# High Fertility among Mexican Immigrants to the United States: Myth or Reality?

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## Introduction

Over 12 million Mexican-born individuals lived in the United States as of 2008 (Pew Hispanic Center 2009). The stream of Mexican migration to the U.S. has been dominated by males, but women are becoming an increasingly important source of migrant and make up 43 percent of the migration flow (Donato 1993; Pew Hispanic Center 2009). An important demographic implication of increasing female migration to the U.S. is in the fertility behavior of these women. Previously when Mexican men dominated the migration stream, fertility decisions were made in response to male migration and had consequences on fertility in Mexico. Yet, fertility and migration become increasingly intertwined and complicated as more Mexican women migrate internationally during their primary reproductive years. Martin and colleagues (2006) estimate that in 2004, 17 percent of all births in the U.S. were attributable to Mexican women, with a large portion from Mexican immigrant women.

Consequently, the fertility of Mexican immigrants has garnered substantial research interest for the past several decades and has recently benefited from a resurgence because of its far reaching social implications (Frank and Heuveline 2005; Parrado 2011). Mexican, and more broadly, Hispanic immigrant fertility has significance for population growth, public opinion on American identity and the reception of immigrants, and understanding the motivation for female migration. Additionally, Hispanic immigrant fertility has important demographic implications for the future of population growth in the United States. Hispanics are the fastest growing ethnic group and the largest minority group in the country accounting for fourteen percent of the U.S.

population in 2005. It is estimated that they will account for sixty percent of the growth in the U.S. population between 2005 and 2050 (Passel and Cohn 2008). Growth in the Hispanic population is largely from births to immigrants and their children in the United States (Passel and Cohn 2008).

**Mexican Immigrant Fertility**

In 2009, the total fertility rate in the U.S. was 2.05 and in Mexico was 2.34 (CIA 2009). The disparity in TFR between Mexico and the United States has declined dramatically during the last four decades due to the success of a government family planning initiative in Mexico. While remarkably similar, the average number of children born to a Mexican woman, given the prevailing age specific fertility rates, is approximately one-third of a child greater than the average number of children born to American women.

Hidden beneath the narrow country-level difference is the fact Mexican immigrants have higher fertility than non-Hispanic whites, U.S. born Mexicans, or non-migrant Mexican women in Mexico. For example, Mexican immigrants in the U.S. have a TFR between 2.9 and 3.3, which is approximately 58 percent higher than non-Hispanic U.S. white women (Frank and Heuveline 2005; Jonsson and Rendall 2004: Martin et al. 2006). In sum, Mexican immigrants have a TFR which is higher than the TFR for Mexican resident women (2.34) and the TFR for all women in the United States (2.05)[1].

However, estimating fertility for Mexican immigrants is complicated by the use of alternate measures. The total fertility rate (TFR), typically used as a period measure for a synthetic cohort of women, is interpreted as the average number of children a woman would have in her lifetime is she experienced the current age specific fertility rates. As such, no woman would experience all of the prevailing age specific fertility rates. Demographers have shown the

[1] When using a period fertility measure such as the Total Fertility Rate (TFR).

sensitivity of TFR to changes in the tempo (timing) and quantum (level) of childbearing (Morgan and Taylor 2006; Parrado and Morgan 2008; Parrado 2011). For example, accelerated or delayed births may temporarily inflate or depress TFR, without affecting completed cohort fertility.

In the case of Mexican immigrant women, fertility timing is often associated with the timing of migration which might accelerate or delay births. The changes in timing of a birth may lead to distorted conclusions about the fertility behavior of immigrant women if using period TFR. Parrado (2011) concludes after examining the completed fertility of Mexican immigrant women, using a cohort measure instead of a period measure, that the changes in the timing of births associated with the migration process overstate period TFR without changing the total number of children born to a woman. Regardless of the measure used, completed fertility for Mexican immigrants never reaches the level estimated by the TFR, but does exceed the fertility of U.S. born Mexicans, non-Hispanic whites, and replacement level fertility (Parrado 2011).

