



**RURAL WOMEN AND MIGRATION IN LATIN AMERICA:
RESEARCH REVIEW AND AGENDA**

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ABSTRACT

This essay examines the role of Latin American rural women in migration, with particular emphasis on rural-urban migration. It poses two questions: 1) What are the determinants of female migration and do they differ from those affecting men? 2) What is the impact of migration on women's roles and status in the community of origin? It addresses these questions through an overview of the literature and concludes that gender has not been a category of analysis in most migration studies. This lack of attention to gender has led to the erroneous assumption that the differences between male and female migration are insignificant. A concluding section outlines several research areas that require further analysis in order to better understand women's roles in migration.

RESUMEN

El presente trabajo examina el rol de la mujer en la migración rural-urbana en América Latina. Se trata de determinar y analizar dos facetas de la migración rural-urbana: 1) los factores que afectan la migración femenina y 2) el impacto de la migración sobre el rol de la mujer en la comunidad de origen. Estos temas son primeramente enfocados mediante una revisión de la literatura y se concluye que existe un vacío en ésta en cuanto no se ha considerado la categoría de género en los estudios de migración. Esta omisión ha implicado, equivocadamente, que no existen diferencias entre la migración femenina y la migración masculina. La última sección del ensayo esboza varios temas que requieren una mayor investigación para llegar a comprender mejor el tema de la mujer y la migración.

Studies of migration in Latin America have proliferated in recent decades. The significant contribution of migratory flows to the rapid growth of major urban centers in Latin America as well as the continued importance of international migration, particularly to the United States, have inspired an extensive and varied literature spanning several disciplines. Studies have captured myriad aspects of migration,¹ and a host of theoretical perspectives have been employed to tackle the difficult task of understanding the migration process.² Yet, despite the large quantity of aggregate data, numerous case studies, and diverse theoretical approaches, the topic of women and migration has received relatively little attention (Castro, et al., 1984). This is a particularly striking omission as many studies show that Latin American women migrate to the cities in greater numbers than men (Jelin, 1977; Elizaga, 1966; Youssef, et al., 1979; Cardona and Simmons, 1975; Young, 1978; Arizpe, 1978). Not surprisingly, in view of this neglect, even less attention has been paid to the impact of migration on the women who remain behind in rural communities (Chaney, 1982).

The aim of this paper is to examine the role of rural women in migration, with particular emphasis on rural-urban migration. I concentrate mainly on rural-urban migration because, although a variety of migratory patterns (rural-rural, urban-urban, urban-rural, international) can be established, the most significant flow numerically is from rural to urban areas in Latin America (Cabrera, 1975) and this is also the one in which women predominate.³ The paper addresses two related sets of questions: 1) What are the determinants of female migration and do they differ from those affecting men? 2) What is the impact of migration on women's roles and status in the community of origin? Whether they go or stay behind, how has migration affected women's participation in the gender division of labor both in social production and domestic activities?

In the first section of this paper, I address these questions through an overview of early studies on internal migration in Latin America. Here I look at the type of information

provided by these studies and discuss their shortcomings. In the second section I examine research efforts, largely emerging in the mid-1970s, that explicitly consider rural women and migration in Latin America. In this section I assess the usefulness of the concepts of class, the gender division of labor, and the household, in examining women in the migratory process. Finally, I provide preliminary conclusions on the status of research on women and migration, and suggest several areas where additional work needs to be done.

A. Early Research Questions and Approaches

I. Demographic Studies

The first research on internal migration in Latin America which shed light on the migration of women was undertaken largely by demographers and it relied heavily on census and survey data (see, for example, the works of Alba, 1977; Elizaga, 1966 and 1970; and Cabrera, 1975). The major concern of this early research was to determine the volume and rate of the migrant flow from rural to urban areas. A secondary motivation was to identify the basic socioeconomic characteristics of the migrant population (i.e., sex, age, education, marital status, occupation, and so forth). For these reasons, population studies have tended to treat migrant men and women solely in terms of demographic categories. The information is limited to descriptive statistics and often focuses on global trends for Latin America as a whole.

The 1940s, a period of intense migration and urbanization in Latin America,⁴ also marked the starting point for demographic research on migration. At this time two salient trends characterized migratory flows in Latin America: First, the data showed that women went to urban areas in greater numbers than men. Second, that women migrated at a

younger age than men. Although these trends have not been constant over the last 40 years and vary widely among Latin American countries and regions, demographers documented clear patterns for the countries of Mexico, Uruguay, Chile, Argentina, Colombia, Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador and Costa Rica (Goldsmith, 1981; Orlansky and Dubrovsky, 1978).⁵

Examples of the diversity of migration patterns came from three highly urbanized Latin American cities--Santiago (Chile), Mexico City (Mexico), and Buenos Aires (Argentina). Elizaga (1970) noted that, for the period 1940 to 1962, the proportion of females among migrants to Santiago was high and growing. During the same period for Mexico City, Cabrera (1970, cited in Jelin, 1977) found that there were more female migrants than male, although the difference was decreasing with time.⁶ Finally, migration to Buenos Aires in the post-World War II period showed a slightly higher proportion of women than men. Prior to this time, male migration was predominant (Lattes and Lattes, 1969). However, country-specific economic or political processes as possible causes for these differences did not emerge as a research question.

