am worried [by school closings] because even though the general population is still 10 thousand, which it has always been, I imagine this means, that the population in Villa Juarez is older and not composed of children, who are the ones who give life to the town.46

Government Officials

Like other interviewees, those working in the local government noted the decrease in population and attributed this primarily to emigration to the United States.

Employment in the United States was acknowledged as a valuable source of income, and by some as a model to follow. One of the interviewees had had interaction with the Villa

45 INT8, interview by author, Villa Juarez, San Luis Potosi, June 8, 2006. “Me ha tocado ser parte de la mesa directiva de padres de familia, y cuando entran a la secundaria, pues entra una cantidad y al final, que son tres años, si baja mucho, [por] la cantidad de los niños que no terminan. Y por lo regular es porque se han ido, familias completas se van. […] Todos están con la mira en Estados Unidos. Antes veámos nada mas la gente grande que emigraba, o jóvenes ya grandes, de 20 o más años, y ahora no. Chicos, de 15 años o menos, se van.”

46 INT32, interview. “Si estoy preocupado [por los cierres de las escuelas] porque aunque la población en general sigue siendo de 10 mil habitantes, que siempre ha sido, me imagino que quiere decir esto, con el cierre de una escuela, que la población que hay en Villa Juárez es población adulta y no de niños, que son los que le van a dar la vida al pueblo.”
Juarez hometown organization in Houston, Texas, which provided financial contributions and ideas to the town.\textsuperscript{47} However, most of the municipal government interviewees generally described United States influence as harmful to the town. One interviewee mentioned the loss of the economically productive population in the town: few people ages 17 to 35 continued to reside in Villa Juarez.\textsuperscript{48} This aspect points to a culture of migration which is dependent on local opportunities, employment and economic conditions relative to those in the United States.\textsuperscript{49} In addition, similar to other interview groups, the municipal government officials recognized that entire families moved away to the United States and that the town was now populated by many returning retirees from the United States. Furthermore, migrants and their families returned to Villa Juarez mostly during December for a few weeks, then traveled back to the United States.

The population has changed in their way of life. There is a lot of influence from the United States. For example, customs have changed. Young people celebrate Halloween; and all of this has occurred in a span of about 30 years.\textsuperscript{50}

The concept of a culture of migration establishes that it permeates the way of life of the town on many levels. Intensification of migration led to a phenomenon where several members of any given Villa Juarez family resided and worked in the United

\textsuperscript{47} INT21, interview.

\textsuperscript{48} INT1, interview.

\textsuperscript{49} Massey, “Understanding Mexican Migration to the United States,” 1372.

\textsuperscript{50} INT1, interview. “La población [ha cambiado] en su forma de vivir. Tiene mucha influencia de Estados Unidos. Por ejemplo, las costumbres han cambiado. Los jóvenes celebran Halloween; y todo ha pasado como en lapso de 30 años.”
States. Interviewees described migration as initially as being driven by the need to work and the desire to live a better life. More recently, the motives for migrating were not necessarily only related to need, one interviewee believed, but also to a cultural connection and a form of social capital: the families that lived in the United States “pulled” many villajuarenzes and found them jobs. Networks of families and paisanos kept those in Villa Juarez informed and many sought to help those left behind be just as successful as they were in the United States by bringing them over. Thus, among the most important determinants of the culture of migration is that it is transmitted across generations and among social networks. The networks are a form of social capital in crossing the border, finding jobs, information and even economic assistance. The idea of migration as a way to social mobility, much more that education, arose among this group of informants. Some government officials believed there was less justification today for migrating, given that the government provided more financial support for staying in school than ever before, but migration had become a “habit” following completion of secundaria, mostly. One of the government officials speculated: “They think they will never accomplish [success] here, and they become impatient and leave.

51 Paisano is typically used in reference to villajuarenzes in the United States, i.e. someone from the same town, region or country.

52 Massey, “Understanding Mexican Migration to the United States,” 1372.

53 INT4, interview.
People from the United States come and young people see them and want to go because they are told how much money these people make.\textsuperscript{54}

The numerous school closures throughout the municipality of Villa Juarez happened over time, as noted by one interviewee. The opportunities to make improvements to the economy of the town existed, but the town needed to take advantage of them and explore other options besides migration. For example, the municipal administration in 2000 mentioned government-developed programs to provide financial support for small businesses. These ranged from financing to change crops to switching from traditional farming to cattle-raising. The interviewee stated: “These are recent programs. And there are successful people in this, but the people from here do not see it as attractive because they already know the United States.”\textsuperscript{55} Thus, although these government programs existed, few took advantage of them. Again, this could suggest that, due to the culture of migration embedded in the imaginations of Villa Juarez residents, migration continued to be a “proven” economic success, whereas few were willing to take their chances on these new, government-sponsored initiatives that had no record of success.

Education was not perceived as isolated from the changes driven by emigration and the United States influence by this group of respondents. In fact, most town officials

\textsuperscript{54} INT27, interview by author, Villa Juarez, San Luis Potosi, June 7, 2006. “[…Creen que aquí nunca lo van a lograr, y se desesperan y mejor se van. […] La gente [del otro lado] viene y los muchachos ven y se quieren ir porque les cuentan cuánto ganan.”

\textsuperscript{55} INT1, interview. “Son programas recientes. Y si hay personas exitosas en eso, pero la gente de aquí no lo siente atractivo, porque ya conocen Estados Unidos.”
demonstrated concern for the young people in school and for their future. School closures affected students in smaller communities in the municipality of Villa Juarez. For areas that did not have enough enrolled primary school students to enlist a full-time teacher at a school, the CONAFE program,\(^{56}\) sent out student teachers to the communities. However, one government worker suspected that student preparation was compromised with this type of education.\(^{57}\) In higher education, one government official claimed that the administration tried to found an extension of the university in Villa Juarez, but found it difficult to secure enough students to start it up. As other interviewees reported, he concluded: “Young people lose an interest in school; they are not interested because they feel the attraction from [the United States].\(^{58}\)

**Remittances and Changes to the Local Economy**

The effects of migration in Villa Juarez were also felt in the town’s economy; these changes were generally viewed positively by respondents. The culture of migration that was embedded in the town grew out of economic needs of the community. The

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\(^{56}\) CONAFE, Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo (National Council for Education Development). In 2003, CONAFE procured a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank to extend educational coverage, quality and efficiency in remote and poor areas with no schools. This program employs the services of young, aspiring teachers (ages 15-24) who live with a family in the rural community, who provide food and lodging. They receive a small stipend and a scholarship to continue their studies. CONAFE provides services in preschool, primary and post primary education. Inter-American Development Bank website: http://www5.iadb.org/idbppi/aspx/ppProject.aspx?pCountry=&pProject=ME0238&pLanguage=ENGLISH (accessed May 15, 2011).

\(^{57}\) INT4, interview.

\(^{58}\) Ibid. “Los muchachos pierden interés por estudiar; ya no les interesa porque sienten la atracción de allá.”
economic success of the migrant families led to improved economic situations for many villajuarenzes who continued to live in the town.

Former Students

Not all changes the town was undergoing were cause for concern to respondents; some had beneficial aspects. Four former students, three of them older students, noted improvements in the town’s and schools’ infrastructures. Poverty in the town had been more pronounced during the 1950s and 1960s, for example, when the population increase occurred. (See Chapter 5 for more on Villa Juarez population trends.) These physical differences demonstrated development in the town and in the schools that was possible due to increased federal and local funding for education and the influx of capital in the form of remittances from the United States.

I experienced a difficult period. I remember that in cold weather there was no glass on the windows. […] Also, we had to drink water directly from a faucet, from a water tank.\(^59\)

[There was] a lot of poverty, in excess, [and lack of hygiene]. So the desperation of a teacher was too [great], because it was impossible for the teacher to try to address those problems [hygiene]. The families were large. […] some families were of 12 or 13 members […] [It was] very difficult to attend to a big family with the meager earnings of a farmer or a day laborer. [Now] it is very different because, in the first place now there

\(^{59}\) INT32, interview. “En primaria me toco, me imagino, la época difícil. Bueno, no era tan difícil como las que antes se vieron, pero todavía me toco la época difícil: la época donde el maestro todavía te pegaba, la dificultad de las inclemencias del tiempo porque las autoridades no le daban mucha atención en tener escuelas bien adecuadas en cuestión de las aulas. Yo pienso que ahorita ya es muy diferente. Ahorita ya hasta, por ejemplo, la prepa tiene acondicionado. Ya es otro tiempo pero a mí me toco la época un poquito difícil. Yo recuerdo que en época de frío no había vidrios en las ventanas. […] nos toco todavía tomar agua directo de la llave, de un tinaco.”
is transportation for those who live far away from the school. They arrive a little less tired, because they travel on bike. Sometimes they are in a vehicle. There is more comfort.60

There are differences, many. […] We have better services that we did not have before. […] maybe some of these are not that efficient, but we have them. About 15 years ago we didn’t have […] telephones.61

One notable example of the benefits of migration in Villa Juarez was that the influx of migrant dollars led to growth in the housing industry. However, migration did affect the farming sector in several ways, as one interviewee explains:

At the town level, it did have an impact. Economically it improved, because we built some very pretty houses, those with [U.S.] dollars. One sees houses all over, a small two room clod house is built with Mexican pesos, and the nicer ones are built with U.S. dollars. So, it benefitted the town economically, but not in the social [aspect]. Before, […] there were many of us living there, and the land produced. There were people to work the land. It was a pleasure to visit the fields. I was never a farmer, but it was a pleasure to visit the fields and see the corn and the watermelons between the corn stalks […] And now all the people who used to work here work in the U.S. And here we are left with no laborers, no one works the land, because there is no profit in it. And if you’re looking for workers to weed out your land, or to do anything in the field you won’t find anyone because they are all in the U.S. And those who are here want to earn dollars, or they work four hours, and they are done for the day. In this way

60 INT36, interview by author, Villa Juarez, San Luis Potosi, June 13, 2006. “[Había] mucha pobreza, en exceso [y falta de higiene]. Entonces era tan [grande] la desesperación de un maestro, pues era imposible para el maestro tratar de corregir esos errores. Principalmente el primer año. Porque las familias también eran muy numerosos. […] Eso era lo más grave porque, pues había en ese tiempo familias que llegaron a tener 12, 13 de familia. […] [Era] bien difícil atender a tanta familia con el escaso ingreso de un campesino, o de un jornalero. [Ahora] es muy diferente, porque, pues en primer lugar ahorita ya hay un medio de transporte para los que viven lejos de la escuela. Entonces ya llegan un poco menos cansados, porque van en bicicleta. Inclusive los llevan en sus vehículos. Hay más comodidad. (In 1968, when this former student worked in Villa Juarez as a substitute teacher, he still witnessed extreme poverty among students attending his classes. Some students were unable to afford shoes and went to school barefoot.)

61 INT6, interview. “Si hay diferencias, bastantes. […] Tiene mejores servicios que antes no teníamos. […] a la mejor algunos no son tan eficientes, pero los tiene. Hace 15 años no los tenía, hace 15 años no teníamos teléfonos.”
the town in general was affected […] So we all felt it, we all noticed it, even if we weren’t farmers we noticed that it all was coming to an end.62

**Work Options in Villa Juarez and Culture of Migration**

Kanaiaupuni makes the case that migration becomes an incentive when the local conditions offer poor jobs and wages and are also compounded by transformations in farming technology and production.63 This is particularly true in the case of Villa Juarez, where farming remained a primary source of revenue until around the 1960s.

In Villa Juarez, some informants justified migration as a source of livelihood for families and thus saw it as necessary. Although other options do exist, agriculture was not seen as a viable option to maintain a family. Education as a means to a career was viewed as another viable option for economic mobility. However, the influence of returning

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62 INT31, interview. “Bueno a nivel pueblo si [impacto]. Económicamente mejoró, porque hicimos unas casas pero re-bonitas, los que tenían dólares. O sea, ve uno residencias por todos lados, luego una casita de terrón, de dos cuartos: esa casa es con pesos mexicanos, y una residencia de esas [otras] es de dólares. Entonces, económicamente beneficio al pueblo, pero socialmente no. Antes, […] vivíamos muchos ahí, y las tierras producían. Había quien trabajara las tierras. Era un gusto ir al campo. Yo nunca fui campesino, pero era un gusto ir al campo y ver cómo estaban los maizales y los elotales, y sandías entre las matas de maíz […] Y todos los que ahora están trabajando en Estados Unidos trabajaban acá. Y acá se quedo ya sin mano de obra, ya nadie cultiva las tierras, porque no es negocio, pues. Y si busca trabajadores para ir a deshierbar, o hacer algo en el [las tierras] no encuentra […] porque todos están en Estados Unidos. Y los que están ahí quieren ganar en dólares, o trabajan 4 horas, y ya desquitaron el día. En esa forma sí se afectó el pueblo en general […] Entonces eso si se sintió, lo notamos todos, aunque no fuéramos campesinos lo notamos, que se iba acabando todo.”

migrants and family members in the United States challenged schooling as the fastest route to economic mobility.

Former Teachers

Not all teachers believed that all students aspired to one day migrate and work in the United States. Nevertheless, work options for students in Villa Juarez in the early 2000s were quite limited. Even those teachers that expressed a desire for students to continue to live and work in Villa Juarez noted the limited job opportunities for those who received preparation. In fact, no teachers who expressed the desire for students to stay lived in Villa Juarez, themselves, at the time of the interview. The career that came up most often in teacher interviews in recounting student aspirations for continuing their education was teaching. The influence of television and other, more recent and more sophisticated media has impacted how students perceive their future careers. According to one teacher,

[…] there are lots of methods of education. [Students] watch a movie, [where] they see a doctor, and perhaps the young person […] gets the idea [that] he wants to be a doctor, or that he wants to be an engineer. […] Before these communication media were not as advanced as they are now.\(^{64}\)

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\(^{64}\) INT33, interview. “[…] los medios de la educación incluyen mucho. Entonces [los estudiantes] ven una película, ven allí un médico, y el muchacho […] pues a la mejor se le mete la idea [de que] “yo quiero ser médico, o yo quiero ser ingeniero.” […] Y antes los medios de comunicación no estaban tan avanzados como están ahora….”
Even with the aspirations of higher education and a career, one teacher noted that the economic situation in Mexico drove many skilled professionals to migrate to the United States and work in factories for the stability of a steady income.65

One of the work opportunities that always existed in Villa Juarez was to work in agriculture, for which an education was not necessary. Work opportunities for future generations who finished their schooling (through high school) included working for the municipal government, perhaps as a secretary (for young women; these positions were typically temporary and depended on the incoming administration’s hiring preferences and discretion), or as shop assistant or sales clerk in a store. More advanced studies could lead students to careers in teaching or as an agricultural engineer.

Despite the difficulties in finding jobs for educated students in Villa Juarez, one former teacher asserted that the migration was not related to education:

[…] it is difficult. That might be the reason why they say, “It’s better to leave.” But I think that when you don’t have enough education or you are not well employed [it is likely]; but even with a profession, [there is] that tendency of leaving to the United States. Even a university graduate, anyone from this country, if they cannot find employment, they will leave to the U.S. […] there are many other reasons [for migrating] but those are of another nature, no longer of an educational one. But of […] governmental systems that are pressured.66

65 INT31, interview.
66 INT34, interview. “[…] es difícil. Que tal vez esa es la razón por la cual ellos dicen, “mejor me voy.” Pero yo siento que cuando no se tiene la preparación suficiente o que estemos [empleados] adecuadamente, pues aun con una profesión, [hay] la tendencia de [irse a] Estados Unidos. Aun un muchacho universitario que ha salido de una universidad, cualquiera de aquí del país, si no [ocupa] un trabajo se va para los Estados Unidos. […] hay muchas razones pero esas son de otra índole, ya no de índole educacional. Sino de […] sistemas de gobierno que [están] presionados…”
This particular teacher felt that the forces of supply and demand for workers and for products that are a characteristic of migration were also at work in Villa Juarez. It was not that the educational system was failing students. Former teachers describe the presence of a culture of migration being developed in the town among students, illustrated by their perceptions of education as secondary to securing an economic future in the United States.

