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Households, Migration And Labor Market Participation: The Adaptation Of Mexicans To Life In The United States

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ABSTRACT: An examination of data collected from Mexican immigrants in San Diego, California, reinforces the theoretical position that the formation of extended family and other non-nuclear family households serves as an important mechanism in migrant adaptation to the U.S. labor market and U.S. society in general. Moreover, the paper attempts to explain the variation in household composition and structure encountered by first placing Mexican migration within an international political and economic context, which reveals that there is an important distinction between (a) legal and undocumented immigrants and (b) temporary migrants and long-term residents or settlers. Household variation reflects these distinctions. Legal and undocumented immigrants exhibit distinctive patterns of household variation. When household variation is viewed in relation to the length of time immigrants have resided in the United States, it becomes clear that different types of households are important at different stages in the migration process and that immigration status influences the patterns of household variation encountered. Specific cases illustrate how individuals and families form households in a strategic manner and how they weigh trade-offs associated with living in one of many types of households, each with its own opportunities, benefits and constraints.

Introduction

The anthropological literature on households and migration has been preoccupied with one overwhelming question: does migration to an urban area or industrialized nation lead to the inevitable formation of nuclear families? What Kertzer (1978) has called the "traditional" perspective holds that nuclear families were the inevitable result of industrialization and rapid urbanization. This position was derived from a functionalist view of social and cultural change as posited by Talcott Parsons (1947), who argued that the nuclear family was most appropriate for industrial economic development. This line of reasoning was carried forward by Goode (1963:369) when he hypothesized that migratory families would exhibit a higher proportion of nuclear family households (see also: Litwak 1965; Yorburg 1975; Mogey 1964; Firth 1964).

Empirical research in a wide range of cultural settings has led to the currently widespread counter view. Households comprised of extended families and other non-nuclear types were found in significant proportions among migrant populations in urban and industrial settings as widespread as Africa, India and Latin America (Mendez-Dominguez 1983; Kertzer 1978; Brown 1977; Stinner 1977; Jayawardena 1975; Conklin 1974, 1976; Modell and Hareven 1973; Nutini and Murphy 1970; Gonzalez 1969; Lewis 1966; Abu-Lughod 1961). Rather than diminishing in importance, the evidence overwhelming suggests that extended family households are essential to the migrants' adaptation to their new environment.

Migrants can vary household size, composition and structure to meet their needs. An established household serves as the "landing pad" for new arrivals, a place where migrants receive assistance and cultural knowledge about life in a new environment. Mutual assistance often extends to occupational training, housing, employment and a variety of items in daily life (Fjellman and Gladwin 1985; Lomnitz 1977; Browning and Feindt 1970; Caldwell 1969; Van der Tak and Geudell 1964; Abu-Lughod 1961). In short, the

household is the intermediary between the individual migrant, the labor market and the receiving society.

The observation that living arrangements vary in any given society or culture, and that the nuclear family (however it is defined) is but one type among many, leads to the search for explanations for why some types of households would be preferred under certain circum-stances. Ever since Glick (1947) and Fortes (1958) published their seminal articles on the developmental cycle, researchers have attempted to show that seemingly haphazard variation in composition and structure actually represents an orderly series of stages through which households pass. Much of the research focused on the influence of the life-cycle and other demographic factors on the type of household which predominates at any particular stage in the developmental cycle (Foster 1978; Hareven 1974; Berkner 1972). More recent research has emphasized the labor needs, both inside and outside the household, required for production and income mainte-nance by focusing on households in relation to subsistence agriculture, cattle raising, migratory labor and other activities in the economic domain (Murphy and Selby 1984; Garcia, Munoz and Oliveira 1981; Pasternak, Ember and Ember 1976).

A major criticism of the developmental cycle approach has been that a single developmental cycle often does not exist, especially in complex societies (Freed and Freed 1983; Otterbein 1970). Individuals or couples forming a household often encounter multiple possibilities, which then lead to quite distinct patterns of household variation. As a consequence, Otterbein (1970:1418) stressed the impor-tance of undertaking an analysis of the economic and social factors influencing the domestic system (see also Jayawardena 1975). Based upon her work in a rural Dominican village, Brown (1977:266) took this idea further when she concluded that different patterns of household development represent varying strategies for coping with given social, economic and historical circumstances. More recently, Dressler, Hoeppner and Pitts (1985) found that

different types of households are advantageous during different periods of a household's history.

This paper builds upon this line of theoretical development. Household variation among Mexican immi-grants is examined in relation to the economic and political context within which Mexican immigrants live and work. Such an approach expands the range of factors affecting the patterns of variation households experience. Although Fortes stressed the life-cycle's influence on the develop-mental cycle, he actually anticipated the importance of the larger society in relation to variation in household com-position and structure when, in 1958, he noted that

> Every member of a society is simultaneously a person in the domestic domain and in the politico-jural domain. His status in the former receives definition and sanction from the latter. This has direct bearing on the internal structure of the domestic group. The differentials in this structure are in part requirements of child rearing. *But their character is also decisively regulated by politico-jural norms* (Fortes 1958:12; emphasis added).

The analysis of household composition and structure presented here can be divided into three general sections. The first section presents the overall framework within which Mexican migration to the United States occurs.

The second section details the household variation found among the informants. As will be shown, Mexican immigrants live in many types of households. There is no single pattern of sequential household types through which pass all Mexican immigrants. However, patterns of house-hold variation are observable when viewed in relation to immigration status, one of the key "politico-jural norms" affecting their lives. Even in a highly developed, highly technological society such as the United States there are populations which rely predominately on the resources found in social relations, particularly, but not exclusively, those found within the household (Stack 1974). For Mexican immigrants, this situation is directly related to their status in U.S. social and economic life, a status which is

influenced by immigration status. Unlike legal immigrants, undocumented immigrants enter the United States without the necessary documents from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

The final section attempts to take the analysis further in two important ways. First, it will examine how the types of households migrants live in change over the time they reside in the United States. Second, specific cases will be interwoven into the discussion in order to suggest an explanation for the variation. The cases exemplify how individuals and families form households in a strategic manner and how they weigh the trade-offs associated with living in one of many types of households, each with its own opportunities, benefits and constraints as they adapt to the U.S labor market and U.S. society in general.

A point of clarification is important here. The influence of immigration status and the length of residence in the U.S. is the central focus of this paper. The purpose is to demonstrate how our understanding of economic and social adaptation is enhanced by this processual per - spective. The life-cycle also plays a role in household variation, and is so noted at the appropriate moments in the analysis. However, given the selectivity of migration, es - pecially undocumented migration (most undocumented migrants are between 19 and 29 years of age), an analysis based solely upon life-cycle factors would not be appro - priate.[1]

In order to examine the relationship of immigration status, length of residence and labor market participation to household variation, we must begin with the economic and political context within which Mexicans migrate, work and establish households in the United States.

Households and Migration

A number of researchers have argued that the household must be analyzed as part of a national and international economic system (Smith, Wallerstein and Evers 1984; Wood 1982; Rollwagen 1981). This is

especially important when dealing with a population of international migrants. Three areas have a bearing on variation in household composition and structure among Mexican immigrants and deserve to be briefly examined. The first concerns the relationship between Mexico and the United States, which is essential for understanding the underlying causes for migration, especially that of undocu - mented workers. The second concerns the Mexican migrant's participation in the U.S. labor market. And the third concerns the distinction between temporary undocu - mented migrants and the undocumented who become long-term residents of the United States.