The aim of this study is to explore if Mexican immigrant women exhibit strikingly different fertility behaviors than other women in the United States and in Mexico focusing on the selection perspective. Arguably, other processes such as disruption and the timing of fertility may also help to explain immigrant fertility, but are not the focus of this paper. This paper will first describe the cultural explanations and commonly used perspectives of high Mexican immigrant fertility behaviors focusing on selection, then turn to the goals of the current study, data and methods, followed by results and future directions.

## Fertility Perspectives

### Cultural Explanations for Immigrant Fertility

The pronatalist and profamilism cultural orientations of Mexicans are commonly emphasized by scholars to explain the high total fertility rates among immigrants. Although

outdated, the conventional wisdom is that Mexico is a high fertility country and Mexican immigrants have more children because of stronger attachment to pronatalist, marriage, and origin country norms established in Mexico and carried to the U.S. (Frank and Heuveline 2005). Empirical evidence does provide supporting suggesting that the normative context of the sending country influences the fertility behavior of immigrants (Kahn 1988). However, recent research demonstrates that high fertility among Mexican immigrants is not a reflection of fertility norms in Mexico or pronatalist attachments. Rather, Mexican immigrants have higher fertility as a result of moving into the U.S. social context that provides limited economic opportunities for low skilled immigrants, resulting in low opportunity costs of childbearing and larger families (Frank and Heuveline 2005). Other research on early marriage among Hispanic immigrants also challenges the cultural argument that Hispanics are more family oriented and highlights the constraints socioeconomically disadvantaged U.S. immigrants face (Raley, Durden, and Wildsmith 2004).

Scholars reluctantly admit that Mexico is no longer a high fertility country. As recent as 1978, the TFR was around 5 children, but fell to just above replacement level by the turn of the 21st century (Tuiran et al. 2002). This achievement was made possible by the Mexican government initiating programs granting all Mexicans access to family planning services that allowed women to make their own fertility decisions (Tuiran et al. 2002). As a consequence of the Mexican fertility decline, when Mexican women immigrate to the U.S. they are actually moving from a low fertility context to a high fertility context among other Mexican-born women (Frank and Heuveline 2005; Parrado and Morgan 2008).

**Migration Perspectives**

In addition to the cultural arguments, the research on immigrant fertility employs a common set of perspectives "to explain the trajectory that immigrant groups' fertility takes" (Carter 2000). In the case of Mexican immigrants, the perspectives are focused on studying how fertility responds to the process of immigration and with duration in the United States. The perspectives put forth in the literature include: adaptation, assimilation, disruption and separation, and selectivity. While the perspectives do address the issue, they are not particularly focused on why Mexican immigrant fertility remains high. However, the following discussion will illustrate how each perspective attempts to account for the high fertility of Mexican immigrants.

Adaptation and assimilation discuss how Mexican immigrant women transition from higher fertility to lower fertility with duration in the U.S. and over generations. Adaptation is concerned with temporary changes in fertility behavior because of constraints faced by immigrants and in response to their new social and economic situation in the host country (Kulu 2005). A study of Mexican immigrant women's fertility found that lower fertility was a *short-term* adaptation strategy used to offset the cost of migration (Lindstrom and Giorgulis Saucedo 2002). Once adapted to life in the U.S., Mexican immigrants may resume their high fertility regimes.

Assimilation, conceptually related to adaptation, refers to *long-term* changes in fertility behavior among immigrants. The assimilation of fertility behaviors towards lower fertility norms can occur within or across generations through increasing acculturation (Singley and Landale 1998; Ford 1990; Parrado and Morgan 2008). Assimilation, either over generations or within the first generation, is negatively associated with fertility rates of immigrants if the fertility rate in the sending country is higher than that of the receiving country. For Mexican migrant women,

assimilation may also foster non-traditional gender roles and personal control over their lives—lowering fertility rates. In other words, Mexican immigrants experience higher fertility upon arrival in the United States because of a lack of assimilation and familiarity with U.S. fertility norms and behaviors.