**Government Officials**

Government officials mentioned the availability of government programs to promote development, but projects were based on census data collected by INEGI. Even if good projects existed, the moneys invested in the municipality ultimately depended on the population, and this was a disadvantage to Villa Juarez, which was losing its residents to the United States. The situation was disenchanted for some leaders who felt they could not compete with free market commerce and other nations. They concluded that people had to leave to the United States for that reason. Other views were more hopeful: “The culture of migration is psychologically embedded in Villa Juarez; but why not do here what they do in the United States in order to change things?”

67 INT20, interview.

68 INT27, interview.

69 INT20, interview. “La cultura de emigración esta psicológicamente [en Villa Juárez]; pero ¿por qué no hacer aquí lo que hacen allá [en Estados Unidos] para cambiar las cosas?”
Conclusion

The quotation at the beginning of this chapter denotes the value attributed to education by the national governments and by educators who saw schooling as a way to improve the quality of life of the townspeople. In addition, education was seen as a way to create better citizens, cognizant of their national identity and contributing to national progress -- a principal goal of education in most nations across the world. The existence of a culture of migration in Villa Juarez can be viewed as permeating the way of life of the town on many levels and perpetuating aspirations to migrate across generations. The prospect of the attractions of migration often serves to undermine the idea that young people could one day have a viable economic future in the town. For example, despite the adaptation of education to train students in agriculture in the secundaria, the schools are unable to keep students in the town to work in the field. Thus, while education is intended to help develop Mexican citizens to contribute to the nation’s economy and development, most young people in Villa Juarez are focused on leaving due to the culture of migration that has existed in the town since before they were born. Promises about fast and sure economic returns and a form of livelihood overpower appeals to remain and contribute to the town and the nation.

Informants provided different perspectives on the purpose of education for students in Villa Juarez. Former teachers noted changes in education, including the lack of human and financial resources during their teaching tenure and the purpose of education as fulfilling the literacy needs of the population. Interviewees in this group
experienced increasing student enrollments and later the diminishing student population and attributed migration as a cause to diminishing enrollments. However, current teachers provided insight into the present situation in the schools. United States influences and migration were posed as reasons for student disinterest in continuing their education and for aspiring to work in the United States. This suggests that education is undermined as a route to economic mobility relative to migration.

In the following chapter, educational changes in Villa Juarez will be examined in the context of globalization.
CHAPTER 8

INTERVIEW RESULTS AND ANALYSIS: GLOBALIZATION

For the purposes of the present study, the informants’ views about education can be generally classified in two categories: those who interpreted education in terms of a culture of migration and those who saw globalization as the dominating influence. The previous chapter reviewed the concept of the culture of migration and explored interviewees’ responses as they reflected this understanding of the experience of Villa Juarez. This chapter examines interviews regarding the purpose of education in the context of globalizing influences in Villa Juarez. It includes informant views on changes in the value of education due to globalization’s influence; what changes in the town occurred due to globalization and how these changes have affected the schools; what the schools in Villa Juarez prepare students for; the aspirations of students; and the options for work in Villa Juarez.

Globalization and the Value of Education

A central tenet of globalization theory is that knowledge is an asset and a route to increasing quality of life. As the World Development Report 1998/1999 by the World Bank posited:

For countries in the vanguard of the world economy, the balance between knowledge and resources has shifted so far towards the former that knowledge has become perhaps the most important factor determining the
standard of living—more than land, than tools, than labour. Today’s most technologically advanced economies are truly knowledge-based.¹

In line with this positioning, Jacques Hallak argued that changes in society have led to a decreased need to produce simply a trained workforce. Globalization necessitates a focus on training people to adapt quickly to changing workforce needs and critical thinking:

This is confirmed by new forms of illiteracy observed in some of the most developed countries. To meet the challenges of globalization, it would in fact appear necessary to prepare individuals for a workplace where responsibilities are constantly changing, where vertical management is replaced by networking, where information passes through multiple and informal channels, where initiative-taking is more important than obedience, and where strategies are especially complex because of the expansion of markets beyond national borders. Therefore, education must help individuals to perform tasks for which they were not originally trained, to prepare for a non-linear career path, to improve their team skills, to use information independently, to develop their capacity for improvisation as well as their creativity, and finally to lay the basis of complex thinking linked to the harsh realities of practical life.²

The schools in Mexico transformed their curricula from a focus on rote memorization to one emphasizing a students’ ability to be an independent learner, which was a technique promoted in the globalization education approach. The national modernization initiatives of the 1990s promoted education creating a more competitive workforce to help the nation on its road to joining the global economy. Thus, the skills promoted in the schools in Villa Juarez were configured to follow the national agenda.

The informants below share their experiences in the schools and the changes in the value


and purpose of education over time. Globalization brought influences principally from
the United States to the rural, agrarian town, leading to change in the community, in the
student population, and in the schools.

Current Teachers

Overwhelmingly, current teachers saw education as important for economic
mobility and as the “basis for the future.” It was critical for students to be independent in
the future, and this meant having a solid education to be able to land a good job.\(^3\) Like
former teachers, current educators believed that through education students would better
themselves as individuals and as members of society -- the fundamental idea that
education improves quality of life. Two of the 11 current teachers saw education as
preparing students simply to be knowledgeable, and two others emphasized the
preparation for an advanced degree.\(^4\) Landing a good job meant economic stability,
participating in growing the economy, “and, above all, to be better citizens.”\(^5\) The same
teacher claimed that education should prepare students to “face life,” be ready to
participate in many “things,” and be successful wherever they were.\(^6\)

The emphasis on educating students to become critical thinkers and learners was a
change brought up by four current teachers. In the 1990s, the SEP introduced new

\(^3\) INT25, interview. “base para el futuro.”

\(^4\) INT34, interview.

\(^5\) INT28, interview.

\(^6\) INT34, interview.
curricula and books in the primary schools to help produce students that were more reflective and more willing to participate and integrate into society. Critical thinking became a focus of learning, so that students would be able to analyze problems and find solutions for themselves.\(^7\) At the *secundaria* and *preparatoria*, the emphasis has been to “make the student independent; for the student to be inquisitive.” The philosophy, according to one teacher, is to “teach a wo/man to fish.”\(^8\) Thus, according to these interviewees, recent education in Villa Juarez has focused on techniques geared toward the child learning to be a learner rather than on the rote memorization methods employed in earlier years. This is in line with creating a global learner that can adapt to changing situations.

The addition of English to basic education (*secundaria*) was another indicator of globalizing influences in the curricula. These elements were part of the modernization policies promoted on a national level and linked to economic development, and tied to globalization. A report published by the International Institute for Educational Planning of UNESCO posited that countries benefitting from globalization adapted their educational systems to meet national and global labor market needs.\(^9\)

\(^7\) INT15, interview.

\(^8\) INT35, interview. “[…] independizar al alumno, que alumno indague.”

Current educators’ ideas about the value of education were also in line with producing members of society that could respond and adapt to changing situations and be “learners” that could find solutions.

[The importance of education] is to develop all of an individual’s abilities. The aim is to reach complete development, not only in the physical, but the emotional and social [aspects], as well. That is the goal, to have them become a well-rounded person.  

[Education] opens up life’s frontiers.  

If you are not educated you are poor. Without education, there is no culture, there is no progress.

Critical thinking and reasoning were both brought up as central to student learning.

What children need most is to learn to think critically beginning first grade, because if the child can think critically, everything else will be easy for him/her… because before we would teach just like that: memorize this. And today we don’t, we teach them so that they can think critically and they can act later in the manner that they think best… [We want them] to be creative, for them to develop their own abilities, for them to think their own ideas.

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10 INT3, interview. “[La importancia de la educación es] desarrollar harmónicamente las facultades del individuo. Tiene que ir encaminada a desarrollo harmónico[y] completo, no solo en físico, también afectivo y social. Esa es la finalidad, lograr un desarrollo harmónico de su personalidad.”


12 INT15, interview. “Si no tienes educación eres un pobre. Sin educación, no hay cultura, no hay progreso.”

13 INT25, interview. “Lo que más necesitan los niños es desde primer año enseñarlos a reflexionar, porque si el niño reflexiona a él se le va a hacer fácil todo… porque antes enseñábamos así nada más: apréndete esto de memoria. Y ahora no, uno les enseña para que ellos reflexionen y ellos puedan actuar después en la forma que a ellos [crean mejor…]. Que ellos sean creativos, que a ellos mismos les salgan sus habilidades, [que] creen ellos sus propias ideas.”
Thus, for these teachers the purpose of education is to develop students to be critical thinkers so they could function in a complex society.

Communication was also viewed as important as critical thinking by four current teachers. One teacher, for example, emphasized the use of different media for learning communication and teaching English as a valuable central skill for students that aspired to travel to the United States, one day. An English instructor saw his course as one of the most valuable classes for students, and one that demanded more attention and development from teachers:

Sometimes I have them watch movies in English. Other times we visit the computer lab, the media lab. In the media lab we teach “interactive English.” There is lots of material, but unfortunately we don’t use it.  

The understanding of being good citizens and of service to their town and to their families was equally important. To some current educators, education consistently represented advancement; it was indispensable for young people’s future and for society’s future, and thus it prepared them for facing possible challenges.

[Education] is meant to achieve a holistic development in children, but they need to be prepared to continue learning. Today it is not so much that the entire family leaves, but that they get married [in the U.S.], they have a family there, they leave at a very young age; they wait to get out of secundaria to leave to the U.S. Because they leave when they are young, we know they have to be prepared with some English and computer skills.

14 Ibid. “[Les pongo] a ver algunas veces películas en ingles. Otras veces vamos a las computadoras, al aula de medios. En las aulas de medios tenemos “inglés interactivo”. Hay mucho material, pero desgraciadamente no tenemos esa cultura para aplicarlo.”

15 INT30, interview.
Former Students

Although education had varying meanings and values for students interviewed in Villa Juarez, most ideas of education were linked to becoming independent and self-sufficient. For some students (four), family was also very influential because parents themselves saw value in sending their children to school. But investing in school also implied they were investing in their community and to stay in the country in the future.

Education was valuable to four of the ten former students who attended the agricultural secundaria to learn the concrete skills taught in the school. Students attending the secundaria had a concentration on one of three areas: fruit conservation, cattle farming, or agriculture but also took general subjects that included English. For these four students, the skills learned in each of these areas were valuable in various trades; two students practiced them as side jobs outside of their main employment. The three areas of concentration provided by the secundaria were closely interrelated and students had an opportunity to practice feeding and raising chickens, pigs, and cows, slaughtering the animals, preparing them for sale or for use as byproducts, such as milk, cheese, and chorizo, and finally, selling these products locally. The skills learned in these processes required a cooperative approach since students from each of the areas worked together to feed the animals (from the agriculture team), and prepare the byproducts (from the food conservation team), etc. Students also used their entrepreneurial skills to

16 INT3, interview. “[La educación es] para lograr el desarrollo harmónico en niños, pero tienen que ir preparados para seguirse desarrollándose. Ahora no es tanto que se va la familia, sino se casan allá [en Estados Unidos], allá tienen familia, se van desde jóvenes; esperan salir de la secundaria para irse a EU. Como se van desde jóvenes uno sabe que deben ir preparados con algo de inglés y computación.”
sell what they had produced and make a profit to benefit the “school business.” Although all former students had grown up in Villa Juarez, learning concrete skills in agriculture, cattle raising, or food preservation proved valuable: “[You] learned how to raise animals, chickens; if you could buy a few, you feed them, and you would make some money for your household needs. I imagine that was the reason to bring the technologies to Villa Juarez.”17

Many former students and teachers pointed out (21) that the majority of Villa Juarez students aspired to migrate to the United States. While the skills learned in secundaria did provide preparation for a future in agriculture or raising farm animals, 60 percent of former students noted that the most important skills to learn in school were general subjects and transferable skills, such as mathematics or typing. These were skills that could be practiced anywhere.

One of the changes demonstrating globalization of education was incorporating English into the curricula. In terms of general subject areas, two students found English important due to their plans to travel to the United States. One other student never believed he needed to learn the subject because he never imagined traveling to the United States. English instructors emphasized the importance of the subject, knowing that the majority of students aspired to migrate at some point. Exposure to the language did prove helpful for the interviewees that worked in the United States: “The teacher would tell us, "

17 Ibid. “Enseñarte como criar animales, pollos, si tú podías comprar poquitos, tú misma darles de comer, y ya [tenías] el solvento para la casa. Me imagino que por ahí fue [el motivo de] el traer las tecnologías a Villa Juárez.”
'If one day you go to the United States, and a policeman stops you, how will you respond? … You have to be very respectful all the time. I never forgot that.'\textsuperscript{18} In another instance, one student that questioned why she had to take English in secundaria, later realized this subject was one of the most important ones in her basic education, since it was transferrable, not only to the United States, but even to urban settings in Mexico.

I never knew why they gave me English in school. And I would always object and say: “but I am not going to the United States, why do I need English.” But now I do see how important it is. There are many companies that come from the United States and establish themselves here and generate jobs, and maybe they ask for your resume or job applications, and the position may require 75 percent English speaking fluency and writing fluency. If you go to San Luis … you can’t even be hired as a receptionist if you don’t have English.\textsuperscript{19}

One former student believed that English was so fundamental for students currently that it should be incorporated into the primary school curricula: “it is a shame that young people that have completed middle school and high school have to go to another country in search of better opportunities, and that they go without knowing any English, and have to suffer in the United States.”\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{18} INT24, interview. “Me acuerdo que nos decía el profesor, “si algún día ustedes van a Estados Unidos, y los para un policía, ¿Uds. cómo le van a contestar? […] Entonces Uds. tienen que ser bien respetuosos todo el tiempo. Le tienes que decir, o a una persona, “yes ma’am,” “yes sir,” … como que te inculcaban el respeto a los policías. Eso lo tengo yo bien presente. No se me olvida.”

\textsuperscript{19} INT11, interview. “Nunca supe porque me daban inglés. Y yo siempre reclamaba y decía: “pero si yo no me voy para Estados Unidos, yo para qué quiero el Inglés.” Pero ahora sí veo que es importantísimo. Hay muchas compañías que vienen de Estados Unidos y se plantan aquí y generan empleos, y de repente te piden tu currículo, o tu solicitud de empleo, y dicen que para tal puesto necesitas 75 porciento de inglés bien hablado y el otro por escrito. Tú vas a San Luis y […] no puedes ni estar como recepcionista [si] no tienes el Inglés.”

\textsuperscript{20} INT36, interview. “[…] es tan importante que en actualidad ya debe de darse desde la primaria clases de Inglés porque es una lástima que jóvenes que han terminado la secundaria, que han terminado la
In the case of the preparatoria, its purpose did not necessarily align with the town’s reality. The vision of the preparatoria is to “promote the development of students that can impact the country, building their family, municipality, and state.” Thus, the vision of the school did not support the reality of students migrating from the town. The mission of the preparatoria is to “develop character and leadership of men and women, preparing them to serve with dedication and efficiency, taking into consideration their capacities and abilities”.\textsuperscript{21} The mission of the school in reality, however, was in line with the globalization paradigm as it reinforced individual student abilities.

