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Articles

Guatemalan households and ethnicity in the South of Mexico: Demographic and socioeconomic profiles

Hogares guatemaltecos y etnicidad en el sur de México: Perfiles demográficos y socioeconómicos

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Abstract

The goal of this paper is to analyze the demographic and socioeconomic profiles of Guatemalan households by indigenous language in the southern border states of Mexico. In particular, it is explored how many Guatemalan households are settled, how they are configured and how they are integrated in structural terms, based on the Intercensus Survey 2015. To this end, descriptive statistics and a multinomial logistic model are used. The analysis indicates that Guatemalan households are concentrated in rural localities, are numerous and younger, and mainly work in the primary sector. Their socioeconomic integration is disadvantaged in aspects such as labor and housing conditions and access to social services. Nevertheless, Guatemalan indigenous households exhibit higher levels of social integration than their non-indigenous counterparts in the access to citizenship, housing and governmental economic transfers.

Keywords: Guatemalan population, households, integration, migration, southern border, Mexico.

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Resumen

El objetivo general de este artículo es analizar los perfiles demográficos y socioeconómicos de los hogares guatemaltecos por habla de lengua indígena en las entidades de la frontera sur de México. En particular, se explora cuántos hogares guatemaltecos están asentados, cómo se configuran y cómo se han integrado en términos estructurales, con base en la Encuesta Intercensal 2015. Para tal fin se emplea estadística descriptiva y un modelo de regresión logística multinomial. El análisis indica que los hogares guatemaltecos se concentran en áreas rurales,

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son numerosos y más jóvenes, y laboran principalmente en el sector primario. Su integración socioeconómica es desventajosa en rubros como las condiciones del empleo y de la vivienda y el acceso a servicios sociales. No obstante, los hogares guatemaltecos indígenas exhiben niveles más altos de integración social que sus contrapartes no indígenas en el acceso a la ciudadanía mexicana, vivienda y apoyos económicos gubernamentales.

Palabras clave: Guatemaltecos, hogares, integración, migración, frontera sur, México.

Introduction

The southern border of Mexico has been an area of high cross-border and international human mobility. Thousands of Guatemalans have joined areas of the productive sector in southern Mexico, either as temporary border workers or permanent residents (Meza, 2015). The reasons include economic factors, aspirations for a better life through insertion into the job market but also political motives or violence (González, 2015; Ramos, 2013). Thus, in the eighties, thousands of Guatemalans obtained refugee status for these reasons and decided to remain in Mexico after the peace accords, residing around the old refugee camps in different municipalities in Mexico's southern states and particularly in municipalities in Chiapas that border Guatemala (González, 2015; Kauffer, 2000; Ruiz, 2018).

As a result, Guatemalans have permeated the demographics of Mexico's southern border by migrating alone or with family members and marrying Mexicans and having children who are Mexican by birth. Although since 2008 U.S. pressure has increased with regard to the implementation of containment policies along the border, Guatemalans have continued to reach Mexico, as we will see later. In the context of greater control over border crossing in northern Mexico and the increasing difficulty of migrating to the United States, Guatemalan migration to and through Mexico has continued (Rodríguez, 2016).

This article aims to analyze the demographic and socioeconomic profiles of Guatemalan households along Mexico's southern border by indigenous language-speaking status. In particular, it seeks to determine how many Guatemalan households are settled in the area, how they are configured and how they have been integrated in structural terms, based on the Intercensal Survey of 2015, taking into account differences that may be recorded regarding the use of indigenous languages, as this is a crucial element of the sociodemographic profile of Guatemalans in Mexico, as we will soon see. We take structural integration to mean the process of achieving similar levels of access to the same rights, resources, services and institutions of native citizens, such as employment, education, housing, health care and citizenship (Heckmann, 2003). Analyzing structural integration is relevant because it determines the socioeconomic status and social welfare of migrants and their descendants (Esser, 2004).

Indigenous peoples have historically lived in conditions of marginalization throughout Latin America (Del Popolo, 2017), and being migrants could put indigenous Guatemalans at a double disadvantage, as they could be left out of social development policies aimed at indigenous peoples in Mexico. However, there is evidence that some Guatemalans in southern Mexico have managed to gain access to land, infrastructure and diversified economic options (Chan & García, 2018; Kauffer, 2000), while others

have developed cross-border or transnational life strategies (both with their country of origin and with Guatemalan family members in the United States), improving their living conditions and allowing them to mitigate social and economic risks (Rodríguez & Caballeros, 2020; Ruiz, 2018).

This article is based on a sociodemographic perspective that considers households as a unit of analysis. In general, settlement in Mexico by Guatemalans is seen as a family life strategy[1] that has facilitated the social and economic reproduction and survival of this group (Torrado, 1981). It should be noted that the decision to remain in Mexico after the end of the Guatemalan civil war or to migrate in search of employment or family reunification is one that has been made by individuals or families who are constrained by opportunity structures. Thus, the analysis of the configuration and dynamics of households and their links with social structures in a given geographic space is essential, not only because it makes it possible to understand the constraints of family reproduction strategies but also because it serves as a basis for the design of effective public interventions aimed at social development (López, 2001).

The article consists of four sections. The first section offers a brief review of the literature on settlement by Guatemalans in southern Mexico in order to contextualize the sociodemographic analysis. The second section presents the methodology used for the analysis. The third section describes the sociodemographic composition of these households in 2015, as well as their levels of social welfare. Finally, section four provides a discussion of the findings and their implications for public policy with regard to the socioeconomic integration of Guatemalan immigrants in Mexico.

Guatemalans in Mexico: From Refuge to Integration

This section summarizes recent Guatemalan immigration in southern Mexico to contextualize the analysis of demographic and socioeconomic profiles. Migration by Guatemalan households to Mexico is considered to be multicausal and historical, and therefore, it can be defined in different terms according to the time of settlement (Del Popolo, 2017). For example, during the armed conflict in Guatemala, migration was forced. In the vast majority of cases, the destinations were border sites, some of common ancestral origin, and later diversified with the relocation of refugee migrants in other non-border areas of the Mexican states of Chiapas, Campeche and Quintana Roo. However, in successive waves, forced migration by violence coexisted with cross-border or transnational migrations in search of job opportunities, sustained by ethnic social networks that maintain exchanges between origins and destinations. For the purposes of this article, we speak of migration by Guatemalans to Mexico in general, without distinguishing between the different causes of migration, a process that is described below as it occurs in this area of Mexico.

In the history of Mexican-Guatemalan migration, the scope and rhythms of border interaction since the 1820s have followed the subsequent patterns: the incorporation into Mexico of inhabitants of neighboring areas that became part of the national

[1] These strategies may also be individual, and settlement may be associated with family formation in Mexico or occur in non-family households. However, the vast majority of Guatemalans included in population censuses have family ties in Mexico, as explained in the methodological section.

territory in the context of 19th century border disputes and agreements; the definitive settlement of seasonal laborers and peasants established in border sites; the arrival of exiles, asylees and refugees from the 1960s to the 1980s; and the establishment of individuals and family groups favored by networks of migrants previously settled in Mexico (Castillo & Vázquez, 2010, pp. 238-239).