The studies went on to describe similarities and differences between male and female migrants and between migrants and nonmigrants in terms of age and civil status. Some of their findings included the following facts: The majority of women migrants came from a single age group, and migrated at an earlier age than men. By 1970 in Mexico City and Buenos Aires, female migrants were prevalent in all age groups but especially in the 10-19 age range (Oliveira and García, 1984). About half of female migrants to Santiago living in the city in 1963 arrived between the ages of 15 and 29 as compared to 44% of men (Elizaga, 1970, cited in Jelin, 1977). This study also showed that 50% of all migrants, male and female, arriving in the city at age 14 or over, came alone. With regard to civil status, several studies revealed that the proportion of unmarried women in urban centers is higher than in rural areas and it is also higher among migrant women than native urban

women. The information also indicated that the majority of female migrants were single-- either unmarried, separated, divorced or widowed (Orlansky and Dubrovsky, 1978). In short, the demographic studies showed that young, single women formed the largest group in rural-urban migration.

Abundant information about certain characteristics of male and female migrants was provided by many of the demographic studies. However, no comprehensive analytical framework emerged within which to understand satisfactorily the migration phenomenon itself. A number of studies have suggested that varying patterns of labor absorption and uneven economic development at different historical periods have led to successive waves of migration (see, for example, Oliveira, 1976 and Alba, 1977). More often, however, demographers utilizing traditional data sources have sought the causes of migration in the experiences of individual migrants (Orlansky and Dubrovsky, 1978). The decision to migrate is then seen as an individual decision with economic motives, primarily the search for work, as the impetus for migration. In this respect, demographic studies are allied closely with microeconomic models of labor transfer (see, for example, Fei and Ranis, 1961 and Todaro, 1969) where the individual's economic behavior constitutes the primary level of investigation. Moreover, in emphasizing individual behavior this framework makes the implicit assumption that the determinants and consequences of female migration mirror those of male migration (Thadani and Todaro, 1979). Consequently, demographic approaches could not pose, much less answer, an obvious question raised by their research findings: Why do more women than men migrate to the cities in Latin America? The next generation of migration research provided some initial answers.

2. Migrant Women and Work in the Cities

During the late 1960s and early 1970s research on women and migration emerged in the context of the growing visibility of urban problems. Such themes as "urbanization without industrialization," "hypertertiarization," and the issues of poverty, integration, and marginality among migrants were of primary importance to researchers of urbanization in Latin America (Lattes, 1984).⁷ An influential point of view was that rural-urban migration was the major factor contributing to serious imbalances in the growth of urban centers: high and chronic unemployment, "disguised" unemployment, underemployment, low productivity, and other urban problems (Lattes, 1984; Jelin, 1977).

Although these sweeping appraisals of the impact of migration on the urban economy were subsequently challenged, the issue of migrant women's employment persisted, primarily because of the tremendous concentration of women in the tertiary sector. In fact, one outstanding feature characterized the entire Latin American region: Migrant women were overwhelmingly concentrated in unskilled service occupations, the primary occupations being domestic service or street vending.⁸ Various studies illustrated the significance of this phenomenon. In 1970, when 29.5% of the female labor force aged 8 and over in Mexico City was employed in domestic service, half of these women were rural migrants (García, et al., 1979:5). Data for Greater Santiago for the period 1956-66 showed a similar pattern: 57% of the economically active female migrant population gained employment in domestic service. Smith (1973) reported that approximately 30% of all female migrants to Lima, Peru between 1956 and 1965 entered domestic service in the city.

A new generation of research thus came to the fore, devoted to exploring migrant women's economic participation in the urban labor market. Like the demographic

approaches, much of the information on migrant women's labor force participation in the urban economy described regional trends as well as comparing and contrasting the experiences of men and women, migrants and nonmigrants.

For example, three trends were noted for the industrialized cities of Buenos Aires, Mexico City, and Santiago: First, more rural migrant women than native urban women participate in the labor market. Second, the participation of women in economic activities is lower in rural areas than in urban areas. (The same does not apply to male participation in the labor force; it appears that men have higher rates in rural areas.)⁹ Third, the degree of women's participation increases with the degree of urbanization (Orlansky and Dubrovsky, 1978:9; Oliveira and García, 1984).

Data on the differences in the employment characteristics of native and migrant women showed domestic service as the primary occupation of migrant women.¹⁰ This pattern was especially clear in the more industrialized cities of Latin America.¹¹ In 1979 more than half of the female migrants in Mexico City were employed in unskilled service jobs as opposed to 20% of native women (García, et al., 1979). A study of Buenos Aires in 1970 found that 51% of recent women migrant workers and 35% of established women migrants were engaged in domestic service (Orlansky and Dubrovsky, 1978). In Buenos Aires migrant women from the neighboring countries of Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay are the ones most likely to be involved in service work, followed by recently arrived internal migrants, and then by established migrants. The same pattern emerged for São Paulo, Brazil: In 1970, 62% of migrant women were engaged in unskilled work in contrast to 44% of native women workers (Ibid.).

