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Mexican women and the decision to migrate: Multiple respondents in household studies

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The University of Arizona, 1988
MEXICAN WOMEN AND THE DECISION TO MIGRATE:
MULTIPLE RESPONDENTS IN HOUSEHOLD STUDIES

by
Ellen Rita Hansen

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1988
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the people of Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico, who shared their lives with me and in so doing enriched mine beyond telling.
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to express public thanks to my thesis advisor, Dr. Janice J. Monk, whose support and encouragement were vital to the completion and quality of this work. Thanks also go to Excelee and Norman Kreckler of the Sonoran Friends Group in Hermosillo and Tim and Marina Kreckler for their help, hospitality and friendship; to all those close to me in Tucson whose support was so important during the research, and always; and to Drs. Plane and Pederson of the Department of Geography and Regional Development for their time and energy. Perhaps most importantly I acknowledge and thank the people of Hermosillo who agreed to share their lives and histories with me. Without them there would be no thesis.
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ABSTRACT

This research is an exploration of the applicability of a methodology to the study of decision making on migration in Mexican households. This thesis shows the importance of using multiple respondents in order to examine the role of women in decision making within Mexican households that have migrated. Women's roles in the processes of decision making and migration are varied, but individuals in all households studied indicated that migration is a family, rather than individual, decision. Gender differences appeared in responses to many questions, emphasizing men's and women's different priorities. The most striking differences emerged between spouses in the same household, and the results show the inaccurate picture that can develop if one household member is used to represent all members.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Who participates in the decision to migrate? This study is an examination of the decision as made by Mexican households when the members move as a unit. Of particular interest are the nature and extent of women's participation in the decision making process within Mexican households that have migrated. How significant is women's participation? Women and men in Mexican households have distinct roles; does participation in the migration decision vary according to gender roles? The literature describes "La Mujer Fuerte" (Ahern et al., 1985), "the myth of macho dominance" in Mexican families (Cromwell and Ruiz, 1979), women as participants in development projects (Beneria and Roldan, 1987; Charlton, 1984; Arizpe and Aranda, 1981; and others), and girls and women as migrants in various parts of Mexico (see Chapter 2). Such descriptions of women suggested to me that women's part in the decision to migrate is little known, is likely to be significant, and may be greater than often indicated by studies that fail to consider women in the migration process or that do not identify the respondents in household surveys.

The first premise of this report is that migration research is deficient when it neglects gender divisions in
analysis. Women are actively involved in and significantly impacted by migration in Mexico and therefore should be included explicitly in research. We cannot assume that because the male "head of household" has a specific motive for moving that the whole household moves for the same reason. Women may have independent reasons for wanting to move or stay in the place of origin.

Because the literature on migration is lacking with regard to the roles of individual household members in the decision process, this study is an exploratory venture into a methodology designed to illuminate the nature of people's participation in migration decision making at the household level. I wanted to allow respondents to describe the nature of participation in the decision in their own terms and according to their personal perceptions, rather than to make inferences about the household on the basis of the opinion of one member, assumed to represent the whole.

The second major premise of this project is that in order to determine the significance of household members' roles in the decision to migrate, individuals must be asked about their participation. Research relying on one person to represent the entire household inadequately illuminates the contributions of other members—contributions that may be significant to understanding why Mexican households migrate.
Migration for economic and other reasons is a well-documented phenomenon in many parts of the world. It takes diverse forms, from individuals searching for adventure or better jobs or marriage partners, to groups seeking security or advancement in new areas, to myriad other types of human movement. In Mexico, migration is a well-used option for solving many of the problems facing the population (see Chapter 2). Migration of workers across the border between the United States and Mexico is currently considered a major economic and social problem by agencies of both governments. Young people seeking jobs in foreign-owned assembly plants (maquiladoras) in Mexico have come from all parts of the country to the border region, with as yet unknown long-term effects on family structure and values in Mexican society. Many of the migrants are young, single women—the preferred employees in the maquiladoras—who are able to find employment in the plants much more often than are men (Chapkis and Enloe, 1983; Fernandez-Kelly, 1982, 1983).

The economic crisis presently afflicting Mexico has hit hardest in the southern and south-central areas of the country, resulting in increased migration to Mexico City and the cities of the north which are relatively prosperous (Fox, 1983). The rapidly growing population of the northern states is putting further strain on the abilities of their governments and industries to absorb the newcomers, yet for
many individuals and families seeking to better their lives, migration remains a viable alternative to staying in the place of origin.

Studies over the past twenty years have indicated that in Mexico and most of Latin America women have comprised the majority of internal migrants for many years (see Chapter 2). Often, while showing women's participation in migration on a macro level, these studies have failed to deal with women's experiences and perceptions. Who are the women migrants? Why do they choose to move? Do they move with dependents or as individuals? What role do they play in the process of migration, from the decision to move, to choosing a destination, and actual relocation? How do they see themselves as actors in the process? These questions have begun to be addressed recently, but much remains to be done to reveal the experiences and needs of women in migration.

This study is limited in scope to exploration of a method of researching women's participation in the process of decision making that leads some Mexican households to migrate. I conducted a series of household interviews designed to address who in the household participates in the decision and to examine the nature of their participation.
THE STUDY SITE

The research site is Hermosillo, Sonora, in northern Mexico (Figure 1). The project design required a city that has been growing due to in-migration from other parts of Mexico. Separate population figures for the city of Hermosillo and the municipio (a political division similar to the American county) are not available for all years; however, an indication of the city's recent growth is obtained from the following figures. In 1970 the city of Hermosillo had 176,596 people, or 85 percent of the municipality's 208,000 population (Cabrera, 1982). In 1980 the municipality's population had grown to 241,912 and by 1986 was 423,026. The rapid population growth is indicative of substantial in-migration. Sonora's economy is relatively healthy and in some areas expanding (Gobierno del Estado de Sonora, 1986). Migrants I spoke with often expressed their perception of the city of Hermosillo as a place to earn higher wages than other cities and rural areas (see Chapter 4).

Hermosillo is the capital of the state and the regional center for manufacturing, banking, medical services, transportation, and grocery services. Employment in the city is concentrated in agriculture, commerce, and to a increasing degree, industry. Remaining employment is
Figure 2. City of Hermosillo
distributed fairly evenly across the other sectors recorded. The city continues to dominate the surrounding agricultural communities and to attract the majority of the growth in the municipality (Gobierno del Estado de Sonora, 1986).

Because my research concerns households that had migrated as units, I avoided cities which might be attracting individuals rather than families. This would include the border area cities where many maquiladoras operate, and those dependent on an industry such as mining that has traditionally hired mostly men. In March, 1986 Hermosillo had only three operating maquiladoras, which employed 188 people (Gobierno del Estado de Sonora, 1986). In late 1986 Ford Motor Company opened an assembly plant in Hermosillo that employs over 3000 people. While the entire economy of Mexico is closely and intricately entwined with that of the United States, Hermosillo has not been a city economically dominated by the presence of American businesses. The types of employment available in the city have attracted many new families to the area. The city does not draw the high numbers of young single women migrants as do cities such as Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, in 1982 the site of 110 maquiladoras (Christopherson). Cities such as Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, have been mining centers and have attracted more single men than households (Browning and
Growth in Sonora and in the municipio of Hermosillo in the past fifty years has resulted mainly from the expansion of agriculture in la costa de Hermosillo, the agricultural zone extending from about ten kilometers from the ocean inland about sixty kilometers (the city of Hermosillo lies approximately 100 kilometers from the coast). Agricultural reform, irrigation, and the introduction of cotton as an export crop brought in-migrants from many other parts of Mexico to Sonora (Cabrera, 1982). The small agricultural communities, or campos trabajadores, generally are made up of groups of families, sometimes as few as three or four. They are dependent on regional commercial and political centers, in this case, Hermosillo. The campos are oriented toward the city and some residents make frequent trips to Hermosillo to visit friends or relatives and to shop. As some farms have ceased operations, resulting in displacement of workers and their families, and as the needs of some households change, many residents of la costa are attracted to Hermosillo. It is the nearest large city, rural families often have relatives or other contacts there, and housings, employment, and services and amenities are available in the city. Several of the families that participated in this study had recently moved to Hermosillo from la costa.

Practical considerations also influenced my choice of
Hermosillo as a study site. It is close to Tucson and easily accessible by car, so travel to and from the city fit within budget constraints. I was able to establish local contacts in Hermosillo through the Rural Health Office at the University of Arizona. The Sonoran Friends Group provided information about Hermosillo and introduced me to faculty members at the Colegio de Sonora, a graduate research college in Hermosillo affiliated with the Colegio de Mexico in Mexico City. Staff of the Colegio provided resources and further information on the socioeconomic and demographic status of Hermosillo.

**STUDY PARTICIPANTS**

The subjects of the research are members of households that migrated as units to the city. I chose to work with the lowest income sector of the city’s population for several reasons. The poorest population sectors in Mexico are the most studied in migration research and therefore the best known as well as most likely to be misrepresented by research that fails to include women or to detail the identity of respondents. The governments of many countries, including Mexico, are concerned about the movements of the lowest income groups because they consider them the major cause of the rapid growth of cities and the resultant strains on the resources of local and national agencies to
provide necessary urban services.

According to the literature of migration in Latin America (see Chapter 2), the poorest rural-to-urban migrants tend to concentrate in the expanding areas at the peripheries of cities; therefore I hoped recent migrants to Hermosillo would be relatively easy to find in a door-to-door search. Without specifically controlling for the income variable, I restricted my search for respondents to several low-income areas of the city. I identified possible study neighborhoods by conversations with my local contacts and reconnaissance trips to areas on the peripheries of the city. Site visits and respondents confirmed the low-income levels of residents of the neighborhoods.

ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature and discusses the relationship of this report to existing research on migration. Chapter 3 describes the methodological approach, and Chapter 4 is an analysis of responses to the survey. In Chapter 5 four case study households are discussed in greater detail. Chapter 6 contains an evaluation of the strengths and problems of the methodology, and my conclusions.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Migration has been and continues to be an option used by individuals and households in Mexico in the search for more opportunities and better lives. This project focuses on the extent and nature of women’s participation in the decision that initiated migration by the household. Bilsborow et al. (1984) state:

"Migration is one of many inter-related household decisions made to help satisfy perceived family economic and other needs. . . . Determining the decision-maker for migration decisions has rarely been acknowledged as an important issue. A related question is whether the ‘respondent’ should be the household head or the individual migrant or both" (p. 82).

These issues—who participates in the decision, and who should be the respondent in surveys—form the basis of this study.

THEORETICAL BASES OF MIGRATION RESEARCH

Migration studies in current literature may be divided into two broad groups based on the scale of their analytical approach: (1) the microeconomic or equilibrium framework, and (2) the historical-structural view (Wood 1982). The first approach emphasizes individual decision makers responding to disparities in the distribution of resources.
and income and focuses on the individuals' attempts to gain access to more resources and higher incomes. Models generally include such factors as migrants' personal traits, prior travel and migration experiences, extent of knowledge about alternative destinations, expectations of higher income, and higher place utility (see, for example, DeJong et al. 1982; McHugh 1984; Fuller et al. 1985). This approach may neglect the social and historical factors considered in the second view which emphasizes the effects of structural forces acting on socio-economic classes of a population. The unit of analysis in the historical-structural view is the migration stream. The factors considered in research may include expansion of capitalism, the changing international division of labor, development strategies, exploitation of the working classes, inequitable land distribution, and other social pressures (Wood 1982; Bach and Schraml 1982; Brown and Jones 1985).

Geographers have analyzed migration at both of the general scales noted, from a wide variety of perspectives and with concern for many of the factors listed above. Clark's (1986) review of research in human migration discusses population mobility at local, regional, and international levels, with an emphasis on methods of analyzing population flows (pp. 90-91).

Recently, scholars, including some of the authors cited
above, have advocated consideration of both structural factors and individual decision makers in migration research projects (Bach and Schraml 1982; Brown and Jones 1985; Wood 1982; McHugh 1984; Desbarats 1983; Wood 1981). Bach and Schraml state that "it seems likely that something is amiss with our view of a social category if it is somehow independent of the men and women who, acting collectively, form and transform that category" (1982, 326). John Urry, considering the interaction of the formal economy and certain sociopolitical processes, writes that

> analysis of the formal economy cannot provide an adequate understanding of the likely patterns of contemporary politics ... because such an analysis neglects an absolutely central dimension, namely, the characteristic social relations and social properties within and between households (1985, 22).

Although he is not dealing with migration, Urry emphasizes the need to integrate study of the structural factors of societies with research at the micro level, particularly when dealing with gender politics and societal processes that affect households. Clark notes the current debate among scholars regarding "the relative importance of individual decision making and migration versus structural and contextual impacts on the individual's decision and ability to change residences in the city, move between regions in the country, or across international borders."
This controversy, he says, is "part of the larger debate about the role of societal contexts on specific behaviors within cities and regions" (1986, 91). Analysis of human migration must be based on an understanding of a combination of behavioral and structural factors; emphasis on one category of factors at the expense of others develops an inadequate picture.

In reviewing recent changes in human geography, Soja states:

Flexible specialization, resistance to paradigmatic closure and to rigidly categorical thinking, the capacity to combine effectively what in the past was considered antithetical/uncombinable, the selective rejection of all-embracing 'deep logics,' the search for new ways to interpret the empirical world have become hallmarks of an emerging postmodern perspective (1987, 209).

An important step in the development of "postmodern" geography, as described by Soja, was

the realization that the organization of space, the unevenly developed geographical landscape, is not only a social product but also rebounds back to shape social relations, social practices, social life itself. . . . This realization meant that the formation (and reformation) of human geographies needed to be seen as simultaneously contingent and conditioning, outcome and medium, product and premise" (p. 291).

Bilsborow and Oberai (1984), writing on migration theory, note that differences in "structural conditions across communities at any moment are themselves a product of
historical-structural forces" (p. 20).

The authors cited above reflect and support a trend toward the suggested combinatorial approach. We cannot understand geographic processes or states in isolation from the environments in which they exist and which give them definition and form, and which are shaped and altered in return. Marshall (1987) describes the household as a "medial" level, as the unit of analysis, between micro and macro levels. As discussed in the next section, the household acts as a mediating factor between society and individuals. In this exploratory research I focus primarily on the household and the individuals in it, and to a lesser degree on the social structures within which they are acting. As the subjects of this study told me about their roles in the household, their work for wages, and the options open to them for making changes, they were reflecting the effects of society on their lives and their views of their places within it. A larger and more in-depth study of this type could include more questions about people's social and physical environments to pursue further their relationships and actions on multiple levels.

In addition to the need to combine behavioral/micro-level with historical-structural/macro-level approaches, we need:

a multidisciplinary approach to migration. .
The usual disciplinary boundaries are much too rigid and have impeded understanding of the migration process. Different facets of migration have been jealously guarded by practitioners of individual disciplines, often to the deliberate avoidance of other aspects of the process (Bilsborow and Oberai 1984, 21).

An approach to the study of migration that integrates individual decision makers into the structure of the society within which each is acting, that allows a multidisciplinary examination of the process and recognizes its complexity can bring us closer to an understanding and explanation of the phenomenon of migration.