Proponents of a world system perspective argue that structural inequalities between nations and regions produce imbalances which lead to migratory pressure (Portes and Bach 1985; Portes and Walton 1981). The resulting labor migration is the process which incorporates peripheral regions into the world economy (Sassen-Koob 1981:65-66). When viewed from this perspective, Mexico and the United States participate as unequal partners in a single economic system (Portes 1978; Cardenas and Flores 1978).[2]

Building upon this line of analysis, Jorge Bustamante (1983) has emphasized the concept of the "international labor market." In this view, workers in Mexico are not limited to selling their labor within Mexico. Indeed, Mexican workers for generations have been migrating to the United States to work. Historically, the U.S. labor market has relied upon Mexican labor and that it continues to do so does not represent a significant change. What does represent a change is the increasing number of workers in this labor market who are considered "illegal" or undocumented workers, despite the demand for such workers in the United States. As Bustamante (1983:340) comments:

> The reality of [the] international labor market is that a demand exists for foreign workers, particularly those who are unskilled, in the United States economy, principally, in the Southwest region. It is also a reality that the quantity of this demand is not exactly known.

Moreover, the realities of the international labor market place the Mexican worker at a disadvantage in relation to his or her U.S. employer. As Bustamante explains,

> Migration from Mexico to the United States is a response to conditions of the international market for manual labor in which the rules imposed by the "demand" pre - dominate, which accounts for the shares of power on the part of the American employers against Mexican migrant workers.

The attraction of focusing on the demands of an international labor market is that it places Mexican migration within an historical context and tradition. Migrating to work in the U.S. is thus one of a number of options available to Mexican laborers whose region, or even specific family, has had previous experience working in el otro lado, often at the inducement of U.S. employers.

The contradiction between the demand for international labor in the U.S. and the limits placed upon legal immi - gration results in the creation of a social group: the undocumented, who reside in the United States without permission from the INS. Perhaps no other nation is as affected by this contradiction as is Mexico, which accounts for about 55 percent of the undocumented immigrants in the United States (Passel and Woodrow 1984).

Although their legal status distinguishes them, the undocumented and legal immigrants share an obvious cultural, social and historical background. Indeed, many legal immigrants were once undocumented migrants.[3] As we shall see below, the sociodemographic characteristics of the legal immigrants resemble those of the undocu - mented immigrants, with some of the differences attribu - table to the legal immigrants' ten to fifteen years of additional experience in the United States. Integrating the two subgroups further is that undocumented and legal immigrants often are members of the same household and family. As a consequence, a distinction made on the basis

of immigration status is, to a certain extent, artificial, and yet has important implications for social structure and organization.

The migrants' political-immigration status in the U.S. influences their economic and social status, which in turn has implications for household composition and structure. Legal immigrants are able to petition the INS on behalf of relatives who wish to immigrate.[4] Undocumented immi - grants, on the other hand, cannot add members to the household through the legal immigration of relatives. And yet, the undocumented need to maximize their participation in the U.S. labor market and to reduce the risk of disruption on family life that is an ever-present possibility because of their immigration status, both of which put pressure on the household's human and financial resources.

Temporary Migration Versus Settlement

It is generally conceded that most undocumented migrants to the U.S. in any given year are temporarily in the country. A study conducted in the late 1970s found that for every 100 entries of undocumented Mexicans into the U.S. there were 92 "exits," either voluntary or at the hands of the INS (Garcia y Griego 1980). Such migrants are commonly referred to as short-term migrants, or in some cases cyclical migrants who return season after season. "Target earner" refers to a migrant whose sole purpose ("target") is to earn money in the U.S. and then return to Mexico (Portes and Bach 1985:8).

Because temporary migration was typical for the undocumented, past research and discussions tended to disregard undocumented immigrants who were long-term residents of the United States (Chavez 1986; Weintraub 1984; Flores 1984; Rosenthal-Urey 1984; Browning and Rodriguez 1982). Such neglect is no longer possible. As the 1980 Census revealed, there is a significant population of undocumented immigrants that resides on a more-or-less permanent basis in the United States (Warren and Passel

1983).[5] In essence, they have decided to settle in the United States.

A number of recent trends in both Mexico and the U.S. influence whether a migrant decides to extend his or her stay in the United States or return to Mexico. Since its economic crisis began in 1982, Mexico has experienced continued devaluation of the peso, high interest rates, decreasing oil prices and little economic growth (Wyman 1983). Given that economic situation, migrants may find returning to Mexico less attractive than continued residence in the United States. Not only would migrants returning to Mexico find it more difficult to subsist in their places of origin, but the economic climate inhibits investment of whatever capital they may have saved during their sojourn in the United States. Moreover, gathering the necessary resources to return to the United States is now more difficult than before the devaluation; in short, it takes more pesos to make the trip.

Events in the the United States also influence migratory patterns for Mexicans. Native-born women in the U.S. are having fewer children (Cornelius, Chavez and Castro 1982:23). This demographic trend has occurred during a period of change ("restructuring") in the U.S. economy (Sassen-Koob 1982). The rapid growth of the service industries and light manufacturing (e.g., electronics) is making new demands for immigrant labor (Fernandez-Kelly and Garcia 1986; Cornelius 1984; Morales 1983). In contrast to agricultural employers, urban-based employers generally do not operate on a seasonal basis. Service sector and other urban-based employers offer, and to a degree expect, year round employment.

The effect on migration of recent economic patterns in both the U.S. and Mexico have yet to be definitively determined through empirical research. However, it is clear that a trend toward longer U.S. residence and an increase in the migration of women and families is occurring (Passel and Woodrow (1985:665).

A conclusion that must be drawn from this discussion is that many of the undocumented who are long-term residents of the U.S. must be considered "immigrants"

rather than "migrants." This is especially true for those who have taken the crucial step of forming a family in the U.S., either by marrying here or by bringing their family from Mexico. Such families will not necessarily follow previous migration patterns based upon the mobility of a single individual. There is scant evidence that such families would willingly return to Mexico after a brief "season" in the United States. Many will remain in the U.S. unless they are apprehended and returned to Mexico by INS authorities. Even then, these families will have incentives to return to the home, community and equity (both social and eco - nomic) they have built up, sometimes over years, in the United States.

In sum, temporary migration or settlement by migrants and their families must be viewed in relation to their participation in the U.S. labor market. For many, their time in the U.S. is of short duration and their participation is in an international labor market. Others have made the transition to, or are in the process of becoming, long-term workers in, and thus residents of, the United States. They are becoming settlers. Patterns of household composition and structure reflect strategies associated with both settlement and temporary migration.

Methodology

Between March 1981 and February 1982, personal in-home interviews were conducted with 2,103 adults (aged 17 or older) born in Mexico who were living or working in San Diego County at the time of the fieldwork.[6] A research team, which included the author, at the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies at the University of California, San Diego conducted the interviews as part of a study on Mexican immigration. Extensive data were collected on the household composition of the interviewees.

The interview schedule consisted of both closed questions (in which responses were anticipated) and open-ended questions. The latter questions allowed for in-depth probing and follow-up questioning. Responses to open-

ended questions were recorded verbatim by the interviewer and were later classified into response categories, a method which allowed for the gathering of extensive qualitative information.