In these empirical studies on labor force participation, differences between the sexes revealed women's lack of occupational mobility within urban labor markets. Muñoz's (et al., 1977) research on Mexico reported that in all migrant categories (recent, intermediate and established) the proportion of women engaged in "marginal"

occupations was greater than that of men. Marshall (1980:456), examining the case of Argentina, stated that migrant-native differences in the type of labor force participation are much greater among women than men. Unlike women, the male migrants tended to be more spread out in the urban occupational structure, not concentrated in any single economic activity. Jelin (1977:134) tentatively concluded that "the differences in the profiles of migrant and native women's occupations are considerably larger than those of males and are more consistent across various cities and countries in Latin America."

The significant absorption of migrant women in the service sector in Latin America, particularly in domestic work, centered research attention on the receiving communities. The literature not only described the type and extent of migrant women's economic participation in urban labor markets but also examined the living and working conditions of domestic servants (Bunster and Chaney, 1985; Rutte Garcia, 1973); occupational mobility for domestic workers (Smith, 1973); the employment alternatives of migrant women in the cities (Jelin, 1977); and the economic role of paid domestic service in capitalist development (Goldsmith, 1981).

Although these studies clearly addressed an important aspect of female migration, the answers to why more women than men in Latin America migrate to the cities have been weak. The analysis of the causes and consequences of migration is based on a "push-pull" model of rural-urban migration. Pull or demand factors in urban areas (new industries, employment opportunities and expectations of better wages) draw the rural population to the cities while push or supply factors in the rural sector (stagnation and the reorganization of agricultural production) provoke out-migration. Women predominate in cityward migration because of the greater demand for female labor, i.e., more job opportunities (domestic service) are available for women than for men (Oliveira and Garcia, 1984). The impact of push factors on the situation of women in rural areas is not explicitly considered except to suggest in passing that "the economic role of females is relatively

minor in the rural areas" (Jelin, 1977:136), therefore, women are the first to be "freed" to migrate to the cities (García, et al., 1979:5).

The push-pull model thus provides some insights into the phenomenon of female migration. It underscores a process of uneven development and its impact especially on urban areas. And, it is sensitive to the fact that migration affects men and women differently. Nonetheless, this framework, like the demographic approach, is drawn from a microeconomic model of labor migration. It assumes that the decision to migrate is based upon individuals' considerations of economic opportunities and constraints, but does little to illuminate the various different contexts in which these decisions are taken, or to explain the group dynamics involved. It therefore fails to fully account for the specific effects of development processes on male and female migration.

3. Historical-Structural Perspectives

During the 1970s other theoretical and conceptual approaches also emerged which, in relation to internal (and international) migration, presented strong criticisms of earlier models concerned with individual motivations and preferences (Lattes, 1984). These approaches adopted a macro-analytic framework and are referred to as "historical-structural". They emphasized class conflict and uneven regional development between rural and urban areas within countries.

In analyzing migration, the historical and macro-social school of thought argued that population movements from rural to urban areas can only be understood as part of the broader effects on the countryside of social, political and economic change and conflict. (see, Stern, 1979; Singer, 1974; Oliveira, 1976). Capital accumulation, in particular, is seen to contribute toward and exacerbate rural poverty, the unequal distribution of income, and stagnation in the peasant sector--all of which provoke rural out-

migration. From this perspective, the most important expulsive factors include: the decreasing viability of peasant agriculture, the concentration of agricultural resources, particularly land, among a small number of capitalist producers, and outmoded forms of land tenure.

This analysis, although comprehensive in its consideration of the historical and structural dimensions of migration, remains exclusively at the level of macro-processes. The micro-demographic approach, as previously discussed, places an unrealistic amount of emphasis on the role of individual choices. By contrast, the structural framework is overly deterministic in that it totally ignores the significance of the dynamics of local cultural and individual preferences. It views local processes as completely governed by the requirements of capital (Berg, 1985). As such, the specificity of the migration process is almost completely lost. As Lattes (1984:77) points out, it has not yet been determined how observations at the structural level tie in with the behavior of individuals. One further criticism arises in the context of the present paper: The analysis is incomplete in that it fails to consider that macro-structural forces may affect men and women differently. In fact, in this theoretical framework women are invisible (Long 1983). Consequently, the model cannot account for the gender specific character of migration.

4. Female Migration and Rural Development: An Overview

The strong incidence of women in rural-urban migration in Latin America calls for a deeper understanding of women's roles in rural areas. This is important because, to a large extent, the socioeconomic conditions prevailing in rural areas explain the differential effects of migration on the sexes (Orlansky and Dubrovsky, 1978). However, analysis of the rural sector must go beyond empirical or theoretical generalizations of macro-structural forces and include an investigation of the way in which these forces affect women's

circumstances. Evidence from various studies shows that rural women have a subordinate position in Latin America, and that particular forms of capitalist development affecting the organization of production in rural areas appear to create conditions which foster the migration of women, rather than men (Young, 1978).