While the schools’ curricula promoted a sense of national identity, good citizenship, and even concrete skills in agriculture applicable to the region of Villa Juarez, the purpose and value of education, according to interviewees, was to teach transferrable skills that could be applied to whatever the student decided to do. These skills were in line with the forces of globalization, in which adaptability to the changing world environment and “lifelong learning for all” have become central global educational policies.\textsuperscript{22} Despite the schools’ investment in its students, students continued to migrate or aspire to migrate to the United States, thus undermining the value of an education that could contribute to national goals of Mexico.

\textsuperscript{21} Preparatoria Juan Sarabia, Villa Juarez, SLP. “promover la formación de estudiantes que impacten al país, edificando a su familia, municipio, y estado”; “desarrollar el carácter y liderazgo de hombres y mujeres preparándolos para servir con entrega y eficiencia, partiendo de sus capacidades y habilidades.”

Quality and Expansion of Education

Changes in the quality and expansion of education were noted over time among interviewees. Many of these changes were influenced by globalization and its focus on the global culture, quality, and efficiency, as described by comparativist Joseph Zajda. The expansion of education was increasingly necessary to improve not only individual lives but also national participation in the global economy. Research sponsored by the International Monetary Fund describes this need for educational expansion: “Greater access to education and training can increase the share of the population that can take advantage of the opportunities to improve living standards from both globalization and technology.”

While only primary education had existed in Villa Juarez for decades, the establishment and compulsory nature of the secundaria increased the level of education for many villajuarenzes. One teacher argued that a public preparatoria (rather than simply having the private one) would further increase the educational level of more townspeople. According to this teacher, both the townspeople and the schools experienced a noteworthy transformation in their approaches to education and its purpose beyond simply literacy:

In the past, we were only sent to school to learn to read and write, that’s what the adults would say: “I want to learn to read, write and do

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24 INT15, interview.
arithmetic, only that. That’s it.” That was the goal, the mentality of that time.25

Although the town was once unreceptive to the outside world, one teacher posited that Villa Juarez schools were evolving:

Villa Juarez used to be more sheltered. Nowadays young people go out, parents go to the U.S., go to other cities. Therefore, it is logical that our education has changed completely. We have some tools in place; children have computer courses. Most schools provide computer courses now, and of course, education needs to follow a pace according to the changes around it. Educational reforms are being applied in each school, and we need to be evolving, our education needs to be changing according to the way of life human beings lead.26

As noted earlier from teacher comments, the emphasis on quality of education and the resulting educational reforms instituted in response to globalization trends affected educators as well. Professional development was enhanced; as one teacher noted, the annual teacher training is to create better prepared teachers to provide a better education.27 Nevertheless, about one third of the current teachers interviewed asserted that teacher training was not adequate to help them carry out the innovations at the classroom level:

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25 Ibid. “Antes nos mandaban a la escuela nada más para que aprendiéramos a leer y escribir, porque eso era lo que decían las personas adultas: ‘Yo quiero que sepas leer y escribir y hacer cuentas, nada más. Y ya.’ Esa era la meta, la mentalidad en aquellos años.”

26 INT30, interview. “Villa Juárez antes era más cerrado. Hoy los muchachos ya salen fuera, los padres de familia salen a EU, salen a otras ciudades. Entonces es lógico que la educación ha cambiado totalmente. Ya tenemos otros implementos; tienen computación. Ya la mayoría de escuelas ya tienen computación, y claro la educación tiene que seguir su ritmo de acuerdo a como vaya sucediendo. Las reformas educativas se van aplicando en cada escuela, y tenemos que ir cambiando, nuestra educación tiene que ir cambiando de acuerdo al transcurso de vida que llevemos los seres humanos.”

27 INT25, interview.
We teach as we were educated ourselves. And that means that many people are not open to change or do not practice the changes as they should.\textsuperscript{28}

Very few teachers adopt the new [teaching] innovations we are given.\textsuperscript{29}

[…] we adapt to our work, and so sometimes we resist change. And since we resist, because we are not trained or advised enough, then education [suffers], although good programs exist, if we are not well-prepared, we won’t understand the reforms enough to implement them.\textsuperscript{30}

Two teachers also noted a palpable level of disinterest among some of their colleagues that impacted student performance:

The teacher sometimes also doesn’t care to develop him or herself, to investigate, to learn about new teaching methods and new technology […] We are at a standstill […] If I don’t prepare myself, then the child can’t walk out any more prepared.\textsuperscript{31}

The majority of teachers did not train themselves enough so that they could implement the new plans the government had introduced.\textsuperscript{32}

While the changing demographic environment, migration, and globalization influenced Villa Juarez students in their perceptions of the United States and their

\textsuperscript{28} INT18. “Educamos como nos educaron. Y eso quiere decir que mucha gente no acepta los cambios o no practique los cambios como debería de hacer.”

\textsuperscript{29} INT30, interview. “Muy pocos maestros adoptan las innovaciones que se nos da.”

\textsuperscript{30} INT15, interview. “[…] nosotros como que nos acoplamos ya a nuestra forma de trabajo, que a veces nos resistimos a un cambio. Y como nos resistimos, porque no nos asesoran lo suficientemente, entonces la educación aunque haya buenos programas, si Ud. no se prepara bien, pues no le va entender al programa para poderlo impartir.”

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid. “El maestro también no se preocupa por superarse, por investigar, por conocer las nuevas formas de trabajos y la nueva tecnología […] Estamos estancados. […] Entonces si yo no me preparo, mucho menos el muchacho va salir preparado.”

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid. “La mayoría del magisterio no se prepara lo suficientemente como para poder desarrollar los planes nuevos que el gobierno implanta.”
aspirations to one day live or work there, some teachers still believed teacher influence on students was powerful: “We shape them to our liking.”\textsuperscript{33} In addition, despite the changes that four current teachers saw as negatively impacting the school system in Villa Juarez, all of current teachers interviewed viewed education in the schools as also undergoing many positive changes. For example, many teachers had conversed with some of their former students, some of whom returned to Villa Juarez from the United States, temporarily or permanently. These teachers agreed that their students’ education was not in vain: “So, what they learned here, they used it over there, the knowledge […]. The education in our country is good as well. Not everything is bad.”\textsuperscript{34}

**Former Students**

Although the federal government focused in the 1980s on eliminating the social and regional gaps in the quality of education in rural and urban sectors, some informants found that recent academic quality in the schools was debatable.\textsuperscript{35} A former student claimed that the curricula were “many years behind advanced nations.” Under the paradigm of globalization, countries are interested in measuring themselves against other nations in terms of how educated their populations are. This is used as a way of gauging

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\textsuperscript{33} Ibid. “Lo moldeamos a nuestro gusto, en otra palabra.”

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid. “Entonces, lo que estudiaron aquí, si lo aprendieron y lo aplican allá, los conocimientos. […] Si es buena también la educación de nuestro país. No todo es malo.”

their competitiveness in global markets. The comparison of Mexican education to that of advanced countries thus demonstrates the influence of globalization in the consciousness of Villa Juarez residents. One former student described the current educational system in the town to that of a Third World country and disconnected from the town’s reality:

[...] the curricula are not adequate. They reflect that of a third-world country, that has not advanced in terms of education because the people that establish the systems of education have not lived the reality of the communities, the economic or cultural reality of the towns. [...] The quality of education is not adequate because, for example with history, it has been written by those in power and they have not made it a reality. Therefore, there is no equilibrium with respect to the real history of the towns, the real history of our country.36

Despite the claims of two student informants as to the debatable quality of education in the schools, some other changes appeared to be positive. The introduction of more services and “experts” in the schools was a sign of improvement from decades earlier to some former students. Vocational orientation did not exist in schools in the 1970s and early 1980s, so choosing a vocation was strongly dependent on parents, according to another student.37 The appearance of psychologists as experts in conjunction with education brought about more services for students. As one teacher reported: “a psychologist visits them to orient them as to their future plans, what routes they can take

36 INT36, interview. Mas sin embargo, el plan de estudios no es el adecuado. Es de un país tercермundista, que no se ha avanzado en cuanto a la educación porque las gentes que implantan los sistemas de estudios no han vivido la realidad de las comunidades, la realidad de la situación tanto económica como cultural de los pueblos. [...] La calidad de educación no es la adecuada porque, empezando por la historia, la historia se ha escrito de acuerdo a quienes han regido el poder. Entonces no hay un equilibrio en cuanto a lo que es la historia real de los pueblos, la historia real de nuestro país.”

37 INT8, interview.
[…] And back in those days, they would give you the classes and you either passed or failed them. And that was it.”

The quantity of education had also increased in Villa Juarez, over time. The emphasis on quality and quantity are trends in globalization, with increasing focus on educating everyone. This has led to not only increased federal resources to education, but also increased enrollments. Some of these enrollments may also be affected by the social program PROGRESA, the Education, Health and Nutrition Program (Programa de Educación, Salud y Alimentación), begun in 1997, which provides monetary incentives to families to stimulate attendance and academic performance among students in marginalized areas (see Chapter 7 for more on this program).

Even with the government’s push for mandatory schooling, schools in Villa Juarez initially struggled with attendance (see Chapter 6 for more on enrollment trends in Villa Juarez schools). The concept of education as a social need was slow to become embedded in this rural, agrarian setting. This perspective began to change with the expansion of education. One student shared the difference in how students perceived education in the past:

In the end, many [children] started to go to school. And many others would not go; they would stay with their father in the fields. That was the difficulty we had, and my father would say: “today you won’t be going because you’re going to be helping me.” Because we were always in the

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38 INT32, interview. “[…] tiene un sicólogo que los orienta, de que cuáles son sus [planes], por donde le pueden dar, qué camino seguir. Y en aquellos días no. Te daban las clases para que las pasaras o las reprobases. Y hasta allí.”

fields, we didn’t see school with much importance. We would not go anywhere. We never thought about tomorrow …

According to an informant, the changing mentality of Villa Juarez residents about the value of education has also contributed to families currently sending and keeping their children in school.

For two former students, the fact that their parents had no education became a motivation for them to continue their education. One student added: “my father did not agree because he thought, if [they] were able to survive without any education, why wouldn’t [I] be able to survive?” Thus, one of the main changes in how generations viewed the purpose of education was the inherent value of having an education. The mandatory nature of primary and later secondary schooling in the nation may have contributed to the understanding of the importance of getting at least a basic education, if not beyond that. The expansion of education, as more countries moved into basic education for all, primarily through providing increasing levels of schooling, followed global trends.

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40 INT12, interview. “Al último ya empezaba a ir mucha gente a la escuela, muchos niños. Y muchos no iban, muchos se quedaban con el papa a andar en la agricultura. Era la dificultad que teníamos, y mi papá decía: “ahora no va para porque me va venir a ayudar.” Por eso la escuela, pues como uno todo el tiempo andaba en la agricultura, la escuela no la miraba uno con mucho empeño. Pues no salía Ud. a ninguna parte. Nunca pensaba en mañana. […].”

41 INT6, interview. “[…] mi papa no estaba muy de acuerdo porque [pensaba]: “si nosotros pudimos sobrevivir sin saber nada, porque Uds. no van a poder sobrevivir?”
Technology

Some changes experienced by the student population and in the town were related to the introduction of new technology and driven by globalization. Perspectives on whether technology was beneficial or harmful to students were expressed in the interviews.

Current Teachers

While some teachers (four) saw technology as a sign of progress in education, other teachers saw it as also encouraging rebellious behavior in children. Foreign ideas, spread quickly over the media, were identified as negatively influencing children behavior:

Foreign ideas we are being exposed to, the media, the infamous Internet, have a lot of influence. A child’s way of thinking is no longer that of a child […] the media is influencing that a lot, television more than anything, which is responsible for spreading more of those same types of problems.42

The impact of technology on students, the fact that some may have access to computers (in their home or elsewhere), also affected teachers: “Students are learning about computers and teachers have to catch up to them.”43 Technology is a central vehicle for globalization. For nations and for companies, technological advantage is important in

42 INT15, interview. “Las ideas extranjeras que van llegando, los medios de comunicación, el famoso Internet, está influyendo mucho. Y las ideas de los niños ya no son de niños. […] está influyendo mucho los medios de comunicación, la televisión más que nada, que es la que difunde más problemas de ese tipo.”

43 INT18, interview. “Los estudiantes están aprendiendo computación y los maestros los tienen que alcanzar.”
securing “key roles in the global system of capital accumulation.” In addition, in the global job market, employers increasingly seek to hire people with technological skills.

Former Students

The pervasiveness of technology brought about by globalization and the increasing ease of access to the Internet and alternative communication, such as cell phones, led to education becoming more valuable in the eyes of residents. In addition, many students and educators understood the value of going to school to learn about technology and using technology to complement the educational experience. One student with only primary education believed strongly in education as a way of learning about the indispensable technological advances of the modern world and noted how necessary they were to function in today’s society and to connect with the rest of the world. Similarly, four other teachers noted the introduction of advancements in technology in the classroom as a benefit to students.

Despite the possible harm that technology introduced to youth, the need to become conversant in it was not really a matter of choice for schools, if they were to prepare students for current times. Those stakeholders (seven) that addressed technology in the interviews were conscious of this and many called for more control rather than isolating youth from technology.


45 INT12, interview.
In the past, many people would not venture out of the town, they would not get out. … today, in order for you to go to San Luis or anywhere else, they ask for more than preparatoria; you need to know computers, you need to know Internet, you need to know other more advanced studies.\textsuperscript{46}

**Government Officials**

Town government officials claimed few schools existed that did not have computers.\textsuperscript{47} This was a matter of pride and demonstrated that the town was not too far behind others, in terms of technology. Town officials believed it was important for teachers to have knowledge of computers,\textsuperscript{48} whether they were in good working condition was not disclosed, however.

**Loss of Traditional Values**

**Former Teachers**

While six former teachers pointed to changes in student conduct as changes in the schools, other teachers reported that drugs were present in the student environment, something that had only been a problem recently. Thus, exposure to television, the Internet, and other influences related to globalization were thought to be responsible for the negative changes in student behavior in Villa Juarez.

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid. “[antes] mucha gente no salía para fueras del pueblo, no salía. Y ahorita, ya ve la actualidad ahorita pues para vida de Ud. ir a San Luis o a otro lado, pues ya le piden ni la preparatoria; necesita ya que sepa computadoras, que sepa Internet, que sepa otros estudios más arriba.”


\textsuperscript{48} INT4, interview.
Two teachers pointed to educational reforms that eliminated the civics component from the primary school curricula as particularly damaging to students’ moral education. Importantly, each administration that came into power at the national level implemented its own reforms. The 1982 reform combined three courses, geography, history, and civics into a single social science course. Although these subjects reverted to three separate courses in 1993, the repercussions of the lack of a civics course during that ten-year period was noted by some former and current teachers as an extremely detrimental practice that affected many students.49 One current teacher claimed that many students who are now professionals and did not get civics courses in school “remained empty.” They were unfamiliar with their history and values.50 The lack of emphasis on civic acts was worrisome to one particular teacher:

[...] the impact is greatest in the social aspects than in what is being taught: grammar is being taught, math is being taught, and biology and physics and chemistry are being taught. But the impact it has on society is very great because [...] in a civic act, if you are to commemorate Independence Day September 16, you no longer have the same [number of] people celebrating [...] and the civic act no longer has that strength, that enthusiasm. It starts losing, if you will, the civic value.51

One teacher commented that the effects were apparent later in life, when students did not display proper manners and respect for others. Social disintegration was a concern of

49 INT3, interview.

50 Ibid., “quedaron en vacío.”

51 INT28, interview. “[...] el impacto está más en relación a lo social, que lo que se está dando: la gramática se está dando, la aritmética se está dando, y la biología y la física y la química se están dando. Pero el impacto en la sociedad es muy grande porque [...] en un acto cívico, si tú vas a conmemorar el 16 de Septiembre pues ya no es la misma [cantidad de] gente [...] y el acto cívico ya no tiene esa fuerza, ese entusiasmo. Se va perdiendo, si tú quieres, hasta el valor cívico.”
several teachers, who viewed influences from abroad as particularly damaging to developing respectful students.