The disruption perspective proposes that migration often separates family members from each other, particularly spouses, and disrupts fertility decisions and actions. In explaining high Mexican immigrant fertility, disruption hypothesis suggests that the immigrant women may actually be inclined and desire higher fertility behaviors, but the process of migration interrupts these behaviors temporarily after which high fertility is resumed. Prior research finds support for migration disruption and separation lowering fertility of immigrants. For example, disruption reduced the probability of birth for migrant Mexican couples temporarily (Lindstrom and Giorgulis-Saucedo 2007; Sevak and Schmidt 2008), but overall disruption did not result in substantially lower cumulative fertility for Hispanics (Ford 1990; Lindstrom and Giorguli Saucedo 2002). Importantly as an explanation for higher immigrant fertility, temporarily reduced fertility due to disruption is often recovered with 'catch-up' fertility. In other words, Mexican immigrant women resume their high fertility behaviors in an attempt to offset the time spent separated from a spouse or partner.

*Selection*

The selection perspective provides one under-analyzed approach for directly addressing why Mexican immigrant women have fertility that differs from their non-migrant counterparts. The broad research on gender and international immigration continually emphasizes the importance selectivity plays in which women migrate (Kanaiaupuni 2000). Research demonstrates that migrant women are selected on educational attainment, occupational status,

mobility aspirations, labor force participation, migrant network availability, marital status, and number of children (Goldstein and Goldstein 1983; Stephen 1989; Kanaiaupuni 2000; Feliciano 2008; Curran and Rivero-Fuentes 2003). Migrant selection has implications for fertility behaviors because many of the characteristics that select women into migration (i.e. marital status) are also related to fertility behaviors indicating that Mexican women selected into migration will differ from non-migrants on fertility outcomes. Bustamente et al. (1998) shows that Mexican women who immigrate are selected on dimensions that affect childbearing (i.e. SES characteristics) and also on reproductive behaviors.

Migrant selection is important for fertility outcomes; yet, there is ambiguity whether Mexican migrant women are positively or negatively selected on fertility (Carter 2000). For example, Mexican migrant women are positively selected on marital status and married Mexican women have higher fertility rates than single Mexican women providing an explanation for the increased fertility rate among immigrants (Raley, Durden, and Wildsmith 2004). Other research (Carter 2000) proposes that immigrants may be selected on higher fertility as a result of immigration laws that favor family reunification. Additionally, Mexican women who selected into migration may be women migrating to reunite with their labor migrant husbands. These women may face limited economic opportunities and low opportunity costs to childbearing. Other Mexican women, also positively selected on high fertility, may place a premium on having a child or children in the U.S. to serve as a legal anchor for the family.

In contrast, some scholars such as Stephen (1989) argue that because Mexican women are selected into migration based on socioeconomic status characteristics (i.e. educational attainment, labor force participation, or occupation), they are also selected for lower fertility behaviors compared with their non-migrant Mexican counterparts. Similarly, women who are

selected into migration based on lower fertility display fertility characteristics similar to those in the destination country, namely lower fertility than those in the origin country (Kahn 1988). These hypotheses suggest that Mexican women may be selected into migration on lower fertility preferences because of economic motivations for migration.

**Current Study**

The process of selection is often ignored or inaccurately assessed when studying the fertility behaviors of Mexican immigrant women because of a lack of data on the sending country (Carter 2000). Landale contends, "Information on the sending population is required to assess whether an immigrant group's behavior is typical of the origin country, or is affected by migration selectivity or the process of migration itself" (1994; 134). Consequently, analyzing the process of selection into migration that occurs at the origin could have serious implications for understanding Mexican immigrant fertility in the United States and whether the fertility of immigrants differs from return migrants in Mexico.

Prior work on immigrant selectivity and fertility that employs origin data uses a number of strategies to control for selection processes. For instance, several studies control for individual level socio-demographic characteristics that are known to influence both migration and fertility like age, education, migrant social networks, marital status, and aspirations for migration or a particular family size (Rundquist and Brown 1989; Singley and Landale 1998). The limitation of this approach is the potential for bias from unobserved characteristics that influence both migration and fertility behaviors possibly biasing the results. Two other methods used to control for selection utilize either community level immigration prevalence rates as a proxy for likelihood of migration or the average number of children ever born for a municipality as an

indicator of fertility preferences instead of individual level preferences, behaviors and characteristics (Lindstrom and Giorguli Saucedo 2007).