Historically, capitalism within Latin America has eroded available employment in the countryside, reducing the demand for a permanent labor force and replacing these workers with temporary, seasonal laborers (Blumberg, 1979). The mechanization of agriculture, in particular, has resulted in fewer permanent job opportunities, and it is on the whole women workers who have been disproportionately displaced from the permanent labor force (Garrett, 1976; Prates, 1980).

On the one hand, the growth of the rural surplus population relative to the growth of agricultural work has led to the entry of men and the pushing out of women from some traditionally female jobs (Sen, 1981). On the other, Tadesse (1979:8) explains that women are the first to be displaced by the introduction of technological innovations because men are relatively more privileged in terms of access to essential resources such as land, labor, cash, education and know-how. Consequently, women are more easily displaced from tasks that can be mechanized or remunerated. Increasingly, then, women work in agriculture only on a temporary basis, during peak seasons, and often in the most labor-intensive tasks of agricultural production (Tadesse, 1979; Díaz and Muñoz, 1978; Crummett, 1984).

Studies have also shown that where capitalist development has resulted in a decrease in small family holdings, women are further marginalized in agricultural production: Their roles as cultivators are reduced to unpaid family work on subsistence or below-subsistence minifundios. These trends have been noted in Chile (Garrett, 1976), Brazil (Vásquez di Miranda, 1977), Peru (Deere, 1976), and other Latin American countries. With the relative weight of the agricultural sector and the rate of wage

employment in agriculture declining steadily,¹² rural women are left without productive roles in agriculture. More than one hypothesis suggests that this is why the rural-urban migrant stream in Latin America tends to be predominately female (Youssef, et al., 1979; Prates, 1980; Sen, 1981).

Compounding the problem of declining work opportunities for women in rural areas is the unequal distribution of land resources on the family farm itself, which works against female children. For example, older daughters in rural areas are responsible for numerous tasks within the household including care of younger siblings and helping with domestic chores. Additionally, they participate in a variety of economically productive activities on the family farm. However, once younger sisters are able to take over some of these activities, older daughters are expected to marry or encouraged to enter the wage labor market, often through cityward migration. Among poor and landless households, the shortage of land often makes migration the only option available for women (Sen, 1981).¹³ Sons are also expected to find paid work yet, in contrast to the encouragement to daughters to leave, they are often discouraged if not prevented from leaving (Young, 1978). Overall their economic opportunities in the rural sector are greater than women's not only because of better local opportunities in paid labor but because in many cases land rights are passed on to sons.

In short, the limitations imposed both by the division of labor within the household and by a restricted labor market contribute toward the creation of a surplus female population that has little or no place in rural production (Prates, 1980). This situation has caused both sex and age differentials in migration (*Ibid.*).

In summary, two broad research traditions--the micro-demographic and the historical-structural--have generated information about migration processes at different levels of analysis. The micro model has provided a plethora of detail on the socioeconomic characteristics of individual migrants, yet has seldom integrated

explanations of migration at the individual level with macro-level dynamics. Where the demographic approach to migration falls short--that is, in failing to identify the structural mechanisms that shape individual choices--the historical-structural framework makes significant headway. However, it goes too far in this direction by completely failing to acknowledge the autonomous actions of individuals in the migration process. Neither microeconomic nor structural perspectives have addressed gender issues in migration. Yet, existing research shows sufficiently substantial gender-related differences in the migratory process to warrant a specific analysis of the determinants, consequences and patterns of female migration. It is essential to undertake such an analysis if we are to understand both why more women than men participate in rural-urban migration and what the impact is on the women who remain behind. A number of recent studies have made efforts in this direction.

B. Recent Developments, Concepts and Approaches

In the late 1970s and early 1980s the primary concern among migration scholars was to overcome the limitations of micro and macro perspectives. It was argued that a comprehensive analysis of population movement must encompass both the determinants of behavior and the structural factors that motivate individual actors (Wood, 1982: 312). This led various authors (Wood, 1982; Pessar, 1982; Dinerman, 1982) to search for analytical bridges that related the atomistic behavior of individuals to the overall process of macro-economic change. The approach taken, then, represented an effort to integrate two different levels of analysis into a single conceptual framework.

In these studies, the household unit emerged as an intermediate variable, the study of which would be capable of bridging the gap between individual and social levels of analysis. Pessar (1982: 3) argues that the household¹⁴ is "an evolving nexus of social

relations and institutions through which it is transformed and which it may in turn modify." This notion of the household captures the dynamic character of the linkages between micro and macro levels. By shifting the unit of analysis to the household, migration can be viewed as a group decision-making process in which individuals take part, as well as a process related to overall conditions insofar as households are linked to one another through larger community and regional ties (Dinerman, 1982). There is also a recognition that, in the rural sector, households typically serve as units of both consumption and production, thereby providing an additional link between micro and macro approaches (Wood, 1981). Thus, this definition of the household unit contains the necessary conceptual and methodological tools to combine the best of the two reigning theoretical models for the study of migration (Pessar, 1982:2).

Attempts to revise existing theories along these lines are able to capture the autonomous actions of individuals more thoroughly and to locate these actions in the context of larger economic structures. Moreover, they have sensitized researchers to the fact that the study of migration requires a more complex and varied approach than those suggested by traditional studies (Lattes, 1984). Indeed, one major advance was to draw attention to issues of gender in the migration process. In this framework, the internal dynamics of the family and the household provide the basis for understanding potential differences in the patterns and characteristics of male and female migration. Women's dual roles as wage laborers and unpaid family workers in the household division of labor are highlighted as key components shaping and defining migration patterns.