The sampling methodology employed was considered carefully in as much as interviewing a "representative" sample of Mexican immigrants -- in San Diego or elsewhere in the United States -- presents special difficulties of access and identification because of the large proportion of undocumented migrants in this population. To date, the most successful approach for overcoming these special problems has been a "snowball" sampling pro-cedure, a well-known technique among anthropologists. After initial contacts are made, each successive informant is a relative or friend of a previous interviewee who provides the interviewer with the necessary introductions and assistance in making contact with other members of his or her kinship and/or friendship network (Cornelius 1981; Baca and Bryan 1980; Mines 1982).

In order to establish immigration status, a series of questions and follow-up questions were asked of each informant. Most of the undocumented informants stated freely that they entered the country without having first obtained proper documentation from the INS. Others claimed to be here with appropriate documents. However, follow-up questions revealed that such documents included local border crossing cards, expired tourist visas, or fake permanent residence visas, none of which allows perma-nent residence or the freedom to work in the United States. These latter interviewees were classified as undocumented.

The original study focused on individuals. Co-residing spouses were interviewed whenever possible, as were other adult members of a household. However, the present study focuses on households. [7]

A subsample of discrete households was arrived at by eliminating interviews of individuals other than the head of the household, whose interview contained basic socio-demographic information on all household members. Consequently, two sets of data are used; one includes all men and women interviewed in the study, the other is

limited to household units. After describing the sociocultural characteristics of the interviewees drawn from the first data set, only the second set will be used.

Household is defined in relation to residence, that is, those who co-reside in a particular place. This definition differs from the concept of a domestic group in that it does not include functions which may, or may not, be performed by those who co-reside (Ashcraft 1966; Gonzalez 1960; Fortes 1958). Although the household may be the locus of economic cooperation, socialization of children and meal preparation, such functions may also be performed outside the household, and in some cases (as is the case with households comprised of single adults) may not form part of the requisite behavior for co-residing (Mogey 1964).

In contrast, a family is defined on the basis of kinship relations, both consanguinial and affinal. A family is not necessarily restricted to the individuals who co-reside. The extent to which a "family" extends through the possible web of kinship relations is culturally determined. However, for the purpose of classifying households, the term "family" is given here a more reduced meaning. This will be discussed further below.

Households are classified here on the basis of composition according to a scheme adapted from Hammel and Laslett (1974). The classification scheme consists of five general categories: (i) solitaries (ii) no family households; (iii) simple family households; (iv) extended family households; and (v) multiple family households.

This classification is based on the structure of relationships within the household and has a number of strengths to recommend it. It does not obscure the nuances in cultural differences, even within a social group. It is an etic scheme which allows comparison between groups within a society, between societies and even across time. It also has some limitations.

The classification scheme had to be modified in two general ways. The number of possible household types has been greatly expanded to increase the subtlety of the analysis. This was undertaken especially to include single parent families which were difficult to detect in the original

scheme (Kendall 1981). In addition, changes had to be made to account for the migration process.

Labor migration results in two types of living arrangements which are here classified as solitaries, individuals who live alone. Women who work as live-in maids are classified as solitaries rather than as part of their employer's household. If the study would have been con-cerned with households generally rather than the relationship of households to immigrant adaptation and labor market participation, then live-in maids would have been classified as "servants" in their employer's household. Instead, they are here considered individuals who in essence "rent" through their labor a room in their employers house where they reside independently.

Farm workers who do not live in a house or apartment but in essence camp on, or near, farm property are also classified as solitaries. This classification was made because their place of sleeping and eating was makeshift and subject to constant change. These encampments were typically found in thick brush to protect the men from detection by INS and Border Patrol officers. Shelter usually consisted of a sheet of plastic strung between trees with a few wooden crates used for chairs and tables. A fire pit was used for cooking. Not only were the encampments temporary, but the group of men, usually between two and five, that shared an area changed frequently. Because living arrangements lacked consistency of members and location, individuals living in such encampments (called "cantones" by the workers) were counted as solitaries who live at their place of work, although such men were often related (e.g., siblings, cousins, uncles/nephews). The cases of the live-in maids and clandestine farm workers points to the limitations associated with the "household" as a focus of analysis when considering social groups that are highly mobile or that move through seasonal cycles of dispersal and concentration (Stack 1974; Howard 1971).

Given the above qualifications, the general household classifications are defined in the following manner:

Solitaries have already been mentioned. They are individuals who live alone -- single person households -- or live at their place of work without spouse and/or child.

No family households consist of individuals who are not related through marriage or a parent-child bond. These individuals live alone, or live with a sibling, other relatives or friends.

While a kinship relationship obviously exists between siblings, the term "family" is reserved for individuals related through marriage or a parent-child connection. This distinction is particularly important when examining indivi - duals participating in a labor migration where migrants may be married but spouses do not migrate. Both solitaries and individuals in no family households may be married, but in such cases they are not living with their spouse and family, who typically reside in the place of origin.

Family households are comprised of at least one pair of individuals who are married or generationally related as parent and offspring. *Simple family households* consist of married couples with or without children and single parents. *Extended family households* contain a simple family plus one or more relatives other than the head of the household's immediate family (spouse and/or children). Additional relatives are single or if married they are not living with spouse and/or children. Finally, *multiple family households* are made up of various combinations of two or more family units, that is, individuals related either through marriage or a parent/child bond.

Informants' Characteristics and Labor Market Participation

A brief overview of the informants' social, cultural and economic characteristics indicates the resources available available to Mexican immigrants (Table 1). In general, legal immigrant interviewees can be characterized as relatively

TABLE 1: Characteristics of Mexican Immigrants, by
Immigration Status and Sex

Characteristics (medians or percentages):	Undocumented		Documented	
	(men) (N=588)	(women) (N=491)	(men) (N=487)	(women) (N=537)
Years in the U.S.	3	4	16	13
Age at Interview	26.8	27.3	40.3	38.6
Years of Education	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.8
% Illiterate	11.4	14.5	4.4	6.5
% Cannot Speak English	49.6	60.0	32.9	40.3
% Cannot Read English	68.0	68.8	40.8	43.9
% Homemakers	0.0	36.5	0.0	52.5
% Currently Employed	92.9	63.5	90.0	47.5
Annual Job Income	$7,334	$6,243	$9,099	$7,026

Data By Household:	Undocumented Head	Documented Head
Total Annual Family Income	$9,359	$13,281
% Owns House	3.8	29.8
Household Size	4.1	3.9

stable, long-term residents with moderate English language skills, a limited education, and jobs which pay slightly above the minimum wage. In comparison, their undocu - mented counterparts had been in the U.S. for a much briefer time (although 9.6 percent had been in the U.S. ten years or longer), received about the same level of education, were less proficient in English language skills and earned less money. Undocumented women were more likely to be employed than women who were legal immigrants. Women generally earned less than men. If we consider that on average (based upon their median years in the U.S.) the legal interviewees arrived in the U.S. at age 24 or 25, then the legal interviewees' characteristics reflect, in many respects, an older, more experienced version of their undocumented counterparts.

The informants' education level and language skills limit the type of jobs many are qualified to perform, which thus influences their earning power. The U.S. labor market does not offer uniform employment. Some jobs provide advancement, a wide range of benefits, a relative degree of job security, and a wage that is substantially above the legal minimum. Such jobs are highly sought after and belong in the "primary" sector of the economy (Piore 1979).