While these approaches represent advances in the conceptualization and measurement of migrant selection and fertility outcomes, the aim of this research is contribute further by refining group comparisons. In an innovative study, Singley and Landale (1998) combined origin and destination data to estimate the contribution of selection to process of migration and fertility for Puerto Rican women. The authors convincingly argue that to understand how migration impacts fertility outcomes, information about non-migrants or pre-migrants is necessary to compliment the information gained from migrant women. It is from these women, the non-migrants, that much information can be gained about how selection and migration influence fertility outcomes. Following Singley and Landale's lead, this paper argues that prior studies have only taken the first step to examine the selectivity of immigrants by accounting for individual level characteristics that influence both immigration and fertility. To take the next step, this paper compares the fertility outcomes of non-migrant women in Mexico to migrant women in Mexico (return migrants), Mexican immigrant women in the U.S., and U.S. born Mexican women.

**Approach & Hypotheses**

The broad aim of this paper is to evaluate if the process of immigrant selection explains the seemingly high levels of Mexican immigrant fertility. More specifically, Mexican immigrant women may stand out for their high fertility rates because prior research is inaccurately accounting for the process of selection into international migration to the United States by comparing immigrant women to *all* women in Mexico regardless of their likelihood of migration. Ideally, to study selection on fertility outcomes, Mexican reproductive age women would be followed in Mexico and in the U.S. post-migration and collect fertility histories. In the absence

of this longitudinal cross-national data, this project uses a novel binational data set that combines Mexican and U.S. data to analyze the role of selection on fertility behaviors.

While primarily descriptive at this point, this paper aims to compare the current and completed fertility for Mexican origin women in the U.S. and in Mexico based on key selectivity characteristics. The goal is to establish whether Mexican immigrant women in the United States will have fertility levels that differ from U.S. born Mexican American women or non-immigrant Mexican women in Mexico.

## Method

### *Data & Sample*

This study analyzes nationally representative survey data on Mexican women of childbearing age from U.S. and Mexico. The Mexican data come from the 2002 and 2005 waves of Mexican Family Life Survey (MxFLS). The Mexican Family Life Survey collected information from 8,440 households and 35,667 individuals in 150 communities, including a rural oversample. The 2002 and 2005 data collection captures non-migrants and return migrants in Mexico. The survey collected social, economic, demographic, and health behavior information for individuals, families, and communities. A comprehensive reproductive history was collected from all women ages 14 to 49. A migration history from age 12 on was collected from all adult women in the sample.

The data on Mexicans in the United States comes from Cycles 6 and the current continuous collection of the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG).The NSFG is used to create a sample of Mexican migrants because of the lack of data on current migrants in the MxFLS. The NSFG is a cross-sectional survey of women aged 15 to 44 conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). As the primary fertility survey in the United

States, the NSFG collects information on birth rates, contraception, sexual activity and marriage (CDC 2009 website). Where available, the recoded variables, rather than the raw variables, are used in the analysis as recommended by the National Center for Health Statistics (Lepkowski et al. 2010).

Cycle 6, conducted in 2002, is nationally representative of the reproductive age household population in the United States with a sample size of 7,643 females. In 2006, the NSFG shifted to a continuous survey design. Interviews on a national sample of women 15 to 44 years of age were conducted continuously for four years (2006-2010); however, only the first half of the continuous data has been released. The NSFG includes information on the respondent's place of birth, year of arrival in the United States, race/ethnicity specifically Mexican origin, complete fertility histories, and other socio-demographic controls.

The two surveys are pooled together into a single file of Mexican-origin women aged 15 to 44 residing in Mexico or the U.S. in the early to mid 2000s. The MxFLS and NSFG are comparable and allow for data harmonization. Both surveys offer fertility histories and comparable social and demographic data as well as information about prior migration. This unique binational design allows for the comparison of fertility outcomes across differing propensities to migrate to the United States.

