

The Contribution of Migration to Children's Family Context

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Household Structure and Child Well Being

- Two-parent vs. single parent homes
- Co-residing couples, stepfamilies, extended families, parental interaction from a distance
- Demographic tools capture children's experience of household structure

Household Structure in Mexico

- In 2002, 7% of Mexican children ages 0-14 living apart from migrating fathers.
- Fathers much more likely to migrate than mothers
- Union dissolution relatively low compared to other Latin American countries
- Consensual unions are legal and common, particularly in second or higher unions
- Extended households also common

Socioeconomic and regional distinctions

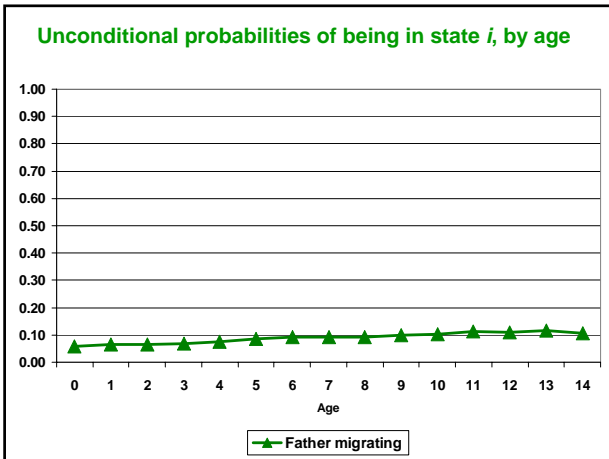
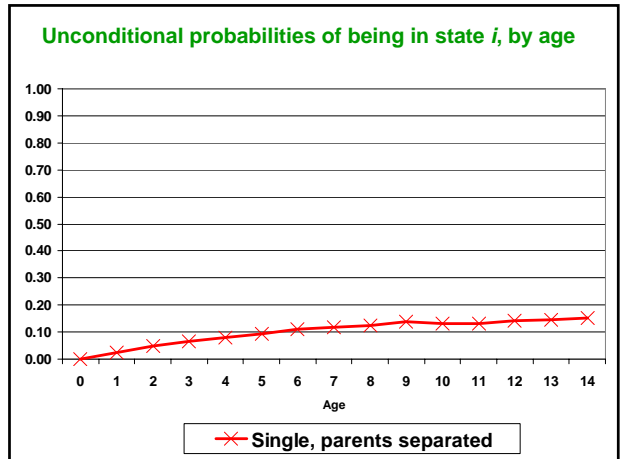
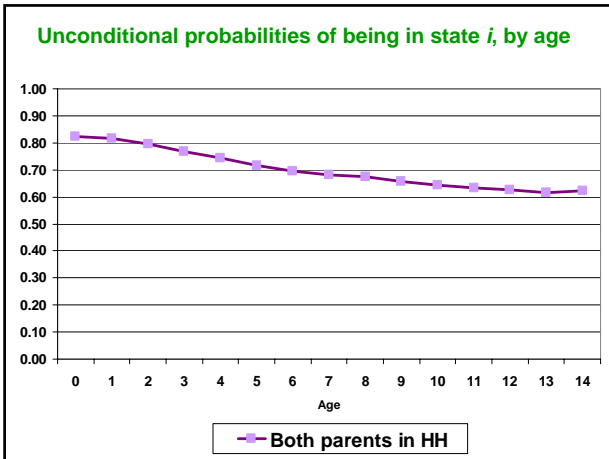
- Additional concern of household disruption for children in families with low socioeconomic status
- Mexican migration is highly region-specific. Temporary migration more common from rural areas.

Multistate Life Tables

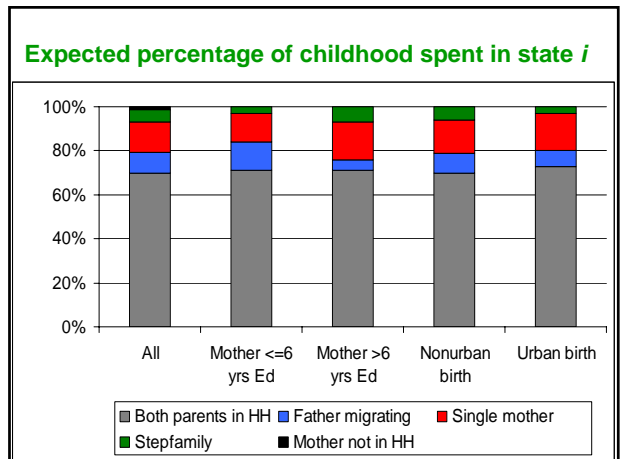
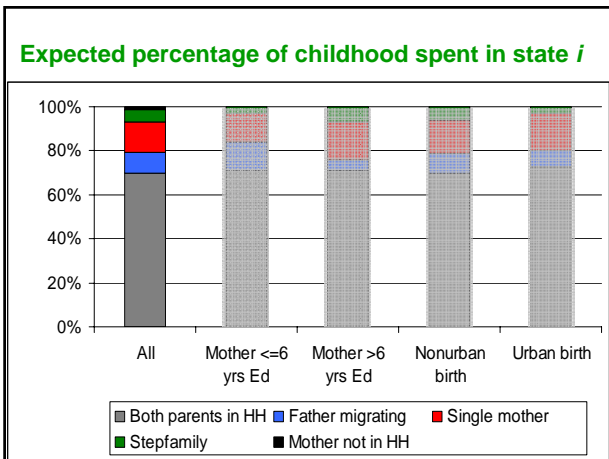
- Approach used frequently in the U.S. and European contexts (e.g., Bumpass and Lu 1992, Heuveline et al. 2003)
- Characterizes what a hypothetical cohort born in one period would experience if subjected to that period's age-specific transition rates
- Construct experiences of a cohort throughout the life course when data is limited
- Allows for competing destinations and non-absorbing states