Current Teachers

While some current teachers saw both the influence of the United States culture and the effects of globalization on the migrating younger generations as detrimental to traditional values, like former teachers, they still acknowledged positive aspects of migration, such as alleviated poverty in the town. Nevertheless, one teacher pointed to the emergence of gangs in Villa Juarez as another negative aspect:

“It’s good that the United States exists, because it has helped. Thirty-five years ago, I was young and financially the town was doing very badly, people’s livelihood was based on agriculture. Before, people wore patched clothes. [But there has been a] repercussion in how people live financially; and it’s because poverty in the U.S. is different. Poverty here stems from unemployment. [Now] we feel the influence, we see better houses. If Villa Juarez depended on agriculture [alone], living conditions would be more precarious; but the negative [aspects of people migrating to the U.S. and returning has been the emergence of] gangs, drug consumption, family disintegration.52

Five current teachers brought up family disintegration as one factor they saw increase during their time working in Villa Juarez. Two of these teachers worked closely with students in the albergue, most of whom came from broken families or from families that were too impoverished to support them. Nevertheless, the growing phenomenon of

52 INT3, interview. “Qué bueno que esta Estados Unidos, porque si ha ayudado. Hace 35 años, yo estaba chico y económicamente [el pueblo] estaba muy mal, la gente vivía de puro campo. Antes [se traía] la ropa parchada. [Ha habido una] repercusión en cómo la gente vive económicamente; y es que el pobre en Estados Unidos es diferente. La pobreza aquí era porque no había de donde trabajar. [Ahora] se nota la influencia, hay mejores casas. Si Villa Juárez estuviera manteniéndose de agricultura [nada mas] hubiera condiciones más precarias; pero lo negativo, pandillas, consumo drogas, desintegración familiar [existe].”
family disintegration in Villa Juarez, as it was identified by one of the teachers, was due to a great majority of students whose parents resided in the United States, or who frequently travelled back and forth across the border.\textsuperscript{53} As a result, many children were living with family members, such as aunts and uncles or grandparents. As a result of these arrangements, children suffered from separation from their parents and had to adapt to a new family. When only the father migrated, women assumed the role of both parents.\textsuperscript{54} Thus, the family structure was deeply affected by migration patterns generated by opportunities in the globalized market. By the time the present study was done, however, younger people from the town were migrating to the United States and their children were more likely to be born there. As a result, these families stayed intact, but they did not live in Villa Juarez.\textsuperscript{55} Four of the current teachers asserted that there was a sense that family values were being lost, and that “there is not enough respect because no authority [figure] exists in the home.”\textsuperscript{56}

The loss of control of children by the parents has been viewed as leading to discipline problems, but foreign ideas were also highlighted as encouraging rebellious behavior. The idea of children’s rights surfaced in discussions among teachers as they

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{56} INT15, interview. “[…] no hay el respeto lo suficiente porque no hay una autoridad en el hogar.”
analyzed the reasons for the changes in their classroom behaviors.\textsuperscript{57} Due, in part, to the Internet, children have been exposed to the fact that they have certain rights and that they can protect themselves from their parents, according to this teacher. One teacher averred that children can also learn to manipulate the system and use their “rights” to turn the police on their parents. Although the teacher used the experience of one Villa Juarez parent who lived in the United States with his daughter, he believed that such examples negatively influenced students in Villa Juarez.

The effect of returning migrants to the town was also seen to be a cause of concern for some teachers. One teacher claimed that children with behavioral problems were sent back to Mexico either as punishment or to reform themselves. The influence of these students on Villa Juarez students was viewed as damaging to the culture of the town: “It’s common now to want to imitate styles, they want to build a house like those [in the U.S.], and the traditional way of life is vanishing; we’ve been losing the individual characteristic of Villa Juarez because of the U.S.”\textsuperscript{58}

Two teachers claimed they noted changes in student behaviors which they attributed to various factors. For example, one teacher saw less interest among parents in their children’s education. Similarly, another teacher contended that some parents would promise to take their children to the United States once they completed their secondary schooling. Thus, he argued, this created a disinterest in the students to continue their

\textsuperscript{57} INT15, interview.

\textsuperscript{58} INT3, interview. “Se da ahora que quieren imitar modas, quieren hacer una casa como allá, y se va perdiendo típico; la característica inicial de Villa Juárez se ha ido perdiendo por Estados Unidos.”
studies beyond secondary level and no incentive for excelling in their academic performance, so long as they got by marginally.  

**Illegal Narcotics and Trade**

One of the most prominent changes mentioned among stakeholders was illegal drugs. Globalization and trade of drugs or goods have opened the door to illegal activity and new markets of users among vulnerable populations, particularly, youth, throughout the world. Three former students spoke about the presence of drugs in the schools. The explanations for why some students in Villa Juarez used drugs varied: family disintegration, influence from United States youth, and popular trends.

**Former Students**

One student described the “poisoning” and “corruption” of the youth as shameless. Two of the three former students had siblings in the school and thus were privy to what went on in secundaria and preparatoria. One spoke about drug addiction not existing when he was in school and that it seemed to be a fashion statement nowadays. Another student commented:

> […] there is a lot of drug addiction, even if we don’t want to admit it sometimes. […] I have heard it because I have brothers in secundaria and they have told me. So it is sad …, the separation, that family disintegration that exists here; migration in the municipality may be part

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59 INT15, interview.

60 INT36, interview.

61 INT24, interview.
of the reason. In addition, you have the influence of the youth that come from the United States; we have many who come in December, unfortunately already corrupt, and in one way or another they also badly influence our young people here. \(^{62}\)

Similar to some former and current teachers, two student interviewees saw changes in values as a critical point about the attitudes of the student population in Villa Juarez. Although they provided no explanation, these students viewed teachers and U.S. migrants as responsible for these changes. One student attributed the fact that young people were lacking in manners to the influence of youth from the United States. \(^{63}\) Teachers who did not participate in civic activities or who did so indifferently were also seen as bad influences as they were not able to “provide students with an example of historic and cultural life.” \(^{64}\)

**Government Officials**

The United States’ influence on local young people was also viewed by a government official as an “imbalance of two cultures”: [students] want to have fun, in excess, and they imitate youth from the United States. \(^{65}\) There was also a general

\(^{62}\) INT11, interview. “[…] hay mucha drogadicción, aunque uno de repente no la quiera ver. […] Y lo he escuchado porque yo tengo hermanos en secundaria y ellos me han platicado. Entonces, sí es triste. […] Esa separación, esa desintegración familiar que vivimos, porque hay mucha migración aquí en el municipio, a lo mejor es parte [de la razón]. A parte de que también influye mucho los jóvenes que vienen de Estados Unidos, porque estamos ahora sí que bombardeados en diciembre de que llegan muchos y pues desafortunadamente ellos ya vienen contaminados y de una manera u otra pues también llegan y contaminan lo que tenemos aquí, a nuestros jóvenes de aquí.”

\(^{63}\) Ibid.

\(^{64}\) INT36, interview.

\(^{65}\) INT4, interview.
impression that young people from the United States who had not done well in school or who had become delinquent were sent back to Villa Juarez either by their parents or by the United States government or police: “they return people if they misbehaved [in the U.S.].” Therefore, one government official emphasized the need to “ground the youth” and not let the students be “influenced by [U.S.] customs,” which he identified as drug addiction. Although no evidence was offered, informants suggested that the presence of drugs in the schools and the rebellious youth behavior all stemmed from United States influence.

**Influence of Globalization on Student Aspirations for the Future**

Globalization led to changes in the town that in turn affected students’ future aspirations. The introduction of migration as a route to economic mobility was reinforced by the *Bracero* Program and later with the increased competition of global markets with small, local agriculture that made sustaining livelihood and family increasingly difficult. For the most part, the educational system in Villa Juarez seems unable to compete with the aspirations of young people migrate. This is due, in part, to the entrenched culture of migration in the town and the fact that decades of Villa Juarez workers in the United States have become living proofs of success. The influence of these workers and the ideas they carry with them from the United States has created positive images of the American

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66 INT23, interview: “regresan gente para acá que allá se porta mal.”

67 INT1, interview.
dream as the best way to achieve economic success with the least investment (time, money, and risk).

Current Teachers

According to four current teachers, the aspirations of Villa Juarez students were fairly limited. When students were younger, they aspired to be like their fathers. However, as they grew older, they were influenced by their environment, access to television, and the internet and their aspirations changed. In particular, globalization seems to have affected student aspirations in Villa Juarez, influenced as well by the connection to the United States. Francisco Alba explains the changing social structure in the country: “beginning with the incorporation and imitation of modes of consumption from the developed countries, cultural penetration and domination become rooted and transformed into attitudes and 'modern' life-styles.”

The number of trained professionals in Villa Juarez is small, making it difficult to fill even positions in the local government. Some students do aspire to be professionals, such as doctors and more commonly, teachers; some young girls aspire to be secretaries; some students did not aspire to a profession but only to finish their preparatoria. Many students did not have the means to pursue a higher education, so their job prospects became even more limited. Of the average graduating class of 16 students, about half

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68 INT25, interview.

69 Alba, “Mexico's International Migration,” 506.
would continue their studies.\textsuperscript{70} And even those who were reluctant to leave to the United States felt the need to go for financial reasons.\textsuperscript{71}

The few students who became professionals left Villa Juarez to practice in either urban centers in Mexico or in the United States. During election time, almost all candidates campaigning for the \textit{presidencia} of the municipality vow to hire villajuarenzes to local government positions. However, once they are elected they are forced to hire professionals from outside the town and the municipality to form their governing body:

There are no professionals. […] I helped out in the municipal government for three years, and we could not find a young woman for a secretary’s position in Villa Juarez. […] So if today the new president […] is going to have to employ lawyers, engineers, architects to form his governing body and there are none in Villa Juarez, he will have to go outside the municipality to get these people.\textsuperscript{72}

According to five of the current teachers, most of their students aspire to be like their \textit{paisanos} in the United States –travel to the United States to work make their dreams come true faster. The students who reside in the town are influenced by the returning migrants that travel to the United States and return with new cars and stories of their jobs and benefits, which take longer to achieve in Villa Juarez.

[For] 80 percent, their aspirations are going to the United States. Why? Because their friends, young people, 20, 22 years old, leave. They spend two, three years over there, and they return with a new car or truck. […]

\textsuperscript{70} INT35, interview.
\textsuperscript{71} INT9, interview.
\textsuperscript{72} INT15, interview. “No hay profesionistas. […] yo apoye en la presidencia 3 anos y no había muchachas para ser secretarias en Villa Juárez. […] Entonces si ahora el nuevo presidente […] va tener que ocupar licenciados, ingenieros, arquitectos para formar su cuerpo de trabajo y no los hay aquí en Villa Juárez, entonces va tener que recurrir fuera del municipio para traer gente.”
the young person who lives here, thinks: “This guy didn’t have anything and he returns with a new truck, and we can’t even buy ourselves a bike here; well, then I will leave as well.” So the aspirations of a young person are to leave because in the United States you can get many benefits in a short period of time. And here, we can work all our lives, and we won’t have even a fourth of what a person in the United States has.73

[…] one of the things that gets their attention is if their fathers send them […] a little check and here it multiplies […], and they say: “Ay! My mom went to exchange 10 dollars and got 100 pesos!” […] Already they envision leaving to the United States as soon as they get to legal age. That’s because one earns very little here. And from a very young age they are already saying, I am going to the other side. Many times it is because of their home is lacking. If they know a neighbor is building a house, how are they doing it? Because they went to the U.S. So, from a very young age they start realizing what path they have to take to avoid poverty or change their living situation.74

When students compare the possibilities of a lifestyle in the United States to their current town, the benefits of working elsewhere outweigh those of staying. One teacher claims that students see his car, an inexpensive model, and decide they need to go to the United States to work and purchase one. The vehicle is a status symbol for economic well-being, and teaching as a profession may not be as appealing as earning more money

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73 Ibid. “El 80 porciento, sus aspiraciones [son] irse a Estado Unidos. ¿Por qué motivo? Porque sus amigos, muchachos de 20 años, de 22 años se van. Duran dos, tres años por allá, y regresan con un carro último modelo o camioneta. […] el que está aquí, el muchacho joven, [piensa]: “Este muchacho no tenía nada y viene con una camioneta de último modelo, y aquí no podemos comprar ni una bicicleta, pues yo mejor me voy para allá.” Entonces las aspiraciones de un muchacho es irse porque allá se obtienen muchos beneficios en corto plazo. Y aquí podemos trabajar, pues ahora sí, toda una vida, y no vamos a tener ni la cuarta parte de la que una persona que vive en Estados Unidos ya tiene.”

74 Ibid. “[…] una de las cosas que les llama mucho la atención es si sus papás les […] mandan un chequecito y aquí se les multiplica […], y dicen: ay! mi mamá fue a cambiar 10 dólares y le dieron 100 pesos! […] Ya están con la visión de que tan pronto como cumplan la mayoría de edad, irse a los Estados Unidos. Eso es porque aquí se gana muy poco. Y desde chiquitillos se dan cuenta ellos y si su papa les platica cuánto gana diario, entonces desde muy chiquitillos ya están diciendo, me voy al otro lado. Muchas de las veces por la misma carencia que hay en la casa. Saben q un vecino está haciendo una casa, como la está haciendo? Pues porque está en el otro lado. Entonces, ya desde muy pequeños se están dando cuenta cual es el camino que hay que tomar para salir de pobres o para cambiar la situación que tienen que vivir.”
by migrating. Even for students who complete professional training, the opportunity to work in a good enterprise locally is rare, given that positions in those companies in Mexico are typically filled by relatives of existing employees in the companies. Social capital, thus, is key to acquiring a good position, as one teacher contends:

Those with no support to enter those places will not have those opportunities, and those who will enter are people who sometimes do not have the preparation, because they are the children of businessmen, companies, and godparents.75

Many students, according to two teachers, had no aspirations or did not make these known. For two teachers, it was difficult to promote education and continue encouraging students to prepare themselves, knowing that finding a position as a professional continues to be a challenge in Villa Juarez and in the country. Even so, one teacher believed that an educated person is still better off in many aspects. Nevertheless, he also claimed the country was saturated with professionals without jobs, which undermined the value of an education and a profession in the country.76 Those students that did manage to complete their degree would be faced with a slim job market for their skill set in Villa Juarez. Thus, the interest in education was minimal, and for many it was not worthwhile to study.77

The truth is, there is no interest. Young men who have studied in the [U.S] have come and told our youth: “You should study and educate yourselves."

75 Ibid. “El que no tienen quien lo apoye para ingresar a esos lugares no va tener las oportunidades, y van entrar las personas que a veces ni preparadas están, porque son hijos de los empresarios, de las compañías, de los compadres.”

76 Ibid.

77 INT35, interview.
Don’t leave to the States.” And some respond, “So why did you leave?” What can they say? It’s difficult to respond.78

Thus, the lack of opportunity in the town and the impact of the global market affect student aspirations to develop professional skills.

Current teachers claimed that education prepared students for making an impact in the wider society, for developing responsible people, to grow culturally, and even to make a name for Villa Juarez outside of Mexico.79 Nevertheless, teachers also noted the difficulty of preparing students to work in the town and contribute to it. For one particular teacher, the educational structure in Villa Juarez exacerbated the difficulty of preparing students for a future career or training that could keep them in the town. The schooling in the town was geared as a pipeline that fed into higher education, which trained students in professions for which there was no job market in Villa Juarez. Further, no university outlet exists in Villa Juarez. No options for exist for continuing in higher education, further prompting migration, if only to the capital. Therefore, he viewed terminal schooling as necessary to prepare students for a vocation or help them develop as entrepreneurs.