In particular, the mobility of Guatemalans to Mexico, mainly in search of employment in the agricultural sector, dates back to the late 19th century with the emergence of coffee farms (Ayala-Carillo & Cárcamo-Toalá, 2012). At that time, Guatemalan labor was needed for coffee production and farm maintenance. However, Guatemalan settlement in Mexico occurred on a small scale due to the high circularity of migration determined by agricultural cycles.

It was not until four decades ago that the exodus of Guatemalans to Mexico began. According to Kauffer (2000), as a result of the civil war in Guatemala, in the early 1980s, both small groups and complete communities of Guatemalans, largely indigenous, managed to cross the Mexican border in search of safety. Some joined Mexican *rancherías* (small rural villages) or border indigenous communities, while others formed refugee camps in some host municipalities in Chiapas, where they received institutional assistance, such as Ocosingo, Las Margaritas, La Independencia, La Trinitaria, Frontera Comalapa and Amatenango de la Frontera (González, 2015; Kauffer, 2005; Ruiz, 2018).

In 1984, the Mexican government decided to relocate a portion of the Guatemalan refugees to Campeche and Quintana Roo, as the border location of the camps drew the Guatemalan army to Mexican territory, which represented a threat to national security (Ruiz, 2018). For this reason, and not always voluntarily, thousands of Guatemalans were relocated to other states in Mexico, with the support of the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR for its acronym in Spanish) and financing from the European Economic Community (EEC) for integration. Of the 45 000 refugees in Chiapas at the time, half went to other states, while others remained in settlements in Chiapas, hid in the forests of the Marqués de Comillas area or returned to Guatemala (Kauffer, 2000).

As Kauffer (2000) notes, since 1987, with the establishment of Guatemala's Office of the Human Rights Prosecutor and the end of the war, the Mexican government also pushed for the return of Guatemalans to their country. However, political and socioeconomic instability continued in Guatemala, and it was not until 1996 that return of Guatemalan citizens was promoted in an organized manner, following the signing of the peace agreements, which provided guarantees for repatriation (Ruiz, 2011).

However, by this time, Guatemalans who had been settled in the area for over a decade were on their way to integration in Mexico, and not all wished to return to their country. In fact, some had Mexican spouses and children who were Mexican by birth, and heads of household expressed their interest in remaining because of the opportunities available for their children in Mexico (Ruiz, 2011). In addition, they were finally able to settle after facing multiple displacements, and returning would involve starting over in a new destination (Kauffer, 2005). For some, the prospect of returning to Guatemala was complicated because they had lost their birth certificates and records as a result of the armed conflict (Ruiz, 2018).

Notably, the integration of Guatemalans in Mexico has not been easy and has been a difficult process (Chan & García, 2018; Kauffer, 2000; 2005; Ruiz, 2018). It has depended on the structure of opportunities in the settlement site, the economic or land support obtained for it, social class, the level of organization of communities, and

the speed with which the documentation process has been carried out, either to obtain immigration documents as a nonimmigrant or immigrant or to become naturalized as Mexican citizens. Documented residents have had greater opportunities to move to different areas in search of job opportunities, and those with greater organization have succeeded in managing land grants and public services. In Chiapas, for example, access to land, housing and services was more difficult to obtain than in other states in Mexico where relocated refugees were able to achieve greater community organization. In addition, the naturalization process in Chiapas was comparatively slow and inefficient, and the Zapatista movement's uprising in 1994 complicated the integration process (González, 2015).

By 1999, according to data from COMAR (cited by Kauffer, 2000), there were approximately 12 350 Guatemalans in Chiapas proceeding toward integration, versus 8 634 in Campeche and 2 900 Quintana Roo (including their Mexican descendants). At that time, national and international institutions still supported the integration of refugees in Chiapas, and their survival was a challenge. However, in contrast to the official count, the Diocese of San Cristobal counted 100 000 refugees, whom it supported with different types of assistance; there is evidence that not all managed to obtain refugee status because they faced difficulties in the regularization process and high levels of poverty (Ruiz, 2018).

Notably, the migration of Guatemalans to Mexico is not only due to the civil war in Guatemala. Since the 1990s, because of the neoliberal economic model adopted by governments in the region, there has been greater instability, inequality and economic uncertainty, leading to the exclusion of large contingents of workers (Castillo & Toussaint, 2015). In particular, communities of ethnic Mams, Chujes, Kakchiqueles, Kanjobales, Jacalteks and Mochos suffered changes in their social dynamics in the last ten years due to the impact of neoliberal agricultural policies on the farming economy (Hernández, 2012). Thus, this agricultural crisis has led to sustained emigration to Mexico by Guatemalans, especially among these indigenous groups, not only in search of work in the countryside but also in search for other types of employment such as domestic labor, street vending, masonry, construction, garbage collection and other informal sector trades.

Another factor that led Guatemalans to migrate to Mexico was the climate of social violence in the post-armed conflict period in Guatemala (Duarte & Coello, 2007). While the peace accords were signed in 1996, violence increased and expanded, as sectors of organized crime dominated areas of the economic sphere. The violence was linked to conflicts between paramilitaries, ex-paramilitaries and drug-trafficking groups, and this caused new waves of Guatemalan citizens to move to Mexican territory.

Finally, it is important to note the impact of natural disasters on migratory flows from Guatemala to Mexico. Hurricanes Mitch in 1998 and Stan in 2005 caused severe damage to the productive sector, infrastructure and housing and, hence, also boosted international emigration by Guatemalans (Duarte & Coello, 2007; Hernández, 2012). These hurricanes exacerbated the agricultural crisis, which has already affected producers in the region for two decades, accelerating the migration, for example, of indigenous men and women to the tourist cities of the Mexican Caribbean (Hernández, 2012).

Moreover, it should be clarified that in addition to Guatemalans who have settled in Mexican territory, there are also those who possess cross-border jobs and do not have their main residence in Mexico. Cross-border labor on a daily, weekly or seasonal basis is also common along this border. Attempts have been made to regulate cross-border labor

and labor insertion through temporary work permits. Thus, "[…] with the Migration Act of 2011, the cross-border labor mobility of Guatemalans to Mexico is permitted … in states in southern Mexico, regardless of the department of origin, by obtaining a Border Worker Visitor's Card (TVTF for its acronym in Spanish)" (Nájera, 2017, p. 122). This permit must be renewed annually and allows documented labor insertion. It authorizes Mexican employers to hire Guatemalans as temporary workers in the states of Chiapas, Campeche, Quintana Roo and Tabasco. They are hired mainly to work in agricultural fields but also in domestic employment and a wide range of trades.