Several recent studies argue that more work needs to be done before concluding that the household constitutes the most appropriate unit from which to integrate micro and macro perspectives on migration (Bach and Schraml, 1982; Crummett, 1984; Schmink, 1984). In particular, the linkages between different levels of analysis--individual, household and societal--require greater analytical and empirical

treatment. In a growing number of studies on migration (Crummett, 1984; Arizpe, 1978; Young, 1978), an analysis of class relations has enriched the household focus by locating women's roles in the household division of labor within the broader context of social relations of production. These approaches emphasize that it is only within the context of local and regional structures and relations that the household becomes a useful analytical tool to investigate the differential impact of migration on the sexes (Crummett, 1984).

1. Class, Household Structure and Gender Selectivity in Migration

In the Latin American context, the application of analyses of class to household structure in the rural sector has been particularly successful in linking micro and macro perspectives to explain gender-specific migration. This type of analysis has not only illustrated the social, economic, and historical processes within capitalist agriculture that generate a migratory labor force, but has also attempted to show how these processes vary over time, affecting some classes, households and individuals, and not others. These studies have shown that the diversity in migration patterns--where men are the migrants in some cases and women in others--can be explained by such factors as the household's access to means of production, i.e., class position, and the sex and age division of labor within the household. In short, if the impact of capitalist production relations in the countryside varies significantly from region to region and by class, then who is selected out for migration varies accordingly. Consequently, the question "Why do more women than men migrate?" becomes "Under what circumstances do migratory pressures have a greater effect on women than men or vice versa?"

Deere's (1978) case study of the Cajamarcan peasantry of Peru, for example, shows that the extent to which rural producers are integrated into capitalist relations of production impacts upon the sex and age division of labor within rural households and

consequently, on the gender composition of the migrant stream. Capitalist penetration of agriculture, associated with a growing class stratification of the peasantry, has spurred an increase of the poor peasant, or smallholding minifundista stratum. It is from this class that a disproportionate number of migrants are drawn.

In the smallholding minifundista stratum, where wage earnings constitute an important part of total income, women participate in agricultural production to a greater extent than women of other social classes. The proletarianization of the male head of household, in particular, has led to the mother's increased participation in subsistence agriculture. Households with insufficient land employ as many family members as possible in production, women and children included, in an attempt to provide for subsistence needs through farm activities alone. One outcome of peasant differentiation then is a breakdown in the traditional division of labor among households with declining access to productive resources (Deere and León de Leal, 1981).

The social and economic differentiation of the peasantry contributes to differential migration by class, sex, and age. Among the poor peasantry, demographic pressures on the land coupled with a growing dependence on wage income forms a strong inducement for working-age children of both sexes to migrate. From the age of 12 or 13 sons are involved with their fathers in local wage work; by the time a young man reaches 15 or 16 he is migrating with his father on a temporary basis. Daughters, also pulled into migration, confront a different situation. A younger women has fewer possibilities of local employment while very young but can capture the wage of an adult women as a domestic servant. By the time a girl is 16 she will be in the coast or in the capital city working as a domestic (Deere, 1978:30).

Young (1978), working in Oaxaca, Mexico finds that migratory pressures are far greater on women than men. This is the case not only because of young women's

economic opportunities in the cities but primarily because they have been the most affected by changes in the household's productive base.

Like Deere, she postulates that the transformation of agrarian structures has led to class stratification, which in turn has resulted in a new division of labor by sex within and outside of the peasant household. Although this restructuring of women's roles permeates all classes of the peasantry, the most severely affected are poor and landless women. These women work longer and harder days as they struggle to meet basic subsistence requirements. In addition to domestic production and other household tasks, these women work as wage laborers for wealthier peasant families.

In Oaxaca, one of the consequences of the social transformation brought about by the penetration of capital has been an increase in family size among the poor peasantry. With the disappearance of reciprocal labor exchange, these households have to depend to a greater extent on their own labor resources, thus placing greater emphasis on women's reproductive capacities. For households dependent on wage labor for survival, a large family may increase the number of potential income earners, thus benefiting the household as a whole. This situation, however, has potentially deleterious effects on women of the poor peasantry by accentuating their work load in both wage and non-remunerated domestic labor.

As in Cajamarca, the need for money income among the poor peasantry of Oaxaca has led to the expulsion of working-age children. In this case, however, young single girls overwhelmingly comprise the rural-urban migrant stream. Why? Young hypothesizes that in the 1940s and 1950s increasing poverty within the peasant community, a result of being drawn into the national economy, led to the expulsion of daughters rather than sons for two main reasons: First, the gender division of labor within the household placed the burden of agricultural production on men. Second, and more important, the fact that many of the economic activities that women and their daughters

carried out--the making of food and clothing and the preparation of products for sale on the local market--were being undermined by more efficiently produced manufactured goods.