[…] INEGI and IFE (government agencies that oversee the census and elections, respectively) were hiring young people with high school degrees, and they are working, but it is temporary work, one or two months. […] That is the problem. If there was a big company here, or several companies soliciting young people with high school diplomas, I

78 INT15, interview. “Sinceramente no hay interés. Han venido muchachos de Estados Unidos, así jóvenes, que han estudiado la escuela allí y les hacen ver a los muchachos: “Muchachos, estudien, prepárense. No se vayan a Estados Unidos.” Y algunos dicen, “Bueno, ¿y Ud. porqué se fue?” Entonces, ¿qué les pueden responder? Entonces, pues, esta difícil.”

79 INT9, interview; INT30, interview.
can assure you that the school would be full, because everyone would be thinking in working or studying to work later, or studying to continue studying—whichever of the two options. But we only have one option here: you finish high school and you have to continue so you can do something with it. Or you can go to the U.S. Or you can stay here, but if you stay, all you do is hang out on the street, without doing anything. That is reality. [...] Why is it that in San Luis, the capital, there are so many schools and they have students? Because the job sources are there. And schools there are probably in high demand. But here, what do we gain?

Interestingly, a maquiladora did exist in Villa Juarez for a brief period of about one to two years before it shut down. Two interviewees saw it as a great opportunity for jobs and economic development in Villa Juarez that had not been successfully harnessed. In this way, globalization also influenced job creation in the town, but for several reasons the venture was not profitable and the company left. Some interviewees speculated as to the reasons the company left; one reason was that it could not find workers in Villa Juarez and neighboring areas to work for the wages they offered.

Clearly, the scarcity of work options in Villa Juarez limits the aspirations of students in the town. Teachers pointed to the job possibilities for students who remained: working in stores or another commercial enterprise, construction, a trade, or bricklayer. Although the secundaria was geared to agriculture, raising farm animals, and sales of byproducts, agriculture was not a viable source of income for many villajuarenzes.

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80 INT35, Interview. “[…] INEGI y lo del IFE, están contratando jóvenes que tienen bachillerato y están trabajando, pero son trabajos temporales. Uno o dos meses. […] Ese es el problema. Si aquí hubiera una empresa grande, o varias empresas que solicitaran a jóvenes con bachillerato, yo te aseguro que la escuela estaría llena, porque todos están pensando en trabajar o estudiar para luego trabajar, o bien estudiar para continuar estudiando—cualquiera de las dos opciones. Pero aquí nada más hay una opción: terminas de estudiar la prepa y te tienes que seguir para que puedas hacer algo, o bien, te vas a Estados Unidos. O bien, te quedas aquí… pero aquí nada mas andas en la calle, sin hacer nada. Esa es la realidad. […] ¿Porque en San Luis, en la capital, hay tantas escuelas, y tienen alumnos? Porque las fuentes de trabajo allá están. Y seguro que las escuelas tienen mucha demanda. Pero aquí, ¿qué ganamos?”
According to one teacher. Because of the unpredictability of farming, it was not considered a secure livelihood.\(^{81}\) Although sources for jobs were limited, some teachers believed that practicing a profession or vocation in Villa Juarez was still a possible goal for students. However, one interviewee acknowledged the possibilities were limited:

> If there were job sources, small businesses or big ones, maybe not so many people would leave for the United States because many people resist having to go but necessity forces them, to the brink of danger, because it is dangerous to pass without documents.\(^{82}\)

> We dream that professionals or trade workers will surface. Mexico does not live on professionals alone. Even the smallest job is important. A person can be a baker or a doctor and both are important.\(^{83}\)

According to Agustin Escobar Latapi, one of the driving forces in globalization comes from the “grass roots,” where the supply and demand for cheap labor from Mexico, for example, the agricultural reforms and the lack of job opportunities has driven migration.\(^{84}\) The voices of current teachers point to the desire for an educational system that prepares students, with transferrable skills, to be used in another country.

\(^{81}\) INT25, interview.

\(^{82}\) INT15, interview. “Si hubiera fuentes de trabajo, pequeños negocios, o grandes, a la mejor mucha gente no se iría para Estados Unidos, porque muchas personas se resisten a irse para allá, pero la necesidad los obliga, los ahorilla al peligro, porque es un peligro fuerte pasar sin documentos.”

\(^{83}\) INT9, interview. “Tenemos el sueño de que pueden surgir profesionistas, o personas que realicen oficios. No solo de profesionistas vive México. Desde el oficio más pequeño, todos son importantes. Una persona puede ser panadero o doctor y es importante ese oficio.”

\(^{84}\) Escobar Latapí, *Nación, Estado, Comunidad*, 16-17.
Former Students

Former students’ aspirations differed according to the time period they lived in Villa Juarez. For example, one former student who attended school in the late 1950s claimed that students simply aspired to become literate, and the United States was still not an influence: “They aspired only to read and write, that was all children aspired to, not really going to the United States.” Aspirations of former students who attended school in more recent decades were geared towards professional careers or trades: chef, psychologist, archeologist, veterinarian, school teacher, lawyer, and building schools, among others. Four of the former students did reach their goals and none felt that younger generations should be discouraged in pursuing a career. However, one student claims he had no aspirations during his school years and was not mature enough to recognize it. Most recently, however, the aspirations of many Villa Juarez students are focused on migration.

The majority [of my classmates] would talk of leaving [to the U.S]. In fact, of those that graduated from preparatoria in my generation […] there are three or five of us that have a profession and that still live here. […] everyone spoke about the United States. There was not one person without an older brother or friend that would return without a truck.

85 INT12, interview. “[Aspiraban] pues nomas en saber a leer y escribir, eran todas las aspiraciones de las criaturas. Pues [irse a] Estados Unidos, casi no.”

86 INT24, interview.

87 INT7, interview by author, Villa Juarez, San Luis Potosi, June 7, 2006. “La mayoría [de mis compañeros de la escuela] hablaban de irse. De hecho, de toda mi generación, de los que salimos de la preparatoria […] somos como tres o cinco de los que tenemos una profesión y que estamos todavía aquí. […] todo el mundo hablaba nomas de Estados Unidos. No había ya el que no tenía un hermano o un amigo más grande que ya venía en su camioneta.”
Although most former students understand the limitations of the job market in Villa Juarez and two students that were returning migrants even expressed their desire to return to the United States to work again, others lament that younger generations are not more proactively seeking to work, if not in the town, in the country.

[My classmates] aspired to leave and work over there. [Some teachers] always would tell us not to be conformists and for us not to depend on mom and dad, and that the United States was not everything, that we could make it here, too, and that we could also stay here and make something for ourselves. They would also tell my classmates not to believe the American Dream, which sometimes brought nothing good, but sometimes they had their father, or siblings over there that would persuade them [to leave].

Emigration used to happen with older men that went to work. And in those days, there were still people who wanted to become teachers, or administrators, all of the professions: doctors, lawyers, everything. Those are the classmates I remember getting a profession. […] But they are from Cerritos. There are less in Villa Juarez. This could be because the town is smaller; many have become professionals and have ended up in the United States. They don’t exercise their profession.

For young women, pursuing a career was more challenging in the past than for men due to social beliefs that women will eventually be committed to raising a family and thus, will not benefit from a career. Though a strong believer in education, one parent

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88 INT11, interview. [Aspiraban a irse] para trabajar. [Algunos maestros] siempre nos decían que no fuéramos tan conformistas y que no estuviéramos esperanzados a papá y a mamá, y que Estados Unidos no lo era todo, que aquí también se podía, y que aquí también podíamos luchar por tener algo. También les decían a mis compañeros que no se dejaran llevar por ese sueño americano, que a veces no traía nada bueno, y pues… igual, a veces tenían a papá, o hermanos por allá y eran los que los inducían mucho.”

89 INT8, interview. “Antes la emigración era de señores que iban a trabajar, ya grandes. Y en ese tiempo como que todavía había quien quería ser maestro, quien quería ser administrador, todas las profesiones: médicos, licenciados, todo. Son los que recuerdo de mis compañeros que recibieron profesiones. […] Pero son de Cerritos. Pero aquí en Villa Juárez como que son menos. Tal vez porque el pueblo es más chico y muchos han sido profesionistas y también terminan en Estados Unidos. No ejercen.”
evidenced the concerns of many and did not allow his daughter to travel to San Luis Potosi, the capital, to continue her education.\textsuperscript{90} One female student asserted:

It took a lot of work to convince my parents to let me go to school in San Luis. Back in the day, people would say: “Why does a woman study if at the end of it all, she will get married and have children, and her husband will provide for her. What good will an education do her? Why should we waste our money on her education?”\textsuperscript{91}

When asked about their work options, former students spoke about the limited possibilities and the uncertainty and risk of the seasonal agricultural enterprise. Opening up the Mexican markets to foreign competition and the elimination of subsidies had also led to United States markets typically setting a low price for corn that did not allow farmers to survive.\textsuperscript{92} Thus, the rural environment of Villa Juarez was also affected by the globalization of the markets because of supply and demand. Students, like teachers, agreed on the income disparity as a reason students chose migration to the United States as an option for their future. To find a suitable life, migrating was seen by one student as a must: “[...] if you are not a conformist, you have to leave or continue your education. [...] If you already left and have some capital, you can return to start a business or to circulate that money [...] To work day to day or work for someone, definitely, only if you

\textsuperscript{90} INT11, interview.

\textsuperscript{91} INT8, interview. “Me costó mucho trabajo convencer [a mis padres] de irme a estudiar a San Luis. Antes se decía aquí… [porque] hasta cierto punto eran machistas los papás: “Para que estudia una mujer, si al fin que su destino es casarse y tener hijos, y su marido la va mantener. ¿De qué le va servir la educación? ¿Para qué gastamos en estudiar?”

\textsuperscript{92} INT6, interview.
are a conformist.”

The other options were the military, or getting a higher education outside the town, which for one student was scary and implausible since a graduate from secundaria or even preparatoria may not have had networks in those particular cities where the educational institutions were located.

Also, as former and current teachers had, former students also identified several aspects of the changes to education in Villa Juarez that were components of globalization: the advancements in technology, the influence of the United States on youth culture and attitudes, the disparities in wages that drive migration, as well as the markets that drive agricultural prices.

Government Officials

Although most of the town leaders interviewed recognized Villa Juarez’ depopulation, they also believed that improvements were possible in the town to secure a better future. The development of new economic opportunities was a recent initiative to try to stimulate the economy of the town and thus provide work for villajuarenzes.

The act of convincing people that we need to stay in our country and work, that the salaries will not be the same, but that you have your own business, you dedicate yourself to produce whatever, from candy, to doing

93 INT32, interview. “De una forma u otra [en Estados Unidos] tienes más facilidad de compra, de trabajo. Todo eso que aquí aunque lo tienes pero, por ejemplo, si allá en una semana ganas $400 a $500 en una semana, aquí los $500 los vas a ganar en un mes. Y eso quizás si tienes un trabajo de gobierno, sí tienes alguna seguridad. Pero una persona que trabaja en el campo estará ganando $200 al mes. Entonces, de una forma o de otra, si no eres conformista, tienes que salirte o a estudiar. O a trabajar, pero tienes que salirte de aquí. […] Si ya fuiste e hiciste un capital, puedes regresar a poner un negocio o darle movimiento al dinero que ahorraste, entonces te puedes quedar aquí. Pero a trabajar al día o hacer empleado aquí, definitivamente, solamente que te conformes.”

94 INV24, interview.
carpentry, from working the land, raising animals, all of that [...] is a type of business. You don’t need a fortune to start it and live off of it. [...] If you have self-employment, which is the ideal, you are not thinking of other things. You are not thinking of vices, you are not thinking of distractions. The work you do dignifies you [...] I am not of the idea that I will reduce emigration. That is not the point. The purpose is to produce and to produce [using the resources known here] to people [...].

Government-sponsored programs were available, according to interviewees currently serving in the government, to develop projects to stimulate the economy, but, as one respondent claimed, there had been no interest. Some ideas shared by the interview participants revolved around capitalizing on what was available in the Villa Juarez environment and the skills learned in the secundaria or agricultural training. Some programs were just ideas at the time, but they had not been launched at the time of this writing. Former students presented several ideas, such as an ecotourism initiative that also enlisted the participation of the secundaria. Not only was lack of interest an issue, the salaries offered for most jobs in the town were not on a par with U.S. salaries; this therefore discouraged people from participation. On the other hand, it was also difficult for entrepreneurs to hire people in the town because of the expectation for higher wages.

95 INT21, interview. “El hecho de ir metiendo en la mente de la gente que necesitamos trabajar aquí mismo, que no son los mismos salarios los que se tienen, pero que si tienes tu propio empleo, te dedicas a producir lo que sea, ya sea desde dulces, desde la carpintería, desde el campo, la ganadería, todo eso, [...] es una forma de [empresa]. [...] no necesitas una fortuna para empezar y poder sostenerlo. [...] Si tienes auto empleos, que sería lo ideal, no andas pensando en otras cosas. No andas pensando en otros vicios, no andas pensando en distraerte. Te dignifica el trabajo que haces. [...] No soy de la idea de decir voy a reducir la emigración. Eso no es el propósito. El propósito es producir y vaya que producir con las características de la mayoría de la gente. [...] Eso es el reto más importante, de allí se deprende mucho. Se mejora la nutrición, [...], se mejora la condición física. Es muy importante en toda la población.”

96 INT1, interview.

97 INT23, interview.
set by the expectations introduced by migrants working in the United States. In addition, the lack of investment in the land was viewed by government officials as a critique of the younger generations.

People are used to working little for a good salary; it is difficult to pay people a good salary here. That is why the fields are abandoned … Only the older generation continues to fight, and almost no one from the younger generation.98

In the communities, love for one’s country is dying; there is no interest in working in the fields… the young person has no interest in the land.99

Government leaders did agree that salaries were important: “In order to progress as a country, one should have a well-paying job as a professional.”100 However, while the idea of changing the mentality of students and villajuarenzes was prominent among town officials, there was also much discouragement and not much clarity as to how to bring this about:

It has been good because we have been supporting ourselves with the help of the United States. However, people need to get it in their mind that they need to invest in order to “take off.” In Villa Juarez, we are afraid to invest even a little money here.101

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98 INT20, interview. “La gente está acostumbrada a trabajar poco por un buen salario; a la gente de aquí sale difícil pagarle bien. Por eso, el campo está abandonado […] Solo la gente de antes sigue luchando, y la gente joven, casi nadie.”

99 INT23, interview. “En las comunidades se va perdiendo el amor a la patria; ya no les llama atención ni les interesa el trabajo de campo… el joven no tienen interés en la tierra.”

100 INT1, interview. “Para poder avanzar como país, se debe tener un trabajo bien pagado como profesionista.”

101 INT20, interview. “Ha sido bueno porque estamos manteniéndonos [con la ayuda] de Estados Unidos. Sin embargo, la gente necesita que se meta en su mente que necesita invertir para poder despegar. En Villa Juárez tenemos temor por invertir poco dinero aquí.”
Conclusion

Former and current teachers, former students and local government officials all provided varying perspectives on the purpose of education in Villa Juarez and the changes that education has undergone as a result of globalization. The influence of the globalization process was evident in the transnational elements affecting the small town: the introduction of technology, the Internet, cell phones, the interchange between the United States markets affecting the town’s economy, the migration of workers and families, and the cultural influences that effected changes in the town and its people. For the younger people, technology, the frequently unsuccessful efforts to increase quality and quantity in education for all in the country, the influence of the United States, and the presence of drugs have been critical components in the town.