Guatemalans also remain temporarily in Mexico for other reasons. There is also the possibility of acquiring the Regional Visitor Card (TVR for its acronym in Spanish), which grants admission to persons from Belize and Guatemala who reside in their home countries and visit border towns for short stays (days or hours) for shopping, family visits or access to medical services. On the other hand, there is an intense border dynamic of Guatemalans who cross the border daily for different purposes, even without possessing immigration documents; for example, by known routes by which it is possible to avoid payment for crossing and border inspection (Ruiz, 2018). There is also a steady flow of Guatemalans and other Central Americans traveling to the United States (Rivera, 2014, pp. 12-17).

In short, the populations of Mexico and Guatemala have experienced intense interaction over time. Geographical contiguity and shared history, along with many decades of cross-border mobility, have allowed for the development of cultural ties and social networks. The permanent establishment of Guatemalans in Mexico, especially in border states, has been influenced by multiple determinants such as armed conflict, violence, natural disasters and economic crises, which have motivated this population to migrate in search of security, employment and better life prospects.

Methodology

Source of Information and Geographic Area of Analysis

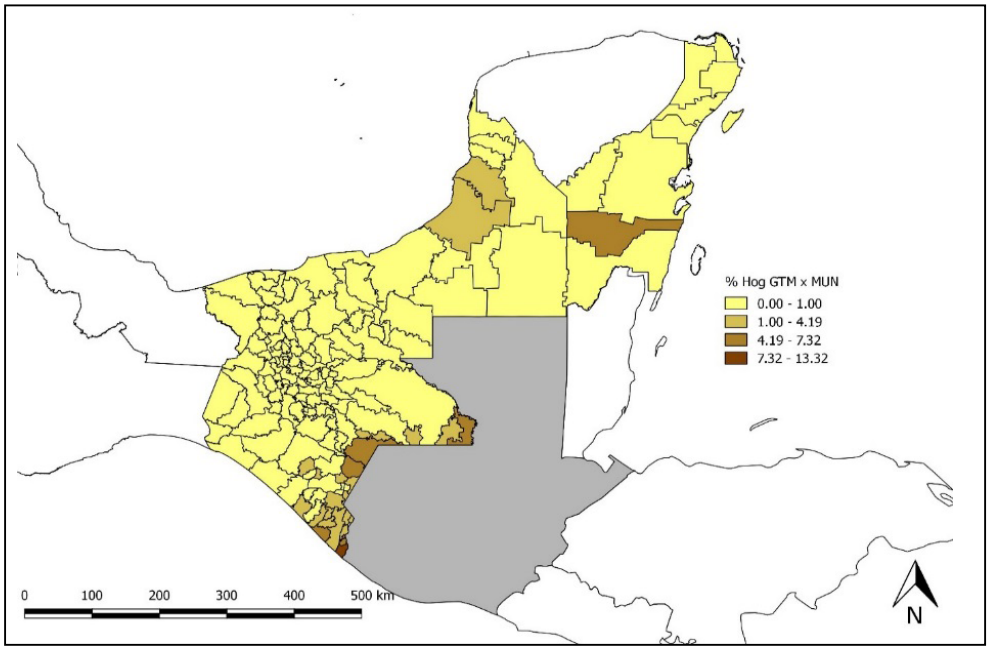
The main source of data was the 20% sample of the Intercensal Survey of 2015 (Inegi, 2015). This study takes census households, which are composed of those members who usually reside in the same dwelling (Inegi, 2019), as a unit of analysis. *Guatemalan households* were defined in the study as those in which the head of household and spouse were born in Guatemala. With this strategy for analysis, we included 86% of the total number of households with a member born in Guatemala. In the remaining households with a Guatemalan-born member, 60% of Guatemalans had no family ties with the head of household or did not specify one, suggesting that they may be temporary workers in Mexican territory. When kinship was specified, they were commonly either daughters-in-law or cousins and were in homes run by Mexican-born individuals.

With the idea of comparing the sociodemographic profiles with those of people residing in the places where Guatemalans are concentrated, the study focused on municipalities in states in southern Mexico in which at least 1% of households were of

Guatemalan origin in 2015.[2] While Guatemalans have dispersed or migrated to other municipalities, a significant concentration is still observed. These municipalities were home to 92% of Guatemalan households in 2000 and 77% in 2015 (Inegi, 2001; 2015). This does not mean that there is no Guatemalan presence in other municipalities of Mexico's southern border states but, rather, that their relative proportion is low.

The municipalities with a high concentration of Guatemalans are shown in Figure 1 as those of the second category and subsequent ones (in darker colors, with percentages of Guatemalans above 1%). The vast majority are located on or near Mexico's border with Guatemala. Only three municipalities are outside this area, which were refugee settlement sites in the 1980s. These include, for example, Bacalar, in the state of Quintana Roo, where indigenous language-speaking (ILS) Guatemalan refugee communities live that developed agriculture and its commercialization in neighboring cities such as Chetumal and Cancún (Chan & García, 2018). The municipality with the highest percentage of Guatemalans in the southern border states was Suchiate, followed by Mazatán, Benemérito de las Américas, Bacalar, Metapa, La Trinitaria, Frontera Hidalgo, Frontera Comalapa and Maravilla Tenejapa, which fall into the last two categories in Figure 1 (with Guatemalan households composing 4.19% or more of the total).

Figure 1: Percentage of Guatemalan Households in municipalities in Mexico's southern border states, 2015



Source: Created by the authors based on Inegi, 2015.

[2] The following 26 municipalities had more than 1% of Guatemalan households in 2015: in the state of Campeche, Campeche and Champotón; in the state of Quintana Roo, Bacalar; and in the state of Chiapas, Acapetahua, Amatenango de la Frontera, Ángel Albino Corzo, Bella Vista, Cacahoatán, Frontera Comalapa, Frontera Hidalgo, Huehuetán, Huixtla, La Independencia, Mazapa de Madero, Mazatán, Metapa, Motozintla, Suchiate, Tapachula, La Trinitaria, Tuxtla Chico, Tuzantán, Unión Juárez, Benemérito de las Américas, Maravilla Tenejapa and Marqués de Comillas.

Variables and Statistical Analysis

To determine how Guatemalan households have been socioeconomically integrated and, in particular, the specific profiles of those that are indigenous, a dependent variable was created that defines the *household type*, which combines the existence of a Guatemalan-born head of household or spouse with indigenous language speaking by a member of the household. Thus, the dependent variable of household type included four categories: non-ILS Mexican households, ILS Mexican households, non-ILS Guatemalan households, and ILS Guatemalan households. This criterion was preferred over the use of ethnic self-identification based on culture because it has been proven that this variable overestimates the size of the indigenous population because Mexicans may feel that they should be considered indigenous because Mexico possesses a mestizo culture with a strong indigenous component (Vázquez & Félix, 2015).