THE HOUSEHOLD AS UNIT OF ANALYSIS

One means of gaining greater understanding of the individual migrant acting within the societal setting is to use the household as the unit of analysis. Decisions to migrate or not and where to go are made within a framework of constraints and opportunities, with a variety of factors impinging on the household and the migrant or migrants. Analysis of migration at the household level acknowledges the importance of the links between people and their societal surroundings by considering individuals as members of groups that have a "pivotal role in mediating the relationship between the individual and broader socioeconomic structures" (Christopherson 1983, 323). One could argue that the household might then be viewed simply
as a larger single decision-making unit and the end result of analysis would be the same as if the focus were on individuals. The intent of focusing on households is not to create a larger unit of analysis but to study individuals as parts of the groups that are of paramount importance in shaping behavior (Arizpe 1980; Harbison 1981; Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur 1984; Smith 1984; Crummett 1985).

The "medial level of analysis" (Marshall 1987) includes "families, neighborhoods, work groups, friendships and other social groups" (pp. 40-41). At this level, researchers investigate relationships between these groups and individuals within them. How do relations in Mexican families, both nuclear and extended, influence decisions? Bach and Schraml (1982), writing of migration as a collective action, state that

decisions behind migration are equally products of history and are organized by a set of dynamic as well as pre-established social relationships. . . . The primary analytical task of interest here is to uncover how the steps leading to migration are organized, by whom, under which conditions and following which rules (p. 335).

The authors emphasize the importance of viewing migration as a human phenomenon perpetrated by real people "who are fully capable of organizing themselves into a variety of groups, tasks, cultural symbols and ideologies" (p. 337). One such group is the household, through which are mediated the
tasks, cultural symbols, and ideologies that affect individuals' lives.

Beneria and Roldan (1987) point out that assumptions about the monolithic household are not valid, that men and women have different and distinct definitions of basic necessities and priorities. Recognition of this diversity results in a more comprehensive view of the reality within which the household and its individual members act.

In my chosen research area of Mexico, household composition varies according to tradition, resource availability, economic and other factors (Luñero 1977; Arizpe 1978, 1981; Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur 1984). In parts of rural Mexico extended families provide needed labor for subsistence agriculture; changing economic patterns in other areas result in adaptations by the people to accommodate domestic needs to economic opportunities. Selby and Murphy (1980) write that the extended family, with its increased earning power and consumption economies of scale, is still culturally desired among the urban poor of Mexico as a way out of poverty. Dinerman (1982) describes increasing intensive craft production and household budgetary pressure as factors contributing to the disappearance of the extended household in her research area in rural Michoacan, Mexico. These reports and others indicate that family and household types are flexible in Mexico, changing with the perceived
needs and opportunities of the people.

Because my target population includes households that have migrated to the city from rural areas, I anticipated at the start of the project that I might encounter a variety of household types in Hermosillo, including extended and nuclear families and those at different stages in the life cycle. Such a mix would provide an opportunity to explore how women's roles vary according to type of household and by the household's life cycle stage. The literature of migration indicates that Latin Americans at age 15 are active as individual movers in many areas (Weaver and Downing 1976; Arizpe 1980; Chaney 1980; Rengert 1981; Young 1981; Crummett 1985), therefore it seemed plausible to me that teenagers would have a part in the decision to migrate and should be included in this study.

The core of the household is the family. The two types of domestic groups can be distinguished as defined by Yanagisako: "the referent of the family is kinship, while the referent of the household is geographical propinquity or common residence" (1979:162). Luñero states that "The family, at the same time that it frames the behavior of its members, both at a private level and a global level—in the general sense—constitutes a unit which shapes and manifests cultural, economic, and social phenomena" (1977, 126). According to Harbison the family functions as "the link
between the individual and the larger society, as well as between the individual and the environment. Although both structure and function vary widely among societies, the family is the context of the migration decision for most individuals" (1981, 228-9). The family provides a social setting within which individuals act, a filter through which the members view opportunities and constraints, their possibilities and their options.

The preceding authors' statements reinforce the idea of the interdependence of people and social structures, as each acts and is acted upon by the other. Just as the migration process cannot be completely understood if removed from its societal context, the decisions of individuals must be analyzed in context, that is, as they affect and are affected by the people around them. How individuals view their choices within the household is explored in Chapters 4 and 5 of this report. Migration may be an option pursued as part of a household strategy to remain a cohesive and meaningful unit; in some areas of Mexico migration of one or more household members is a long-standing answer to various needs faced by the people (Dinerman 1978, 1982; Ahern et al. 1985; Arizpe 1978, 1980; Selby and Murphy 1980; Baca and Bryan 1985; Rengert 1981; Young 1981).

Most of the studies cited deal with individual migrants, but in all cases the family or household serves as
the forum within which the migrant makes the decision to go. Selby and Murphy suggest that poor urban households will send members to (in this case) the U.S. to work "so that they can remain large, extended families" (1980, 23). which are, according to the authors, the desired household form among the urban poor of Mexico. In Young's study of a rural area in southern Mexico, young women have become redundant in the local labor force as the economy of the area has changed. The author discusses migration of young women as the result of decisions made in the family, with daughters encouraged to leave as their labor is no longer necessary in the home, and sons encouraged to stay to help with subsistence activities. Most daughters maintain close ties with their families after they leave, often sending regular remittances to help with household expenses (Young 1981, 167). In the rural areas she studied, Arizpe (1978) found that many poor families are no longer able to subdivide family land to pass on as sons' inheritance. Younger sons, therefore, migrate seasonally on a regular basis to find work off the land. Upon marriage, these sons' new wives often stay with their husbands' families as the men, whose economic contributions are essential to household maintenance, continue migrating seasonally to cities. By these and other means, families and households order their lives to remain together.
This research focuses on migration at the household level by gathering information from members who participated in the decision to migrate. The study considers members' perceptions of their place in the household and their attitudes about the places they left and their new home, to place the decision and the movement of the household in social and geographical context.

**WOMEN AND THE DECISION TO MIGRATE**

Studies that disaggregate data by sex of migrants show that women dominate numerically in rural to urban internal migration in Mexico, while men are more numerous in the international migration streams from Mexico (Weaver and Downing 1976; Thomas and Hunter 1980; Arizpe 1980; Chaney 1980; Young 1981; Crummett 1985). The relative dearth of information regarding women migrants is therefore a glaring gap in our knowledge of migration in Mexico.

In many studies, analysis of the specific role of women in the decision process is not possible because the household is considered as a single unit. Information is gathered from one "representative" member, usually the "head" of the household (Todaro 1976; Garcia et al. 1981; Harris 1981; Rogers 1981; Browning and Feindt 1969; Selby and Murphy 1980), or an often unidentified person or persons whose characteristics are then used to define the household.
In a content analysis of family decision making studies from various disciplines, Bokemeier and Monroe (1983) found that half the 80 studies they reviewed relied on one respondent to represent the family or household, and two-thirds of those generalize from one respondent’s answers to describe other household members. Researchers who have used multiple respondents in household-level studies note that the answers obtained from members of the same household are often conflicting, yet researchers continue to use single respondents. Two main reasons for the continuing practice are cited: (1) the tendency to rely on tested and proven methods of research which often use a single respondent per household, and (2) the increased time, costs, and complexity involved in using multiple respondents. Bokemeier and Monroe warn against generalizing from one member’s responses to other members or to the entire household and question the accuracy of studies that do so.

A United Nations (1984b) study notes that

As long as households and families are thought of as combinations of individuals there is no problem [in classifying data on households and individuals]. The difficulty arises when one person in a multi-person household, or that person’s characteristics, are taken to represent the household as a whole (p. 5).

According to the U.N. report, "it became commonplace to identify the characteristics of the household as a whole
with those of the head of the household. . . . Women within households tended to become invisible, their characteristics and contributions being largely ignored" (p. 5). Economic analysis assuming that whatever benefited the head of the household or the household as a whole was of benefit to each family member "left no scope for a conflict of interest between male and female household members or even for different needs" (pp. 5-6). With this research, I sought to explore the possibility of conflicts of interest and differing needs between men and women within households, and to learn if women express their interests and needs regarding migration to other household or family members.

Some authors attribute to women an active, influential role in matters dealing with migration (Dinerman 1978, 1982; Briody 1986; Chaney 1980; Crummett 1985; Jelin 1977). The authors cited do not discuss decision making explicitly, but portray women as influential in migrant families and families with migrant members. Women appear as important actors in the struggle of Mexican households to improve their situations or simply to survive.

Most studies of migration in Mexico and elsewhere have not explicitly considered women. In an often-cited study, Browning and Feindt (1969) acknowledge that the pattern of migration to the city of Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico, was changing from single males moving to the city as individuals
to a "mass" pattern comprising "married men and their families" (p. 347). They continued to focus on single men moving alone to Monterrey and did not consider women in their study, nor what possible effects women may have had as the migration pattern changed and families moved together to the city. Bhattacharyya (1985) discusses rural to urban migration using Indian data to suggest the importance of the system of family farming and the family decision to send out migrants. He writes of the effects on migration flows when the decision to migrate is predominantly a family decision, and suggests that the family, rather than the individual, is important in modeling migration decision making. He does not, however, define "family," nor does he describe the people acting as part of the families making the decisions, either men or women.

In the past ten years the number of studies of women in migration has increased (see Chaney 1980, for a review and bibliography), including studies on Mexican women migrants (e.g., Jelin 1977; Arizpe 1978, 1981; Dinerman 1978, 1982; Garcia et al. 1981; Young 1981; Ahern et al. 1985; Baca and Bryan 1985; Crummett 1985). Awareness of the need for more effective and efficient collection of data relating to women is also growing. For example, the United Nations recently published two studies on the subject: Improving Concepts and Methods for Statistics and Indicators on the Situation
of Women (U.N. 1984b), and Compiling Social Indicators on the Situation of Women (U.N. 1984a). The first study contains information on subjects vital to understanding women's circumstances worldwide; it challenges long-standing assumptions of the methods used to gather data in the past and recommends deep probes into the inner workings of families and households to gain better perspective on the state of women in the world. The second reviews existing data from censuses, household surveys and registration systems with the goal of devising new ways of using such data to develop more accurate indicators of women's situations.

As socio-economic conditions in Mexico continue to change, women's roles in the family also change. As Luñero states, "a woman's role as 'economic provider' brings her greater power and authority. This is manifested by wider participation in the decisions that affect her and her family" (1977, 136). According to Luñero's study, women's employment outside the home is a major factor in increasing their participation in family decision making. Youssef (1982) lists several other factors that indicate the level of women's participation in family decision making; for example, the degree and rigidity of the sexual division of labor in the family and women's control of income they earn. These factors are influenced by social structures and may
change from area to area. Income earning and control of income may be critical factors in the amount of power women exercise in household decision making. This thesis addresses control of household income, individuals’ sense of relative power and their perceptions of the relationship between waged employment and family influence.

In an analysis of studies of Mexican and Chicano families, Cromwell and Ruiz (1979) conclude that male dominance in decision making is not substantiated by the existing data. "Basically, the studies suggest that while wives make the fewest unilateral decisions and husbands make more, joint decisions are by far the most common in these samples" (p. 370). The "myth of male dominance" is grounded in cultural factors affecting family structure and individual behavior among Mexicans, and the authors state that "it should be acknowledged that the myth is based almost exclusively on simple descriptions or subjective impressions, is disseminated in essay form, and is seldom subjected to the scrutiny of empirical inquiry" (p. 370). These statements influenced the direction of this study and provided justification for my expectation that women participate in the decision to migrate. They led to the question that opens this section and others: What part do women play in this decision which will greatly affect their lives? How do the women perceive their roles? What is the
best way to find this information?

The literature on migration is lacking with regard to how the decisions are reached within the household. DeJong and Fawcett's (1981) book, Migration Decision Making, deals with micro-level or behavioral approaches but does not specifically address household members' roles in actually arriving at the decision to migrate or to send a migrant. In the chapter "Family Structure and Family Strategy in Migration Decision Making" Harbison discusses the factors that may affect the decision, such as the demographic structure of the family (size, age, sex, and life cycle), social structure (household type and belief systems), the function of the family relative to the individual member (as subsistence unit, as socializing unit, and as social group and network). These factors influence the decision of an individual to migrate or of the household to send a migrant, and were taken into consideration in development of the survey instrument I used to interview family members to investigate their roles in the decision.

Bilsborrow et al. (1984) point out that use of aggregate data, in this case from censuses,

reflects failure to recognise [sic] the severe limitations imposed by reliance only on aggregated data. Since such studies do not deal with the decision-making units and are of necessity restricted to a narrow set of explanatory variables--often so-called 'proxies' for the theoretically desired
measures—they are of limited explanatory value. Although census data are necessary for measuring migration, they cannot help us much in understanding or explaining migration (p. 65).

Although the authors do not deal extensively with women's issues in migration, they advocate using the household as the unit of analysis for studies of internal migration in low-income countries: "In terms of practical data collection and analysis, only a detailed household survey can collect the information needed to appraise the migration decision in the context of the other household decisions" (p. 20). They also recommend that more than one respondent per household be used in order to obtain more accurate information about each individual's situation, and that whenever possible each respondent be interviewed separately. Because these measures seemed to offer the possibility of exploring women's roles in household decisions about migration, I decided to develop an in-depth survey and interview as many adults in each household as possible.

The literature discussed above contains a wealth of information about migration in and from Mexico, as well as suggestions for new directions and approaches that will fill the existing gaps in our knowledge. Awareness is growing that we need an interdisciplinary approach combining information about individuals with their socio-economic setting to facilitate evaluation of the effects of people on
their surroundings and vice versa, regarding migration as well as other processes. Many researchers have recognized the importance of viewing individuals as part of families and households within societies, rather than as isolated actors, and gathering information relevant to the household’s effect on the individual’s perceptions of available options, including migration. The number of studies that include or concentrate on women as migrants and as participants in the migration process is increasing, as are new questions about women’s experiences of migration compared with and relative to men’s. Some recent reports point out the inadequacy of much existing data for revealing a clear picture of women’s roles and the need for further and more comprehensive research. Future research must be sensitive to all people involved in and affected by migration.

Migration is much more than the geography of human population movement; as Bilsborow and Oberai (1984) noted, "the usual disciplinary boundaries are much too rigid and have impeded understanding of the migration process" (p. 21). Real life processes such as migration do not happen along disciplinary lines, and explanations for the structure and events of peoples’ lives are not to be found strictly within the confines of a single approach. We cannot study the process of migration as a geographic phenomenon apart
from the sociological factors influencing migrants, or without considering the dynamics of decision making within households among individuals.

By using the household as the unit of analysis I hope to illuminate constraints operating on individual members and the links between individuals and the people around them as well as their social setting. This study acknowledges people's attitudes about their socio-economic milieu, both in the place of origin and in the receiving city. The household in this study serves as the context within which members are making decisions; analysis of it reveals how people affect those around them and are in turn affected by others. Women are included as respondents so their roles in the decision to migrate can be analyzed and acknowledged. As the U.N. study (1984b) notes, there is a pressing need to gather more and better information on women's situations to better understand their status worldwide. This is accomplished partly by collecting information directly from women, as I do in this study.
CHAPTER 3
DESCRIPTION OF METHODOLOGY

With a small number of case study households I am exploring the idea that one respondent cannot adequately represent a household made up of individuals, although the household may act as a single unit, and that it is therefore important to use more than one respondent in household studies. My purpose is to test a method of studying the decision to migrate in Mexican households. The major questions asked are: "Who participates in making decisions about migration in Mexican households?" and "How does the nature of participation vary among individual members of households?" Of particular interest is the role women play in making the decision; to investigate their role and their perceptions of it, I asked them and other adult members of their households about the process they went through in deciding to move. In this way I obtained information directly from the women, rather than relying on other people's (i.e., men's) ideas of how women contribute. This chapter is a discussion of the methodological approach I used to answer the questions stated above, including the means of choosing a study area and respondents and a description of the survey instrument and the interviews.
SELECTING STUDY AREAS

As discussed earlier I chose to work with the lowest income sectors of the population of Hermosillo. My local sources indicated that the southern and northern fringes of the city (Figure 2) are areas of rapid residential expansion where low income arrivals from outside the city would be likely to settle initially. My reconnaissance trips to these areas revealed a variety of types of colonias (neighborhoods). Open land is available at the southwestern and northern edges of the city where people can buy a solar (a small plot of land) and build a house, or squat on public land.