In the analytical sample, there are 892 Mexican born immigrant women in the U.S. representing 731 total live births and 1008 U.S. born women of Mexican origin representing 547 live births. In the Mexican sample, there are 2458 Mexican women who have ever migrated representing 1985 live births and 8482 Mexican women without migration experience representing 4045 live births.

***Measures***

*Fertility*

The study uses two fertility variables. Current fertility will be assessed using the number of live births a woman reports having in the past 5 years at the time of the survey top coded at 2. Completed fertility measures a woman's total number of live births top coded at 4.

*Women's Migrant Status*

Women in the NSFG sample who report that they are Mexican or Mexican American and were born outside of the U.S. are considered immigrants and women of Mexican or Mexican American ethnicity and not born outside of the U.S. are considered natives. Mexican born women residing in the U.S. can be further distinguished by duration of U.S. residence.

For women in the Mexican sample, migrant status will be established by determining if a woman has ever migrated since the age of 15. Migration theory suggests that women who have moved once are likely to move again. The limitation of this method is that there could be a small group of women who moved once and were disillusioned by the experience and are unlikely to ever migrate again.

*Key Selectivity Characteristics*

There are three primary selectivity characteristics: age, marital status, and educational attainment. Age is reported by the respondent and categorized into 3 age groups to ensure adequate sample sizes (15-24; 25-34; 35-44). Age has a strong curvilinear association with fertility. At the beginning of a woman's reproductive career, fertility is low but rises as women move into primary reproductive ages, and then declines again as a woman reaches the end of her reproductive career. However, the association of age and fertility may depend on migration. Current marital status is assessed using three categories harmonized over both data sets (married/cohabiting; formerly married; and never married). Educational attainment is the final

selectivity characteristic with three categories (less than high school; high school; some college and college plus.

**Analyses & Results**

The analysis is a descriptive comparison of fertility outcomes for women broken down by the selectivity characteristics and migration status. Each cell represents the percentage of women in each category with the particular birth parity. The results for current fertility outcomes are shown in Table 1. Overall, the results suggest that Mexican migrant women in the U.S. highest levels of current fertility by all key characteristics, confirming prior research and suggesting selection based on high fertility. In Panel A. Age, for young women aged 15 to 24, very few non-migrant women in Mexico or the U.S. have had a child in the past 5 years adding together any parity over 0 (17.2% and 26.3%, respectively) compared to 49.3% of Mexican born women in the U.S. and 45.1% of ever migrants in Mexico. However, in the other two age categories migrant women in the U.S. have the highest levels of current fertility followed by U.S. born Mexican women. The results suggest that the comparisons only by age and place of residence may overlook important differences in fertility outcomes by migration experience, possibly implying the role of selection. In Panel B. current fertility is assessed by marital status. The results mirror what was found by age: current fertility is highest in all marital statuses for Mexican immigrants in the U.S. followed by U.S. born Mexican women. Yet, for women who report current fertility of 2 or more children, the never migrant and ever migrant in Mexico exhibit differences, further suggesting selection (i.e. 8.1% vs. 11.7 for formerly married). Finally, Panel C. reports current fertility by educational attainment. Again, as found in the previous two panels, migrant women in the U.S. generally have the highest current fertility by educational attainment. Never and ever migrants in Mexico with current fertility of 2 or more children differ

in every educational attainment category. Moreover, the current fertility results highlight the importance of examining fertility outcomes by migration experience given the current fertility differences between never migrants and ever migrants in Mexico and ever migrants and current migrants.

The results for completed fertility further establish the patterns found in current fertility. Table 2 presents the results for completed fertility broken down by the same selectivity characteristics. On average, ever migrants in Mexico have higher completed fertility than non-migrant women regardless of country of residence, but lower completed fertility than migrant women in the U.S. For example, focusing on women nearing the end of their reproductive careers (35-44), the results show that 29.8% of migrant women in the U.S. report having 3 children, compared to 27.3% of ever migrants in Mexico, 26.8% of never migrants in Mexico, and 22.6% of U.S. born women. Further establishing the idea of selection, in the majority of martial status and educational attainment categories, ever migrants have higher completed fertility than never migrants in Mexico again highlighting the need to examine fertility between the two countries by migration experience. Ever migrants in Mexico have completed fertility that is similar to migrant women in the U.S. while migrant women in the U.S. differ from their U.S. born counterparts.