To define the profile of Guatemalan households, a set of variables was used that characterizes both the composition of households and their socioeconomic inclusion. Among the variables related to household composition, the following were evaluated: the structure of the census household (nuclear, extended, composite, single-person or other),[3] the average number of residents and Guatemalans, the age and sex of the head of household, whether the head of household's partner lives in the home, the average number of resident and live-born children of the spouse or head of household and the percentage of Guatemalan members of the household that are naturalized Mexicans.

The variables relating to the socioeconomic profiles of households were subdivided into those relating to the head of household, the spouse, children, and finally to the household as a whole. Given the complexity of some of these variables, their definitions are detailed in Table 1. Variables regarding the head of household were recent immigration from another country, whether they are employed, and what sector of the economy they are employed in. Variables regarding the spouse included their economic participation and sector of activity. Variables regarding resident children were their economic participation, the sector of activity and whether any do not attend school. Finally, household variables included being located in rural areas, the percentage of members who are employed, access to health insurance, receipt of assistance from the government and remittances, degree of overcrowding, ownership of housing, access to running water, average per capita income per job and the average durable goods.

[3] The census definition of the type of household structure is taken as the basis (Inegi, 2019). Nuclear refers to a family home made up of the head of household and spouse; the head of household and children; or the head of household, spouse, and children. The extended household includes co-resident relatives in addition to the above. The composite household adds the presence of non-relatives in the home. Single-person households are non-family households composed of one person. Other refers to households of co-residents without kinship ties with the head of household.

Table 1: Definition of socioeconomic variables

Variable	Type	Definition	Categories or ranks
Recent migration	Categorical	Head of household lived in another country 5 years ago	0 No, 1 Yes
Employed*	Categorical	Worked last week	0 No, 1 Yes
Sector of activity*	Categorical	Sector of economic activity	1 Primary sector
			2 Secondary sector
			3 Tertiary sector
Child under age 18 not in school	Categorical	At least one of the children under age 18 is not in school	0 No, all are in school
			1 Yes, not in school
% employed	Numerical	Percentage employed versus members of household	0 up to 100%
Rural location	Categorical	Location with <15 000 inhabitants	0 Urban, 1 Rural
Home ownership	Categorical	A member of the household owns the house	0 No, renting
			1 Yes, own home
			2 No, other
Level of overcrowding	Numerical	Number of people per bedroom	0.07 to 16 people
Running water	Categorical	Running water in the house	0 No, 1 Yes
Income	Numerical	Income from employment per capita	0 up to 499 997
Health insurance	Categorical	Type of health insurance of the members of the household	0 Uninsured
			1 Only *Seguro Popular* public health insurance
			2 Only IMSS or ISSTE (social security)
			3 Both
Durable goods	Numerical	Number of goods (refrigerator, washer, television (TV), land line telephone, cellular phone, car, computer, internet and paid TV service).	0 up to 9 goods
Government assistance	Categorical	A member of the household receives government assistance	0 No, 1 Yes
Remittances	Categorical	A member of the household receives remittances	0 No, 1 Yes

Source: Created by the authors.

*Note: These were estimated for the head of household, their spouse and children. Whether or not at least one of the children works was considered, giving priority to recording their agricultural activities.

The analysis was based on descriptive statistics (means and frequencies) and a multinomial logistic regression model that considered household type as a dependent variable. To estimate the model, tests of bivariate association were conducted of each variable with the dependent variable, as well as correlation matrices between independent variables. The variables that demonstrated a high correlation were evaluated according to their relationship with the dependent variable, and only one was introduced in the final models. This is the case, for example, with variables such as property and income, the type of economic activity of heads of household and of children, the structure of the household and the age of the head of household, and the numbers of resident children and live-born children. Finally, the model was determined with the set of variables that provided better goodness of fit according to likelihood ratio tests.

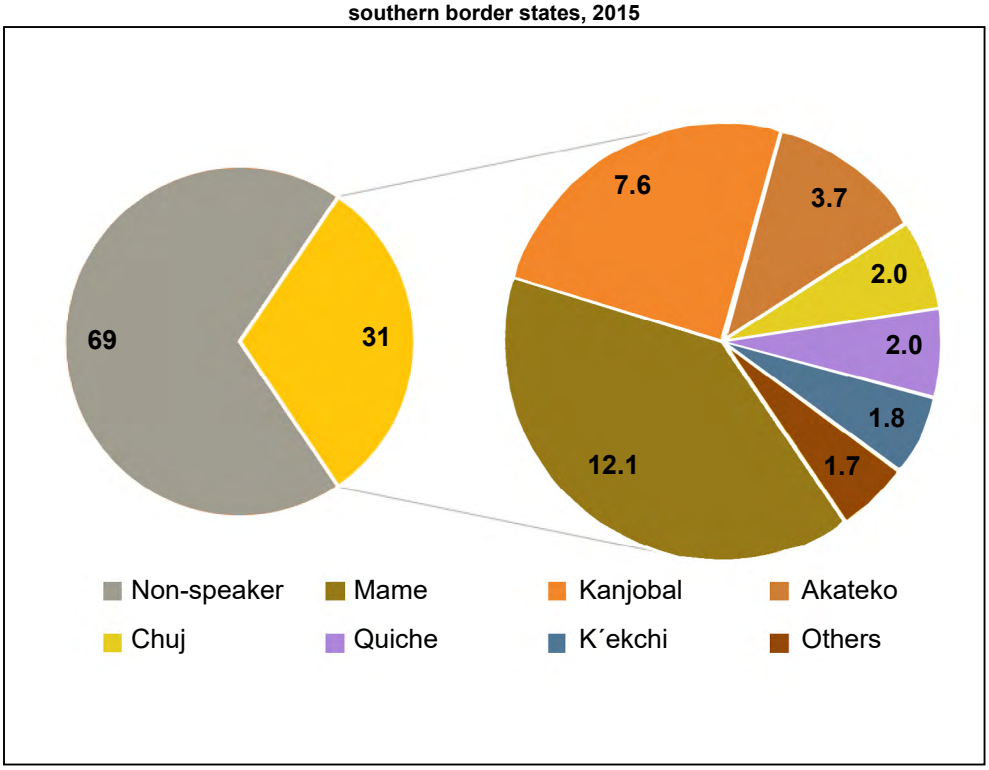
Results

The Configuration and Characterization of Guatemalan Households in Mexico Based on Indigenous Language Use

In the selected municipalities of southern Mexico, 3.4% of households are Guatemalan. Of the total Guatemalan households, 31% registered indigenous language use, compared to only 7.2% of Mexican households. Although there is a significant indigenous presence in the southern border areas and Lacandon Jungle, in which most of the municipalities analyzed are located, there are not the municipalities with the highest concentrations of indigenous Mexicans, which are instead in the Chiapas Highlands and other municipalities of the Maya region in the Yucatan Peninsula (Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas y Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo, 2006). This is because Guatemalans occupied areas of the thinly populated border where they were assigned or purchased land or had relatives with whom to reside (Kauffer, 2005). The three main indigenous languages of the Guatemalans were Mame, Kanjobal and Akateko, but languages such as Chuj, Quiché and K'ekchi are also seen (see Figure 2). It should be noted that the languages spoken were recorded as reported in the source of information and that the linguistic profile of these immigrants coincides with that identified in 2000 (own calculations based on the analysis of the Census of Population and Housing, Inegi, 2001).