Mexican Family Life Survey (MxFLS)

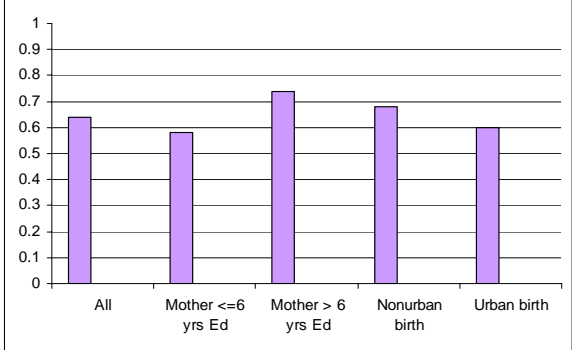
- Nationally representative household survey fielded in 2002
- Includes data on over 8,300 households
- Permanent migration and marital histories for all adults aged 15 and older
- Temporary migration histories for two years prior to survey
- Marital history includes data on all coresiding relationships
- Use data on children aged 0-13 in 2001, 1-14 in 2002: 10,362 children



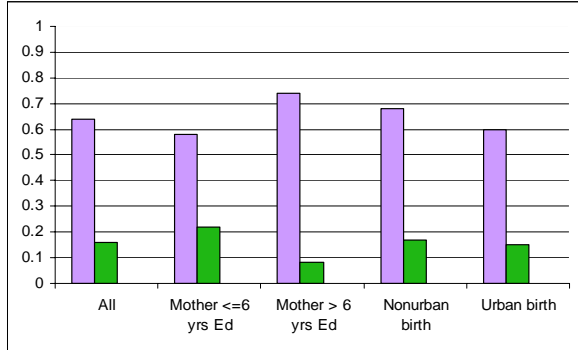
- ### Expected percentage of childhood spent in state *i*
- Both parents in the household
 - Father migrating
 - Single, parents separated
 - Mother single, nonunion birth
 - Stepfamily, parents separated
 - Stepfamily, nonunion birth
 - Mother not in household



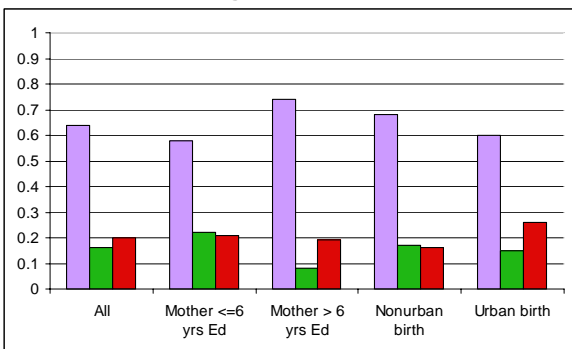
Cumulative probability of remaining in a household with two parents through age 14, conditional on being born into a two parent home



Cumulative probability of having a father migrate by age 14, conditional on being born into a two parent home



Cumulative probability of having a father leave the household following separation by age 14, conditional on being born into a two parent home



Conclusions

- At the population level in Mexico, migration constitutes an equal percentage of children's time away from fathers as union dissolution and nearly as much time as nonunion fertility.
- Cross-sectional tabulations significantly understate the population expected to spend time apart from fathers over the course of childhood.

Care in Interpretation

- Must be cautious applying findings about child development in parental absence from other contexts.
- Multistate results do not tell us the additional amount of time children would spend with both parents in the absence of migration.

Next steps

- Re-estimate results using longitudinal data
 - Aid in assignment to states
 - Help assess bias associated with emigration
- Begin investigation into the consequences of household structure, specifically parental absence and migration, on child development in Mexico

Bonus slide 1
Expected percentage of childhood spent in state *i*

- Both parents in the household
- Father migrating
- Mother single, parents separated**
- Mother single, nonunion birth
- Stepfamily, parents separated**
- Stepfamily, nonunion birth
- Mother not in household

Bonus slide 2
Expected contribution of time apart from fathers