Both the northern and southwestern areas of the city have the raw look of recent settlement, with sparse vegetation, unpaved streets, and a mix of housing types, all owner built and occupied. According to the people with whom I spoke, many residents are squatting on public land and many had just moved to the colonia. The appearance of the fringe areas indicates the residents have low incomes. The newest residents in the southwestern colonias do not yet have electricity, running water, or sewer service. In the north of the city all the homes have electricity, and most have water on the property. New houses are being constructed of wood frames and carton (a relatively
Figure 1. Mexico
inexpensive stiff cardboard material), and the boundaries of the city are expanding. On the basis of my examination of these sections of the city, I decided they would be suitable places in which to seek households for the study.

**SELECTING RESPONDENTS**

Because my interest lies in learning how different members of a household participate in decision making, the research design required that I attempt to interview all those members who might have participated in the decision to migrate, including women, whose views are often neglected in household studies; men; and children over the age of 15 years living in the household. To minimize problems that might stem from people’s inability to remember aspects of past decision making, I sought recently arrived immigrants, whom I defined as those who moved to the city in the previous year. I planned to contact twenty households and to interview all residents over the age of 15 years.

I began locating migrant households by a door-to-door search in the southern and northern neighborhoods described above. Both areas contained a mix of long-time residents and newly arrived families, but in the southern colonias most of the new families came from other parts of Hermosillo, many moving there when their rents were raised in other parts of the city. By means of the door-to-door search I located two recently arrived households in the
southern sector and two in the northern; but the canvassing approach, while successful, was very slow. Because I had limited time to contact twenty households, I changed to a different method to find respondents. I went to an elementary school in a northern neighborhood and asked the Director to help me identify students who recently arrived in Hermosillo from outside the city. The Director and a teacher who also works at a nearby school in the afternoons asked students to have a parent come to the school to talk with me. Usually the mother arrived, often with a small child she could not leave at home. Sometimes the school child would take me home to meet his or her mother and then return to school while I interviewed the parent.

After finding the method of locating participants through the schools useful in the northern neighborhoods I went to an elementary school in a southern colonia. Its Director agreed to help by asking new students to have their parents come to the school, but doubted that she would find any newcomers from out of town. Her visits to each classroom verified that the only new students were from other schools in Hermosillo. Thereafter I concentrated on finding families through the two schools in the northern neighborhoods. With the cooperation of their staff I found the remainder of my subjects. Only two families, from the first four I located by canvassing, live in the south of the
city.

In total I contacted twenty households. All but three had been in the city for less than a year; one family arrived 18 months before, one had been in Hermosillo for three years, and one for six years. Although I had asked the Director of the school to specify that I wanted to talk with people who migrated to the city in the previous year, he may have asked for "recently arrived" students, which obviously had very different meanings for some people. Of the three families mentioned above I included the two most recently arrived. One of the items in the interview with the initial respondent from each household related to length of residence in Hermosillo, but by then the interview was underway, and because the respondent had taken time to come to the school to talk with me, I completed the interview. Because I contacted longer-time residents in only three cases, I did not change the selection and interviewing procedure.

I expected to encounter a variety of types of households, but with only two exceptions the households in the study consist of nuclear families. In one case a widowed father lives with his daughter and her family, and in the other an older couple moved to Hermosillo with their four unmarried children and now live with their two married daughters and their families. Because the migrants comprise
nuclear families, I am using the terms "household" and "family" interchangeably in this report, with the understanding that there is a great variety of household types in Mexico.

Interviewing one parent at the school first was advantageous in that I was able to talk with that person away from the presence of other family members. Privacy for interviews was usually impossible in the home because the families in the study live in one- or two-room houses and share limited space with many people, both residents and visitors. Friends, neighbors, and relatives seemed to know that something out of the ordinary was occurring when I was at a house and would come visiting to witness the event. It was important for me to try to talk with each person alone to gain the perspectives of individual respondents without their being pressured to answer in certain ways by a spouse or parents. Unfortunately this was not always possible, even when I requested a private place to talk. Of the total 37 interviews, 21 were completed in relative privacy (that is, no one sat close by listening through the entire interview), and 16 were done while a spouse or parent sat or worked nearby. When a person other than the respondent answered questions, I asked them not to talk. I cannot be sure to what extent some respondents' answers were influenced by the presence of others. The people I
interviewed at the elementary schools seemed to be comfortable in that setting, although the ideal situation was when I came to the respondent's home. There, people seemed most at ease and could exhibit their traditional hospitality towards visitors.

After interviewing one member of a household I arranged to come to the house to talk with other adults. In all cases but two I spoke first with a woman, as most of the men were working away from home during the day. It was usually easy to set a time when the husband would be available to be interviewed at home, but actually encountering the man at home at that time was rare. Many are jornaleros (day laborers) who must be gone early in the morning to look for work for the day, and who have to be flexible to take jobs whenever they are available. Appointments I made with the wife to talk with the husband were often broken and I obtained many interviews only after two or more trips to the person's house. In thirteen of the case study households I was able to interview both husband and wife. Some men were unavailable because they work during the week in other cities or in the costa de Hermosillo; one man told his wife he did not want to talk with a stranger; and another had abandoned his family after they had moved to the city.

I interviewed three adult children out of a total of
eight resident in the study households. Several parents told me that unmarried children and those under 18 years of age did not have much, if any, say in the family's decision to migrate. I wanted to ask the young people themselves, because these same parents also told me they discussed the move with the whole family. One family has four adult children I hoped to interview. I talked with the two daughters, but although I arranged to call when the sons would be home and visited the house repeatedly, I never saw the young men. This experience was duplicated in the two other households with adult sons. In one other family I interviewed an adult daughter.

The analysis in the remainder of this report will deal with those fourteen families in which I interviewed more than one household member (31 interviews), except where noted otherwise.

THE INTERVIEWS

The survey instrument consists of four sections (see Appendix One). I asked all questions of each respondent, with the exception of those questions included in the matrix which I filled out with the help of the initial respondent from each household. The matrix is the first section of the survey and contains demographic information about the people in the household, including age, place of birth, relation to other household members, length of residence in Hermosillo,
and employment status at the time of the move. Occasionally the respondent considered people to be part of the household who were not currently in residence. By filling in the matrix for each household I was able to keep track of those members who were temporarily absent but usually part of the household and to consider their part in the household’s decision to migrate. People were temporarily absent from the case study households for a variety of reasons, including school attendance and work, and information about their status and their participation in the decision suggests that as households evaluated the various options open to them, some decided on one that includes temporary separation for some members.

The second section of the questionnaire asks each respondent for personal information including current employment status and earnings, if the respondent moved with, before, or after the household, and who handles money in the household. These questions were designed to illuminate the respondent’s current economic position in the household and possibly to ascertain whether that position relates to the nature of participation in decision making. The strength of the relationship between women’s income earning and the nature of their participation in household decision making appears to be an important and interesting area for further research, particularly as more Mexican
women enter the wage labor force and as their roles in the family continue to evolve.

The third section of the survey deals with the household's last place of residence and characteristics of life there. These questions addressed each person's attitudes toward that place and if he/she felt life there was better than in the city. Attitudes toward the place of origin might have had an effect on the way a respondent participated in the migration decision and his/her feelings about the move and about Hermosillo. Those with longer residence in the place of origin and a larger investment of time and possibly emotion there might feel and act differently than those who were dissatisfied or indifferent about where they had lived. These issues were explored in the fourth section of the questionnaire.

In the third section I also asked what the respondent knew and what were the sources of information about the city before moving, and if prior to moving to Hermosillo the respondent had visited or lived in the city and had liked it or not. These questions were asked to gauge the extent of information people had about Hermosillo while making the decision to move and to evaluate whether differences in knowledge and attitudes affected the nature of participation in the decision. The data I collected by asking these questions are not sufficient to allow a detailed analysis in
this report of the relationship between prior knowledge of
destination and participation in the decision; they do,
however, indicate that this subject merits further
investigation.

The final section deals with respondents' perceptions
of their roles in the decision to move, and communication
with other people about the decision, both within and
outside of the household. I asked if respondents had wanted
to move, who they talked with and felt was available to talk
with, if respondents could talk with their families about
the move, and if information gained was shared with
household members. Other questions included whether the
decision to move was a hard one and if the respondents could
have stayed if they had wanted to, who in the household
first started talking about moving, what respondents had
hoped to find in Hermosillo, and current feelings about the
city as a place to live. These questions were designed to
explore the extent of personal power people felt and
exercised during the decision making process, and whether
individuals within the household withheld or selectively
shared information gained from outside sources to influence
the decision.

Because of the open-ended nature of many of the
questions the interviews lasted from approximately one-half
hour to an hour and a half. As is usual in survey work, I
discovered many additional questions I would like to have asked as I talked with people and learned about their lives. Some of those questions are discussed in Chapter 6, which also contains an evaluation of the methodology.
CHAPTER 4
RESPONSES TO THE SURVEY

Respondents' answers to survey questions show striking differences between men's and women's experiences and expectations of migration, and in their perceptions of their participation in the decision to migrate. The differences are manifested between all the men and women in the study, but the most notable are often within households between husbands and wives. Some examples of the differences between people in specific households are discussed in Chapter 5.

Scholars have debated the effects of the researcher on the subjects of research (Oakley 1981; Stacey 1988; Stanley and Wise 1983). As Stacey states, "no matter how welcome, even enjoyable the fieldworker's presence may appear to 'natives', fieldwork represents an intrusion and intervention into a systems of relationships that the researcher is far freer than the researched to leave" (Stacey 1988, 23). I was conscious of my intrusion into people's lives as I pursued my study. On a few occasions I sensed that individuals were not comfortable talking with me. Two women appeared ill at ease during the interview, and one of those answered questions with minimal responses. Two other women told me their husbands would not be willing to talk with me because I was a foreigner.
For the majority of respondents, I believe the interview was an interesting, often enjoyable, experience. Talking to a foreigner was a novelty to many of them and most enthusiastically told me their stories. In many cases I was able to establish friendly and comfortable relationships with respondents very quickly. To what extent people may have told me what they thought I wanted to hear is unknown and, to a certain extent, unknowable. I asked follow-up questions and used probes as I felt necessary to encourage respondents to give detailed answers in their own words rather than by repeating my questions as responses. With the understanding that what I have learned is necessarily filtered through my own cultural screens, the rest of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the information gained from the survey. Two major questions are analyzed in the following sections of this chapter: are there differences in participation in making the decision to migrate within households; and if so, are they based on gender roles?

WHO PARTICIPATES IN MIGRATION DECISIONS?

Everyone interviewed agreed that migration is a family decision that should include all members, or at least all adult members, of households, with the exception of one man who told me that who participates in the decision "depends on the family and the motives for moving." Among the
fourteen families in which I interviewed more than one member, all respondents but two said either that both spouses discussed the move or that the whole family talked about it. A common response was the whole family should be in agreement about moving because it will affect everyone. Many people said their families share ideas and problems and work things out together. In one of the two cases of exception, Sr. Ochoa said he did not participate in discussion about moving--his wife and married daughter made the decision and convinced him it would be better for the younger children if they moved to Hermosillo. Sra. Ochoa told me the whole family talked about the move, including her husband, and that it is important for everyone to be in agreement in the decision. Sr. Ochoa did not want to leave his hometown and seemed to be distancing himself from the whole idea of the move. The other case was an adult daughter who said her parents left the children out of the decision. Three women indicated that their husbands made the decision and moved the family without consulting them. In these cases I was not able to interview the husbands, so their views cannot be compared with the views of their wives.

Many people told me that their children participated in discussions about moving, but said children really have no choice in where they will live until they are married or
older than 18 years. Sr. Montes, father of ten, told me moving is "an adult decision, since adults have to deal with the results." He said that "the small children go where the food is. The older children talked about the move, but followed their parents." Sr. Galaz told me the whole family should make the decision "because they're family." But, he added, "children until they're 18 should follow their parents." Many of these same parents said the search for better opportunities for their children was their primary reason for moving, even as they left children out of the decision making process.

Two women and two men said their children initiated talk about moving. In two of those four cases the children are married adults who moved to Hermosillo prior to their parents' move; in the other cases the children are younger and wanted to move away from the rural area where the family had always lived. Lorena, an 18-year-old, told me that the decision should be made by the entire family but in reality is made by the father or by both parents, and children have little or no say until they have their own households. When I spoke casually to some of the younger children in various households, some indicated that they had not wanted to move but had no choice. Now that they were in Hermosillo, most were content.
People's responses indicate they were part of the family's decision to migrate. Almost all respondents said they thought the whole family should discuss the decision; even those who ascribed little or no influence to children's views indicated that the children should participate in discussion. Among the exceptions were the three women whose husbands made the decision unilaterally, Sr. Ochoa, who seemed to have been content to stay out of the decision making process, and Lorena, who resented not being included in the decision.

Most people talked with friends or relatives outside the household while they were contemplating the move, and all who did said they shared such conversations with other household members. Sr. Torua worked in a mining town in the Sierra of Sonora. He told me he and his co-workers all talked about leaving to get away from the mine and the boring routine that kept them away from their homes and families. His friends did not want him to leave the town before they did, but otherwise supported his move. Sra. Torua felt desperate to leave and claimed a major role in the decision. She said she insisted on the move and convinced her husband it was best. She was afraid for him while he worked and tired of being alone while he was on night shift. She talked with her neighbor about moving, but not her family in Hermosillo, because they were too far
away. A woman who moved to the city to find health care for her daughter said she talked first with her relatives in the small town they left, then with many friends who supported her decision to move. Her husband said he talked only with his wife, but he knew that she had discussed the move with her family and that her parents had not wanted them to leave.

Only in a few cases were people unable or unwilling to talk with others outside the household about the decision to move. Some families made the decision so quickly that they moved before outsiders were aware they were thinking of leaving. Sr. Romero, who said he moved because problems with his boss forced a quick decision to leave, said he did not have time to talk with anyone but his wife, although he knew his wife discussed the move with her friends. Sr. and Sra. Carrillo agreed that neither had time to talk with anyone outside the household before they moved, as they left town suddenly to avoid financial troubles. Sra. Montes said she did not talk about the move with anyone other than her husband, but he talked with friends. She is estranged from her family and did not feel she needed to include them in discussions of the move. Her husband affirmed that he talked about moving with his co-workers, but added that his mother-in-law tried to convince them to stay because "she didn't want her daughter to move so far away." His view
seems to be very different from his wife's perception of her relationship with her family.

With those exceptions noted, the people I interviewed indicated they participated to some degree in making the decision about where they would live. They had varying views of other household members' roles but generally agreed that at least spouses, and often children, also participated. Women perceived their role in the decision to migrate on a scale from very strong to minimal. Aspects of the varying nature of women's and men's participation in the decision making process are discussed in the following sections.