As for the composition of Guatemalan households, first, it is noted that they have more members than do Mexican households (Table 2). Among indigenous language speakers (ILS), the average number of residents in Guatemalan households is 5.2, compared to 4.3 in Mexican households. In contrast, among non-ILS, the average number of residents in Guatemalan households is 4.4, with the difference being smaller between ILS and non-ILS Mexican households because the latter have an average of 3.9 people. In total, these averages amount to 60 000 people residing in Guatemalan homes in just these 26 municipalities along Mexico's southern border.

Figure 2: Main indigenous languages of Guatemalans in the selected municipalities in Mexico's southern border states, 2015



Source: Created by the authors based on Inegi (2015).

Notably, in Guatemalan households, only approximately two members are Guatemalan-born, suggesting that most children were born in Mexico. Another variable that helps us understand the level of political integration of these populations is the percentage of Mexican citizens compared to the total number of Guatemalan members. It is noted that naturalization is most common among ILS households. On average, nearly 70% of Guatemalan-born members in indigenous households are Mexican citizens, compared to only 20% of non-ILS household members. ILS Guatemalans have a shared history with Mayan peoples from the border area, which may favor intermarriages between Guatemalans and Mexicans in the same linguistic group (Lerma, 2016; Rodríguez & Caballeros, 2020). In addition, scholars have documented the existence of a high percentage of indigenous people among Guatemalan refugees in the 1980s (Kauffer, 2005), and this population was exposed to various naturalization campaigns (González, 2015; Ruiz, 2018).

In analyzing the average number of children residing in the household (Table 2), it is observed that higher numbers of children are present in Guatemalan households, especially among ILS (2.6 children versus 1.8 children in Mexican households). Among non-ILS, higher numbers of children are also seen in Guatemalan households compared to that in Mexican households (2 children versus 1.6 children). This could be linked to fertility differentials, different moments in the life cycle of the household, and the tendency of married children to co-reside with parents.

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of households by country of birth according to the indigenous language of the head of household or their spouse. Municipalities with 1% or more Guatemalan households. Southern border of Mexico, 2015

Variables	Guatemalans		Mexicans	
	ILS*	Non-ILS*	ILS*	Non-ILS*
Sample size (n households)	1 918	2 537	8 050	75 783
Number of households	4 012	8 938	26 708	342 314
Percentage	31.0%	69.0%	7.2%	92.8%
Average total residents	5.2	4.4	4.3	3.9
Average Guatemalans	2.1	1.9	–	–
Guatemalans with Mexican nationality	69.4%	20.2%	–	–
Average age of the head of household	46.6	39.7	50.5	47.6
Average number of children residing in the household	2.6	2.0	1.8	1.6
Average live births (of the spouse or head of household)	5.3	3.5	4.3	3.4
Female head of household	16.9%	21.1%	20.7%	30.1%
No spouse residing in the home	27.5%	23.5%	23.9%	34.0%

Source: Estimates by the authors based on the Intercensal Survey of 2015 (Inegi, 2015).
* Note: ILS = Indigenous Language Speakers.

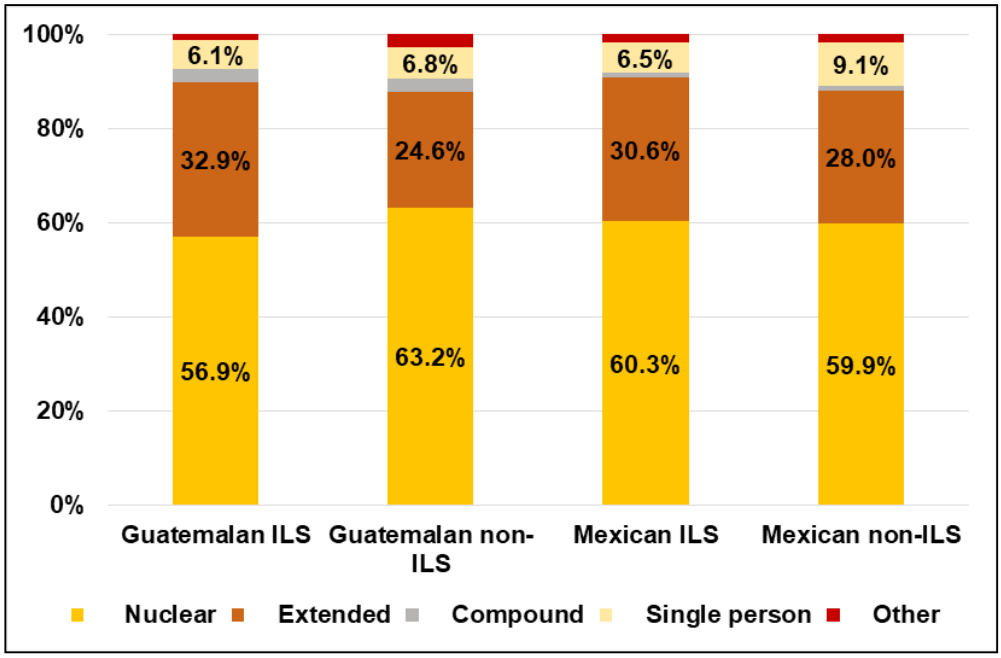
Regarding the first point, the average number of live births of the head of household's partner is included in Table 2. It is noted that among ILS, the average number of children is higher among Guatemalans (5.3 children) than Mexicans (4.3 children). By contrast, no differences are found between the number of children of non-ILS from both countries. Regarding the second point, it is determined that the average age of the head of household male or female is lower among Guatemalans, also suggesting an earlier stage in the life cycle of the household.

Moreover, as observed in Figure 3, ILS Guatemalans are slightly more likely to reside in large households than are ILS Mexicans —33% versus 31%— figures that are higher than those of non-ILS. This trend can be associated with both the traditions and customs of indigenous communities (Robichaux, 2002) and the need to reside with the extended family, as well as a survival strategy amid economic difficulties (Jelin, 1991). Also, it is notable the higher concentration of non-ILS Guatemalans in nuclear households compared with other types of households.