In contrast, secondary sector jobs are less advan - tageous and are often considered "dead-end" jobs. They pay minimum wage or slightly above, rarely offer benefits such as medical insurance, paid vacations, or pension plans, and are often temporary or seasonal in nature. Jobs in this sector typically include seasonal farm work, dishwashers, busboys, cooks, gas station attendants, car wash work, and waitressing. Mexican immigrants, particu - larly the undocumented, have been shown to be employed predominately in the secondary sector of the labor market (Portes and Bach 1985; Cornelius, Chavez and Castro 1982).

As Table 2 indicates, the informants generally worked in jobs in the urban secondary and informal sector of San Diego's tourist-oriented economy. Undocumented men worked predominately in services (gardening, nursery work,

TABLE 2: Current Occupational Sector in the United States, by Immigration Status and Sex

| Sector | Undocumented | | Documented | | TOTAL |
	Male N=561 %	Female N=425 %	Male N=460 %	Female N=463 %	
Agriculture	16.2%	4.5%	29.8%	11.0%	15.6%
Construction	5.9	0.7	8.7	0.4	4.1
Manufacturing	4.5	3.8	7.2	6.9	5.6
Commerce (e.g., restaurant work, car wash)	29.8	4.7	13.5	7.1	14.8
Services (e.g, gardner, hotel maid, domestic, janitor, driver)	36.5	48.9	26.3	17.1	32.1
Public Service	0.0	0.2	1.3	1.1	0.6
Professions	0.0	0.7	3.3	3.9	1.9
Not participating in labor market (unemployed or not seeking work)	7.1	36.5	10.0	52.5	25.3
TOTALS	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Significance (X2): undocumented -- documented = .001 or less.

maintenance), commerce (restaurants, gas station, car wash) and agriculture. Undocumented women were cluster - ed primarily in the services (maids, hotels). Although legally-immigrated informants also worked in such sectors of the economy, they were employed in construction and manufacturing to a larger degree than the undocumented. Even though proportionately fewer informants worked in the agricultural sector, fieldwork continues to be an important source of employment for Mexican migrants.

The urban informal sector provides an easily entered niche for Mexican immigrants, particularly the undocu - mented. However, participation in the informal sector has distinct disadvantages (Nelson 1979).[8] Such jobs typically do not operate under a formal contractual relationship. Individuals generally offer their services, as gardeners or maids for example, and are hired on a personal basis. Because of the informal nature of such jobs, regulations concerning fair labor standards and practices are rarely observed. There are no guarantees of overtime pay nor are job-related benefits provided. Most importantly, informal sector employment is extremely tenuous, rarely permanent in nature.

Household Composition and Structure

Households headed by legal Mexican immigrants (N=531) fell into one of 31 household types (Table 3). Households headed by undocumented immigrants (N=545) varied between 42 distinct household types. The undocumented clearly showed greater variation in the types of households they formed compared to their legal counterparts.

Solitaries

Eleven percent of the legal interviewees and fourteen percent of the undocumented were classified as solitaries (Table 3). However, this similarity masks important

TABLE 3: Household Classification Scheme with
Percentages by Immigration Status

	Undocumented (N=545)	Legals (N=531)
I. Solitaries	14.0%	11.0%
1. lives alone	4.6	10.6
2. lives at work (maid, farm)	9.4	0.4
II. No family households	13.6%	2.5%
10. coresident sibling	2.2	1.1
11. coresident relations, other kinds	0.9	0.6
12. persons not related	7.2	0.6
13. combination of 10 + 11	0.4	0.0
14. combination of 11 + 12	0.9	0.2
15. combination of 10 + 12	1.7	0.0
III. Simple family households	43.4%	71.4%
20. married couples alone	6.8	8.1
21. married couples with child(ren)	27.7	48.0
22. widowers with child(ren)	0.0	0.1
23. widows with child(ren)	0.0	0.0
24. single parent with child(ren)	3.7	13.4
25. combination of 20 + friend(s)	0.9	0.7
26. combination of 21 + friend(s)	3.0	0.9
27. combination of 22,23,24 + friend(s)	1.5	0.2
IV. Extended family households	17.3%	11.7%
30. extended upwards	0.7	2.4
31. extended downwards	1.7	1.3
32. extended laterally	11.2	4.0
33. combination of 30, 31, 32	0.7	0.6
34. 30 + friend(s)	0.0	0.0
35. 31 + friend(s)	0.2	0.2
36. 32 + friend(s)	1.3	0.4
37. 33 + friend(s)	0.2	0.0
38. Int. is single parent family (spf) extended up	0.2	1.1
39. Interviewee is spf extended DOWN	0.4	0.8
40. Interviewee is spf extended laterally	0.7	0.9

V. Multiple family households   11.7%   3.6%

  50. Int.=primary family, secondary units UP   0.2   0.0
  51. secondary units DOWN   1.7   0.8
  52. secondary units lateral   2.9   0.8
  53. Int. is secondary family and is UP   0.0   0.0
  54. Int. is secondary family and is DOWN   0.2   0.0
  55. Int. is secondary family and is lateral   0.4   0.0
  56. Int. primary and spf and 2nd unit UP   0.2   0.0
  57. Int. primary and spf and 2nd unit DOWN   0.4   0.2
  58. Int. primary, spf and 2nd unit lateral   0.4   0.2
  59. Int. is secondary and spf and UP   0.0   0.0
  60. Int. is secondary and spf and DOWN   0.0   0.2
  61. Int. is secondary and spf and lateral   0.2   0.0
  62. Int. primary, second unit is spf and UP   0.4   0.0
  63. Int. primary, second unit is spf and DOWN   0.0   0.6
  64. Int. primary, second unit is spf + lateral   0.6   0.6
  65. Int. primary + spf, & second unit spf + UP   0.0   0.0
  66. Int. is spf and second unit is spf and DOWN   0.2   0.0
  67. Int. is spf and second unit is spf + lateral   0.0   0.0
  68. other multiple family household   0.0   0.0
  69. non-related family households (HH)   2.2   0.0
  70. non-related family households, int. is spf   0.6   0.0
  71. non-related family HH, secondary unit is spf   0.4   0.2
  90. Int. primary family, 2nd units UP + friend(s)   0.0   0.0
  91. secondary units DOWN + friend(s)   0.0   0.2
  92. secondary units lateral + friend(s)   0.0   0.0
  93. Int. is secondary and is UP + friends(s)   0.0   0.0
  94. Int. is secondary and is DOWN + friend(s)   0.0   0.0
  95. Int. is secondary and is lateral + friend(s)   0.0   0.0
  96. Int. primary + spf, 2nd unit UP + friend(s)   0.0   0.0
  97. Int. primary + spf, 2nd unit DOWN + fren(s)   0.0   0.0
  98. Int. primary + spf, 2nd unit lateral + fr(s)   0.0   0.0
  99. Int. is secondary and spf and UP + friend(s)   0.0   0.0
100. Int. is secondary + spf and DOWN + friend(s)   0.2   0.0
101. Int. secondary + spf and lateral + friend(s)   0.0   0.0
102. Int. primary, 2nd unit spf and UP + fren(s)   0.0   0.0
103. Int. primary, 2nd unit spf and DOWN + fr(s)   0.0   0.0
104. Int. primary, 2nd unit spf + lateral + f(s)   0.0   0.0
105. Int. primary + spf, 2nd unit spf + UP + fr(s)   0.0   0.0
106. Int. spf, 2nd unit spf + DOWN + friend(s)   0.0   0.0
107. Int. spf, 2nd unit spf and lateral + fr(s)   0.0   0.0
108. other multiple family household + friend(s)   0.4   0.0
109. non-related family households + friend(s)   0.6   0.0
110. non-related fam HH, int. is spf + friend(s)   0.0   0.0
111. non-related fam HH, 2nd unit is spf+ fr(s)   0.0   0.0

VI. Non-classifiable households
120. not classifiable, no household data   MISSING   MISSING

differences. Most of the undocumented in this category (51 out of 75 individuals, or 68%) lived at their place of work, compared to only 2 of 58 (3.4%) of the legal interviewees who lived as solitaries.