**EXPECTATIONS OF HERMOSILLO AND OF MOVING**

I asked respondents what they had expected to find upon moving to Hermosillo to explore what men and women hoped to accomplish by migrating and whether various expectations might result in different approaches to the decision or in conflict within the household regarding the move or the destination. I also asked respondents what they knew about Hermosillo before moving, and what their sources of information were. People's expectations may vary based on prior knowledge and on the source of knowledge—whether it is personal or second-hand. Some respondents had lived in Hermosillo before, and others had visited often. How might prior residence or visits affect what people hope to
accomplish by moving to the city? In this section I will discuss respondents' expectations of migration to Hermosillo. The questions regarding prior knowledge of the city before the move are of interest and in a larger study of this type could be an important source of information about individuals' priorities and goals regarding migration; however, after reviewing the data from those questions, I realized I did not have sufficient information to adequately analyze this issue.

Thirty respondents cited concrete goals they expected to realize as a result of migration and said they had reached or were in the process of reaching those goals. Most gave one or two of several different responses when I asked about their expectations of a new life in Hermosillo. Primarily these migrants were hoping to find good schools for their children, work for themselves or for their spouse or children, medical facilities, and decent housing. Some expressed as secondary hopes that they and their children would find friends, that they would like the climate in Hermosillo, and one woman lamented that she did not have room for the garden she had hoped to plant next to her house. Ten of the fourteen men interviewed cited work for themselves as their primary expectation. Five of the women listed work as a goal--three of those said they hoped for good jobs for their husbands, two were single adult
daughters in one household who had wanted to find work for themselves on arrival in Hermosillo. Three men said they did not think about what it would be like in Hermosillo before they moved. One woman said she did not expect life to change when the family moved to Hermosillo, two women said they had expected to move to a more comfortable life, and one woman had feared she would have a hard time adjusting to a very different life in the city. In general, men and women expected to improve their lives and bring greater social and economic opportunities to themselves and their children by moving to Hermosillo.

While men and women did identify differing goals, most people did not indicate that making the decision to migrate was a source of conflict within households. The lack of conflict suggests that people are able to arrive at mutually satisfactory decisions, especially as they can devise ways to meet their own expectations. Gender distinctions are evident in the responses to this question, and expectations described reflect the different responsibilities and roles of men and women within the household.

The men I interviewed were primarily concerned with their financial obligations toward keeping the household together and were more likely to state their hopes of the outcome of the move to Hermosillo in the narrower economic terms of earning an income. The women also are very
involved with household finances; most couples said they make joint spending decisions with the wife making the purchases, and many of the women were in the process of buying the land the family was living on—a complex and lengthy procedure. These women's primary responsibilities, however, are not provision of money, rather they are concerned with the economics of daily management of the household: caring for the children; washing clothes by hand—a time-consuming and never-ending task; purchasing and preparing food; dealing with the city on matters of property, utilities, and schools; and other household and social obligations.

The women I talked with were more likely to describe their expectations of the city in terms of their primary responsibilities to their families: they wanted to find good schools and friends for their children, a decent house and perhaps a piece of land to buy, better opportunities for advancement in school and work for their children and husbands, and had hopes such as finding "a better life in a new place," and "a more comfortable life." Sra. Valenzuela's response is representative—she said she had hoped to find "a house, a good place to raise children, and friends." Sra. Ochoa listed her similar expectations as "work [for her husband], schools, a solar to buy and a house to live in, and being close to our married daughter." Their
husbands more often described their expectations in terms of personal goals, such as finding a better job, to advance personally, to work for himself. Sr. Melendrez said his expectation of the move was "work first, with a better salary." Sr. Montes' hopes were to "better myself, find a better job without a boss."

Emphasizing the gender distinctions in expectations, answers varied greatly among men and women in particular households as well as between all men and all women. Indeed, in only two couples did the individuals describe their expectations in similar ways. Both men in these cases cited work for themselves as their only expectation of the move to Hermosillo. Their wives' first stated goal was work for their husbands; they also hoped for good schools nearby for the children and a house and land to live on.

Other couples had differing but complementary expectations. For example, one woman said she had hoped to find a better life in a new place, while her husband said he hoped to find a job and a house. Another woman was looking for a chance to progress, opportunities for her and her family to better themselves, while her husband wanted to find work and good medical care for himself. As noted previously, three men said they had not thought about what they would find in Hermosillo, but their wives had specific hopes before moving. One wanted work for her son and
husband, a piece of land and a house, and to live close to her married daughter. Another wanted to find a nice house and to have more time with her children, and the third wanted to enhance her children’s opportunities for work and school. One woman dreaded the adjustment made necessary by the move, while her husband hoped for better schools for the children and a good job for himself.

Respondents who were reluctant to move appeared to be willing if they saw mitigating circumstances that would make relocation tolerable. For example, Sr. Ochoa said he had not thought about what it would be like in Hermosillo, because he had thought he would stay in his home town for the rest of his life. He did not want to move but his wife and daughter convinced him it would be best for his unmarried children if the family moved to the city. His wife is happy with the change and content to be in the city. He has kept in close touch with family in the town they left and in my time in Hermosillo he made at least two extended trips back to the town to visit and to work. On my last visit to the family’s house, Sr. Ochoa was home and Sra. Ochoa had gone back to the town to see her family. Part of this couple’s expectations of their move may have been that they would be able to visit their home town on a regular basis to maintain ties. Perhaps with that expectation Sr. Ochoa was more willing to move.
The differences between men's and women's expectations of what they would find in Hermosillo and what they hoped to accomplish by moving there are considerable, both within households and between all men and all women in the study. This variety, combined with the differing motives expressed by men and women discussed in the next section, supports my thesis that research dealing with only men's or only women's views of migration conveys an inadequate idea of the process as it takes place with Mexican households.

FACTORS LEADING TO THE DECISION TO MIGRATE

Several questions addressed respondents' reasons for wanting to move. The first two, "Ud. quería cambiarse de (pueblo)? Por qué, o como no?" ("Did you want to move from [place of origin]? Why or why not?") elicited a variety of responses. The most common primary motive among adults of both sexes for migrating was the desire to provide better schooling and more opportunities in general for their children. Other reasons mentioned first by both men and women include the search for better jobs for themselves or a spouse, the need for health care for themselves or a family member, lack of housing in the place they left, boredom with life there and desire for change. Six women and four men had unique primary motives. For example, Sr. Romero moved to the city after a fight with his boss on the farm. Sr. Armendales wanted to expose his children to "a better look
at reality, to be in a place where there are more people" than there are in la costa. Sra. Gonzales said she wanted to move because there was no place to have fun in the mountain village they had left and she was tired of her husband's night-shift job, which she thought was dangerous. Sra. Herrera told me her husband had made the decision to move because difficult relations with her family made him uncomfortable.

Motivation for migration does not differ notably according to gender, unlike respondents' expectations of the move to the city. On the basis of the data I collected in this study I cannot provide an explanation for the presence or lack of gender differences in people's expectations and motives, an issue more in the domain of psychology than geography. Over two-thirds of men and women interviewed gave one of the five responses listed above as their primary or secondary motive for migrating. The others had more personal, sometimes psychological, reasons, such as the examples noted. The differences revealed in motives are more marked between women and men within particular households than among all men and all women in the study. Among the thirteen households in which I was able to interview both husband and wife, spouses in eight couples cited different reasons (among the five principal motives listed above) for wanting to move. In four of those
couples, the spouses never mentioned each other's reasons. For example, Sra. Romero told me her family had moved from la costa de Hermosillo to the city because she was having a problem pregnancy and had to be close to a hospital. She said her husband had suggested the move because she was very sick. Sr. Romero told me he had wanted to move because he had a fight with his boss and could not bear to live at the farm anymore. Neither mentioned the other's problem, although it seems likely that each was aware of the other's situation.

In another case, Sra. Carrillo said the family had moved because decent housing was not available in Nogales, Sonora, where she and her husband had both worked. After a trip to Hermosillo on vacation they found a nice house and decided to move there, where they had friends and family. Her husband's story was quite different. He told me he had been in an automobile accident with two friends. The three of them had been found liable for damages and had agreed to split the costs; however, his two friends left town suddenly and rather than pay the whole amount himself he decided to move back to Hermosillo. In this case I felt Sra. Carrillo was not willing to share her husband's story with me, but it would be surprising if she did not know of the automobile accident and her husband's desire to leave town rather than assume damage costs alone. At the same time, her desire for
a better house may have been a more important motive to her for moving.

The other cases are equally diverse. Most reasons offered fit the standard motives for migration (i.e., the search for jobs, for medical care, etc.). Had I interviewed only one person in any of those eight households, however, I would have obtained a more simplistic view of the factors underlying these families’ decisions to migrate than was actually the case. Paradoxically, all these respondents said they had discussed the move with the family. This raises further questions that await asking: What did they discuss? Did each person explicitly state his or her motives for wanting to move? Were motives discussed with some family members but not all? Is it a case of people simply not listening to each other, or of not revealing their principal motives to others and instead discussing the move with them in what they considered to be the most persuasive manner?

I asked if the decision to move had been difficult. A much larger percentage of all women than all men interviewed said migration was a difficult decision for them (53 percent of women, 29 percent of men). Most of those who had a hard time deciding felt the pain of leaving their homes and loved ones behind when they moved. For example, Sr. Montes said it was hard to move because of family ties in the place he
left. His goal was to work for himself and progress personally, and he did not feel he could succeed in the town they left. So, although he misses his family, the chance to advance was more heavily weighted and his decision was to relocate.

Sra. Montes told me the decision was easy for her. She wanted to move and initiated discussion of relocating while her husband was out of work for a period of time. Her relations with her family in the place of origin are not as close as those of her husband and she did not have a hard time leaving. Sra. Valenzuela had to leave her family to move close to a hospital and although she said it was a necessary decision, it was not easy.

Sra. Armendares had difficulties with the decision to migrate. She and her husband wanted to give their daughters a chance to go to better schools than were available in the agricultural zone, so they decided to move to Hermosillo. Sr. Armendales hac kept his job in la costa and commutes to the city on weekends, a situation that Sra. Armendales does not enjoy. "It makes life hard" that her husband is gone during the week, she told me, and "It’s better if the whole family is together." Sr. Armendares also said the decision to move was difficult, as they were "facing the unknown, and a new kind of life" in the city. While these people had problems with the decision to migrate, they had certain
needs or ambitions for bettering themselves by moving to Hermosillo which overrode their desire to stay in the places they left.

Those respondents said who said the decision was easy for them often stated that they "had to move" for some reason—mainly for health care, to be close to family, to find work or better opportunities for their children. Some said they were ready to leave; the decision to migrate was a natural one whose time had come and Hermosillo was a logical choice because of its proximity or because friends and relatives already lived there.

All but four respondents in the study said they had first-hand knowledge of Hermosillo before they moved to the city. With the exception of three people, all respondents had relatives or friends living in the city, and most of them said they talked with the people they knew in Hermosillo before moving. Discussions with family and friends centered on the quality of life available in the city, and opinions varied. One woman said her friends told her it is "a pretty city with good qualities," and advised her what part of town would be best to live in and how to find a house. Her husband's sources told him that Hermosillo had its share of city problems and that "people are not as polite or friendly as they are in small towns." They had visited Hermosillo prior to moving and neither had
liked it. Another respondent had relatives who left Hermosillo after living there for a few years because things did not work out for them. She had lived in the city for a year and had not liked it. None of the other three members of her family I interviewed had liked the city on previous visits, but, as with the couple mentioned above, they had been convinced that there were more opportunities for school and work in Hermosillo than in the rural area, and the family moved. One woman's friends in the campo de trabajadores told her there would be problems if the family moved to the city and it was better to live in the agricultural area. They wanted to give their daughters better opportunities for education, and the woman's family, mostly in Hermosillo, encouraged her to move to the city for the girls' sakes. Friends of another man warned him against moving to the city. They told him that with a big family he would have trouble finding work to support his family: "what are you going to do? The work is here." Apparently convinced of his determination to move, his friends also advised where the lowest cost areas of city are located and where he could find a house and buy a solar.

In most families at least one respondent said someone tried to persuade him or her to change his or her mind about moving, either to go or to stay. Most often family members or friends who would be left behind tried to persuade the
family to stay instead of move. Some people said their parents were not in favor of the move because they would miss their children who would be far away. Almost all respondents have maintained close contact with friends and family in their former residences.

The responses discussed above suggest that people may have divergent reasons for moving, but as long as they perceive potential advantages for themselves or their families the different motives do not necessarily interfere with the result. Women and men within the same household may have very different ideas and experiences of migration, but this may not lead to conflict or difficulties in making the decision to move. It is possible that the variations are not discussed, including in those cases in which people told me they talked with the whole family about moving. It may be that even those women who said they had no part in the decision to move perceived advantages for themselves or their families and accepted, if not supported the move. For example, Sra. Leon did not want to leave home but her husband could not find work after his job ended, so he decided to move the family to Hermosillo. She is "a gusto" (content) now in the city, has contacted old friends she knew from living there previously, and is living rent-free in the house of acquaintances. She said she is content now
to be back in the city, and was happy that her children were in school close to her house.

Differing motives on the part of various family members do not necessarily give rise to conflict or necessitate discussing the decision to move. The lack of discussion and/or conflict does not negate the differences in perception, experience, and expectations of migration between individuals nor make it any less important to illuminate those differences, to add further to the growing understanding of the process of migration.

**PERSONAL POWER WITHIN THE HOUSEHOLD**

I asked several questions I hoped would reveal people’s perceptions of relative power within their families, so I could compare how this sense of power related to women’s and men’s perception of their roles in making the decision to migrate. For instance, I asked each person: "Pudiera haber quedado en (pueblo) si habia deseado?" (Could you have stayed in [town left] if you had wanted to?) By using the second person singular form of the verbs in Spanish in this and other questions I indicated that I wanted to know the individual respondent’s thoughts about herself or himself, rather than the family. I asked who controls money in the household, and if the respondent felt more influential in family decision making if employed. Although I asked questions designed to reveal individuals’
perceptions of their personal power and influence in the household, they often stated their answers in terms of the household, reflecting their strong family ties and their sense of responsibility toward maintenance of the household.

When I asked respondents if they could have stayed in the place of origin, their answers reflected their perceptions of personal power in the household. Often, spouses stated their answers in opposite manners—some people said "No, I couldn't stay because I wanted to move" and others said "Yes, I could have stayed but I wanted to move." These subtle differences in languages are not easy to interpret, but in these cases they appear to reflect different views of constraints and opportunities, even as the eventual outcome is the same—that is, the family moved.

Women more often said "No, I couldn't stay because..." and then gave the reasons they felt they had no choice but to move. Men more often expressed a sense that they had a choice and chose to come to the city, although their reasons for moving suggested that they would have had problems if they had chosen to stay in the place of origin. For example, the Trujillo family lived in Ciudad Obregon, a town in southern Sonora. Sr. Trujillo was in an accident in which he had severely injured one leg. The doctors in Obregon could not give him hope of regaining full use of his leg so he visited Hermosillo, where doctors told him they
could operate and repair the damage. He told me he could have stayed in Obregon and would still be there if he had not had the accident. His problem was not life-threatening, and he expressed his options in terms that indicate he feels he has choices, although staying in Obregon would have resulted in his living with an injured leg that might have restricted future options.

Sra. Galaz, faced with a similar kind of situation, did not feel she had the choice to remain in her hometown. Her eight-year-old daughter has an affliction that keeps her from speaking. The doctor in their small town told her that speech therapy could possibly help the girl speak, but no therapist was available in the rural area. This also was not a life-threatening situation—her daughter is otherwise healthy—but Sra. Galaz did not feel she had any choice but to move to a large city where she could take her daughter to a speech therapist regularly.