Interview participants believed education was valuable for students, independently of whether migration was in their plans or not. The skills that many respondents considered important for schools to teach were also transferable to any setting, a necessary component of training global citizens. Current teachers noted that education aimed to create students that were critical thinkers and could be independent learners. Several of the stakeholders generally viewed students’ loss of traditional values and the influence of United States as negative. However, few of the participants agreed that students should be encouraged to stay in Villa Juarez. Overwhelmingly, they could offer students few choices as to what they could do with their education if they were to stay. This suggests that despite the reforms to the educational system in order to improve
quality and extend education to all Mexicans, in Villa Juarez, and other towns affected by globalization schooling has not been able to compete with migration as a better option for a future. In this respect, the global economy has served to undermine Mexican educational system.
CHAPTER 9
CONCLUSION

Entire villages and towns are depopulated in Mexico’s northern and central states due to migration stimulated by economic stagnation. Although migrants’ infusion of financial investments in their home communities’ economies are beneficial, this demographic trend has resulted in a decrease in school-age populations and has deeply affected the prospect of future economic growth in these regions. In the town of Villa Juarez in the state of San Luis Potosi, the decrease in the school-age population in recent decades has led to schools closing or consolidating. Migration from Villa Juarez intensified after the Bracero Program of 1942; this, along with the family planning campaign of the 1970s, contributed to depopulation and consequent school closures. By 2006, the town of Villa Juarez and several other schools across the municipality had closed shut their doors to hundreds of children due to depleted enrollments.

The present study examined the perspectives of 38 educators, students, and policy makers who lived in Villa Juarez between 1942 and 2000. Personal interviews with these stakeholders explored whether and how their understanding of the role and purpose of education was altered by their experience of these social and demographic changes. Globalization and the culture of migration provided the conceptual frameworks to investigate this central research question. In addition, the current study presented a brief history of both national and local education policy as well as of Villa Juarez’ schools.
from the late nineteenth century to the present to contextualize the social and
demographic changes that resulted in depopulation and a diminished number of schools.
The findings of the present study suggest that, despite federal and local government
efforts to improve education in Villa Juarez by developing a system consonant with
global trends that advantages students by offering vocational training in agricultural
trades, the schools in the town could not compete with the embedded culture of migration
in the town. As a result of this inability to reorder education effectively, students
continued to aspire to migrate one day to the United States, undermining the educational
system.

**Conceptual Frameworks**

Globalization has been defined in many ways. John H. Coatsworth represents one
predominant view that globalization is a phenomenon transcending national boundaries,
typified by the accelerated mobility of “people, goods or ideas”. William Kandel’s and
Douglas Massey’s culture of migration theory posits that people migrate as a way of life
in communities that have extended histories and consistently high rates of migration to
the United States. The history of Villa Juarez demonstrates economically stimulated
emigration over time that has resulted in a tradition of a “culture of migration.” This
culture of migration not only contributed to depopulation; it affected the attitudes and
aspirations of generations of students. Consequently, the current goal of an estimated 80

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percent of young people is to ultimately work in the United States.² From the time of the Bracero Program of 1942, globalizing influences were evident in the relationship that developed between Villa Juarez and the United States: the circular and permanent migration patterns; the foreign remittances; the economic stagnation; and, later, the emergence of philanthropic hometown organizations in the United States that retained active participation in their originating locales.³ By introducing the “American Dream,” returning migrants and the media inspired students to live and work in the United States. The transformation of the aspirations of future generations and how they perceived their search for a livelihood has come close to predominance in the school culture.

According to the Mexican statistics institute (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI)), increased education positively correlates with higher wages. In addition to education fostering personal development, it is an investment in one’s economic wellbeing.⁴ The parental admonishment to children that education enhances their future quality of life most often refers to the higher salaries that education generally provides. However, in Villa Juarez, this foundational tenet is undermined by the option of migrating to the United States for higher wages. Indeed, it is more likely

² Two current teachers (INT15, interview; INT30, interview) provided estimated percentages of students that aspire to one day leave to the United States.


that young people with higher levels of education that stay in Villa Juarez will make less money than their less educated peers working in the United States. Given this context, the purpose of education becomes a central question for those youth growing up in traditional rural communities that are affected by the continuous erosion of outmigration.

The migration trend that took root in Villa Juarez was not unique; it became institutionalized in many areas that were originally targeted by the Mexican government as bracero-sending regions.\(^5\) James Sandos and Harry Cross contend that the Bracero Program did not only benefit the American government by ameliorating U.S. labor shortages; the Mexican government reaped many advantages by providing an outlet for employment to help address rural poverty. In addition, the program served to quell unrest in the north and west center regions of the country that were historically rebellious due to economic and social discontent.\(^6\) By means of the Bracero Program, families in the rural countryside could be maintained with foreign wages.\(^7\) Despite the difficulties that many braceros endured, Sandos and Cross assert that “the average bracero carried away a positive impression of his experiences in the United States.”\(^8\) Even after the program

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\(^6\) Ibid. Sandos and Cross provide more context about the Cristero and Sinarquista resistance movements in those regions.

\(^7\) In a letter to the *Heroínas Mexicanas* Primary School, President Adolfo Ruiz Cortines announced his plans for the nation’s schools, emphasizing prosperity in Mexico and his preoccupation with the problems of the farming communities. He noted that two thirds of the country’s population had a livelihood in activities related to agriculture and livestock, yet received about one-fifth of the national income. Municipal town archives, January 10, 1952.

\(^8\) Sandos and Cross, “National Development and International Labour Migration,” 56.
terminated in the mid-1960s, migration continued, much of which was illegal. Over time, families that continued residing in the town normalized regular travel to the United States as part of their lives, and the pattern of migration for work established “economic interdependence” between the migrant-sending communities in Mexico and the United States.\textsuperscript{9} In addition, enclaves of migrants in the United States formed networks that facilitated further migration. Thus, exchanges resulted not only in remittances, but also in cultural influences, ideas, and practices. As Michael Orozco writes, central to globalization is the “increase in the scope and intensity of social relations” as well as in economic relationships. The tenets of globalization are vividly illustrated in the experience of Villa Juarez.\textsuperscript{10} Likewise, the normalization of migration in the town reflects a critical element in Kandel’s and Massey’s concept of a culture of migration.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

Three research collection methods were employed to investigate the central research question of the present study. These included the collection of archival material related to education from both the municipal government building and *Heroínas Mexicanas*, Villa Juarez’ oldest school, and interviews with local education stakeholders, including teachers, students, and government officials. In addition, primary research included the analysis of census and school enrollment data, and migration figures from the *Heroínas Mexicanas* and municipal archive. This information was amplified by data

\textsuperscript{9} Sandos and Cross, “National Development and International Labour Migration,” 56-57.

\textsuperscript{10} Manuel Orozco, “Globalization and Migration,” 41.
from the Mexican bureau of statistics (INEGI, Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática) and from CONAPO (Consejo Nacional de la Población), an organization that assesses the social, economic, and ethnic composition of the nation. As Norman Denzin writes, triangulating findings to strengthen the validity of interpretation is a process that helps verify an observation or meaning, using several viewpoints to analyze it. 

11 In this case, triangulation allowed the research results from archival materials, demographic data, and interviews with local stakeholders to construct a picture of the history of education and migration in the town of Villa Juarez.

Data collected from archival documents were examined using the technique of latent-content analysis. Richard Boyatzis asserts that this method examines for the meaning and interprets “the underlying aspects of the phenomenon under observation.”

12 In the present study, documents were examined to gather information about school enrollments; specific educational events; dynamics of teachers with students, parents, and government officials; and national education policies. This evaluation provided the historical framework to examine the development of schooling in Villa Juarez from the late 1800s to the present. Interviews with current and recent education stakeholders added a crucial component to the research. Census, school enrollment, and migration data provided details to track population and enrollment trends between 1942 and 2000;


these figures were then analyzed in the context of policies initiated by the school and the town that were geared to increase student personnel or convince parents to send their children to school. In the course of this analysis, multiple aspects of globalization and the culture of migration were identified.

Interviews with stakeholders in education—teachers, students, and government officials—were mined for themes related to changes in their perceptions about education in view of the demographic changes the town was undergoing during the period of their professional involvement. Several major themes related to the culture of migration and globalization emerged, revealing the relationship of these phenomena to the experience of Villa Juarez. The interviews with students provided a diversity of views about the purpose of education. These interviews also addressed the nature of students’ experiences in attending school, their aspirations and expectations for the future, current employment, and ways their educational background affected decisions in choosing a profession or job. Teachers were queried about their experiences with educational reforms and asked to discuss changes in the educational system, in student enrollments, and in the student population. Government officials offered another layer of perspectives; they were asked about the changes in the town as a whole, the effects of the depopulation on the schools, and the local government’s policies about and engagement with education.

13 Refer to Appendix A for interview protocols.
Discussion of Findings

According to respondents, depopulation in Villa Juárez could be attributed to two principal causes: migration to the U.S. for varying motives and the Mexican government’s family planning program that was vigorously promoted in the 1970s.14 Both of these factors were critical to the decline in school enrollment and the diminution of registered births in the 1980s. The Bracero Program in the 1940s propelled the earliest waves of migration from Mexico, particularly from many of the northern states. From the Program’s inception, these waves established a pattern for livelihood and travel that subsequent generations followed. Thus, from the inception of the Bracero Program until the present day, patterns of migration developed among villajuarenzes and citizens of other states in northern Mexico that became entrenched over time.

The majority (74 percent) of the villajuarenzes interviewed for the present study agreed that migration had become part of the life of the town. According to half of the interviewees, students generally aspired to leave the town for the United States. Once students finished secundaria, they prepared to migrate. According to Kandel and Massey, “the greater the involvement of a young person's family in U.S. migration, and the greater the prevalence of migratory behavior in the broader community, the greater should be the likelihood that a young person aspires to work and/or live in the U.S.” This disinclines

14 Eight interviewees mentioned the family planning campaign affecting population growth in the town; 28 mention migration as having affected the population.
students to invest in their success in Mexico by furthering their education in their home towns.15 One Villa Juarez resident described the influence of migration:

Our countrymen are the ones that have affected us in this case. They come and they dazzle the young people with their economic situation, enjoying themselves, with a big truck, a big stereo that play the songs from here to the town square. Those are the details that attract young people.16

Interviews indicated that villajuarenzes in both the U.S. and in the town have benefitted economically from the migrant labor and the remittances that characterize a culture of migration and in nations undergoing globalization. While these benefits were noted, 37 percent of the interviewees reported that the depopulation of the town was a concern. Nevertheless, they asserted that they understand families wanting or needing to migrate for financial reasons. Of these interviewees, three current teachers were also concerned with dropping enrollments in the schools but they accepted it as a “reality”. Thus, for almost 40 percent of the study’s participants, migration was accepted and understood.

Government administrators have responded to the effects of a culture of migration by closing schools with diminishing enrollments. Nevertheless, the curriculum that continues to be followed is set from the Education Ministry (SEP, Secretaría de Educación Pública), and the school does not factor in the specific situation of the town. This is so, despite the fact that a training session sponsored by the SEP revealed that


16 INT18, interview: “Los paisanos son los que nos han [afectado] en este caso. Llegan y los deslumbran [a los jóvenes] con la situación económica en que vienen ellos, disfrutando con un camionetón, un esteriozaso, que se oyen las canciones de aquí a la plaza. Y todos esos son los detalles que los muchachos van idolatrando…”
“education cannot be foreign and isolated from the social context and from the evolutionary development of the student.”

One former teacher spoke about the value of the agricultural skills gained in *secundaria* as a response to emigration, since students could use these skills in Villa Juarez. On the other hand, five interviewees pointed to learning English as necessary and positive, given the migration trend among young people.

Current teachers (45 percent) reported in their interviews that national educational policies introduced new methods of teaching that emphasized students as independent learners and abandoned rote memorization. Skills believed to be most important for students to learn, according to 79 percent of the teacher interviewees, were reading and writing, critical thinking and reasoning, English, math, and agriculture, in that order. Thus, most of the skills seen as necessary for success were also skills that were transferrable to any setting. These skills are also central to creating lifelong learners, a vision of learning closely tied to the education programs promoted since the 1980s by the World Bank and other globalization institutions. International agencies promoted this education approach that “resulted in structural and qualitative changes in education and policy.”

The emphasis on a workforce with advanced knowledge and technical training was central to Mexico’s national modernization educational agenda; increased skills were

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17 *Heroínas Mexicanas* School Archive, August 20, 1980. “La educación no puede estar ajena y aislada del contexto social y del desarrollo evolutivo del educando.”

tied to national development and competitiveness in the global market.\textsuperscript{19} According to a 1999 World Bank report on development, “knowledge, not capital, is the key to sustained economic growth and improvements in human well-being.”\textsuperscript{20} Thus, education in Villa Juarez would also seem relevant to those who are leaving, since it does provide abstract skills that are transferrable to any setting. Except for agricultural vocational training, it appears that other subjects and skills taught in Villa Juarez schools are more applicable in urban or industrial areas than in rural agrarian settings. Despite this, all (38) interviewees believed that education was important, its purpose was for personal development, and it could lead to a profession or well-paying job. Independent of whether students migrated, interviewees saw education as necessary.

In the last 25 years, the business sector has supported innovative educational practices to teach technology, math, and science.\textsuperscript{21} Many of these practices, however, have been made available only to the urban areas where much of the industry is centered. In Villa Juarez, the technical secundaria provides skills to work in agriculture, but well-remunerated jobs in general are scarce. One teacher describes the lack of opportunities for students who are educated:

\begin{quote}
\textbf{[Teacher]:} I don’t know what they expect students to do in the future. How do you think students should be prepared for future jobs? (laughs)
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{19} See Chapter 4 in this study, “Plans for Modernization, 1988-2000,” for more on this national initiative.


\textsuperscript{21} “School Administration in Mexico,” Escuela de Ciencias de Educación, División de Estudios de Posgrado. PowerPoint presentation at Hispanic Association for Colleges and Universities conference, October 30, 2006.
Thus, the effects of globalization can also be seen in the dwindling opportunities in the agrarian sector. Whereas farming was once a form of subsistence, competition from global markets as well as the withdrawal of government subsidies has affected the value of corn and other staple crops grown in Villa Juarez.23

Four current teachers also mentioned that many families were disinterested in their children’s education. The motivation to send their children to school on a regular basis did not exist, according to the teachers, because there was a better future on the other side (i.e., the U.S.). Many teachers and students viewed the student aspiration to leave to the United States as something out of anyone’s control. One teacher claimed that one cannot demand that migrants come back to live to Villa Juarez, given the economic success of those who have left.24

22 INT35, interview. “[…] hay una cosa muy rara: no es rentable para muchos estudiar. […] No hay empresas, no hay fábricas, no hay nada donde el joven pueda ser productivo, donde pueda encontrar un trabajo, una fuente de trabajo que le remunere y que de alguna forma traiga un bienestar a su casa. […] Así es que ese es el problema que enfrentamos. […] Y los que estudian la preparatoria y ya no tienen la oportunidad de seguir estudiando, pues se quedan aquí y los ves trabajando en el campo, y de alguna manera, ¿qué dicen los jóvenes? ¿Para qué estudio? No voy a trabajar.”

23 INT6, interview; INT11, interview.

24 INT15, interview.
One interviewee related that for students who do obtain higher education, their titles, degrees, and educational achievements have no validity in the United States. Nevertheless, few teachers (four) felt that they could encourage students to stay in the town, because they were destined to leave to find employment in the United States anyway. Thus, as in many other migrant towns during the globalization of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, some educators (five) held the opinion that unless better options for employment are found within the town, the young generation will find a more secure future by migrating.

One government official pointed to the need for creativity to develop alternative economic opportunities in Villa Juarez and create an infrastructure to support investment in the town. However, finding support for such projects in the town has traditionally been difficult, particularly when migration is validated by the government. For example, the government of Vicente Fox (2000-2006) advocated for immigrants’ rights abroad. Rather than discouraging immigration, Fox hailed them as heroes.