That more undocumented lived at their place of employment, as maids and farm workers, than did their legal counterparts reflects the employment opportunities for unskilled undocumented migrants. Age differences also come into play. The legal interviewees who live alone are generally older. If we isolate those who actually live alone, and not at work, we find only 4.6 percent of the undocumented and 10.6 percent of the legal immigrants in such single person households. The particular needs of the undocumented lead them to live with other people rather than alone.

No Family Households

Legal immigrants rarely (2.5%) lived in households with unmarried siblings or other relatives, and they almost never lived with friends (non-relatives) in the same household. In contrast, many (13.6%) undocumented lived in a household comprised of other individuals to whom they are not related or they shared a household with siblings, other relatives or friends.

Simple Family Households

A major difference exists in the proportion of simple family households formed by legal immigrants compared to the undocumented (Table 3). A majority (71.4%) of legal immigrants lived in a simple family household while less than half (43.5%) of the undocumented did so. Moreover, almost half of all legal interviewees lived in a household consisting only of a conjugal family, that is, both parents and child(ren), compared to only 27.7 percent of the undocumented.

The examination of simple families reveals that another difference between the two subgroups in the Mexican immigrant population is the frequency of single parent families. Legal immigrants (13.7%) were much more likely to live as single parents without friends or other relatives in the household than are the undocumented (5.2%).

Few undocumented single parents lived in a household without other adults. The importance of friends in households headed by undocumented single parents is underscored by the data on household composition. Out of 28 undocumented single parents in simple family households, 8 (28.6%) had friends living in the household, compared to only 1 of 72 (1.4%) of their legally-immigrated counterparts.

Friends, or others in the household, can assist with child care and other domestic labor needs, which increases the single parents ability to participate in the labor force. Moreover, additional adults in the household helps to counter the risks associated with possible deportation. For example, should the parent be apprehended and returned to Mexico, the other adult can take care of the child and maintain the household until the parent makes his or her way back to the household. The reliance on the resources gained from human relations also influences the addition of relatives to a household.

Extended Family Households

Legal (11.7%) and undocumented (17.3%) immigrants lived in extended family households in similar proportions. However, when we examine the ways in which households are extended, significant differences are apparent and indicate the influence of the the migration process and immigration status on household structure. The role played by the life-cycle in influencing household structure which will be indicated below but will not be examined at length due to limitations of space.

TABLE 4: Extended Family Households

Households	Undocumented N=94 %	Documented N=62 %
Total Extended UP	5.3%	30.6%
Total Extended DOWN	12.8	19.4
Total Extended LATERALLY	76.6	45.2
Total Combinations	5.3	4.8
TOTALS	100.0	100.0
Total Extended Family House-holds which include a Single Parent Family	7.5	23.4
Total Extented Family House-holds with Friends	9.6	4.8

Table 4 presents the various types of extended households as a proportion of all extended family households only. Extension UP, DOWN and LATERALLY refers to the generational relationship between ego or interviewee and the other person in the household. Extended UP refers to a household in which the additional relative is a generation or more above the interviewee, for example a mother, father, aunt or uncle. Extended DOWN refers to a household in which the additional relative is one or more generations below the interviewee, for example a niece, nephew, grandchild. Extended LATERALLY refers a household in which the additional relative is of the same kinship generation, for example, a brother, sister, cousin.

Among legal immigrants, less than half (45.2%) of the extended family households were extended laterally. Among undocumented interviewees, however, extension through inclusion of a brother, sister or cousin in the house - hold accounted for more than three-quarters (76.6%) of the extended family households.

Many of the legal interviewees also extended their households by including a mother or father (extension UP). This pattern for legal immigrants is related to their being generally older than undocumented informants and their immigration status. They are relatively established residents who also have the possibility of applying for their parents to legally immigrate. In some cases, their parents may have actually been the primary migrants.

The virtual lack of households extended UP among undocumented immigrants reflects their relatively recent arrival in the United States and the pattern of their migration. Undocumented immigrants generally did not migrate with their parents nor do they have the possibility of legally immigrating their parents, who, because of age, may be unwilling to make a risky and arduous illegal entry to the United States. In addition, migration tends to be age selective, with most undocumented migrants being between 19 and 29 years old. Although a young undocumented im - migrant's parents may still be relatively young, they would have to abandon their social and economic equity in their place of origin in exchange for a clandestine lifestyle. In contrast, a brother or sister of an undocumented immigrant relies on the U.S. household for support when migrating, which helps account for the high frequency of laterally extended households.

Multiple Family Households

Legal and undocumented immigrants differ on the extent to which they live in households comprised of more than one family unit. Multiple family households accounted for only 3.6% of the households of legal informants but more

than one out of ten households (11.7%) among undocumented informants (Table 3).

TABLE 5: Multiple Family Households

Households	Undocumented N=64 %	Documented N=19 %
Second Household UP	7.8%	0.0%
Second Household DOWN	21.9	52.6
Second Household LATERAL	34.4	42.1
Other Combination	4.7	0.0
Unrelated families	31.3	5.3
TOTALS	100.1	100.0
Multiple Family Households which include a Single Parent Family	28.0	52.6
Multiple Family Households with friends	9.4	5.3

The most frequent type of multiple family household found among legal immigrants included secondary families which were generationally DOWN from the perspective of the head of the household (Table 5). Such households often consisted of the interviewee's family and at least one child who was either married (with or without a child) or a

single parent. Only 21.9% of the undocumented lived in such households.

Households consisting of married siblings were common types of multiple family households among both legal and undocumented informants. However, only one household of unrelated families was found among legal interviewees. In contrast, households consisting of two or more families who were not related accounted for 3.7% of all households found among undocumented interviewees, and 31.3% of the undocumented multiple family house - holds.

Although two families sharing a household may not be related through kinship, they often share a common affiliation with a particular community or region in Mexico which, so far from home, serves as the basis for a kinship-like relationship. In other cases, the sentiment upon which a relationship is based results from two members of the joining families working together.

Household Variation: Legal Immigrants

Households among legal immigrants exhibited much less variation during the first few years of migration compared to undocumented immigrants (Tables 6 and 7). Over two-thirds (69.7%) of the legal informants in the country 5 years or less lived in simple family households, most of which consisted of both spouses and children. This is double the proportion of such households found among undocumented immigrants (35%) with the same amount of time residing in the United States. Legal immigrants, even recent arrivals, believe they are here to stay, at least for a long time. If married, their wives are here with them.