People's sense of personal power is complex. Sra. Trujillo, from Obregon, felt she was part of the decision to move to Hermosillo and had her own, separate reasons for wanting to be there. She told me she could not have stayed in Obregon because she did not feel at home there and wanted to move. She said she initiated talk of moving (her husband said he did) and the idea originated with her mother, who lives close to Hermosillo and wanted her daughter and family
to move nearer to her. She did not mention her husband’s accident or his leg injury, but she sat with us while I interviewed him and expressed no surprise at his reasons for wanting to move to Hermosillo. Whose motives were stronger or more influential in the decision making process? Were both spouses’ expressed desires necessary before a move could take place? Sr. Galaz was content to be in Hermosillo, although he said he had moved only to find a speech therapist for his daughter. He misses his life in the village and said it was a hard decision to move to the city, even considering his daughter’s problems, but he had no other option than to move. When I asked if his married daughters who live in Hermosillo like the city, he told me that his daughters had no choice about living in the city because their husbands wanted to be there. Personal power in the family is expressed in a variety of ways, and one person’s perception of other members’ power is often different from those other members’ own sense of power.

There was some disagreement about who initiated discussion of migration. In seven households both husband and wife agreed that the husband first talked of migrating, and in one case both spouses agreed the wife did. Seven other women named themselves as the initiator of conversations about moving, while only two men in those households agreed that their wives had brought up the idea,
and two men did not remember who first began talking about migrating. Women were just as likely to say they were the initiators of discussions about migration (seven women named themselves, seven named their husbands); while eight of fourteen men said they initiated talk of moving, only two said their wives did, two credited their children, and two did not remember. There is no simple relationship between starting discussions of moving and personal power, although those women who claimed they initiated talk of migration expressed a sense of greater participation from the beginning of the decision making process through to the conclusion (see the descriptions of Sra. Ochoa and Sra. Medina in Chapter 5, for example).

The adult daughters expressed perceptions of personal power to varied degrees, and seemed generally to feel that family ties were stronger. Two of the young women said they could have stayed in the place of origin, but only if they had married or had not wanted to be with the family. The third told me the only reason she could have stayed behind was that her father was still working in Tijuana and she could have stayed there with him if she had wanted. Although these young women indicated they had a choice of staying or moving with the family, they would have had to make major changes (get married or live without the family)
in order to have done so, and they all chose to remain with their families.

When I asked who controls money in the household I hoped to assess whether a relationship exists between control of money and people's sense of personal power, and how these might relate to the nature of their participation in decision making in the household, including the decision to migrate. I asked "Hay una persona en la familia que dirige todo del dinero de la familia, o guarda cada persona su propio dinero?" (Does one person in the family manage all the family's money, or does each person keep his or her own money?) During the interviewing this evolved into a more clear and direct question: "Who decides how to spend the family's money?" and "Who buys the food and pays the bills?"

Decision making regarding household money ranges from individual to shared approaches. Sometimes household members disagreed about their roles, but this may reflect the initial wording of the question with its focus on "managing" rather than decision making. Spouses in only four couples reported making joint decisions. One person in each of two other couples said decisions were joint, though the husband in one case claimed to manage the money and in the other couple the wife said her husband controls the family's money. Only two men said they manage household money, and only one of their wives agreed, the other said
they make joint spending decisions.

An indication that people were defining "management of money" in various ways comes from the Romero family. Sra. Romero said her husband manages the money, he named his father-in-law Sr. Miranda, who said it was his daughter’s responsibility. Sr. Romero said he gives his money to his father-in-law who distributes it; Sra. Romero told me her husband gives her money to make purchases for the household. All three may have had a different interpretation of the question, or each may have a distinct definition of money management.

Women spoke proudly of their money management responsibilities and some explained the complex procedures they were going through as they purchased their homes. For others, household finances were a source of constant stress because money was always scarce. In most of these cases the husbands were working as jornaleros and their income was uncertain. The Medina household has multiple wage earners. The four adult children work full-time and give their mother up to half of their incomes to help with family maintenance. Sr. Medina said he keeps some money and gives the rest to his wife (he called her la patrona—the boss), who manages the household’s budget. It requires contributions from the five incomes to maintain this family of eleven in the city. Sra. Medina expressed worry over money when she told me that
it never quite reaches far enough, never quite covers the family’s needs. Her husband is building a second room for sleeping quarter for the girls, so all eleven family members will not have to sleep in the one small room that now serves as their living quarters. Construction is a slow process, as they must save week by week to buy a load of concrete block and mortar to continue building.

Questions regarding money management may reveal more about people's perceptions of their personal power than actual power. Most of the women I spoke with do not work for wages and are managing the money their husbands give them. Even if they do not consider this to be an adequate amount to run a household, their part in budgeting may give women a sense of control and the confidence to make their voices heard in family decisions. Some women in the study who manage household money nonetheless expressed little sense of participation in the decision to migrate. For example, Sra. Leon indicated that her husband and two oldest sons made the decision to move to Hermosillo, but she said she manages the money Sr. Leon earns. The opposite was also true, as in the case of Sra. Montes, who initiated discussion of migration and was influential in the household’s move; however, she and Sr. Montes agreed that he manages the money. The relation between decision making about money and about migration varies greatly in the case
study households. Only one person, Sr. Ochoa, reported not participating in the decision to migrate in addition to not making decisions about expenditures of household income.

Control of household money may be related to variables which have a lesser effect on participation in the decision to migrate. For example, the four women in this study who are forty years of age or older all said they manage the household's money. Two of them were the main voice in the decision to migrate, one said her husband made the decision without consulting her, and the fourth described a family decision. Women's age may be more important in control of money than with respect to their participation in decisions about migration. A larger sample size and additional questions would allow more comprehensive and detailed examination and conclusions about the relationship between various types of decision making within households.

I asked respondents if they feel they have more influence in family decisions if they are working for wages, and revealed some people's perceptions of their position in the household. Both men and women answered the question negatively and positively, but a higher proportion of women said their status in the household did not depend on having work for wages. In only one household did husband and wife agree that having an income earning position affects their status in the family. In two households both spouses said
they were equals whether or not they worked for wages. In the other ten households spouses either gave conflicting answers to the question or did not understand it. Eight people (four women and four men) did not understand the question and response to the question is missing for two men. Fourteen women and four men said their status in the family did not depend on having a job outside the home. Sra. Soto helps her husband in the small store they run. She said she feels more independent when she works outside the home, but does not have more influence in the family. Sr. Torua told me that his position in the family does not depend on the amount of money he makes, and that when he is out of work his brothers treat him better. Both Sr. and Sra. Armendales told me they were equal partners in their relationship, as the señora said, "we are on the same level, it doesn’t matter if one earns money or not." Two of the three adult daughters I interviewed told me they have the same position within the family whether or not they work, and one woman told me that "the person is the same whether she works or not," that position in the family depends on the person, not on work or money.

Among all respondents four women and four men expressed feelings that having a job makes a positive difference in relative household position. Some of those are currently employed, others are not. Sr. Romero works as
a taxi driver and said "If you don't work you don't eat. If you have a job people look up to you." Sra. Carrillo worked in an assembly plant before she moved to Hermosillo from Nogales but does not currently earn an income. She told me first that her family treats her the same whether or not she works, then paused and added, "but they treat you with more courtesy when you work." Sr. Mejia, who works as a security guard at a hotel, asked me, "If you don't have work, the wife doesn't respect you, and what would we eat?" Sra. Montes, who currently is not employed outside the home, said that if she had work for wages she would feel better because she would be helping provide necessities for the family and her ten children would listen to her more. Her husband said he has "more confidence from the family" when he is working, and has "more esteem in their eyes." An adult daughter, Lorena, had been left in Hermosillo to take care of her younger siblings while her mother was visiting Tijuana, where her father is now living and working. Lorena said she has worked since she was thirteen years old (she is now eighteen), and the younger children treat her with more respect when she has a job. When I interviewed her she was not earning an income and complained that the children did not pay attention to her. Sra. Soto told me that her husband has more influence because he works and would even if she worked. She added "The man has more influence in the
family because he is male, whether the woman works or not." Sr. Trujillo said he is "mayor de mi casa" (head of my household) whether or not he has work, thereby claiming an inherent position as head of the household. His wife, however, said a person's influence in the household depends on the individual's character, "not on work and money. The person is the same whether one works or not," and status derives from earned respect.

Some people did not understand the question, even after I repeated and reworded it. Their responses included rambling answers about the expense of living in the city and statements such as the poor always had to work in order to eat. This lack of understanding, mainly on the part of older respondents, may reflect the idea that influence in Mexican families, particularly in low income sectors, is not always based on the amount of money a person can earn, but on other, less tangible factors related to familial and social position. The question would have little meaning for people who do not judge family status by income earned. This is the case in the Medina family. Sra. Medina is acknowledged as head of her household by her husband and children. Her status is not based on monetary contributions to the family's income but apparently on the strength of her personality. She did not understand when I asked about status relative to wage labor, but when I asked Sr. Medina
(his wife was present throughout the interview), the question led to a discussion of Sra. Medina's decision making power, which is based partly on the fact that she is at home most of the time and is aware of her children's activities and needs.

I asked the sixteen women in the study who did not work outside the home if they would like to find paid employment. Five said no, and eleven of them said yes, but that they could not at this time for various reasons. Among the latter, four said their husbands told them they could not work; four cited household responsibilities, mainly child care, for which they had no viable options but their own labor. Sra. Romero worked in la costa as a cook for the agricultural workers. She would like to work for pay in the city but has little formal education and thinks the only job available to her is as a domestic helper, which she does not want to do. The women who preferred not to work outside the home often said they had enough to do maintaining the household, and had no time for additional work. Of the eleven women who said they would like to work outside the home, only two thought their relative position in the household was affected by earning an income. One of them said her husband told she could not work and the other has ten children at home, ranging in age from 16 years to a few
months old. Her opportunities to leave the house are restricted by her children's needs.

I have focused on two areas of perceived personal power in the household in this section: perceptions of options regarding migration and control of household money. Women appear to exercise power in these areas in households to varying degrees along a continuum, from those who did not participate in the decision to migrate and who appear to have little part in other decisions, to the women who consider themselves the main decision maker in the household. Most fall somewhere between those two extremes in a middle ground of complex household relations, power sharing, and decision making. Based on the small number of case study households in this study, I can draw no firm conclusions regarding the relationships between personal power in the different areas. Some possible relationships between the areas of personal power are discussed below relative to women in the thirteen households in which I interviewed both husband and wife.

Because I suspected there might be a relationship between participation in decisions about migration and women's economic status (as an indication of women's personal power in the household), I asked the questions about control of money, employment, and people's opinion on whether their household position was affected by wage labor.
Three women claimed to manage the family's money, four said their husbands did. Their answers to the other questions of this section are varied, and no clear relationship between the two areas of personal power appears. Of the women who control money, two said they could not have stayed in the place they left, one said she could have. All three think migration is a family decision, two said it was a hard decision to make, one found it easy. Only one woman initiated discussion of moving, another said her husband did, the third said her married daughter in Hermosillo first brought up the idea. Two thought they have more influence in the household when they have waged work; the oldest, who is 57 years of age, did not understand the question.

Women who said their husbands control the household money had a similar mix of responses. All four said they could not have stayed in the place they left, but two said they could not have stayed because they wanted to move. Only one said it was a hard decision, and all said it was a decision made by the family. Two women claimed to have initiated discussion of migrating, the other two said their husbands did. Three of the four said their relative position in the household did not depend on their working for wages, the other thought it did. No pattern of relationships emerges in this small number of responses, but they suggest that not having control of household money does
not negatively affect women's ability to participate in making the decision to migrate.

The nine women who felt they had no option but to leave the place they were living still expressed the idea that migration is a family decision in which they have a role. Everyone should talk, they told me, and it was important for all family members to be in agreement. As Sra. Trujillo said, the move "should be a joint decision. We support each other and talk things out." They recognized few options other than migration, yet they were just as likely to say their husbands initiated discussions of moving as to claim they first brought up the idea themselves. Four of the nine said they had difficulty making the decision to migrate, but only one of those said she did not want to move. For some, apparently, once they had started thinking and talking about moving, other options either became less appealing or disappeared, and migration emerged as the desired possibility.

All thirteen women thought and talked about moving before they migrated to the city. Most discussed it with people outside the household, and seven women talked with family and/or friends in Hermosillo prior to moving. These women were actively involved in making the decision to migrate, irrespective of their relative power in other types of decision making. Power relationships in households are
complex and not easily unraveled; the small number of case studies in this project discourages firm conclusions about the connections between different types of power and decision making.

Many questions remain in this area that deserve further investigation; for example, what are the most important factors that determine women’s relative position in the household and their perceptions of their personal power? Do women employed for wages have a stronger influence in family decisions than women who do not work outside the home? Do women’s perceptions of their position in the family change with age and family structure? Do women’s roles vary with different types of decisions, and how does this relate to personal power? That is, can a person have power in some areas and little or none in others?

The results of this exploratory study provide evidence that the differences between members of the same households are significant enough that it is important for migration research at that scale to use more than one respondent per household. Policy makers in Mexico and other developing nations working with data gathered from unknown respondents or only one segment of migrants are making decisions based on a view that neglects some key players in the drama of the human search for a better life. As many people told me,
"everyone stands to benefit so everyone should talk" about migrating; "more than one person will be affected, so everyone should make the decision"; and, "everyone together should make the decision because we are a family." The people themselves recognize that migration is not always an individual event, that household members are affected by and affecting each other and all are important actors who need to be acknowledged.
CHAPTER 5
A CLOSER LOOK:
SELECTED CASE STUDY HOUSEHOLDS

To illustrate some of the most striking differences between men’s and women’s perceptions and experiences of migration as they are expressed within households, I will discuss four case study households in this chapter. I chose these households not as representative of all cases but to illustrate differences among family members that should be considered in the study of migration at the household level.

Three of the four households comprise nuclear families, the fourth includes the wife’s father. The husbands and wives in these households represent a range of life stages; the oldest is the family of Sr. and Sra. Ochoa, who are 62 and 57 years of age, respectively, the youngest that of Sr. and Sra. Romero (31 and 26 years). Sra. Romero’s resident father, Sr. Miranda, is 58 years old. Sr. and Sra. Montes are 39 and 38 years of age, respectively, and Sr. and Sra. Medina are 52 and 47 years.

The families have been in Hermosillo for periods of from five months to just over one year. The Ochoa family previously lived in a small town in northern Sinaloa, the Romeros moved to Hermosillo from a campo de trabajadores in la costa, the Montes family moved from the city of Leon in the state of Guanajuato, and the Medina family moved from an
agricultural village northeast of Hermosillo. Each of the families will be discussed individually as they relate to the major research topics of this report, namely: which household members participate and what is the nature of their participation in making the decision to migrate?; what are respondents’ motives for moving and their expectations of the move?; and how is personal power in the household perceived and expressed by various members in relation to decision making?

THE OCHOA FAMILY

Sr. and Sra. Ochoa have twelve children, four of whom are single and moved to Hermosillo with their parents. Seven of their children remain in the town in southern Sonora where they were born and grew up; one daughter married and moved to Hermosillo several years before the other family members. The oldest resident child is 18 years, the youngest 12. When the family first started thinking about migrating to the city Sra. Ochoa went to Hermosillo and stayed with her daughter Sra. Nieblas for two months to assess the value of moving permanently away from the small town where she had grown up. Later Sr. Ochoa visited separately and stayed with Sra. Nieblas while he looked for work and a likely place to find a house. Soon after, the couple and their four unmarried children moved into a small house of carton at the southern extreme of the
city. Although Sra. Ochoa told me she does not work outside the home—"It's enough to work around the house"—she sells candy from her front door to supplement the couple's meager income. She also has a garden that supplies fresh vegetables much of the year. Her husband works as a laborer in construction. He has no patron (regular employer) now, and was working with his son-in-law as a brick layer when I first met him. Their children are students, and the oldest also works.