The 1970s, however, witnessed a diversification of the migration pattern. Greater economic constraints on the poor to acquire money income as they became more involved with the national economy, and increased opportunities for wealthier households, led to a situation where people of all ages were leaving. Nonetheless, the majority of migrants were young, between the ages of 10 and 29, and more migrants were female than male. So while over time more and more household members from different classes were drawn into migratory wage labor, young women of the poor peasantry continued to be the most vulnerable to migratory pressures.

Other factors also explain the continued predominance of women in migration. With the destruction of domestic manufacture, unmarried, abandoned or widowed women find it difficult to maintain themselves economically; women are not agriculturalists nor do they have land rights in the majority of cases. For many women in this situation migrating to the city is preferable to remaining in the rural community (Young, 1978; 298-299).

In Aguascalientes, Mexico (Crummett, 1984) transformations in the rural sector as well as new opportunities in manufacturing activities have affected the gender composition of the migrant pool. In this region, the commercialization of agriculture, beginning in the 1940s, seriously eroded the economic viability of smallholding rainfed agriculture, provoking an increase in the number of landless agricultural wage workers. A major consequence of this process was an outflow of rural inhabitants. Between 1940 and 1960 the migrant stream was composed largely of young single women from poor peasant and landless laborer households migrating to the cities, especially to Mexico City. Between 1960 and 1970, however, young men constituted a far greater percentage

(62.5%) of the migrant population, a reflection of increasing mechanization within irrigated areas of the state that displaced the permanent labor force.

In Aguascalientes, as in Oaxaca, the erosion of women's productive activities in the rural area and the demand for female labor in the cities partially explains the early tendency for women to dominate the migrant stream. In this region, however, the sharp decrease in female migration after 1960 appears to be a result of increasing opportunities for women in both rural and urban areas in the state. Women's participation in agricultural wage work increased in those phases of production calling for temporary, seasonal labor. Grape cultivation, the state's most important fruit crop, employs women during the harvest, the most labor intensive period of production. More important, the growth of the textile and garment industries in Aguascalientes City in the 1960s increased the demand for a permanent female labor force. These industries also flourished in numerous rural communities and employed a predominantly young and female work force. The textile and garment industries in turn promoted the growth of maquila doméstica (piece work in the home of women's and children's clothing)--an activity exclusively employing women.

2. Migration and the Roles and Status of Women Who Remain Behind

Analyses of class and household structure have been equally important in addressing the impact of migration on the women who remain behind. Available evidence, largely drawn from studies of international migration, suggests that women are affected in a variety of ways when husbands, fathers, daughters, and sons migrate. The age and sex selectivity of migration, for example, can have profound effects on the household division of labor by transferring work roles from the young to the old and by increasing the work burden of women and children in rural areas where male out-migration prevails (United Nations Secretariat, 1984). Again, research shows that the extent to

which women are affected by migration invariably relates to the household's economic standing within the rural community.

Where migratory pressures are greater on sons or the male head of household, a new gender division of labor emerges within the household. A common result of this migration pattern is to relegate women to the subsistence sector in agriculture. An example taken from a study of rural out-migration from Guanajuato, Mexico to the United States gives evidence of this. In this community, subsistence agriculture has become the exclusive activity of women, older persons and children as the result of male out-migration to the United States (Margolis, 1979). Deere's work also shows the effects of male migration on the household division of labor. Women of the poor peasant class assume greater responsibility for agricultural production--an activity previously dominated by men--as men leave the household in search of temporary wage work elsewhere.

In addition to greater work loads in agriculture, available evidence suggests that poor peasant women are the ones most adversely affected by changes in the gender and age division of labor brought about through migration. Young (1978) finds that the expulsion of young daughters from smallholder households places increased demands on many mothers' unpaid household chores. The care of younger children, traditionally a responsibility of older daughters, is added to the mothers' already heavy work loads. A number of tasks traditionally entrusted to children such as animal care and wool collecting also become the mother's charge.

Transformations in the division of labor in the household and in production brought about through male migration often impact upon the economic structure of the household unit, which in turn may affect its composition. For example, findings from my field research in Aguascalientes show that remittances from international migration, in particular, have served to supplement household income substantially above a bare subsistence level. The cash influx from husbands in the United States has allowed

women from landless laborer households to purchase a variety of consumer goods as well as to cover children's health and educational expenses. On the other hand, if remittances are low or unreliable--more often the case for migration within Mexico--women are left with the primary, if not sole, economic responsibility for the household. This situation may alter the composition of the domestic unit. Weist's (1973:205) study of a Mexican town suggests that recurrent wage-labor migration, characterized by male absenteeism and low remuneration, leads to the formation of female-headed households.

Yet women are not always the "victims" of migration; they often take active parts in the migration process even when they do not go themselves. In Aguascalientes women's roles in the household division of labor interact with other economic parameters to condition and perpetuate a specific migration trajectory. In the region of Calvillo, temporary cyclical migration to the United States has constituted the dominant migrant pattern among landless households for several decades and migrants are overwhelmingly male heads of households. I suggest that the temporary character of the migrant stream and male selectivity in migration are related to the sexual division of labor both within and outside of the household unit. Two key factors operate here: the lack of permanent, steady employment for men in the region and women's dual roles in productive and reproductive activities.