**Discussion and Future Research**

This paper descriptively compared the current and completed fertility outcomes for non-migrant and migrant women in Mexico and the U.S. by age, marital status, and educational attainment. More specifically, this paper tests whether Mexican immigrant women stand out for their high fertility rates because prior research is inaccurately accounting for selection into

migration by comparing the fertility outcomes of immigrant women to *all* women in Mexico regardless of their migration experience.

The descriptive findings suggest that ever migrants and non-migrants in Mexico exhibit differing current and completed fertility patterns and, in many ways, the fertility behaviors of ever migrants in Mexico mirrors those of Mexican migrant women in the United States. This suggests that women may be positively selected into migration based on higher fertility behaviors. Additionally, the descriptive evidence presented may also call into question the assertion that Mexican migrant women in the U.S. experience remarkably different fertility behaviors than Mexican women because prior comparisons have ignored the prior migration experience of the women in Mexico. Taken together, the results suggest that prior comparisons of fertility may have overlooked the role of selection into migration and its role in explaining the high levels of fertility among Mexican migrant women in the U.S.

The descriptive analysis is only the first stage of examining the role of selection in explaining Mexican immigrant fetidly. The second step involves comparing the fertility behaviors of women based on their likelihood of migration given that all women have an underlying, latent propensity to migrate. These comparisons are conceptualized in Figure 1. Typically studies of migration and fertility compare all women without U.S. experience known as the non-migrant women ($f_x^{lm}$ and $f_x^{um}$) to women with migration experience ($f_x^{lus}$ and $f_x^{uus}$). However, as the conceptual figure points out, more refined comparisons are possible. The difference in fertility outcomes between Mexican women without U.S. migration experience who are likely ($f_x^{lm}$) versus those who are unlikely ($f_x^{um}$) to migrate can provide a more nuanced study of the process of selection.

Therefore, the next stage of this research will use of propensity scores to assess the likelihood of migration for Mexican women. This novel methodological approach will aid in the evaluation of whether women with higher fertility norms are selected into migration. Additionally, the Mexican women with the highest propensity to migrate can be compared to Mexican women residing in the United States (because of arguably similar underlying propensities to migrate and other characteristics except for country of residence) to assess the role of migration on fertility.

Furthermore, the assignment of migrant status will be further refined for the propensity analysis. For women in the Mexican sample, migrant status will be established using three criteria to most accurately identify a pool of migrant women (instead of the single approach used in the descriptive analysis). The first is if she has ever migrated since the age of 15 and prior to the baseline wave of data collection. Migration theory suggests that women who have moved once are likely to move again. In the second method, migrant status is assigned if the woman reports migrating between 2002 and 2005. Estimating migration status between the two waves of data collection may produce a sample that is too small for statistical analysis. The third method is to assign migration status based on the migration experience of any adult in the household. This is the basis of cumulative causation theory or the idea that each act of migration in a household alters the social context of migration decisions and makes migration more likely (Massey 1990).

Table 1. Current Fertility: Percentage Distribution by Parity and Migration Status