Other important characteristics of the configuration of Guatemalan households include the low rate of female heads of household (Table 2). Among ILS, only 17% of Guatemalan households have female heads of household, compared to 21% of Mexican households. This is true despite the fact that rates of co-residence with a spouse are lower among indigenous Guatemalans than among indigenous Mexicans,

suggesting that in the absence of the head of household, a male child is usually left in charge of the household, which is common in patrilocal Mesoamerican families (Robichaux, 2002). Finally, it is notable that among non-ILS households, the gap is much greater; only 21% of Guatemalan households have female heads, in contrast to 30% of Mexican households.

Figure 3: Structure of households by Guatemalan origin and indigenous language use. Selected municipalities on the southern border of Mexico, 2015



Source: Created by the authors based on Inegi (2015).

Regarding the socioeconomic variables of heads of household, only about 7% of ILS Guatemalan heads of households and 9% of non-ILS heads of households reported having immigrated from another country to the selected municipalities within the last five years (Table 3). In other words, although Guatemalans continued to migrate to the area, in 2015, the vast majority of the heads of household had been in Mexico for five years or more. This coincides with the long history of Guatemalan settlement in this country, which multiplied with the political conflicts of the 1980s, the economic crises of the 1990s and the environmental disasters of the first decade of the 21st century.

One of the main characteristics of Guatemalans is their high labor participation and concentration in agricultural activities (Table 3). Among Guatemalan heads of household, 76% of those who are ILS are employed versus 82% of non-ILS heads of households, higher than among Mexicans in both population segments. In addition, differences exist by indigenous language use regarding the main sector of employment. ILS from any country are concentrated in the primary sector, especially those of Guatemalan origin. By contrast, non-ILS Guatemalans have found more diversified opportunities, as they participate in equal numbers in the primary and tertiary sectors, although they have higher participation in agriculture than do non-ILS Mexicans.

Table 3: Socioeconomic characteristics of households by Guatemalan origin of the head of household or spouse according to indigenous language. Municipalities in which Guatemalan households make up with 1% or more of the total. Southern border of Mexico, 2015

Variables	Guatemalans		Mexicans	
	ILS*	Non-ILS*	ILS*	Non-ILS*
Size of sample (n)	1 918	2 537	8 050	75 783
Head of household				
Recent international migration	6.8%	9.0%	0.3%	0.6%
Employed	76.2%	82.4%	73.4%	71.4%
Sector of activity				
Primary	71.8%	41.1%	50.2%	31.0%
Secondary	9.3%	17.5%	14.2%	15.6%
Tertiary	18.9%	41.4%	35.6%	53.4%
Spouse (of head of household)				
Employed	13.1%	27.2%	25.6%	29.0%
Main sector of employment	60.4% tertiary	64.3% tertiary	69.8% tertiary	79.4% tertiary
Children				
At least one resident child is employed	45.4%	28.0%	41.8%	33.8%
Main sector of employment	62.4% primary	46.2% tertiary	47.0% tertiary	59.1% tertiary
Child under age 18 not in school	26.6%	22.2%	10.0%	6.8%
Household				
% employed among residents	36.3%	41.5%	39.4%	39.8%
Rural location	90.2%	68.7%	64.7%	54.2%
Home ownership	77.4%	37.8%	85.3%	74.8%
Level of overcrowding	3.3	3.3	2.7	2.4
Running water in the house	26.9%	43.8%	45.7%	60.7%
Per capita income from employment	$852.9	$1 702.9	$1 579.3	$2 096.6
Health insurance				
Uninsured	23.7%	44.4%	5.4%	9.9%
Only Seguro Popular public health insur ance	70.8%	39.9%	56.3%	49.1%
Only IMSS or ISSSTE	3.1%	8.9%	22.2%	27.5%
Both	2.4%	6.8%	16.1%	13.5%
Average durable goods	2.8	2.9	4.1	4.3
Member of household receives government assistance	67.6%	29.5%	56.8%	44.1%
Member of household receives remittances	5.5%	5.2%	2.5%	3.5%

Source: Authors' estimates based on the Intercensal Survey of 2015 (Inegi, 2015).
* Note: ILS = Indigenous language speakers.

With regard to the partners of heads of households, it is found that ILS Guatemalan spouses tend to be employed far less than do ILS Mexican spouses; however, when they are employed, they are mainly in the tertiary sector, as are their Mexican counterparts (Table 3). Thus, the extra-domestic economic participation of ILS Guatemalan spouses is only 13%, compared with 26% of ILS Mexican spouses. However, among non-ILS, the differences in this indicator by country of birth are very small (27.2% among Guatemalans and 29% among Mexicans). In this regard, Chan and García (2018) illustrate how Guatemalan women make a significant contribution to the trade in fruits and vegetables grown in Quintana Roo. Guatemalan participation in commerce in Chiapas has also been widely documented (Meza, 2015).

In assessing rates of economic participation among Guatemalan children, it is observed that this variable is higher among children in ILS households (Table 3). In 45% of ILS Guatemalan households, at least one child is employed, compared to 42% for indigenous Mexican households. This is not the case among non-ILS households, in which Guatemalan children exhibit lower rates of labor insertion than do Mexican children, which may suggest that these households are at an earlier stage in their life cycle. In addition, the main sector of activity among ILS Guatemalan children is the primary sector, unlike children in other types of households, who are employed primarily in the tertiary sector.

A common characteristic of children in Guatemalan households, both ILS and non-ILS, is that they have lower rates of school attendance than do children in Mexican households (Table 3). In children under 18 years of age in ILS Guatemalan households, school non-attendance is 27%, versus 22% among non-ILS Guatemalan households, while these figures are only 10% among Mexican households. As various studies have noted, Guatemalan children support their parents in the fields and in the home, earning higher incomes from an early age (Ayala-Carrillo & Cárcamo-Toalá, 2012). However, Guatemalan children born in Mexico demonstrate rates of school attendance that are higher than those of first-generation Guatemalan children and rates similar to those of Mexican children in the southeastern part of the country, although with indications of lagging behind in the early years of schooling (Aguilar & Giorguli, 2016).

Below, we describe socioeconomic variables at the household level (Table 3). Notably, the structure of opportunities for economic integration and access to housing services is linked to the level of urbanization of the place of residence. In this sense, Guatemalan households are at a disadvantage, as there is a high concentration of these households in rural areas; ILS Guatemalans are predominantly located in rural areas (90%), followed by non-ILS Guatemalans (69%) —higher rates than those for Mexicans.

The rural concentration of ILS Guatemalans may be favorable in terms of housing ownership, as the cost of land is lower in rural areas. Thus, a high percentage of ILS Guatemalan households own their own homes (77%), a rate that is lower than among ILS Mexicans but comparable to that of non-ILS Mexicans (Table 3). By contrast, non-ILS Guatemalans have a very low level of housing tenure; only 38% own their own homes. However, it is important to note that even though some indigenous Guatemalan refugees obtained land to build their homes through donations or support from civil and religious organizations, endowments of farmland were not considered, which has contributed to reproducing their poverty levels (Ruiz, 2018).