In Navojoa, Sra. Ochoa worked part time as a house cleaner on a seasonal basis. Sr. Ochoa sold elote (roasted corn) from a cart, processed menudo (animal intestines used in soup), and worked as a jornalero. When I asked about his salary in Navojoa, he shrugged and said "Less, the same, more or less." He said life in Hermosillo was about the same as it had been in Navojoa. "If a person is happy he is happy anywhere," he told me. Still, he preferred life in Navojoa, where he had his home, and seemed indifferent to the opportunities available in the city. Sra. Ochoa, on the other hand, said while she has more work to do in Hermosillo, "it is cheaper here and a little easier to maintain oneself," and that "it offers a chance for a better life." I asked her how life was the same in the two places and she told me that their small house is the same, poor. Life is better in the city than it had been in the town, she
said, in Hermosillo there are "bigger salaries, more jobs, and schools." Sra. Ochoa repeated a phrase often used by recent immigrants to the city: "poco a poco nos mejoramos" (little by little we're improving ourselves). She saw no chance for improvement if they stayed in Navojoa and has high hopes for a better life in Hermosillo.

Sra. Ochoa and her daughter in Hermosillo were the force behind the family's move. According to her parents, Sra. Nieblas initiated conversations about migrating and had no trouble convincing Sra. Ochoa that the city is where the future lies. Although I did not speak with her, it is likely also that as she was the only family member to move from Navojoa, Sra. Nieblas misses her family and hoped that some or all would move to the city. The married children in Navojoa tried to convince Sra. Ochoa that moving was a bad idea. She commented that they had no reasons other than that they would miss their parents if they moved. Sr. Ochoa talked with family members and some friends about moving, but he said the whole family did not talk about the move, and he thought that no one else in his family talked with anyone outside the household about it. For Sra. Ochoa moving was an easy decision and she thought the whole family, including her married children, eventually agreed that they had to move for the younger children's sakes. Sr. Ochoa however, had difficulty making the decision. He was
disturbed by people who move around a lot and the stability of his long-time home obviously meant a lot to him.

As mentioned, both Sra. and (eventually) Sr. Ochoa moved to Hermosillo to give their children better opportunities for school and work. Sra. Ochoa stated her expectations clearly—she had hoped that her husband and their oldest son would find work, that good schools would be nearby, that she would find a house to live in and be close to her daughter. All these things she said she had found in the city, although Sr. Ochoa’s work is sporadic and uncertain. Sr. Ochoa was aloof from his new home. He told me he had not thought about what he might find in Hermosillo, and that he did not think about what his life might be like in the city. During my time in Hermosillo I visited the Ochoa home often because the family lives at the end of a bus route I used frequently. Sr. Ochoa was home only twice in all my visits, and their oldest son and daughter were never there. Sr. Ochoa made at least two trips to Navojoa in that time, to work with one of his sons and visit his family. The first time he left, Sra. Ochoa told me he said he would be back on Monday. She added, "He didn’t say which Monday though, and that was over a week ago." Sra. Ochoa also made at least one trip back to Navojoa to visit her family and friends. Part of Sr. Ochoa’s acceptance of migrating to the city may have been
the knowledge that he could travel with relative ease between Hermosillo and Navojoa and thereby maintain close ties with his family, friends, and home. Although Sra. Ochoa has apparently adjusted more quickly and thoroughly to city life, it seemed very important to her also to be able to make regular trips back to Navojoa for family visits. It is probable that the ability to maintain close family ties is a condition of moving in some households, especially, perhaps, when the migrating members are older or one party is not enthusiastic about going.

When I asked Sr. Ochoa how he feels now that he lives in the city he said "no queja" (no complaints), he was fine. Sra. Ochoa was more positive. Although she simply said she was "contenta" (content) to be in the city, the feelings she expressed about her children’s futures, as well as her smile and her attitude, showed she is pleased with the move. When I asked if she could have stayed in Navojoa she responded "no, there were no opportunities for the children." Sr. Ochoa told me he could have stayed behind, but living permanently in Navojoa while his wife and single children went to Hermosillo was not really an option. His frequent visits to his former home suggest the importance of his attachments. The difference in the way the couple answered this question reflects each spouse’s priorities. Sra. Ochoa’s most pressing concern was to open opportunities for
her children's future; she did not feel she could stay in a smaller city after she was convinced that those opportunities were to be found in Hermosillo. Sr. Ochoa expressed his sadness at leaving his home of many years in terms of himself and his expectations for the rest of his life, that is, that he would die in Navojoa. The result of discussion and contemplation of migrating was the same for both, but each had very different experiences of the move.

Sra. Ochoa handles the money in the household and was the driving force behind the family's move to Hermosillo. She initiated discussion of migration and was the first to visit the city to determine its possibilities for her family. When I asked her if she had more influence in the household when she had a job and earned money, she did not understand the question. She exercises a great deal of decision making power in her household, but her position is not based on income earning, rather, it seems, on more intangible factors such as her gentle and caring manner, and the respect shown for older parents in general in Mexican families.

THE HOUSEHOLD OF THE MEDINA FAMILY

Sr. and Sra. Medina are parents of nine children ranging in age from 25 to 9 years. They grew up and raised their family in Rancho Viejo, a village in the agricultural area near Ures, northeast of Hermosillo. They moved to the
city five months before I met them. Sr. Medina said she does not miss anything in Rancho Viejo, although later she talked with longing about her house which was bigger than the one the family occupies in Hermosillo, and about her family and friends, and she told me that she feels mala (bad) now because she does not like living in the city. Sr. Medina misses everything about his life in the campo. He had worked as an agriculturalist for six months of the year and as a jornalero in whatever type of work was available the other six. He misses planting and working the land, the animals, and having his own house. In the country, he said, he did his work when it had to be done, in the city he has to punch a time clock at his job at a highway maintenance plant and feels trapped in hectic city life.

I interviewed Lupita (age 25) and Panchita (23), the two oldest children in the family. The two oldest sons (22 and 20) were never at home when I visited the house and I was not able to interview them. Lupita works full time in downtown Hermosillo as a sales clerk in a men’s clothing store. She earns minimum wage, the same as her father. When she was eighteen Lupita came to Hermosillo to work as a domestic in the household of a wealthy family. She had been in school in Ures until her father was in an automobile accident and could not work. Because Lupita is the oldest child, she quit school and went to work to help support the
family. She worked as a domestic for six years, then returned to the village for a year until the family moved to the city. Although she said she dislikes Hermosillo, she told me she does not miss life in Rancho Viejo except for the celebrations of saints' days.

The second daughter, Panchita, is a hair stylist in a shop in the city, and works on a fifty percent commission basis, so her income varies. She had lived in Hermosillo with her aunt for a year while attending beauty school and did not like the city much then or now. Both young women said life in the city is completely different for them from their lives in the country. They mentioned the hustle and hurry of the city, the dangers they worry about, and working full time as the main differences. Panchita added that "life in the country is mas tranquila (more relaxed)," another common phrase among migrants who had moved from rural areas.

The four family members interviewed agreed that they moved to Hermosillo for the sake of the children, as Lupita said, there is "mas porvenir aqui" (more future here). Panchita also included "to have fun" as one of her motives. The three women said they had wanted to move, but Sr. Medina told me he would still be in the country if not for lack of educational and work opportunities there for his children.

All four agreed that migration is a family decision,
and each said that they had participated in discussions before coming to the city. Sr. Medina said the whole family had sessions in which they all sat and talked about why they had to move. Sra. Medina told me she talked with everyone she knows about leaving Rancho Viejo, about characteristics of life in the city and what she would do when she moved there. Lupita had conversations with other family members and neighbors, who encouraged the idea of migrating to find "better chances to study and to earn more." Panchita's friends told her it was a good idea to go, that the family "could rapidly improve life since there are lots of them to work and make money."

All but Sra. Medina felt they had to move to Hermosillo, as it is the closest big city and would offer more opportunities than would Ures. Sra. Medina preferred Ures because it is smaller and a "vida mas tranquila" is possible there. She was persuaded by Lupita that Hermosillo was the best place for the family. Only Panchita said it was a hard decision to make. Once the family started planning together, she added, it was easier to join in and she was more comfortable with the idea of migrating. Lupita talked about the difficulties involved in making the decision, such as the expense of leaving and finding a new home, but one by one the problems were solved. They all knew they would be within a short bus ride of their former
home and could visit often; this knowledge may have eased the hardship of leaving the campo for a new life in the city.

Sra. Medina and Panchita had specific expectations of their move to Hermosillo. Sra. Medina hoped that members of her family would be able to find work, that good schools would be nearby for los chamacos (the kids), and that she would find a house to buy. Although she and her family have met these expectations, she still is unhappy in the city. She fears many things, including the influence of drug users on her children and the dangers of their neighborhood. Panchita expected to find a good job and a better climate (Rancho Viejo is at a higher elevation than Hermosillo and she was tired of the cold). Sr. Medina and Lupita both expressed as their only expectation that they would find work, and both have. Lupita said she will always work to have her own money but hopes she will not be a sales clerk for the rest of her life. Sr. Medina told me he is unhappy in Hermosillo, and feels "trapped in the city where I’m gone from 6 am to 6 pm every day." Perhaps as a result he spends much of his free time socializing with friends. He was rarely home when I visited the house and Sra. Medina usually said he was out drinking.

I discussed Sra. and Sr. Medina in Chapter 4 relative to power within the household. Sr. Medina called his wife
the *jefa* (chief), and the *patrona* (boss) of the house, and said that she makes most household decisions, as he is away at work most of the time. Sra. Medina also characterized herself as the head of the household. Sr. Medina and the four working children give her up to half the money they make, which she uses to buy groceries and cover other expenses, and when she can, saves for material to complete the new room Sr. Medina is slowly building. When Sra. Medina's father died he left her four cows as her inheritance. She sold them and with the money bought their *solar* in Hermosillo. While I was in the city she completed the long and complex process of gaining title to the land, which is a lot approximately 30 feet by 80 feet. She told me she would like to work outside the home, however she also appeared to be well-occupied running her larger household and supervising her husband’s construction of the new room.

Sra. Medina is a strong person and probably would have been called the "boss" of the household with or without control of money and land. She is an excellent example of a family matriarch, and of "la mujer fuerte" described by Ahern et al. (1985)—the woman who makes decisions and runs the household whether or not a man is present. Still, she said she had to leave Rancho Viejo because the family was moving--she felt she had no choice but to leave for her children's sake. Sr. Medina, in contrast, said he could
have stayed, but would not have without his family. This couple illustrates women's tendency to assess their options in family-oriented terms and men's tendency to come to the same conclusion via the route of personal desires. At the same time, Sra. Medina sounded very much in control of her family as she told me she was the main force behind the final decision to migrate, that she chose where the family would live, and was adamant about her ownership of the solar. Obviously perception and exercise of power within the household is complex.

Both Lupita and Panchita impressed me as independent, self-confident young women. They are somewhat unusual in a Mexican household--both unmarried over the age of 20 years and living at home (Panchita has since married a young man in Hermosillo, but Lupita--the older of the two--swore she would never marry). Panchita told me she could have stayed in Rancho Viejo without the family, but only if she had married. Lupita also said she could have stayed behind, but would not have without her family.

These young women were expressing the same idea as did their mother, but in a manner more like their father's, that is, with the feeling that they had a choice and chose to move with their families. Both said their family treats them the same whether they have work or not; Lupita told me her position in the family is always the same, and Panchita
said they "all share what they have, it doesn't matter if one works or not." These two young women embody changes that appear to be occurring in Mexican women. They are working and express a greater sense of self-confidence than their mother. While they hold fast to the traditions of their culture, they seem to be more willing to explore alternatives. For example, Lupita told me that although she does not intend to marry she would like to have a child. Single mothers are not uncommon in Mexico but most are not single by choice. Lupita added that her parents strongly disapproved of her talk of having a baby on her own and that she probably will not do so. Her ability to discuss the idea, however, seems to be a reflection of changing values. The two daughters are at a different life stage from their mother, which may also affect their perceptions of personal power. Their status as unmarried, full-time workers in the family leaves them with more freedoms and options than their mother. Although they are more strongly tied to the home than are their adult brothers, they do not have as much responsibility for the well-being and maintenance of the household as does their mother.

The Medina family decided to migrate as a way of keeping the household together. The children could not advance beyond eighth grade in the country, nor could they have found any type of work except as jornaleros when they
finished secondary school. Lupita and Panchita had already left home for extended periods to work and go to school, neither of which they could do in Rancho Viejo. The four members of the family I interviewed all expressed a strong desire to maintain the household as a cohesive, viable unit, and to do so they moved to a place none of them particularly like. The parents said they are unhappy in Hermosillo, but Lupita and Panchita both said they are "a gusto, contenta" with the results of the move, although they preferred the "more tranquil life" of the country. They viewed the move as opportunity for themselves and seemed happy with the trade-off of city life with its greater potential for calm country life, while their parents saw it as an undesirable but acceptable necessity so they might present their children with opportunities to advance.

THE MONTES FAMILY

When I first visited the Montes family, seven months after the family moved to Hermosillo, Sra. Montes was over eight months pregnant with her tenth child. Her oldest is 16 years, and she repeated a saying popular among large Mexican families: "Los que Dios nos manda" (Those that God sends us). I met one daughter at her school, and she took me to the house on a weekday morning. Most of the family was home helping Sr. Montes prepare ceviche for his day's work. He calls himself "un comercio pequeño" (a small
businessman) as he rides his bicycle cart to the bus depot and sells seafood to the bus drivers each day. While I interviewed him Sr. Montes shelled shrimp, one daughter chopped cilantro, tomatoes, and chiles, and other children prepared food for the family.

In Leon, a city in the state of Guanajuato, Sr. Montes worked making boots. Sra. Montes earned an income working in her home, taking in ironing and laundry and making handcrafted items to sell. Sr. Montes said he moved because he was tired of working for a boss and wanted to have his own business, but there was too much competition in Leon. They chose Hermosillo as their new home because they had lived there for three years in the early 1970s and knew the city, and because Sr. Montes’ two brothers live there. Sra. Montes had different motives for moving, which her husband did not mention. She said that they did not have enough money to send all their children to school in Leon, so they moved to Hermosillo to earn higher wages and give the children a chance to gain an education. Before moving, the couple hoped that Sr. Montes would be able to reestablish old business contacts and start his business. Sra. Montes also hoped to find good schools for her children. They feel they have found what they expected and both told me they feel good about the move and living in Hermosillo. Sra. Montes said maybe she would want to live somewhere else if
she visited other places in Mexico, but as she is not familiar with any cities but Leon and Hermosillo, she is "muy bien" (fine) in Hermosillo.