| | Mexico[1] | | | | | | United States[2] | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Never Migrant | | | Ever Migrant | | | Migrant | | | U.S Born | | |
| | 0 | 1 | 2+ | 0 | 1 | 2+ | 0 | 1 | 2+ | 0 | 1 | 2+ |
| **Panel A. Age** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15-24 | 82.8 | 12.9 | 4.3 | 54.9 | 29.9 | 15.2 | 50.8 | 35.2 | 14.1 | 73.7 | 18.9 | 7.4 |
| 25-34 | 86.6 | 8.7 | 4.7 | 80.4 | 12.6 | 7.0 | 35.3 | 47.2 | 17.5 | 54.0 | 32.8 | 13.2 |
| 35-44 | 95.6 | 3.2 | 1.2* | 97.6 | 1.6* | 0.8* | 72.0 | 23.8 | 4.3* | 79.5 | 19.5 | 1.0* |
| **Panel B. Marital Status** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Married | 70.1 | 18.5 | 11.4 | 71.4 | 16.1 | 12.5 | 46.0 | 39.8 | 14.2 | 51.8 | 34.9 | 13.3 |
| Formerly Married | 77.6 | 14.3 | 8.1 | 80.2 | 8.1* | 11.7 | 57.8 | 32.1 | 10.1* | 68.0 | 24.6 | 7.4* |
| Never Married | 94.4 | 4.4 | 1.0 | 90.6 | 6.0 | 3.4* | 54.4 | 34.8 | 10.8 | 77.2 | 17.3 | 5.4 |
| **Panel C. Educational Attainment** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Less than High School | 80.1 | 12.5 | 7.5 | 75.5 | 13.3 | 11.3 | 49.5 | 35.2 | 15.2 | 70.6 | 19.7 | 9.7 |
| High School | 86.0 | 10.1 | 3.9 | 72.6 | 15.7 | 11.8 | 48.2 | 41.3 | 10.6* | 60.3 | 27.8 | 11.9 |
| Some College & College | 84.1 | 12.2 | 3.6 | 77.3 | 14.3 | 8.4 | 56.4 | 37.6 | 6.1* | 71.6 | 24.3 | 4.1* |

* Sample size less than 25 women

[1] Mexican sample from MxFLS 2002 and 2005

[2] U.S. sample from 2002 and continuous collection of NSFG

Table 2. Completed Fertility: Percentage Distribution by Parity and Migration Status