In addition, overcrowding is more common in Guatemalan households than in Mexican households, indicating the need for more spacious housing as well as the precariousness of housing (fewer with running water) and poverty (measured through durable goods in the home and income by job), especially among ILS Guatemalans. In this regard, ILS Mexican homes also experience precarious housing and poverty, but the situation is more serious among ILS Guatemalans.

Due to the high economic integration of Guatemalan households in the Mexican countryside and tertiary sector activities, both with high informality, there is a very high lack of access to health insurance (24% among ILS and 44% among non-ILS), and very few Guatemalan households receive health insurance benefits through employment. On the other hand, rates of inclusion in the Social Protection System in Health, better known as Seguro Popular, are very high and even higher among ILS Guatemalan households than ILS Mexican households. This precarious labor situation coincides with that of Guatemalan migrants in Chiapas according to the Survey on Migration on the Southern Border of Mexico (EMIF Sur) 2004-2013 and the Population and Housing Censuses of 2000 and 2010 (Meza, 2015).

With regard to household economic dependence, the lowest percentage of employed household residents was observed in ILS Guatemalan households, compared to other types of households. However, this percentage may depend on the household life cycle, and multivariate analysis may yield different results.

Finally, reliance on economic assistance, particularly in the form of government support (government programs) among ILS Guatemalan households is very high, approximately 68%, compared to 57% of ILS Mexican households. However, this is not the case in non-ILS Guatemalan households, among which only 30% rely on such assistance, in contrast to 44% of non-ILS Mexican households. In addition, Guatemalan households report greater receipt of international remittances than do Mexican households, especially ILS households. In this regard, several studies report on emigration to the United States by Guatemalan men settled in Mexico to secure the subsistence and social integration of their families in the Mexican south through remittances for the purchase of homes and farmland (Kauffer, 2005; Ruiz, 2018).

Socioeconomic Profiles of Guatemalan Households Based on Indigenous Language Use

In this section, we summarize the results of the multinomial logistic regression, which allows us to understand, as a whole, the most important factors that define the socioeconomic profile of Guatemalan households by ethnic origin (Table 4). The category of reference of the dependent variable is non-ILS Mexican households because they are the majority group and, from the perspective of integration (Heckmann, 2003; 2006), the group that Guatemalans should resemble over time in relation to access to institutions and services.

Some variables relating to the configuration of households were introduced as controls. With regard to the demographic composition of Guatemalan households, they are less likely to have female heads of households and more likely to have a higher number of resident children than the other types of households. ILS Guatemalan households are also more likely to have immigrated recently, when controlling for

their demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Finally, the spouse is less likely to live in these homes, compared to non-ILS Mexican households.

With regard to the labor profile of ILS Guatemalan households, it is confirmed that they are more likely to have heads of households who are employed in agricultural activities and are less likely to be in the secondary and tertiary sectors, compared with unemployed. In addition, when controlling for the sector of activity, there is less access to any type of health insurance, either through an employer or through Seguro Popular. Additionally, the percentage of employed individuals in these households is higher than among non-ILS Mexicans, and the likelihood of having children under 18 years of age who are not attending school is higher, which —as we saw in the previous section— coincides with a high rate of labor insertion among children.

The housing characteristics reveal that ILS Guatemalan households also have higher levels of precariousness and poverty. Their likelihood of residing in urban areas is very low. In addition, these households are less likely to own their homes and have running water, and they have fewer durable goods. With regard to access to housing, it is important to note that when controlling for rural place of residence, the disadvantage of Guatemalan households in terms of property ownership was demonstrated compared to non-ILS Mexicans. Finally, the greater likelihood of Guatemalan households to receive government economic support and international remittances was confirmed.

Does this characterization of ILS Guatemalans differ from the profile of non-ILS Guatemalans? On the one hand, there are differences in the configuration of their households compared to those of non-ILS Mexicans. Non-ILS Guatemalan households are more likely to have a female head of household and less likely to lack a spouse, although a positive relationship is still observed with a greater number of children and reduced school attendance by minors. Recent immigration also has a strong positive association with this type of household compared to non-ILS Mexican households.

Non-ILS Guatemalans also tend to live in rural areas, although to a lesser extent than ILS Guatemalans, and to have comparable access to housing and goods and services. However, non-ILS Guatemalans have a greater risk of overcrowding and are less likely to receive government support. In this regard, we can say that they also live in precarious conditions, and being in more urban areas, they have a reduced likelihood of accessing home ownership and public assistance.

With regard to the economic activities of non-ILS Guatemalan households, it is found that the occupational insertion of heads of household is diversified, they are more likely to be employed both in agriculture and in the secondary sector, unlike ILS Guatemalan households, who are predominantly found in the primary sector. Although non-ILS Guatemalans are mainly employed in the tertiary sector, their participation in the other two sectors is greater than the participation by non-ILS Mexicans.

Do differences exist between the profiles of ILS Guatemalan households and ILS Mexican households? The demographic profiles of the two types of households are very similar, with the exception of certain variables. Heads of households in ILS Mexican homes are older than those in Guatemalan households, spouses have higher rates of economic participation, and their likelihood of recent migration is very low. Their economic integration also tends to be slightly more diversified. Like ILS Guatemalans, ILS Mexicans tend to be employed more in agriculture, but they have rates of participation in the secondary sector similar to those for non-ILS Mexicans. Meanwhile, ILS Mexican households have higher rates of school attendance by minors than do ILS Guatemalan households.

Table 4: Socioeconomic Profiles associated with households by country of birth and indigenous language use (based on relative risk). Selected municipalities on Mexico's southern border (n=343273)

Independent variables	ILS Guatemalans	Non-ILS Guatemalans	ILS Mexicans
Age of head of household	1.000	1.000	1.002***
Female head of household (Male)	0.666***	1.124**	0.788***
Resident children	1.503***	1.081***	1.116***
Recent migration (No)	6.053***	3.791***	0.534***
Sector of employment of head of household (Unemployed)			
Primary	1.141*	1.191***	1.255***
Secondary	0.693***	1.229***	0.95
Tertiary	0.617***	0.972	0.782***
Spouse is employed (Unemployed spouse)			
No spouse	1.190**	0.446***	0.773***
With spouse- employed	1.045	1.008	1.164***
Children under age 18 in school (all attend)			
No children under age 18	1.395***	0.762***	1.493***
At least one not in school	1.714***	1.897***	1.109***
Urban (rural)	0.358***	0.604***	1.145***
Home ownership (Renting)			
Own home	0.386***	0.218***	1.333***
Other	0.233***	0.564***	0.812***
Running water in the house (No)	0.629***	0.803***	0.683***
Overcrowding	0.959	1.188***	1.053***
Number of goods	0.894***	0.802***	1.001
% employed	1.010***	1.006***	1.003***
Health insurance (Uninsured)			
Only Seguro Popular public health insurance	0.480***	0.257***	1.902***
Only IMSS or ISSSTE	0.178***	0.217***	2.101***
Both	0.114***	0.252***	2.485***
Government assistance (No)	1.388***	0.593***	1.220***
Receives remittances (No)	1.644***	2.071***	0.731***
log-likelihood			-121455.7

Source: Authors' estimates based on the Intercensal Survey of 2015 (Inegi, 2015).