The majority of landless households in Calvillo depend on wage work in order to meet consumption needs. Wage income is primarily obtained from work in the guava fields or through maquila doméstica. (Overall, more than 75% of households depend on either guava or maquila for employment.) These two activities reflect the rigid gender division of labor prevalent in the region and in the household. Guava, a labor-intensive crop, employs a male work force; maquila, on the other hand, exclusively employs women with almost all female children from the age of 7 or 8 involved in maquila as unpaid family laborers. The nature of maquila work--paid work in the home--means that the day-to-day

responsibilities of household maintenance and child care can be performed simultaneously with wage work.

The limited range of salaried work available to male household members shapes the pattern and intensity of migration. Employment in guava is seasonal, the harvest period extending from late September through early February. Few jobs are available in guava during the off-season and other employment opportunities--in construction, petty commerce, or odd jobs in the community--are sporadic. During the off-season temporary migration is at its highest, with migrants leaving after the harvest and returning in the fall.

Yet despite the strong incentive to migrate, men could not leave without women's contribution to household income. Their work in maquila provides the household with a dependable source of income throughout the year. Indeed, the availability of steady, albeit poorly remunerated work, allows the male head of household to migrate knowing that basic needs are being met in the interim before his remittances arrive. In short, in this case study, women's activities ensure the ongoing economic as well as social reproduction of the domestic unit during periods of male out-migration.

In all the studies presented, the gender-specific character of migration has reinforced key components of class. Among landless and poor peasant households, in particular, male migration had important consequences for the household division of labor: Women increased their participation in agricultural production and wage work while retaining their traditional responsibilities for child care and family welfare. Thus the intensification of women's labor in paid and unpaid work and productive and reproductive activities sharpens not only the analysis of migration but also of class and household relations. On the one hand, it reveals how and which household members are most vulnerable to and marginalized by changes in the household's productive base. On the other, it shows how these household members actively respond to changing circumstances.

C. Directions for Research

The past twenty years of migration research have shown some progress on the issue of women and migration. We have an idea of the relative importance of women in the rural-urban migrant stream during the initial stages of industrialization in Latin America; of the concentration of migrant women in domestic service in urban areas; and of the pressures on young women of the poorer strata of the peasantry to migrate. Initial research efforts on the impact of migration on women have also shown that women's roles in the household division of labor are both responsive to and results of migration. Nonetheless, more analytical and empirical research is needed in order to better understand women's participation in migration. This section attempts to outline several research areas requiring further analysis and elaboration.

Using class and household as independent variables to explain migration has begun to illuminate the special characteristics and circumstances that distinguish female from male migration. Yet the concepts of class and household require greater analytical clarity than existing studies provide. While the determination of social classes in the agrarian sector has been the subject of heated debate in Latin America, scholars tend to share a conceptualization of the household as a harmonious, undifferentiated economic unit. More attention needs to be paid to gender and age-based inequalities within the household and their relation to wider social and economic conditions. Reference to "household interests" and "household decisions" obscures the unequal conditions under which different household members migrate. Household inequalities help explain who in the household is selected out for migration.

"The household," while useful as a conceptual tool in attempting to bridge the gap between studies focusing on structural factors and on individual behavior, has fallen

short of fulfilling its aim. The integration of the two levels of analysis in migration research--micro and macro--has not been satisfactorily accomplished. Nor has a consensus been reached on how much relative importance should be accorded to micro and macro factors in the analysis of migration. As Parkin (cited in Thadani and Todaro, 1979) asks, "How much analytical emphasis should be placed on the individual migrant as being free to decide between alternative courses of action, and how much on the wider political, economic, and ecological factors directing and constraining migratory flows of particular groups?"

Another task for future research involves pursuing more comparative, cross-cultural studies on women and migration. Much of the recent work presented here, while careful in its attention to the historical and regional influences in the migration process, is based on case studies focusing on one or two communities. While this approach has been useful in generating hypotheses, these hypotheses now need to be tested in a broader context. Few researchers have undertaken comprehensive studies involving major regions within or across countries. This is necessary if we are to understand more fully the migration process and women's roles in it.

Another area of research involves documenting and accounting for changes in women's migratory patterns over time. Early demographic research on migration trends indicated a clear pattern of female migration to the cities. The case studies, however, provided some evidence that the intensity of women's involvement in migration does not necessarily follow a unidirectional rural-urban course. If these case studies are correct, then a variety of patterns in terms of both direction (rural, urban, international) and type (temporary, permanent, circular and return) may now characterize female migration. If there has been a shift over time in women's migration trajectories, what accounts for the heterogeneity of the current migrant stream?

A major shortcoming in migration research, as we have seen, is the absence of an analysis of gender in the migration process. The lack of attention to gender in migration studies leads to the erroneous assumption that the differences between male and female migration are insignificant. Analyses assumed to be generalizable to both male and female migration are, in fact, gender-specific theories--specific to male migration (Thadani and Todaro, 1979).