While Sra. Montes believes migration is a family decision, that everyone should agree on the move and even the children should talk about it, Sr. Montes said it is the decision of adults, who have to bear the consequences, and while the older children participate in discussions, until they are adults they follow their parents. The small children have no choice and simply go where the food is. Both said Sra. Montes initiated discussion of migrating. She told me she started talking about moving when her husband was out of work temporarily, and once they agreed to migrate the move happened quickly. Sra. Montes noted that she had tried to convince her husband once before to leave Leon, after they had moved back from Hermosillo. Sr. Montes may have been hesitant to leave Leon before this year because he had a job and his and his wife's families live there. His two brothers in Hermosillo encouraged him to move, and his friends and family in Leon supported him in his decision to leave. Sra. Montes told me she is estranged from her family because of her marriage to a poor man whom the family considered to be beneath her status. Therefore she did not discuss migration with anyone outside the household. Sr. Montes said his mother-in-law tried to
convince Sra. Montes to stay in Leon because she did not want her daughter to be so far away.

Sr. Montes' work involves the entire family—the children go to the fish market to purchase ingredients and help prepare ceviche and other food for sale; while Sra. Montes helps her husband the older daughters tend the youngest children and prepare food for the family. Both spouses said Sr. Montes manages household finances and Sra. Montes buys food and clothes with the money he gives her. He said he is treated better by his family when he works because he is taking care of all of them, he has "more confidence from them" when he is working, and "more esteem in their eyes." Sra. Montes currently does not earn an income, but would like to "para mejorarnos" (to better ourselves). Further, when she works she feels better as she helps provide the necessities for her children and has more authority over and more respect from them.

When I asked Sr. Montes if he could have stayed in Leon he said yes and no. For the traditions, celebrations, and his family ties he would like to be there, but to advance beyond working in a shoe factory, he felt he had to leave. Sra. Montes told me she could not have stayed there because she did not want to. She saw a need to relocate to provide better opportunities for her family’s future. This is another example of men’s and women’s different approaches
to saying basically the same thing: the woman sees moving as her only choice while under the same circumstances the man considers his options and chooses to migrate in order to accomplish certain goals for himself.

Sra. Montes' view of herself as a decision maker is limited by her concept of the role she plays in the household. Her family's needs comprise her highest priorities. In contrast, Sr. Montes listed his own expectations as most important to him, and he expressed his expectations of moving in very personal terms, as his desire to better himself, to have his own business and progress. He is soft-spoken but has a strong sense of his role as provider and father. Sra. Montes is shy and does not socialize or have many friends; her life is focused on her large family. Migrating was her idea, but she is not an assertive woman and does not appear to exercise a great deal of power within her family. During my visits to the home, Sra. Montes seemed to have status equal with that of her oldest daughter. She described her experience of migration in terms of her desires for the family, not for herself. She hoped for business opportunities for her husband and good schools for her children.

Although she said she would like to earn an income, Sra. Montes presently has no way to allocate child care and home maintenance to others so she could leave for part of
the day. She would like to start making hand crafted items for sale again, but will have to wait until the new baby is a little older and she has more time. Sra. Montes poignantly expressed some of her feelings about her role as wife and mother when she told me she still is estranged from her family since her marriage to Sr. Montes. "In all those years," she said, "he has been a good provider, good natured, and has never beat me. What more could a woman ask?"

THE ROMERO FAMILY AND SR. MIRANDA

The Romeros moved to Hermosillo a little over a year before I met them. Sra. Romero's father, Sr. Miranda, moved with the family from la costa de Hermosillo, where they lived in a campo de trabajadores consisting of ten families. In Hermosillo Sr. Romero drives a taxi and earns more on commission than the minimum wage he had earned as a tractor driver in the la costa. Sr. Miranda had to stop working in irrigation because of health problems, and now in the city works irregularly as a jornalero. Sra. Romero worked as a cook in the campo, fixing meals for the workers and being paid by each worker weekly. She enjoyed working and would like to find a job in the city, but her husband told her he does not want her to work outside the home. In addition, she told me, it is difficult for an uneducated woman like her (she taught herself to read and write but has no formal
schooling) to find any job other than domestic work, which she does not want to do as she does that now in her own house.

I have previously discussed the Romero couple’s completely different reasons for moving, and the fact that neither mentioned the other’s reasons. Sr. Romero told me he had planned to stay in the campo for another year because he liked his job, but had a falling out with his boss. As a result, he decided he had to leave right then because he did not feel he could live near the boss any longer. Sra. Romero also liked life in the country and would like to have stayed. However, she said they had to move because she was very ill with her third pregnancy and had to be near a hospital for the birth. No doctors were available in the campo and the only nurse providing health care for the rural families was far from their home. Neither spouse mentioned the other’s predicament. Sra. Romero sat with us while I interviewed her husband but made no mention of her own reasons for migrating to Hermosillo while he was discussing his views. Obviously the two had very different priorities and expectations of moving, both valid and important to understanding what led this family to migrate. It appears they were aware of each other’s motives but did not weigh them as heavily as their own.

Sr. Romero said the decision to move was very sudden
and he did not have time to discuss it with anyone other than his wife. When his co-workers found out the family was leaving they tried to convince him to change his mind because "we were all friends and they wanted us to stay."

Sra. Romero said she talked with her husband about moving and with her two brothers who live in the campo. She told me the decision to migrate is one for the husband and wife to make together. Sr. Romero’s knowledge of his wife’s conversations with people outside the household suggests that the idea to migrate was being discussed at the time he had his falling out with his boss and made the quick decision to move. Both said Sr. Romero brought up the idea of moving; however, he told me he thought of leaving only because of his troubles at work, while Sra. Romero said her husband started talking about moving because she was very sick and needed to be near a hospital. It is possible that Sr. and Sra. Romero had decided that they had to move for health care reasons but had not set a date for the move until Sr. Romero’s falling out with his boss.

The distinct views of the same experience expressed by this couple could be the result of a number of factors, including faulty recall, conflicting perceptions of the situation, different priorities, and unawareness of the needs of other family members. Although they agreed to migrate and therefore the family acted as a unit, their
motives were distinct and they were responding to different forces when each decided to move. Both saw advantages for themselves and had needs to fill by moving to the city, and neither reported any conflict in the decision.

As might be expected, Sr. and Sra. Romero had dissimilar expectations about their move. Both had previously lived in Hermosillo so they knew the city and what they would find there. Sra. Romero told me she hoped they would be near a school for her children and a hospital for herself, while Sr. Romero's only expressed expectation was that he would find a job. Both said their expectations had been met.

Sr. Miranda decided to move with his daughter because his health problems made it impossible for him to continue working in agriculture. He thought about staying in la costa with his two sons, or moving to another agricultural area to stay "en mi tierra" (on my home turf) but decided to come to Hermosillo to be with Sra. Romero and her family. He had hoped to find a better job in the city and when work is available he is satisfied; he said it is hard for him to find work often, however, and he now spends much of his time socializing and drinking with friends of his son-in-law. He told me he is "muy a gusto" in Hermosillo with his daughter.

To the question of the relation of employment to influence in family decisions, Sra. Romero responded that
she and her husband "make decisions together about how to spend money and the things we need." I asked her if life was better in the city or in the campo, to which she replied that life had been better in the country because she worked and had her own money. In the city, her husband does not want her to work, and she misses having a job. Sr. Romero had a strong sense of added prestige from being employed. "If you don't work you don't eat," he commented, and added, "When you have a job people look up to you." He earns enough as a taxi driver to insist his wife not work outside the home. They recently bought a solar in the colonia north of their current residence, where they plan to build a house of material (brick or concrete block) so they can move out of their present rented house of carton.

The Romero family is a study in contradictions. Sra. Romero is home most of the time caring for the children and the house. She is an assertive, sometimes aggressive woman with a loud voice and strong opinions on a variety of subjects. She is well-informed regarding the complex procedures necessary to buy a piece of land and gain title to it, and handles the household's bills. In her husband's presence she is diminutive, much quieter, except when yelling at her children. He is a tall, physically imposing man who never speaks at a level below a shout. He did not pay attention to his children during the times I visited the
house, and spent most of his time at home asleep or playing cards with his friends and drinking. Yet he defers to his father-in-law, who also spends much of his time drinking and is not an impressive figure. Sra. Romero treats her father with respect but is not intimidated by him. When I asked these three who manages the money in the household each gave me a different answer. Sra. Romero said her husband controls the money, which he gives to her to buy food. Sr. Romero claims he gives the money to his father-in-law who distributes it. But Sr. Miranda said his daughter handles the household's money. It seems there is unequal authority between Sr. and Sra. Romero in decision making, and great divergence of opinion regarding why the family has acted as a unit in some things, such as migration and household expenditures. In this case, a joint interview with husband and wife would reveal more about how they reach decisions.

CONCLUSIONS

The four households discussed in this chapter illustrate the varying degrees of harmony and conflict that can be present in a single household. While family members agreed on some issues, in every family individuals had different feelings about, motives for, and expectations of migrating, and experienced the move differently. The disagreement appears in every topic area--factors leading to the move, who participated in the decision, people's
expectations, and perceptions of personal power in the household—to various degrees in the four families. This discussion further reinforces the idea that an inadequate assessment is the result of household level migration studies that rely on one respondent to represent all members—significant elements are omitted and important participants neglected in such studies. A project in which spouses and adult children were interviewed together would be a method for further research on migration decision making at the household level, although it would no doubt be fraught with difficulties related to the family dynamics which would be the subject of the study.
CHAPTER 6
EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

This study examines the advantages of using more than one respondent per household in household level research. Clearly the methodological approach used in a project should reflect the researcher's goals and needs. Much of previous migration research that has used the household as the unit of analysis is flawed because one respondent's views were generalized to represent all members, resulting in an incomplete picture of reality which ignores the contributions of other residents. In a study cited in Chapter 2, Bokemeier and Monroe (1983) note that responses obtained from various members of households are often conflicting, and such was the case in this study. If one respondent is used to define a household, but other members have different views, whose answers are most accurate or most important? If only men are interviewed, women's experiences are portrayed from the male perspective, and vice versa. Many studies have surveyed the "head of the household" to find information on why the family moved.

Sr. and Sra. Medina are an example of the inaccurate picture that can emerge if a male head of household is assumed to represent the household. After I talked with Sr. Medina, he and Sra. Medina discussed the question of power in the household. They agreed that she is the head of their
household because she is there all the time while he is at work, therefore Sra. Medina knows what is happening in the lives of all the family members and makes the major household decisions. Sr. Medina works full time and spends much of his free time drinking with friends. He is less aware of the household's daily routine and his children's lives and has less influence in household decisions.

Beneria and Roldan (1987; see Chapter 2) challenge assumptions about the monolithic household, particularly in the case of Mexico, making decisions as a unit and having "shared and unique interests in any sphere of family interaction" (p. 111). Each household is different, of course, but the case of the Medina family illustrates an alternative to the view of the male breadwinner ruling his household and making decisions to satisfy the needs of all members.

**STRENGTHS OF THE METHODOLOGY**

This exploratory study shows that women's priorities and their expectations and experiences of migration often are different from men's. For many of the survey questions in this study, the largest variation in responses was within households between husband and wife. Women's responses often are more like other women's than like their husbands' and men's responses more like other men's than like their wives'. These differences would not be revealed by research
that used one respondent, whether man or woman, to represent the entire household. In that case, the respondent's view of what is important is accepted as the household's view. Human beings have selective perception and memory, and most of us have different sets of priorities from the people around us, even those closest to us. Responses to a variety of questions show gender distinctions. Differences or conflicts experienced in the household may not emerge when a single respondent reports what was important to him/her and perhaps forgets about issues raised while the decision was being discussed. This was illustrated many times by couples who participated in this study. Chapters 4 and 5 provide details of husbands and wives who cited completely different motives, expectations, and perceptions of their roles in their households. Using multiple respondents helps reveal the differences in perception and experience between men and women and between adults and children. It is unfortunate in this project that I was not able to interview more children and further compare differences between them and their parents.

Another strength of the research design is that who was interviewed is clearly stated. The reader is not left to wonder if women, men, children, some or all participated in the survey. This seems to be a basic feature of research reports, but is most often neglected. In the following
I discuss problems of access to subjects of the research. Women were generally much more available than were men, and I often had to make several visits to a family's house to interview men. The difficult access to male subjects I experienced raises the question—how much more of existing migration research is based on information from women than is acknowledged, even while researchers tend to refer to all migrants as "he"? Most reports do not specify who responded to surveys so we cannot easily answer that question.

LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS WITH THE METHODOLOGY

It is extremely time-consuming to interview all adult members of any household. After contacting the first person to be interviewed I arranged a time to return and talk to the spouse and children. In most cases I obtained interviews only after repeated visits. On the sixth trip to the Ochoa family's house to meet Sr. Ochoa I decided I would not attempt again to find him. That time, he was home. This was a common experience during my field work. None of the families have telephones and I could not call to verify appointments, therefore I spent fruitless hours visiting houses where no one was home. All but two of the participant families live within reasonable walking distance of each other, so transportation time was minimized once I was in that part of the city. Time considerations might
make application of the methodology feasible only in research projects in which either the budget is sufficient to employ multiple interviewers or an extended period is available for field work.

Present economic conditions in Hermosillo are such that regular employment for low income people is scarce and often uncertain. Of the fourteen men interviewed six have steady employment; one is unemployed and hoping for a job with the government; three are self-employed—-one as a seafood peddler, one as a taxi driver, and the third, with his wife, runs a small store in his house. The remaining four work as jornaleros, or casual day laborers. Only five of the women have income-generating work: two adult daughters have full-time jobs in the city; one woman helps her husband with the store they run in their home; one sells candy from her front door; and the other, at the time of the interview, did haircuts, simple tailoring, and gave injections at her house. Often people find it difficult to predict when they will be home. The men who work as jornaleros usually leave early in the morning to find work for the day, although they may sometimes work at one job for longer periods. The self-employed men seemed to have sporadic schedules and were home irregularly. The uncertain and changing economic situation makes access to these people for research more difficult than in areas where economic
patterns include more opportunities for full-time work.

Gender roles and obligations also affect people's accessibility. Women have different duties than men, and as most I interviewed do not work in paid employment, they were home much more often taking care of children and maintaining the house. The houses of many of the participant families were constructed of carton nailed to a wooden frame and did not have locks on the doors—indeed, some did not have doors. Often one of the wife's duties is to remain home to prevent burglary, and one woman expressed her frustration at not being able to leave her house for this reason. Men spend more time away from the house, working and socializing, while women's household obligations more often keep them at home. The women who participated in the study usually socialized at home, sitting in chairs in the dirt yards in front of their houses while their children played nearby. They were much more accessible than men.

Three families have adult sons I wanted to interview. I never saw any of the young men, although I visited their houses many times and at various times of the day. They did not spend their free time at home doing household chores or interacting with their families. The adult daughters also had jobs and social connections which took them away from the house, still, they spent more of their free time at home. The daughters help their mothers with child care,
housekeeping and food preparation, and were more likely to be at home when I visited.

The problem of access to some subjects, whether due to gender roles or economic circumstances, must be dealt with by researchers, as it is unlikely to change soon in Mexican society. In a small study such as this, I was able to make repeated visits to find people at home (adding to the first problem of time consumption). In this situation the researcher must be flexible and available when subjects are—in this case early mornings, late evenings, and weekends. In a larger study, a limit to the number of visits to obtain an interview could be established to eliminate those subjects most difficult to reach. Still, this problem leaves systematic biases in the survey data for this project, as the people represented are those who were home.

Another methodological problem, particularly in the kind of community in which I worked, is the lack of privacy for interviews. In hopes of obtaining uninhibited responses, I asked to talk with each person in private. Often this was not possible. All the subjects live in one or two room houses where family members and friends come and go with freedom and regularity. On a few occasions a woman sat in the room while I interviewed her husband. In one case I had to ask the wife several times not answer for her husband as she sat listening, after I had asked to interview
him in private. This woman may have felt threatened by my desire to speak with her husband alone—I noticed she did not hover nearby while I spoke with her adult daughters.