At first glance, the role of education in Villa Juarez seems to be disconnected from the reality of the demographic and social changes that have occurred in the town. Educators and the school administration accept the general migration and the skills that students gain in school are transferrable, so the education students receive does, in many

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25 Ibid.

ways, support their migration indirectly. In this sense, education in Villa Juarez is integrated into the town’s reality because it provides the tools for students who aspire to migrate to be prepared for work in another setting. However, the intention of the educational preparation they receive in Mexico is for them to contribute to their own society, be it in the town or in the country, as is evidenced in the national educational plans. Thus, it can be argued that education in the rural, agrarian town of Villa Juarez and others like it in Mexico and other emerging nations is not well positioned to support the future development of those regions. While the agricultural secundaria provides some skills to students so they can remain in the town and make a living using the resources from their environment, overall, the schools (primaria and preparatoria) have not addressed how education can prepare students to contribute to the locality and/or retain or create jobs that are well-remunerated. This deficit undermines an educational system that intends to promote not only an “individual’s social and economic prospects,” but also that individual’s contribution in its own nation.27 Francisco Lazarin views national educational policies as disconnected from local or regional realities:

The educational projects were constructed with the national scale or general macrostructure in mind, a factor which lost sight of the details and nuances of why education did not function and did not generate the results that the government expected in different regions of the country; likewise, […] the educational authorities proposed plans and projects with total disregard for the reality to which they would be subjected. In other words, it was thought that education in itself would extricate millions of Mexicans from misery and exploitation, but what was never questioned was at what point the difficult economic and social conditions that many

Mexican families were going through became an obstacle to successfully executing the educational programs.28

Thus, a government’s intention to participate in globalization is not enough. Appropriate assessment; the ability to deliver necessary skills to the populace; and, above all, a realistic understanding of the meaning and purpose of education in the global context are essential ingredients for success.

Recommendations for Future Research

There is an absence of scholarly research exploring the histories of rural agrarian towns and their ailing schools. In particular, few studies have examined the effects of dwindling student enrollments and the implications for education in rural settings of emerging nations. The present study helps to fill this void by providing a starting point for further research on the history of education in rural agrarian towns that are undergoing depopulation and the implications for the future of these towns. This study presents the first documentation of educational stakeholders’ perspectives about the purpose of education in Villa Juarez, a town experiencing these changes, and thus contributes original research to the field of comparative education. Replicating this research in other areas of Mexico that have become cultures of migration would allow

28 Lazarín, “Educación para las ciudades,” 173. “Los proyectos educativos estaban pensados en una dimensión nacional o general de macroestructura, como se argumenta hoy en día, elemento que hacía perder de vista los detalles y particularidades del porqué la educación no funcionaba y no generaba los resultados esperados por el gobierno en las distintas regiones del país; […] las autoridades educativas proponían sus planes y proyectos con una total desvinculación de la realidad a la que iban a ser sometidos, es decir, se pensaba que la educación por sí misma lograría sacar de la miseria y explotación a millones de mexicanos, pero nunca se cuestionó hasta qué punto las difíciles condiciones económicas y sociales por las que atravesaban millones de familias mexicanas eran un obstáculo para la puesta en marcha con éxito de los programas educativos.”
comparisons to be made among similar communities. Subsequent research could also explore the role of education in other rural agrarian areas in the state of San Luis Potosí that do not exhibit a culture of migration in order to provide additional and variant comparison frameworks.

Although some educational theories maintain that education is a reflection of society and that the purpose of education is to perpetuate culture and thought, another theoretical position might also be considered: do schools have the ability to transform society? Proponents of the idea that schools can be a mechanism for social change contend that schools can counter the very systems that created them. In his assessment of education around the world during the period of European colonization, John Willinsky posited that education, while representing a form of domination of one culture over another, also created resistance to that very domination. This suggests that it is worthwhile to consider schools as agents of social change that can address or ameliorate dominating socio-cultural factors. Following Willinsky, schools can provide alternative options to future generations who may choose to maintain a traditional way of life in their own communities. The purpose of education in Villa Juárez can include the promotion of future generations of students who stay and work in the town. If such an approach were


taken, the schools could be the catalyst for transforming the town, education, and the future.
APPENDIX A:

STUDY DESCRIPTION DISTRIBUTED TO PARTICIPANTS
DESCRIPCIÓN DEL ESTUDIO

Título del Estudio

Propósito
El propósito de este estudio es investigar más sobre la historia y el propósito de la educación en Villa Juárez empezando con el Programa Bracero de los años 1940. Una de las metas de este proyecto es estudiar el papel que ha tenido la educación a través de la emigración del pueblo, principalmente a través de las escuelas primarias y secundaria. Para este estudio, se harán entrevistas con maestras/os y administradoras/es, estudiantes de antes y oficiales en Villa Juárez. También se harán investigaciones de archivos. Aprender de la historia de las escuelas puede ayudar a educadores e investigadores a saber más acerca de la educación en pueblos migrantes, ya que muchas escuelas están cerrando por este motivo, y es un fenómeno que existe en muchos pueblos.

Los resultados de este estudio serán compartidos con los residentes de Villa Juárez, y con otras comunidades, incluyendo la comunidad académica, y una copia del estudio será donada a la biblioteca de Villa Juárez y a la Presidencia Municipal.

Para más información
Si Ud. tiene preguntas acerca de este estudio por favor comuníquese con Magda Banda.

En Villa Juárez:
Hidalgo #601
Villa Juárez, SLP
C.P.
teléfono: (486) 861-5241

En Chicago:
3904 W. 63rd Place
Chicago, IL 60629
teléfono: (773) 581-9122
correo electrónico: mbanda@luc.edu
DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

Title
Depopulation and Education in a Mexican Migrant Town: Schools in Villa Juárez, San Luis Potosí, 1945-2000

Purpose
The purpose of this study is to investigate the history and purpose of education in Villa Juárez since the beginning of the Bracero Program in the 1940s. One of the goals of this study is to examine the role of education through the town's history of emigration, mainly concentrating on the primary and secondary schools. Interviews will be conducted with teachers and administrators, previous students, and town leaders mainly in Villa Juárez. Archival research will also be used. Learning about the history of the schools can help educators and researchers learn about education in migrant towns, as many schools are closing.

The results of this study will be shared with Villa Juárez residents, the academic and other communities, and a copy of the dissertation will be donated to the town library and Presidencia Municipal.

More Information
If you have questions about this research study, please feel free to contact Magda Banda.

In Villa Juárez:
Hidalgo #601
Villa Juárez, SLP
Telephone: (486) 861-5241

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APPENDIX B:

IRB-APPROVED INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS
ENCUESTA PARA MAESTRO

Sobre la persona
1. ¿Cómo se llama?
2. ¿En dónde nació?
3. ¿En dónde vive actualmente?
4. Si vive en Villa Juárez, ¿cuánto tiempo ha vivido en Villa Juárez?
   a. ¿Desde cuándo? ¿Cuáles años?
5. ¿Cuál es su puesto?

Sobre el maestro/a
6. ¿Cuántos años ha sido maestro/a?
7. ¿Está Ud. ahora dando clases en Villa Juárez?
   a. ¿Desde cuáles años ha impartido clases en Villa Juárez?
   b. ¿En cuales escuelas ha dado clases?
   c. ¿Cuales grados/niveles/materias?
   d. ¿Cuántos alumnos tiene?
   e. Si no, ¿durante cuáles años dio clases en Villa Juárez?
      i. ¿Cuales grados/niveles/materias?
      ii. ¿Cuántos alumnos tenía en aquel entonces?

El propósito de la educación: pasado y presente
8. ¿Ha visto cambios en la población estudiantil de Villa Juárez (ya sea en la población, demográfica, el tipo de estudiante, las familias, etc)?
a. ¿Cuáles son los cambios que ha visto?

b. ¿Cuándo empezó a notar estos cambios por primera vez? ¿Y porque cree que se empezaron a dar?

c. ¿Han tenido un impacto estos cambios en su trabajo como maestro/a?

d. ¿Han afectado a los estudiantes estos cambios?
   i. ¿las escuelas? ¿Cómo?
   ii. ¿los padres/familias? ¿Cómo?
   iii. ¿el pueblo? ¿Cómo?

9. Tengo entendido que ha habido clausuras en varias escuelas. ¿Cuál es la razón porque está pasando esto?
   a. ¿Cuál ha sido la reacción de la gente de Villa Juárez por los cambios/clausuras de las escuelas en el pueblo? ¿Por qué?

10. ¿Han habido cambios en el sistema de educación (e.g. reformas, etc.) desde que Ud. recuerde?
    a. ¿Cuáles son estos cambios?
    b. ¿Cómo han afectado estos cambios a los estudiantes villajuarenzenses?

11. En su opinión, ¿cuáles son las razones por las cuales los niños/as van a la escuela en Villa Juárez?
    a. ¿Que los motiva a asistir?

12. ¿Cuáles son las razones por las cuales los padres los mandan a la escuela o no?


14. ¿Existen retos que enfrenta Ud. como maestro/a en Villa Juárez? Los puede describir.

15. ¿Cuál es su filosofía de enseñanza? En otras palabras, ¿cuál es el método que Ud. usa para enseñar y porqué (i.e. sigue el currículo al pie de la letra, se basa en
libros, fomenta la investigación, creatividad de los estudiantes, fomenta el aprendizaje por medio de la memorización, etc.)?

16. ¿Tiene Ud. que enseñar un currículo impartido por la SEP? ¿O puede Ud. adaptar su currículo enseñanza de acuerdo a los estudiantes y la región?
   a. ¿Ha visto Ud. la necesidad de diseñar un currículo diferente al que la SEP impone/promueve?
   b. ¿Afectan los cambios en la comunidad (i.e. así como la población que Ud. enseña, los valores de la comunidad, etc.) qué o cómo Ud. da sus clases/enseñanza?

17. ¿Cuáles son las destrezas más importantes que sus estudiantes aprendan, y porque?

18. ¿Porque es importante la educación?
   a. ¿Cuál es el propósito de obtener una educación en Villa Juárez?

19. ¿Para qué prepara la escuela a los estudiantes en Villa Juárez? (i.e. conseguir un buen trabajo, una profesión, leer y escribir, trabajar en el campo/agricultura, etc.)

20. ¿Cuáles son las aspiraciones de los estudiantes para cuando crezcan (i.e., en términos de carreras)?

21. ¿Cuáles son sus opciones de trabajo si deciden quedarse en Villa Juárez?

22. ¿Qué es lo que Ud. espera que sus estudiantes aprendan cuando salgan al final de año escolar de su clase?

*****
**Ex maestros:**
23. Estoy tratando de darme una idea de cómo era dar clase en Villa Juárez. ¿Me puede describir un DIA común en sus principios como maestro/a?
   a. ¿Cómo es un DIA común hoy?

24. En sus experiencias con las escuelas en Villa Juárez, ¿encuentra alguna diferencia en las razones por las cuales asistían a la escuela los niños hoy y en el pasado?
a. ¿Cómo se marca esa diferencia? (i.e. que hacen los estudiantes/padres de familia diferente, etc.)

b. ¿Por qué cree que existen o no estas diferencias?

25. ¿Ha visto cambios en las aspiraciones que tengan los estudiantes de Villa Juárez a través de sus años como maestro aquí?

26. Si Ud. está dando clases fuera de Villa Juárez (cabecera), ¿hay una diferencia entre esas experiencias y las de aquí?

27. ¿Se preocupa Ud. por su futuro como maestro por los cambios que se han dado (en las escuelas)? ¿Por qué?

28. ¿Están preocupados los padres o estudiantes por los cambios que se han dado (en las escuelas)? ¿Por qué?

29. ¿Cree Ud. que el gobierno, la SEP, del pueblo o federal, responde/ha respondido a la clausura de las escuelas en el pueblo? Si es así, ¿cuál ha sido su respuesta?

**Preguntas para concluir:**

30. ¿Qué edad tiene?

31. ¿Conoce Ud. a otros que hayan sido maestros en Villa Juárez con quien me pueda referir (especialmente a maestros jubilados de Villa Juárez)?

32. ¿Tiene algo más que agregar?

Muchas gracias por su tiempo y por permitir que lo/a entrevistara. Su información es muy valiosa. Se puede comunicar conmigo al (486) 861-5241 si tiene alguna duda o comentarios.
ENCUESTA PARA ESTUDIANTE

Sobre la persona

1. ¿Cómo se llama?
2. ¿En dónde nació?
3. ¿En dónde vive actualmente?
4. ¿Cuánto tiempo ha vivido en Villa Juárez?
5. ¿A qué se dedica?

Experiencias en la escuela

6. ¿Ud. fue a la escuela en Villa Juárez?
   a. ¿En cuáles años? ¿Qué tiempo duró en la escuela?
   b. ¿A cuáles escuelas fue?
   c. ¿A cuál año llegó?
7. ¿Cuáles materias tomó en la primaria? (Si es que asistió) ¿en la secundaria?

El propósito de la educación: pasado y presente

8. ¿Por qué iba a la escuela en aquel entonces?
9. ¿Le gustaba? ¿Por qué?

10. Estoy tratando de darme una idea de cómo era asistir a la escuela en Villa Juárez en aquel entonces. ¿Me puede describir como era un día “común” en la escuela para Ud.? (i.e. lavar las manos, formarse en fila, tomar asistencia, matemática, lectura, recreo, etc.).

11. ¿Cree Ud. que es importante recibir una educación?
12. ¿Creía Ud. que recibir una educación era importante en aquel entonces?
13. ¿En su opinión, cuál es el propósito de recibir una educación?

14. ¿En aquel entonces, cuál era el propósito de recibir una educación?

15. ¿Para qué preparaba la escuela a los estudiantes? (i.e. conseguir un buen trabajo, una profesión, leer y escribir, trabajar en el campo/agricultura, etc.)

16. ¿Ha cambiado el propósito de la educación, hablando desde su experiencia? ¿Cómo?

17. ¿Creían sus padres que la escuela era importante? ¿Por qué?

18. ¿Creían sus amigos/colegas que la escuela era importante?

19. ¿Qué piensa Ud. de sus maestros/as?

20. ¿Cuáles materias eran las más importantes aprender?

21. ¿Tuvo algún problemas/retos cuando era estudiantes en Villa Juárez?
   a. ¿Puede describir estos retos?

22. ¿Había algún beneficio para asistir a la escuela en aquel entonces?
   a. ¿Puede describirlos?

23. ¿En su opinión, cuáles eran las razones que los niños fueran a la escuela en aquel entonces?

24. ¿En su opinión, porqué van a la escuela los niños hoy en día?

25. ¿Cuáles son las razones que los padres mandaban a sus hijos/as a la escuela hoy en día?

26. ¿Encuentra Ud. diferencias en las razones por las cuales los niños van a la escuela hoy en día y en el pasado? ¿Por qué?

**La comunidad de Villa Juárez**

27. ¿Es diferente la vida en Villa Juárez a cuando Ud. estaba creciendo aquí?
28. ¿Ha visto cambios en la población de Villa Juárez?
   a. Si es así, ¿de qué formas es diferente ahora?
   b. ¿Cuándo vio por primera vez estos cambios?
   c. ¿Han afectado su vida estos cambios?
   d. ¿Su familia?
   e. ¿Sus hijos (si es que tiene)?
   f. ¿El pueblo y su gente?

29. En su opinión, ¿ha habido cambios en el sistema de educación?
   a. Si es así, ¿cuáles son?

30. ¿Está Ud. preocupado con los cambios/clausuras de las escuelas en el pueblo?

31. ¿Cuáles eran sus aspiraciones de niño? ¿Qué quería ser cuando creciera en aquel entonces?

32. ¿Cuestionaba su futuro?