Despite the preponderance of simple family households among relatively recent legal immigrants, extended and multiple family households were also present. Complex households were formed by 15.8% of the legal heads of household. While this is about half of the proportion found among undocumented heads with the same length of

TABLE 6: Household Variation by Length of U.S. Residence for Households Headed by Legal Immigrants

Household Type	Years in the United States				
	1 or less N=11 %	2-5 N=65 %	6-8 N=55 %	9-12 N=97 %	13+ N=296 %
Solitaries					
live alone	18.2%	6.2%	9.1%	6.2%	12.8%
live at work	0.0	0.0	1.8	1.0	0.0
No Family Household	0.0	7.7	0.0	4.1	1.4
Simple Family HH	81.8	67.7	72.7	64.9	73.3
Extended Family HH	0.0	12.3	10.9	19.6	10.1
Multiple Family HH	0.0	6.2	5.5	5.2	2.4
TOTALS	100.0	100.1*	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Error due to rounding off.

residence (30%), complex family households represent an important option for legal immigrants.

Legal informants lived alone at about the same proportion as their undocumented counterparts during the early years of migration to the U.S. (five years or less). However, they rarely lived at their place of work. Living with unmarried siblings or friends is not very common among legal immigrants (6.6%) during the early years of residence, at least when compared to undocumented informants (17.9%).

TABLE 7: Household Variation by Length of U.S.
Residence for Households Headed by
Undocumented Immigrants

Household Type	Years in the United States				
	1 or less N=123 %	2-5 N=217 %	6-8 N=87 %	9-12 N=68 %	13+ N=44 %
Solitaries					
live alone	8.9%	3.7%	3.5%	0.0%	6.8%
live at work	17.1	8.3	3.5	8.8	2.3
No Family Household	21.1	16.1	10.3	2.9	4.5
Simple Family HH	22.0	42.4	48.3	64.7	65.9
Extended Family HH	19.5	18.9	18.4	11.8	9.1
Multiple Family HH	11.4	10.6	16.1	11.8	11.4
TOTALS	100.0	100.0	100.1*	100.0	100.0

*Error due to rounding off.

After six years in the United States, the preponderance
of simple family households continues. However, the pro -
portion of extended family households among legal infor -
mants gradually increases. The increase in extended family
households is related to the reunification of families as
discussed above. Now that the household is established,
they can begin to immigrate relatives from Mexico. In
addition, the children of the household are aging, which
means that extension may be due to children getting
married or having children and staying in the household.

Long-term legal residents, thirteen or more years in the U.S., continue the trend toward simple family households, with almost three-quarters in that category. Long-term undocumented residents mirror this pattern, with two-thirds living in simple family households.

The proportion of legal immigrants who lived alone increases among long-term residents. As the immigrants age, they find their household goes through a series of changes related to the life-cycle, as in the following case.

CASE 1: Senora Valdez is 76 years old and lives alone. She came to this country the first time forty-five years ago, when she was thirty-one years old. She has lived and worked as a waitress almost all this time without immigration documents. She has been apprehended by the INS and sent to Mexico three times, twice with her five children, two of which were born in the United States. She continues to work on a part-time basis, but now she is legally in the United States. Her husband only occasionally lives with her.

Senora Valdez' case reflects the type of lifestyle found among many older individuals. She has experienced various types of households. In her case, she has passed from a household which included five children and a now estranged husband to living alone. In addition, this case reflects the commitment to continuing to reside in the U.S. among undocumented immigrants who have formed a family in the United States.

With long-term residence, complex households drop to their lowest proportion: 12.5 percent of the households of long-term legal residents. Legal immigrants that live in complex family households do so for a variety of reasons, as the following case indicates.

CASE 2: The Ramona household consists of Luisa, age 38 and head of the household, her four children, her parents, grandmother, two young cousins, and an adult cousin and her three children. In all, fourteen people live in a three

room, poorly constructed house ("shack") in the affluent beach community of Leucadia. On one side of the house is a six foot pile of aluminum cans which the family collects to earn money from a local recycling center. Luisa has been in the U.S. for thirteen years. Although now divorced, she was once married to an American citizen. She is legally immigrated and all four of her children were born in the United States. Three years ago her parents and grand - mother, age ninety-three, legally immigrated and joined her household. A year ago, she went down to Mexico and brought back her two orphaned cousins and plans to raise them here. Her adult cousin, age 30, has lived in the U.S. nine years and has had three children born here. This cousin is an undocumented immigrant who, though sharing the household, is quite independent. Luisa, her father and her adult cousin work on a flower farm, one of the principal industries in Leucadia. Her mother takes care of the nine children while the others work.

The Ramona household is a mixture of legal and undocumented immigrants. The complex family structure found in the Ramona household results from a combination of a desire to reunite the family, economic necessity, and family responsibility.

Household Variation: Undocumented Immigrants

Examining households in relation to the length of time the informants have resided in the United States indicates the presence of patterns of household variation among undocumented immigrants. The following two cases em - phasize how specific types of household structure are beneficial during certain moments in the migrant house - hold's history.

CASE 3: Enrique, age 30, came to the U.S. twelve years ago. He was trained as an elementary school teacher and taught for a year in his ejido's school as part of his social service obligation. After completing his service, he could not

find a permanent position. And so, he headed north to the United States.

Without a social security card or immigration papers, Enrique found his employment opportunities limited. He began working as a gardener. His brother joined him a year later. The two of them have continued working as independent gardeners in Pacific Beach, where they live.

Enrique and his brother lived together for the next eight years, with little change in their household. They periodically returned to their home town in Mexico. Three years ago, Enrique married a woman while in Mexico and brought her to live in their household. Also joining the household at that time was Enrique's uncle, age 50, and a friend, age 30, both of whom worked as gardeners. The household expanded again a year ago, when his uncle's wife, 49, and son, 26, migrated from Mexico. His cousin also became a gardener and his aunt a housekeeper. In the meantime, Enrique's American daughter was born.

Between the time Enrique came to the U.S. and the interview, he experienced four types of household. Arriving alone, he lived as a solitary, but was soon joined by his brother with whom he formed a no family household. After a long period of time, Enrique's household began to undergo a rapid series of transformations. The addition of his wife, uncle and friend turned the household into one with an extended family plus friend. Then, his household became composed of multiple families when his uncle's wife came on board.

The rapid expansion of Enrique's household is primarily due to the migration process. His household became the crucial link that facilitated his relatives' migration from Mexico to the United States. The following case follows a similar yet slightly different pattern.

CASE 4: Felipe, age 38, first came to the United States nine years ago, entering without documents. He found work in Solana Beach as a gardener. For eight years he lived in the United States without his wife and family, who remained in Mexico. During this time he shared an apartment with other

men, some of whom he knew from his village in Mexico. He returned yearly to visit his family. In order to return to Mexico he had to quit his job and find a new one on his return. Throughout this period, Felipe considered the U.S. his permanent residence. As he said, "I didn't want to return to Mexico to live [permanently]. My health is much better here, I think, because of the weather."

In the Fall of last year, Felipe returned to Solana Beach with his wife, age 32, and five children, the oldest age 14 and the youngest age three. They rented an apartment with one bedroom, one bath and a kitchen. Five months later, Amalia's brother, Francisco, and his family moved in with them for a short period of time.