Most of the time, however, the audiences during interviews were curious onlookers who wondered who I was and why I was asking questions. The presence of a foreigner in their home was an unusual occasion and I realized that I could not expect to have privacy under the circumstances. I continued to ask to interview each person privately, and in some cases we had at least nominal cooperation with other people in the house. Of the total 37 interviews, 14 were conducted in private (that is, no one sat nearby listening), 7 in relative privacy (people were around but no one listened to the entire interview), and 16 without any privacy (a spouse or parent was present throughout).

The difficulties I encountered do not outweigh the advantages of using multiple respondents because of the diversity of viewpoints expressed within households. The information I obtained allows comparison of people’s views of the experience of moving to a new place, their motives for migration and expectations of the move, their sense of power in the household, and the nature of various household members’ participation in the decision to migrate.
EVALUATION OF THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Some problems with the survey instrument were revealed as the project progressed. Most questions evolved with use; some appeared suitable for all household members while others needed to be specific to men, women or children; some expanded to permit additional information to be gathered; some were difficult for the respondents to understand and were revised. New questions and issues came to light as people shared their lives with me. Because my study was exploratory with the goal of developing a methodology suitable for obtaining the type of data necessary to analyze migration decisions at the household level, it was subject to revisions throughout the research and reporting process.

As I analyzed responses, the question "Could you have stayed in the place of origin if you had wanted to?" emerged as an important indicator of a person's sense of personal power. Men and women responded in distinctly different ways to this question, as discussed in Chapter 4, revealing various perceptions of their options. Initially I did not ask follow up questions such as, "(If yes) Why then did you leave?" and "(If no) Why not?" Such probes shed light on people's perception of their part in the decision to migrate and their options as part of the household and, in fact, the question evolved to include them as the project progressed. This question, and the subject of personal power in decision
making regarding migration, merit further elaboration and study.

A probe that became part of the interview was "Did you feel you were part of the decision to move?" This was generally part of the discussion when I asked respondents if the whole family should participate in decision making about the move. I asked it of women more than men, possibly because women were often less assertive about their role in the decision than were men. I asked all respondents whom they thought should be involved in the decision, but did not ask directly if they felt they had participated. From other responses the answer to this question can be inferred, but it would be more revealing to include the direct question in the survey.

Further questions about household money management are necessary to explore a possible relationship between people's control of money and their participation in decision making. Many of the studies cited in Chapter 2 led me to expect to find an obvious connection between income management and other types of power in the household, but the relationship is more complex than could be revealed by this study. Some interesting questions remain to be explored. Does the power to decide how household income is allocated give individuals more influence in other household decisions? Does control over income earned by other
household members give a man or woman greater actual power, or increase an individual’s perception of personal power? What questions will illuminate the place of control of money relative to other kinds of control or influence? In very poor households is control of money a negligible source of power relative to other areas of family life? What other sources of power relate to decision making? A problem with the question as originally worded in this survey is the difference between people’s understanding of "managing" money as distinct from making decisions about money. The question evolved into "Who makes decisions about what to buy for the household?" which was its initial intent. Combining existing research on household income and control over it with household level migration studies might provide further questions to investigate this area in greater depth.

Other questions could be added to reveal more about people’s perceptions of their roles in household decision making. As the project progressed, new questions sometimes became part of the probes I used when talking with respondents. In other cases, analyzing the data has made me aware of potential new questions. For example, only two women and one man indicated they had no part in making the decision to migrate. It would be valuable to talk further with people who felt left out of the decision to find out more about their views of the move. Questions could deal
with whether they saw personal advantages in the move and therefore made no attempt to argue for other options, or if they generally feel powerless within the household and have little part in decision making. My conversations with women who felt excluded and their answers to other questions give some insight into their views of their roles in their families, but this remains an area for further study.

In household level studies it is valuable to ask spouses the same questions so their answers are directly comparable. In this manner the differences between women's and men's perceptions of their worlds may be more clearly revealed. After interviewing two adult children, however, I concluded that a separate questionnaire for parents and children would be appropriate. I revised the original survey to include the questions that seemed most relevant to children, who may not be making the decision to move but are involved to some degree. I was able to interview only one young woman using the revised survey, unfortunately, but while additional questions emerged, the new questionnaire is more applicable to children than the original.

Some of the questions provided inadequate data to actually perform an analysis of the issues covered, but provide glimpses of important areas for future research. These include: the relationship of control of money to other areas of power in the household, as discussed above;
the relationship between people's attitudes about places of origin and prior knowledge of Hermosillo and the nature of their participation in the decision making process; the presence and lack of gender difference in motives and expectations, as discussed in Chapter 4; further exploration into people's consideration of their options for making changes, including but not limited to migration; and more detailed analysis of the relation between macro, medial, and micro scales. The questions I asked are useful in indicating these possible directions for further research.

CONCLUSION

The views expressed by the people participating in this study are diverse. Some of the most striking differences occur within households between husbands and wives, indicating that, in household level surveys, it is vital to use more than one respondent to fully understand how and why people arrive at the decision to migrate within households. The question that initiated this study was "Who participates in migration decision making in Mexican households?" When a household moves to a new place of residence it may be viewed as acting as a unit with a single purpose, according to who represents the household. Because the household moved as a unit, differing experiences of migration, other options that might be considered--including staying in the place of origin, people's perceptions of
their role in the decision and the move, and the motives and expectations of members other than the representative--may disappear or be considered unimportant.

Marshall (1987) writes that "there is little doubt that the dominant paradigm directing population studies has been limited by the omission of women's perspectives" (p. 41). Gender roles in Mexican households appear to shape expectations and priorities of individual members. The results of this study indicate that the "head of household" is not a lone decision maker but rather a participant in a decision making process that involves other adults in the household, including women (who may be considered the "head of the household"), and often resident children and non-resident family and friends, all of whom have different perspectives on the situation confronting them. Household members may disagree on motives for moving without conflict arising, as long as individuals perceive advantages for themselves or their children, or ways to mitigate the disadvantages of leaving the place of origin.

Many questions were raised by this project and many remain to be explored further, but the results discussed in this report coincide with the Cromwell and Ruiz (1979) study cited in Chapter 2 which indicates that joint decisions between husband and wife are most common in Mexican households. Women and adult children participate in the
decision to migrate to varying degrees, and one respondent cannot adequately represent all other members nor reveal the diversity of experience of the entire household. Researchers must consider more than one person’s view to obtain a truly representative view of why people migrate and what kinds of programs might slow or stem the migration flow.

Rural development programs to provide jobs for male workers might be partly successful but may not affect women-headed households, families who seek health care, or those who desire better facilities and opportunities for their children’s education and future employment. Migration research that focuses only on macro level analysis of human population movement neglects important factors that influence where people choose to live, factors that may be vital to people previously ignored by research. Some of the existing literature on migration points to a need to consider women’s experiences and to use more than one respondent per household in studies.

This study is an exploratory venture into a way of approaching migration research that will reveal a more accurate and comprehensive picture of the beginning of the migration process within Mexican households. While the idea of this type of study is not new, its application is rare. Some authors (see Chapter 2) have noted the need for
new methods in migration research, combining analysis at the micro and macro levels, and using interdisciplinary approaches and skills. This project has examined the differences between men's and women's priorities and experiences and echoes the call for new empirical studies based on the recommendations above to more accurately determine the important factors that influence the decision to migrate.
APPENDIX A
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE
(IN SPANISH AND ENGLISH)

INFORMACION PERSONAL

1. a. Se mudo a Hermosillo con la familia entera?
   b. Se mudo aquí solo/a?
   c. Se mudo antes o después de la familia?
   d. Porque se mudo antes o después de la familia?

2. a. Tiene Ud. trabajo fuera de la casa? En la casa?
   b. Le gustaría trabajar fuera de la casa?
   c. Que tipo de trabajo tiene?
   d. Donde trabaja?
   e. Pueda decirme que sueldo gana?
   f. Gana otro tipo de sueldo que dinero?
   En que manera se da su sueldo?

3. a. Hay una persona en la familia que dirige todo
deldinero de la familia, o guarda cada persona su
   propio dinero?
   b. Quien dirige el dinero?
   c. Quien paga las cuentas? Quien compra la comida,
   la ropa?

CONTEXTO DE LA DECISION--SITIO DE ORIGEN

1. Donde vivia antes de cambiarse a Hermosillo?
2. Como es (pueblo)? Cuantos personas viven alla?
3. Cuanto tiempo hace que vivia alla?
4. Donde vivia antes de (pueblo)?
5. Tiene muchos amigos y parientes alla (en pueblo)?
6. a. Tenia trabajo en (pueblo)?
   b. Que tipo de trabajo hacia?
   c. Pueda decirme que sueldo ganaba?
   d. Ganaba otro tipo de sueldo en vez de dinero?
   e. Que tipo?
7. Que tipos de actividades hacia Ud. en (pueblo) en
   su tiempo libre?
8. a. Hay cosas en (pueblo) que tiene ganas de ver otra vez?
   b. Que cosas?

9. a. En que manera era la vida en (pueblo) diferente que aquí en Hermosillo?
   b. En que manera era lo mismo?

10. a. Era la vida alla mejor que aquí?
    b. En que manera?

11. a. Ya conocia algo de Hermosillo antes de cambiarse aqui?
    b. Que conocia?
    c. Donde lo aprendio?

12. a. Habia visitado Hermosillo antes de decidir que se cambiaria aqui?
    b. Le gustaba a Hermosillo cuando la visito?
    c. Conoce a alguien que se cambio a Hermosillo antes de Ud.?
    d. Hablo con ellos sobre Hermosillo antes de que Ud. se cambio?
    e. Que le dijeron sobre la ciudad?
    f. Les gusta a Hermosillo?

LA DECISION DE CAMBIARSE

1. a. Ud queria cambiarse de (pueblo)?
    b. Por que, o como no?

2. Con quien platicaba sobre la mudanza antes de cambiarse?

3. Se sentia que podra platicar con la familia sobre la mudanza?

4. a. Sus amigos o parientes le dieron ideas o sugerencias sobre la mudanza?
    b. Que ideas tenian?
    c. Compartio esas sugerencias con miembros de su familia?

5. a. Otros miembros de la familia platicaban con amigos o parientes?
    b. Compartieron sus ideas con la familia?
6. a. Alguien en la familia intentaba de hacerse cambiar de parecer sobre la mudanza?
   b. Quien?
   c. Que razones tenía?

7. a. Ud. intentaba de persuadir alguien que cambiara de parecer sobre la mudanza?
   b. Tenia exito?
   c. Que razones usaba Ud. para persuadir?

8. a. Platicaba la familia entera sobre la idea de cambiarse?
   b. Piensa Ud. que la familia debe descutir esta decision?
   c. Porque o porque no?

9. a. Quien hablo primero de cambiarse?
   b. De donde vino la idea de cambiarse?
   c. Quería cambiarse a Hermosillo o simplemente queria irse de (pueblo)?
   d. Que razones tenia para preferir Hermosillo en particular?

10. a. Era dificil para Ud. hacer la decision de cambiarse?
    b. Por que? En que manera?
    c. Pudiera haber quedado en (pueblo) se habia deseado?

11. a. Ud. queria cambiarse a Hermosillo o a otro lugar?
    b. Ud. sugiero otros sitios a su familia?
    c. A alguien en la familia le gusto la idea de cambiarse a otros sitios?
    d. Que preferia Ud. sobre los otros sitios mas que Hermosillo?

12. a. Otros miembros de la familia sugerieron otros sitios?
    b. Quien?
    c. Intentaban persuadir la familia que debieran cambiarse a otro sitio?
    d. Que razones tenian?

13. a. Antes de cambiarse, que cosas esperaba encontrar en Hermosillo?
    b. Tiene Hermosillo esas cosas?

14. Como se siente ahora que esta en Hermosillo? Que piensa de la vida aqui?
15. Cree que Ud. tiene mas influencia en las decisiones de la familia si Ud. tiene empleo y gana dinero?
Lo toman a Ud. mas en cuenta en las decisiones de la familia cuando tiene empleo?

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. a. Did you move to Hermosillo with your whole family?
b. Did you move here alone?
c. Did you move before or after the family?
d. Why did you move at a different time from the rest of the family?

2. a. Do you work outside the home? Do you work in your home?
b. Would you like to work?
c. What type of work do you do?
d. Where do you work?
e. Can you tell me how much money you earn?
f. Do you receive some other form of salary than money?

3. a. Does one person in the family manage the household’s money?
b. Who?
c. Who pays the bills, buys the clothes and food?

CONTEXT OF THE DECISION—THE SITE OF ORIGIN

1. Where did you live before you moved to Hermosillo?

2. What is that place like? How many people live there?

3. How long did you live there?

4. Where did you live before that?

5. Do you have friends and relatives in the place you left to come to Hermosillo?

6. a. Did you work in (town)?
b. What type of work did you do?
c. Can you tell me how much money you earned?
d. Were you paid in a form other than money?
e. What other form?
7. What kinds of things did you do in your free time in (town)?

8. Are there things in (town) that you miss and would like to see again?

9. a. How was life different there from in Hermosillo?  
   b. How was life the same there?

10. a. Was life in (town) better or worse than in Hermosillo?  
    b. In what ways?

11. a. Did you already know something about Hermosillo before you moved here?  
    b. What did you know about the city?  
    c. Where did you learn about it?

12. a. Had you visited Hermosillo before you decided to move here?  
    b. Did you like it when you visited?  
    c. Do you know anyone who moved here before you did?  
    d. Did you talk with them about Hermosillo before you moved?  
    e. What did they tell you about the city?  
    f. Do they like Hermosillo?

MAKING THE DECISION TO MOVE

1. a. Did you want to move from (town)?  
    b. Why, or why not?

2. Who did you talk to about moving before you moved?

3. Did you feel you could talk to your family about the move?

4. a. Did your friends or relatives give you suggestions or ideas about moving?  
    b. What kinds of things did they tell you?  
    c. Did you share those things with your own family?

5. a. Did other members of your family talk with friends or relatives about the move?  
    b. Did they share those conversations with the rest of the family?
6. a. Did anyone in the family try to change your mind about moving?
b. Who? 
c. What reasons did they have (for wanting or not wanting to move)?

7. a. Did you try to convince anyone in your family to change their mind about moving? 
b. Were you successful? 
c. What reasons did you use to change their minds?

8. a. Did the whole family talk about moving? 
b. Do you think the whole family should discuss moving? 
c. Why or why not?

9. a. Who first spoke about moving from (town)? 
b. Where did you/they get the idea to move? 
c. Did you/they want to move to Hermosillo or simply to leave (town)? 
d. What reason did you/they have for preferring Hermosillo in particular?

10. a. Was it hard to make the decision to move? 
b. Why or why not? 
c. Could you have stayed in (town) if you had wanted to?

11. a. Did you want to move to Hermosillo or some other place? 
b. Did you suggest any other places to your family? 
c. Did anyone in the family like the idea of moving somewhere besides Hermosillo? 
d. What did you like about those other places more than Hermosillo?

12. a. Did family members suggest other destinations? 
b. Who? 
c. Did they try to persuade the family to move somewhere other than Hermosillo?

13. a. Before you moved, what kinds of things did you expect to find in Hermosillo? 
b. Have you found those things here?

14. How do you feel about Hermosillo now that you live here?

15. Do you think you have more influence in family decisions when you are working and earning money?
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