33. ¿Qué le decían sus padres acerca de su futuro?

34. ¿Cuáles son las materias más importunes que el estudiante pueda aprender en la escuela, en su opinión? ¿y por qué?

35. ¿Cree Ud. que el gobierno, del pueblo o federal, responde a la situación de las escuelas en el pueblo?
   a. Si es así, ¿cuáles son los temas que el gobierno atiende cuando se trata de las escuelas?
   b. Si es así, ¿ha atendido el tema el gobierno de las clausura de las escuelas?
c. Si es así, ¿cuál ha sido su respuesta?

**Preguntas para concluir**

36. ¿Qué edad tiene?

37. ¿Tiene hijos? ¿Cuántos?

38. ¿A dónde van/ fuera a la escuela?

39. ¿Ud. alguna vez trabajó en EEUU?

40. ¿Tiene Ud. familiares que trabajaron o viven/vivieron en EEUU?

**Muchas gracias por su tiempo y por permitir que lo/a entrevistara. Su información es muy valiosa. Se puede comunicar conmigo al (486) 861-5241 si tiene alguna duda o comentarios.**
ENCUESTA PARA LIDER/OFICIAL DEL GOBIERNO

Sobre la persona

33. ¿Cómo se llama?

34. ¿En dónde nació?

35. ¿En dónde vive actualmente?

36. Si vive en Villa Juárez, ¿cuánto tiempo ha vivido en Villa Juárez?
   a. ¿Desde cuándo? ¿Cuáles años?

37. ¿Cuál es su puesto? ¿Por cuánto tiempo ha servido en este puesto?

Experiencias/observaciones generales sobre Villa Juárez

38. ¿Ha visto cambios en la población de Villa Juárez desde que Ud. ha estado en su puesto, o tal vez antes (ya sea en la población, demográfica, el tipo de estudiante, las familias, etc.)?
   a. ¿Cuáles son los cambios que ha visto?
   b. ¿Cuándo empezó a notar estos cambios por primera vez? ¿Y porque cree Ud. que se empezaron a dar?
   c. ¿Han tenido un impacto o tuvieron un impacto esos cambios en su trabajo?
   d. ¿Han tenido un impacto o tuvieron un impacto esos cambios en el pueblo y su gente?


Experiencias con escuelas de Villa Juárez
41. ¿Ud. asistió a la escuela en Villa Juárez?
   a. ¿A cuál escuela/s?
   b. ¿Qué grados de la escuela (i.e. primaria, secundaria)?
   c. ¿Durante cuales años?

42. En su puesto, ¿ha tenido/tuvo interacción con las escuelas en Villa Juárez?
   a. ¿Cuáles/cómo han sido/fueron esas experiencias?

43. ¿Han habido cambios en el sistema de educación desde que Ud. recuerde?
   a. ¿Cuáles son estos cambios?
   b. ¿Cómo han afectado estos cambios a los villajuarenzes?

44. Tengo entendido que ha habido clausuras en varias escuelas.
   a. ¿Cuál es la razón porque está pasando esto?
   b. ¿Cuál ha sido la reacción de la gente de Villa Juárez por los cambios/clausuras de las escuelas en el pueblo? ¿Por qué?

45. ¿Cree Ud. que el gobierno, del pueblo o federal, responde/ha respondido a la situación de las escuelas en el pueblo?
   Si es así, ¿cuál ha sido su respuesta?

46. En su opinión, ¿por qué razón/es asisten los niños/as a la escuela en Villa Juárez? ¿Que los motiva?

47. ¿Por qué razón mandan a la escuela los padres de familia a sus hijos/as?

48. ¿Cuál es el propósito de recibir una educación?
   a. ¿Con que fin?
   b. ¿Cumplen las escuelas de Villa Juárez con este fin?
En su experiencia como líder/oficial, ¿encuentra Ud. alguna diferencia entre las razones por las cuales los niños/as asisten hoy a la escuela que en el pasado? ¿Por qué?

¿Cuáles son las materias/destrezas más importantes que deben aprender los jóvenes de Villa Juárez, y porque?

a. ¿Están siendo efectivas las escuelas para enseñar estos aprendizajes a los estudiantes de Villa Juárez?

¿Para qué prepara la escuela a los estudiantes en Villa Juárez? (i.e. conseguir un buen trabajo, una profesión, leer y escribir, trabajar en el campo/agricultura, etc.)

¿Cuáles son las opciones para los estudiantes que decidan quedarse en Villa Juárez en términos de trabajo; o sea, en que pueden trabajar en Villa Juárez (i.e., en términos de carreras)?

¿Ha visto diferencias en las aspiraciones que tengan los estudiantes en toda su experiencia en Villa Juárez?

**Preguntas para concluir**

¿Qué edad tiene?

¿Conoce Ud. a otros que hayan sido líderes en Villa Juárez con quien me pueda referir?

¿Tiene algo más que agregar?

Muchas gracias por su tiempo y por permitir que lo/a entrevistara. Su información es muy valiosa. Se puede comunicar conmigo al (486) 861-5241 si tiene alguna duda o comentario.
APPENDIX C:

CONSENT FORMS
FORMULARIO DE CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPAR EN EL ESTUDIO
(Maestro/a, Maestro/a anterior)

Investigadora: Magda Banda
Asesor académico: Erwin H. Epstein, Ph.D.

Introducción:
Se le está pidiendo que tome parte en un estudio de investigación conducido por Magda Banda para su disertación, y bajo la supervisión de Erwin H. Epstein, Ph.D., su asesor en el departamento de Educación en la Universidad de Loyola en Chicago.

Se busca su participación en el estudio porque Ud. fue maestro/a de la primaria y/o secundaria en Villa Juárez, SLP, México en 1942 o después. Sus experiencias en las escuelas y sus opiniones sobre la educación son muy importantes para ayudar a entender la trayectoria histórica de las escuelas en Villa Juárez.

Por favor lea esta forma cuidadosamente y haga preguntas antes de decidir si quiere participar.

Propósito:
El propósito de este estudio es saber más sobre la historia de las escuelas y el propósito de la educación en Villa Juárez desde el inicio del programa Bracero en 1942.

Procedimiento:
Si Ud. decide participar en este estudio, se le pedirá:

Participar en una entrevista sobre sus experiencias como maestro/a en la escuela y sus perspectivas sobre el propósito de la educación, en el pasado y presente. Se le pedirá que recuerde sus experiencias que puedan ayudar a contestar porque es que los estudiantes asistían a la escuela en el pasado. La entrevista será de aproximadamente 1.5 horas, y será grabada, si Ud. da su permiso. La investigadora irá a su casa para la entrevista o a donde sea más conveniente y cómodo para conversar para Ud.

Riesgos / beneficios:
No se espera ningún riesgo al participar en este estudio, mas allá de los que se viven en la vida diaria. No hay ningún beneficio directo a Ud. por participar pero la información que Ud. contribuya ayudará a trazar la historia de las escuelas en Villa Juárez y el propósito de la educación en el pasado y presente. Los resultados de este estudio serán compartidos con Ud. y una copia de la tesis doctoral será donada a la biblioteca y a la Presidencia Municipal de Villa Juárez.

Confidencialidad:
La información colectada es confidencial. Como participante, Ud. no será identificado individualmente; su nombre será cambiado para mantenerlo/a anónimo/a. La información
colectada en las entrevistas solo será accedida por la investigadora, Magda, y será mantenida en un archivo bajo llave. Al concluir el estudio, la investigadora guardará las entrevistas grabadas por un periodo indefinido.

**Participación Voluntaria:**
Su participación en este estudio es voluntaria. Si Ud. no quiere participar en este estudio, no tiene que hacerlo. Si decide participar, Ud. tiene la libertad de negarse a contestar cualquier pregunta o retirarse la entrevista en cualquier momento sin ningún compromiso o sanción.

**Contactos y Preguntas:**
Si tiene preguntas acerca de este estudio o entrevista, puede comunicarse conmigo a mi casa, domicilio: Hidalgo #601 in Villa Juárez, o al siguiente teléfono de mis familiares: (486) 861-5241. También puede comunicarse con mi asesor académico en Chicago, IL al 312/915-6273 o por correo electrónico: eespetei@luc.edu.

Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante en este estudio, puede comunicarse al Director de Conformidad en las oficinas de Investigaciones de Loyola al (773) 508-2689.

**Declaración de Consentimiento:**
Su firma indica que ha leído y entendido la información que se proporciona en este formulario, que ha tenido la oportunidad de hacer preguntas, y que está dispuesto/a a participar en el estudio. Se le entregará una copia de este formulario para que se conserve.

☐ Sí, acepto que se grabe esta entrevista.
☐ No, no acepto que se grabe esta entrevista.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Firma del Participante</th>
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<th>Firma de la Investigadora</th>
<th>Date</th>
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FORMULARIO DE CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPAR EN EL ESTUDIO
(Estudiante anterior)

Investigadora: Magda Banda
Asesor académico: Erwin H. Epstein, Ph.D.

Introducción:
Se le está pidiendo que torne parte un estudio de investigación conducido por Magda Banda para su disertación, y bajo la supervisión de Erwin H. Epstein, Ph.D., su asesor en el departamento de Educación en la Universidad de Loyola en Chicago.

Se busca su participación en el estudio porque Ud. fue estudiante de la primaria y/o secundaria en Villa Juárez, SLP, México en 1942 o después. Sus experiencias en las escuelas y sus opiniones sobre la educación son muy importantes para ayudar a entender la trayectoria histórica de las escuelas en Villa Juárez.

Por favor lea esta forma cuidadosamente y haga preguntas antes de decidir si quiere participar.

Propósito:
El propósito de este estudio es saber más sobre la historia de las escuelas y el propósito de la educación en Villa Juárez desde el inicio del programa Bracero en 1942.

Procedimiento:
Si Ud. decide participar en este estudio, se le pedirá:

Participar en una entrevista sobre sus experiencias como estudiante en la escuela y sus perspectivas sobre el propósito de la educación, en el pasado y presente. Se le pedirá que recuerde sus experiencias que puedan ayudar a contestar porque es que los estudiantes asistían a la escuela en el pasado. La entrevista será de aproximadamente 1.5 horas, y será grabada, si Ud. da su permiso. La investigadora irá a su casa para la entrevista o a donde sea más conveniente y cómo para conversar para Ud.

Riesgos / beneficios:
No se espera ningún riesgo al participar en este estudio, mas allá de los que se viven en la vida diaria. No hay ningún beneficio directo a Ud. por participar pero la información que Ud. contribuya ayudará a trazar la historia de las escuelas en Villa Juárez y el propósito de la educación en el pasado y presente. Los resultados de este estudio serán compartidos con Ud. y una copia de la tesis doctoral será donada a la biblioteca y a la Presidencia Municipal de Villa Juárez.

Confidencialidad:
La información colectada es confidencial. Como participante, Ud. no será identificado individualmente; su nombre será cambiado para mantenerlo/a anónimo/a. La información
colectada en las entrevistas solo será accedida por la investigadora, Magda, y será mantenida en un archivo bajo llave. Al concluir el estudio, la investigadora guardara las entrevistas grabadas por un periodo indefinido.

**Participación Voluntaria:**
Su participación en este estudio es voluntaria. Si Ud. no quiere participar en este estudio, no tiene que hacerlo. Si decide participar, Ud. tiene la libertad de negarse a contestar cualquier pregunta o retirarse la entrevista en cualquier momento sin ningún compromiso o sanción.

**Contactos y Preguntas:**
Si tiene preguntas acerca de este estudio o entrevista, puede comunicarse conmigo a mi casa, domicilio: Hidalgo #601 in Villa Juárez, o al siguiente teléfono de mis familiares: (486) 861-5241. También puede comunicarse con mi asesor académico en Chicago, IL al 312/915-6273 o por correo electrónico: eepstein@luc.edu

Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante en este estudio, puede comunicarse al Director de Conformidad en las oficinas de Investigaciones de Loyola al (773) 508-2689.

**Declaración de Consentimiento:**
Su firma indica que ha leído y entendido la información que se proporciona en este formulario, que ha tenido la oportunidad de hacer preguntas, y que está dispuesto/a a participar en el estudio. Se le entregará una copia de este formulario para que se conserve.

☐ Sí, acepto que se grabe esta entrevista.
☐ No, no acepto que se grabe esta entrevista.

__Firma del Participante__

__Firma de la Investigadora__

__Date__

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2
FORMULARIO DE CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPAR EN EL ESTUDIO
(Líder, Oficial anterior)


Investigadora: Magda Banda
Asesor académico: Erwin H. Epstein, Ph.D.

Introducción:
Se le está pidiendo que tome parte en un estudio de investigación conducido por Magda Banda para su disertación, y bajo la supervisión de Erwin H. Epstein, Ph.D., su asesor en el departamento de Educación en la Universidad de Loyola en Chicago.

Se busca su participación en el estudio porque Ud. fue líder/oficial en Villa Juárez, SLP, México en 1942 o después. Sus experiencias en las escuelas y sus opiniones sobre la educación son muy importantes para ayudar a entender la trayectoria histórica de las escuelas en Villa Juárez.

Por favor lea esta forma cuidadosamente y haga preguntas antes de decidir si quiere participar.

Propósito:
El propósito de este estudio es saber más sobre la historia de las escuelas y el propósito de la educación en Villa Juárez desde el inicio del programa Bracero en 1942.

Procedimiento:
Si Ud. decide participar en este estudio, se le pedirá:

Participar en una entrevista sobre sus experiencias como líder/oficial en Villa Juárez y sus perspectivas sobre el propósito de la educación, en el pasado y presente. Se le pedirá que recuerde sus experiencias que puedan ayudar a contestar porque es que los estudiantes asisten a la escuela en el pasado. La entrevista será de aproximadamente 1,5 horas, y será grabada, si Ud. da su permiso. La investigadora irá a su casa para la entrevista o a donde sea más conveniente y cómodo para conversar para Ud.

Riesgos / beneficios:
No se espera ningún riesgo al participar en este estudio, mas allá de los que se viven en la vida diaria. No hay ningún beneficio directo a Ud. por participar pero la información que Ud. contribuya ayudará a trazar la historia de las escuelas en Villa Juárez y el propósito de la educación en el pasado y presente. Los resultados de este estudio serán compartidos con Ud. y una copia de la tesis doctoral será donada a la biblioteca y a la Presidencia Municipal de Villa Juárez.

Confidencialidad:
La información colectada es confidencial. Como participante, Ud. no será identificado individualmente; su nombre será cambiado para mantenerlo/anónimo/a. La información colectada en las entrevistas solo será accedida por la investigadora, Magda, y será mantenida en...
un archivo bajo llave. Al concluir el estudio, la investigadora guardara las entrevistas grabadas por un periodo indefinido.

**Participación Voluntaria:**
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**Contactos y Preguntas:**
Si tiene preguntas acerca de este estudio o entrevista, puede comunicarse conmigo a mi casa, domicilio: Hidalgo #601 in Villa Juárez, o al siguiente teléfono de mis familiares: (486) 861-5241. También puede comunicarse con mi asesor académico en Chicago, IL al 312/915-6273 o por correo electrónico: eeps. *@*luc.edu.

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**Declaración de Consentimiento:**
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☐ Sí, acepto que se grabe esta entrevista.
☐ No, no acepto que se grabe esta entrevista.

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**Firma del Participante**

__________

**Firma de la Investigadora**

__________

Date

Date
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VITA

Magda Banda was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. Before attending Loyola University Chicago, she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Studies from Illinois Wesleyan University in 1997. Magda spent one year teaching and participating in other educational projects in Mexico City in 1998. She entered Loyola University Chicago in the fall of 1999 and received a Master of Arts in Comparative International Education in winter of 2004. Currently, Magda is Director of Institutional Research at Morton College, a community college in Cicero, Illinois.