The joining of families in one household occurred because of a temporary need for assistance on the part of Amalia's brother's family. Francisco, age 25 and also undocumented, had been in the United States working as a gardener for six years. His wife, age 22, joined him three years later. They had a son, age 2, born in the United States. The eminent birth of their second child led the family to return to Mexico, where the cost of delivery was less than in the United States. Upon return, Francisco and his family turned to his sister Amalia for lodging.

For six months these two families lived in the one bedroom apartment. During this time, Amalia and her sister-in-law acquired jobs as maids in a hotel. Amalia's oldest daughters helped with caring for the younger children. When Francisco and his family moved it was to an apartment in the same building.

When Felipe first came to the U.S., he lived in a no family household. He then formed a simple family household that became a multiple family household as a result of the migration his brother-in-law's family was undergoing. His household then reverted to a simple family household.

As these two cases attest, different types of households are beneficial during different moments in the migration process. Complex households, such as the multiple family household, often develop out of a need for assistance in the

migration process. Recent arrivals turn to established households for room, board, employment referrals and a broad range of other assistance. At the same time, the additional members of the household help with domestic labor needs, such as child care, which enable others to join the workforce.

The importance of different types of households during different moments in the migration process can be observed systematically in Table 7. Undocumented Mexicans in the U.S. a year or less lived in households which reflect their recent arrival to the area. Most first-year migrants did not live in a traditional family household; instead, they either lived with siblings, single relatives or friends, lived at work, or lived alone (47.2%). Or, they lived with other relatives in complex households (either extended or multiple family) of some type (30.9%). Only 22 percent of the first year undocumented interviewees lived in simple family house - holds.

The first year of an undocumented migrant's residence in the U.S. can be interpreted as a fishing expedition. That is, households are transitory, reflecting the transitory nature of recent undocumented migrants, most of whom come to the U.S. to work, earn money, and then return to Mexico. Forming a household consisting of their immediate family is often not a primary concern.

After a year of residence in the U.S., the proportion of undocumented Mexicans living at work and living alone diminishes. Living with other single relatives or friends decreases somewhat but continues to account for 16.1 percent of the households. More often than not, households consist of individuals of varying lengths of residence, as in the following case.

CASE 5: Patricia and two women friends share an apartment in Pacific Beach. All three are undocumented. They work as maids in La Jolla. Patricia, 28, has been in the U.S. seven years, and her two friends, ages 22 and 21, have been here three years and one year, respectively. Unlike her two friends, who are single and have never been married, Patricia was married until just before she migrated

to the United States. After her divorce, she worked as a nurse in Mexico but found she could not earn enough money to support her children. So she decided to move north in search of a better job, leaving her children with her parents in Mexico. One day she plans to bring her children to join her in the United States.

As in the case above, undocumented migrants often band together with other like-situated individuals during their sojourn in the United States. Sharing residence and rental costs is a strategy which allows young, solitary undocumented migrants to maintain themselves as they search for employment and then work at low-income jobs. In some cases, they are married and have children, but leave their families in Mexico. Other times, they are young members of a household in Mexico who are sent to the United States. Such migrants maintain a relationship with a household in Mexico. Whether or not such migrants return to Mexico or form a family household depends on many things, not the least of which is their success at finding adequate employment.

With longer residence in the U.S., undocumented migrants appear to make some adjustments leading to an increase in family-oriented households. This trend could be the result of a process of selection. Transitory migrants return home after about a year in the United States. Those that remain are oriented toward more long-term residence. This interpretation is based on the dramatic increase (from 22% to 42.4%) in the proportion of simple family house - holds among undocumented migrants residing in the U.S. longer than a year but less than six years.

The sharp increase in simple family households also reflects the need for an initial period of adjustment to life and work in the United States. After experiencing the U.S., the migrant better understands the adaptations which will have to be undertaken.

Households consisting of extended and multiple families continue in importance during this period. Recent arrivals may be joining households of previously migrated relatives

during this time. Or, families are joining as a means of sharing costs and household labor requirements.

With six to eight years of residence, the pattern observed earlier continues. Fewer undocumented immigrants live at work or live with single relatives or friends and we find more family-oriented households.

During this time, complex family households reach their peak of importance, accounting for 34.5 percent of the households. This pattern may be accounted for by families reuniting with other members left in Mexico, that is, others coming to join family here. After six years of residence, the migrating head may feel his or her household is established enough to assist other family members arriving from Mexico. As the following case suggests, with longer resi- dence and family formation, especially children, there is often need for help with household labor, such as child care, in order that as many adults as possible participate in the labor market.

CASE 6: The Flores household consists of Ricardo, age 43, his wife, Anna, 39, their four children, ages 11, 8, 7, and 3 (all but the oldest born in the U.S.), and Anna's sister, Juana, age thirty-one. Ricardo was the first member of the household to migrate to the United States. He came 14 years ago, entering the U.S. without immigration docu - ments. For five years he shuttled between work in the U.S. and his family in Mexico. Then Anna and their child also came to the United States. Five years ago, Anna's sister joined the household.

Although the Flores family live in Encinitas, a relatively affluent beach community, their housing is minimal. They live in a garage. In order to create some measure of privacy the garage space is divided by blankets hung from the ceiling. Water is brought from the faucet outside the garage. The nearest bathroom facilities are in the adjoining house.

Both Ricardo and Anna work on flower farms. Anna is pleased with her life, especially her work. She takes great pride in the quality of her work and the fact that she is the boss' confidant. Juana helps take care of her sister Anna's children in exchange for rent and food. She seems to run

the household and appears to be as important to the children as their mother. In addition, Juana cleans houses a couple days a week to earn money which she uses to support her mother and an invalid sister in Mexico.

The theme of bringing a relative from Mexico to help with child care and other domestic tasks recurs in a number of interviews. In this case, Juana's presence in her sister's household serves strategies emanating from two house - holds that are geographically separate and yet related thrcugh kinship. She is providing her sister's household with labor that is necessary to allow Anna to participate in the labor force, thus helping maintain the U.S. household. At the same time, she is essential to the survival of her mother's household in Mexico.

The Flores' extended family household reveals the linkages between the labor market, the household and undocumented immigration. The Flores family's resources would be taxed to the limit if they had to hire someone to assist with child care. In a sense, Juana is subsidizing, through her own undervalued labor, the wages earned by her sister, Anna, and therefore the cost of labor to Anna's employer. In essence, undocumented immigrants who earn wages which do not cover the cost of maintaining a house - hold (e.g., child care) often recruit additional undocumented immigrants into the household to help make up the difference between earnings and maintenance. In such cases, the employment of undocumented workers is intrinsically related to further undocumented immigration.

After 9 years or more in the U.S., undocumented immi - grants lived less often in households consisting of non-married siblings, relatives or friends (Table 7). Living alone also diminishes with time. Living at work still occurs, mostly among women who work as domestics and in child care. Complex family households diminish in importance, but still account for about 22 percent of the households.

With longer residence, undocumented interviewees predominately (65.2%) lived in simple family households. The Carrillo household is an example of such a household.