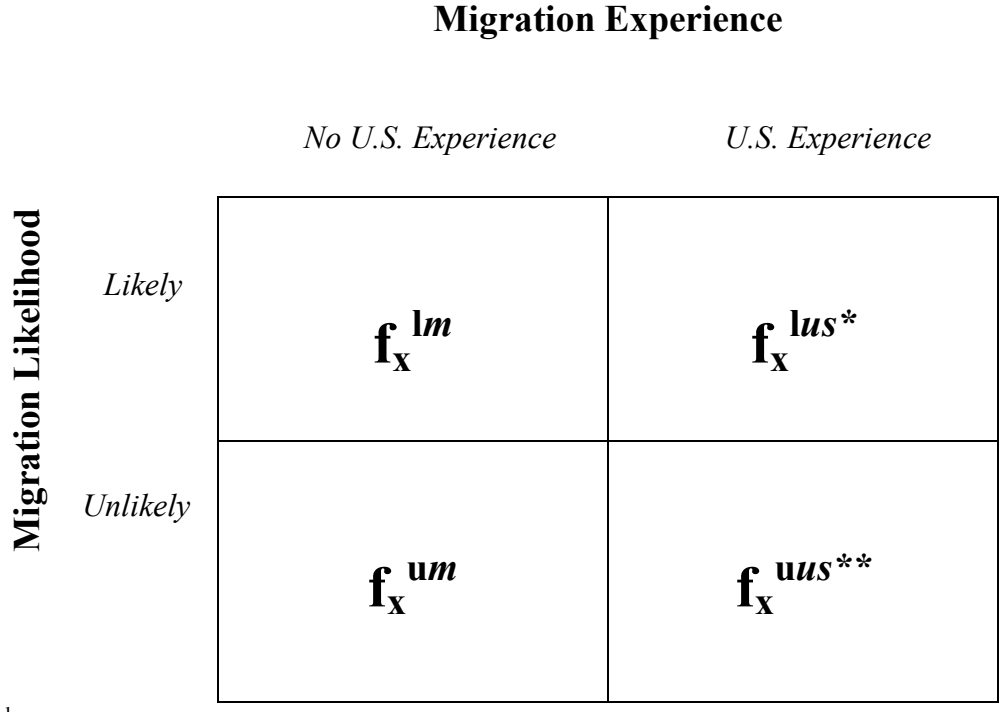
| | Mexico[1] | | | | | | | | | | United States[2] | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Never Migrant | | | | | Ever Migrant | | | | | Migrant | | | | | U.S. Born | | | | |
| | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4+ | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4+ | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4+ | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4+ |
| **Panel A. Age** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15-24 | 75.6 | 18.4 | 5.4 | 0.6* | -- | 46.8 | 39.4 | 11.4 | 2.2* | -- | 49.3 | 30.7 | 12.1* | 6.5* | 1.5* | 71.8 | 18.2 | 6.8 | 1.7* | 1.5* |
| 25-34 | 30.8 | 22.6 | 25.3 | 14.4 | 7.0 | 15.0 | 29.9 | 29.5 | 17.0 | 8.6 | 11.2 | 17.3 | 36.3 | 20.9 | 14.4 | 27.0 | 17.9 | 25.8 | 17.6 | 11.7 |
| 35-44 | 10.9 | 9.0 | 20.2 | 26.8 | 33.1 | 5.8 | 8.7 | 25.1 | 27.3 | 33.1 | 6.0* | 7.1* | 30.1 | 29.8 | 27.0 | 15.3 | 20.5 | 24.6 | 22.6 | 16.9 |
| **Panel B. Marital Status** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Married | 9.6 | 23.2 | 25.5 | 20.2 | 21.4 | 9.1 | 24.0 | 25.1 | 21.4 | 20.4 | 6.5 | 15.7 | 35.4 | 26.6 | 15.9 | 14.6 | 23.8 | 29.8 | 19.4 | 12.4 |
| Formerly Married | 10.4 | 27.3 | 22.7 | 20.2 | 19.4 | 5.7* | 18.2 | 32.4 | 19.0 | 24.7 | 6.4* | 10.1* | 29.4 | 26.6 | 27.5 | 10.7* | 19.7* | 26.2 | 26.2 | 17.2* |
| Never Married | 88.8 | 7.6 | 2.4 | 0.8 | 0.4* | 73.4 | 15.4 | 5.1* | 2.4* | 3.7* | 40.3 | 21.6 | 18.7 | 8.9 | 10.5 | 70.4 | 15.4 | 7.4 | 3.3* | 3.5* |
| **Panel C. Educational Attainment** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Less than High School | 34.9 | 18.0 | 17.3 | 14.6 | 15.2 | 12.7 | 20.9 | 23.5 | 20.4 | 22.5 | 15.1 | 15.6 | 25.9 | 22.7 | 20.8 | 52.1 | 16.5 | 11.5 | 8.8 | 11.2 |
| High School | 66.7 | 13.8 | 11.4 | 5.5 | 2.6 | 37.6 | 26.3 | 20.2 | 12.4 | 3.5* | 17.9 | 18.8 | 33.0 | 20.2 | 10.1* | 31.4 | 20.2 | 22.7 | 15.5 | 10.1 |
| Some College & College | 64.9 | 15.4 | 10.7 | 6.5 | 2.4* | 36.1 | 25.0 | 22.0 | 13.6 | 3.3* | 28.9 | 19.5 | 33.6 | 13.4* | 4.70* | 50.4 | 19.2 | 16.9 | 10.0 | 3.6* |

* Sample size less than 25 women

[1] Mexican sample from MxFLS 2002 and 2005

[2] U.S. sample from 2002 and continuous collection of NSFG

**Figure 1.**




$f_x^{lm}$ where l indicates that migration experience is likely and m indicates women are in Mexico
$f_x^{um}$ where u indicates that migration experience is unlikely and m indicates women are in Mexico
$f_x^{lus}$ where l indicates that migration experience is likely and us indicates women are in the U.S.
$f_x^{uus}$ where u indicates that migration experience is unlikely and us indicates women are in the U.S.
*Hypothetically all women with U.S. Experience have a propensity equal to 1.0 of experiencing migration.
**This category or women is hypothetically small because women who have U.S. experience will probably have a high likelihood of migration.

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