Finally, little is known about the State's role in promoting or inhibiting migration. While numerous rural development plans and projects have been designed explicitly to reduce rural-urban migration, we have no clear sense of whether women have been targeted as key components of these strategies, nor of the effects of these programs on women and migration. It is of great practical importance that studies be initiated to evaluate the particular impact of rural development projects on women. Any strategy designed to improve the condition of women in rural Latin America must take into account those state development policies which shape the pattern of female migration.

NOTES

1. In Latin America major research on migration includes: documenting the volume and direction of the migrant labor force; examining migration patterns (temporary, permanent, seasonal, circular, recurrent, etc.); and exploring differences between national and international moves (see, Cardona and Simmons, 1975; Corona Vázquez and Ruiz Chiapetto, 1981). Socioeconomic characteristics of migrants such as sex, age, education, income, occupation, place of origin and destination have also been repeatedly examined in the literature (see, Corona Vázquez and Ruiz Chiapetto, 1981; Muñoz et al., 1977; Balán et al., 1973). Other themes have been the impact of migration on sending and receiving communities and the role of networks in the migration process (see Mines, 1981; Kearney and Stuart, 1981; Berg, 1985). A recent study has analyzed migration in Latin America in a comparative, cross-cultural perspective (Murillo, 1984). Policy issues, of course, have been at the forefront of research on international migration.
2. From the early microeconomic push-pull models (see Lewis, 1954; Fei and Ranis, 1961; Todaro, 1969) to the political economy perspectives emerging from the historical-structural school (see Stern, 1979; Singer, 1974; Muñoz et al., 1977; Alba, 1979) and more recently, the household survival strategies approach (see Weist, 1973; Wood 1981 and 1982; Dinerman, 1982; Pessar, 1982)--all of the above have been utilized to understand the dynamics of migration.
3. Women in international migration is a more recent, yet increasingly important phenomenon. Mortimer and Bryce-Laporte's (1981) edited volume contains an overview of Latin American and Caribbean women's migration to the United States. Castro's (et al., 1984) annotated bibliography is also an important source of information on women in international migration.
4. Since the end of World War II, almost every country in Latin America has experienced a massive redistribution of its population through migration. Two examples illustrate this phenomenon. During the period 1947-1960, 74% of the growth of Buenos Aires was due to migration (Recchini de Lattes, as cited in Oliveira and García, 1984). During the 1940s migration contributed more than 50% of the growth of Mexico City (Oliveira and García, 1984). Rapid migration to the cities was characteristic of the following two decades as well. For the region as a whole, 5.3 million peasants migrated to the cities between 1950 and 1960; another 4.5 million migrated between 1960 and 1970 (de Janvry, 1980: 121). According to Jelin (1977:130), the annual urbanization rate in Latin America as a whole was 1.26% from 1920 to 1930 and 2.5% from 1950 to 1960.
5. Some exceptions to the pattern of female dominated migration during this period are Paraguay, Guatemala and Peru (Orlansky and Dubrovsky, 1978:7).
6. In the period 1960-1970 Alba (1977) states that female migration was greater than male migration to the metropolitan area of Mexico City but the opposite trend prevailed in the migrant stream toward northern Mexico.
7. The literature on urbanization in Latin America is far too extensive to cite here. The volume compiled by Cornelius and Trueblood (1975) provides an overview of some of the main issues and problems.
8. A far more extensive literature exists on domestic servants in Latin America than on street vendors. Arizpe's (1979) study on the "Maria's" of Mexico City and a recent work by Bunster and Chaney (1985) for Lima, Peru are two good case studies of street vendors.

9. Recent studies have challenged the assumption of low participation rates for Latin American women, arguing that women's productive work is seriously undervalued and underestimated in census data. The economic contributions of women are particularly undercounted in rural areas and there are few estimates of women's work in the urban informal sector. Wainerman and Lattes (1981) provide an excellent review and critique of the ways in which Latin American census data underestimate women's work.

10. Nonetheless, domestic service employs a significant percentage of the total female labor force in Latin America. Fernandez-Kelly (1983:70) states that one out of three women who work for a wage in Latin America do so as domestics.

11. The incorporation of migrant women in service related activities also appears to follow a similar pattern in less industrialized countries: Data for Costa Rica for 1953 and Paraguay for 1962 showed female migrants to be overrepresented in the category "domestic service, service and related workers" (Orlandky and Dubrovsky, 1978).

12. This phenomenon is evident throughout Latin America. Between 1950 and 1980 there has been a massive recomposition of the labor force in Latin America from the primary sector--that fell from 56% of the economically active population in 1950 to 36% in 1980--to the secondary and tertiary sectors (Ramos, 1984). Between 1950 and 1970, agricultural wage employment increased by only 0.5% per year, accounting for 24% of the total agricultural labor force (de Janvry, 1981:121).

13. Of course, increasing demographic pressure on the land in the face of fixed or decreasing resources adversely affects sons as well. My work in Aguascalientes, Mexico (Crummett, 1984) showed that in poor ejidatario households only one son, usually the oldest, will inherit his father's plot. Migration to the cities or in some cases across the northern border is the usual employment option for younger sons.

14. Pessar (1982:3) defines the household as a "core group of individuals whose decision making and labor is directed toward the maintenance and reproduction of the unit by producing and disposing of a 'full income'."

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