Note: ILS = Indigenous language speakers. Reference categories in parentheses. Dependent variable category: non-ILS Mexican households.

* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

In terms of socioeconomic characteristics, gaps exist that favor indigenous Mexicans. For example, urban residence and home ownership are more likely among Mexican indigenous people, and the number of durable goods in the home is comparable to that in non-ILS Mexican households. In addition, they are more likely to have insurance through Seguro Popular, employer health insurance, or both, a situation not observed among indigenous Guatemalans.

Conclusions

The objective of this article was to analyze the demographic and socioeconomic profiles of indigenous language-speaking households in the municipalities with the highest concentration of Guatemalan settlement on the southern border of Mexico, based on the Intercensal Survey of 2015. The hypothesis presented was that indigenous Guatemalans would have a double disadvantage in their socioeconomic integration as indigenous and international migrants. In line with this approach, the results of this article show that Guatemalans generally present lower indicators of socioeconomic integration than do Mexicans. However, because of the history of refugee settlements with a strong indigenous component and in accordance with the multidimensional nature of socioeconomic integration (Heckmann, 2006), in certain areas, indigenous Guatemalans have higher levels of social integration than do nonindigenous Guatemalans —in particular, in access to naturalization and own housing (ownership).

Statistical results indicate that indigenous Guatemalans are concentrated in rural areas and their economic participation is predominantly in agriculture, which places them at a socioeconomic disadvantage compared to Mexican households. This situation is evident in various indicators of socioeconomic integration, such as social security, income from employment and durable goods.

Thus, with the absence of labor guarantees in the agricultural sector, very few ILS Guatemalan households enjoy health insurance through employment. Lack of health insurance is very common, and there is a greater likelihood of Guatemalans having insurance through Seguro Popular than Mexicans (ILS or non-ILS). In addition, household poverty is palpable in housing conditions. This situation leads them to rely heavily on government subsidies and remittances for their survival.

The socioeconomic situation of nonindigenous Guatemalan households is similar to that of indigenous Guatemalans, although slightly better in some aspects such as the diversification of the economic sectors in which they are employed, higher income from employment and slightly higher residence in urban settings. However, non-ILS Guatemalans are also in precarious jobs with little access to health insurance, and they have very low access to home ownership compared to that for ILS Guatemalans and Mexican households. Moreover, their rates of naturalization are very low, which may limit their access to public services and government support. Unlike indigenous Guatemalans, for whom living in organized communities and in certain rural territories may have been advantageous to advance these dimensions of integration

(Kauffer, 2005; Ruiz, 2018), nonindigenous Guatemalans did not benefit sufficiently from naturalization campaigns. Unfortunately, we do not have information on immigration documentation in population censuses to determine whether their status was regularized in Mexico.

With regard to demographic profiles, there are distinctive aspects of Guatemalan households compared with Mexican households in Mexico. Guatemalan households are large because of their high fertility and are at an earlier stage in the family life cycle. The multivariate statistical analysis also shows that there are high rates of economic participation among heads of households and children, which leads Guatemalan households to have less economic dependence than ILS Mexicans have. However, this dynamic of households also limits school attendance among children, and it is more common to have minor children who have left school. The above applies to both ILS and non-ILS Guatemalan households. Finally, it must be stressed that demographic differences exist among Guatemalan households based on indigenous language use. ILS Guatemalan homes have very low rates of female heads of household, are even larger and are at a slightly more advanced stage in the family life cycle than are non-ILS Guatemalan homes.

These findings invite reflection on the need for public intervention to help Guatemalan households achieve full social integration in Mexico. As Coria and Zamudio point out (Coria & Zamudio, 2018), no policy currently exists for the integration of immigrants in Mexico, rather, there is a hostile institutional and social environment that discriminates against them and marginalizes them, limiting their ability to exercise their social rights.

With regard to health services, a thorough analysis of the health deficiencies of Guatemalan households is needed, as the percentage of households without health insurance is very high. Moreover, because Seguro Popular is the main health service to which they have access, the quality of these services should be assessed. The results suggest that high fertility could be linked to low access to contraceptive methods, the main factor associated with fertility in Mexico, which could inhibit Guatemalan women's agency in reproductive decision-making.

Another finding of the study was the limited educational opportunities for young Guatemalans. These young people drop out of school at an early age to help parents, as demonstrated by their high economic participation. A public intervention program could focus on promoting increased high school scholarships for this sector as well as expanding flexible school options and high schools and technical degrees that boost the productivity of the agricultural activities they engage in, as well as business entrepreneurship based on the labor market of the region.

Furthermore, the conditions in which Guatemalans live are very precarious. On the one hand, indigenous people, who live in areas of low urbanization and where agricultural activities predominate, have greater overcrowding and low access to public services and durable goods. On the other hand, nonindigenous people, while living in more urban areas, have very low access to home ownership. In this regard, it is necessary to promote a program of access to and improvement of housing to benefit this sector of the population who lives in conditions of socioeconomic marginalization.

The difficulties faced by Guatemalans in their integration into Mexico raise the need for productive projects in the south of the country. The current development model has focused on the redistribution of wealth through monetary transfers, without fundamentally altering the conditions of inequity and economic dependence. However, it is necessary to promote regional economic development, diversifying sources of employment, with decent wages and better working conditions. Immigration by Central Americans of different nationalities could increase along Mexico's borders—both south and north—in this era of expulsions (Sassen, 2014), and hence, promoting economic investment, whether public or private, in the regions to which these migrants are moving should be made a national priority.

The geographic concentration of Guatemalans in certain municipalities of Chiapas, Campeche and Quintana Roo could facilitate the targeting of intervention strategies for their socioeconomic integration. For example, while the indigenous Guatemalan population is segregated in rural areas, their situation indicates the need for public policies to boost Mexican agriculture in these states. In this regard, beyond granting provisional asylum or shelter to Central American migrants, Mexico must design public policies to allow their incorporation in the country that do not confine these populations to geographic segregation and socioeconomic marginalization. This is a lesson that applies to both Guatemalans and to the new waves of immigrants who are arriving in this country, as they will require the implementation of public policies for their development and their monitoring over time.

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