CASE 7: The members of the Carrillo family are long-term residents of the United States despite their undocumented immigration Status. Mr. Carrillo is thirty-seven and has been in the U.S. for 15 years. His wife is twenty-seven and has been in the U.S. for 8 years. Their two children were born in the United States. Mr. Carrillo works in a hardware store in Valley Center, where the family also lives. Mr. Carrillo only has only one complaint which has to do with his immigration status. He hopes to someday live legally in the United States. Towards that end, "I have paid over $1,200 to two lawyers to help me get my [immigration] papers. But they have done nothing."

The fact that Mr. Carrillo has lived in the U.S. for an extended period of time is related to how well he as adapted to the local culture and economy. He has a relatively permanent job, his children are U.S. citizens who have never experienced life in Mexico, and he has taken steps to legalize his family's status.

Once again, a selection process is occurring. Many of the undocumented have returned to Mexico before this time. Those who manage to reside on a long-term basis have become settlers. They often view themselves as permanently in the U.S., and desire to live as legal immigrants.

In sum, the households of legal and undocumented im - migrants became more similar with longer residence. Households comprised of simple families became the most favored type the longer Mexican immigrants, whatever their immigration status, live in the United States. It must be noted, however, that even among long-term residents, other types of households existed, reflecting their advantages under certain conditions and at different stages in the migration process.

Conclusion

Data collected on household composition and structure among Mexicans who live in San Diego, California,

reinforce the premise that household variation is essential to the migrants' adaptation to their new environment. Mexican immigrants live in a wide range of household types. The "nuclear" family of early theorists -- a household comprised of two spouses and their offspring -- is but one of many forms of household organization.

The households found among Mexican immigrants were classified into five general categories: households of individuals living alone and/or at work (solitaries), households comprised of individuals who are neither married nor share a parent/child bond (no family house - holds), households of married couples with or without children and single parents with children (simple family household), households of families which also contain single relatives (extended family households), and house - holds consisting of two or more families (multiple family households).

The attempt to understand this variation began by taking into account immigration status (an important "political/jural norm" commented on earlier by Fortes). Although they share a common cultural background, undocumented and legal immigrants exhibited distinct patterns of household variation.

When viewed over their length of residence in the United States, it became clear that no single developmental cycle exists. However, various types of households are beneficial at different moments in a migrant's history. Once again, significant differences are observable between legal and undocumented informants, the former exhibiting a greater degree of household variation at all stages.

Among legal interviewees, simple family households predominated at all stages of the immigrants' experience in the United States. Complex households (consisting of extended or multiple families) appeared in significant pro - portions only after legal immigrants spent an extended period of time in the United States. In contrast, complex households among undocumented immigrants were especially important early in the migration process.

The presence of complex households among legal immigrants who were long-term residents is explained, in

part, by the time it takes to establish oneself economically and socially, which would then allow legal immigrants to reunite family members left in Mexico via legal mechanisms. In addition, the life-cycle played a role in the household variation exhibited by legal immigrants. Compared to the undocumented, legal immigrants were generally older, thus their children were also older, increasing the likelihood of a child marrying and/or having children and joining the household. This would occur not only as immigrants reside longer but also as they age and work their way through the life-cycle.

The flexibility undocumented Mexican immigrants exhibited in the types of households they lived in can be interpreted as reflecting strategies for coping with U.S. society, their status in the economic system, their insecurity and their geographic mobility, all of which are influenced by immigration status. As the cases presented indicate, households with extended or multiple families, or the presence of friends or other "single" (without spouse and/or child) persons in the household serve many purposes. Such "others" provide additional economic and human resources. If they work, they bring into the household income with which to share expenses. If they do not work, they can assist with domestic labor requirements, which is often essential for participation in the labor market by other members of the household. The presence of others in the household also offsets the risks associated with living as an undocumented immigrant, providing a social insurance in the case of sudden, unplanned departures. In return, the es - tablished household assists recent migrants, thus serving as a key link in the migration process. Not surprisingly, many undocumented immigrants who have lived in the U.S. for a relatively long time continue to rely on the advantages provided by other types of households, particularly those consisting of extended and multiple families.

The analysis of household variation among undocu - mented Mexican immigrants reveals that despite their immigration status, they, too, undergo a process of incorporation into U.S. society. As they continue to reside in the U.S., they increasingly live in households comprised of

spouses either alone or with their offspring, without other relatives or friends. This pattern reflects a stabilization of household organization as the undocumented migrants become familiar with American society and adapt to the the U.S. labor market.

Mexican culture allows for flexibility in household formation, especially as a means of coping with economic uncertainty and labor needs, both inside and outside the household. As undocumented immigrants adapt to the labor market and become more secure in their ability to interact with American society and culture, their households reflect a composition and structure increasingly similar to their legal counterparts. Although difficult to resolve here, the pattern of Mexican immigrants increasingly forming simple family households as they stay longer in the U.S. may reflect a return to a Mexican cultural pattern as much as it does acculturating to an "American" style, especially given the large proportions of single person households and single parent families found in American society.

The findings presented here reinforce the direction being taken by theorists such as Otterbein (1970), Brown (1977), Freed and Freed (1983), and others, who insist on examining the influence of social, economic and political factors on household composition and structure. Although culture was a constant factor for both legal and undocu-mented Mexican immigrants, examples from other cultures and in different social contexts would be expected to exhibit similar patterns as a result of similar influences.

For instance, when examining the adaptation of individual migrants and their families in a receiving society, the nature of their participation in the labor market and political/immigration status must be considered. Immigrants working at low-paying jobs, or experiencing chronic unemployment, will find the ability to vary household composition an important asset (for example, the Indo-chinese, see Ruben *et al*, 1987). However, the constraints inherently associated with an undocumented immigration status exacerbate reliance upon domestic resources and household flexibility. Among migrants from countries other than Mexico, it is suspected that an undocumented immi-

gration status would also lead to the presence of large proportions of no family and complex family households, especially during the early stages of the migration process.

NOTES

[1] The life-cycle and its utility to understanding household variation among Mexican immigrants is the focus of another work in progress by the author.

[2] See Chavez (1987) for a more thorough discussion of the international system perspective in relation to Mexican migration to the United States.

[3] Indeed, many legal immigrants entered the U.S. without documents the first time they came to this country and then later managed to acquire permanent residence. Portes and Bach (1985:8) found that 70% of the legal Mexican immigrants interviewed in their decade-long study had at one time been undocumented migrants.

[4] This is not to say that legally immigrating a relative is not a lengthy and time consuming process. With the current backlog in the INS' processing of legal residence applications for Mexicans, nine to 14 year delays are commonplace. As a consequence, households headed by legal immigrants may include a family member who has applied for legal residence but has not yet received it, and thus the legality of his or her residence in the U.S. is open to question.

[5] The 1980 Census counted 2.06 million undocumented residents, most of whom were considered long-term residents of the United States rather than temporary migrants (Warren and Passel 1983).

[6] Included in the original sample of 2,103 interviewees were 90 border "commuters" who are legal immigrants to the U.S. but who choose to reside in Mexico. The commuters work on the U.S. side of the border. For the purposes at hand, border commuters are not part of the analysis, unless they are explicitly mentioned.

[7] For comprehensive reviews of the literature on research on households see Schmink (1985) and Yanagisako (1979).

[8] For studies on participation in the informal sector as a strategy employed by low-income urban dwellers see: Kemper 1981; Logan 1981; Banck 1980; Hansen 1980; Lloyd 1979.

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