

MIGRANT INVESTMENT IN SALVATIERRA, GUANAJUATO, MEXICO: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF RETURN MIGRANT INVESTORS AND REMITTANCE BASED BUSINESSES¹

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ABSTRACT

The issue of migrant remittances and investment raises transcendental theoretical and methodological challenges. Depending on the scope of the research and analysis, whether global, regional, local, urban, or rural, if certain epistemological models and paths are taken, the results will yield different conclusions. Although researchers have discussed the positive and adverse effects for years, the controversy is still recent enough to review much of the current literature on the subject. We conducted a comparative analysis to deepen our understanding of differences in terms of both theoretical approaches and an evaluation of the impact on the communities, regions, and countries involved. For the state of Guanajuato, this is no small matter. International migration to the United States has a long history in Guanajuato. Therefore, many towns and municipalities in the state have been impacted in different ways, without a doubt, the social and economic remittances, and entrepreneurship have disrupted the heartstrings of individuals in the region. For public policy purposes, systematic, holistic, and comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of migration, and particularly of migrant investment, merits a more targeted analysis and an understanding of the context beyond shortsighted triumphalism. We infer from this comparative reflection that the remittance investor and the return migrant investor overcome the volatile and subjective factors of potential entrepreneurs. The interweaving of the macro-, meso-, and micro-structural conditions are essential to understanding projects of this nature.

Keywords: *migrant investment, business remitters, returns migration investor, Salvatierra, international migration.*

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Introduction

The wealth of theoretical and empirical findings emphasizes, not only the changes that have occurred but the vast complexity that the process of modern migration has adopted. International migration is part of a transnational revolution that is disrupting societies around the world. Thus, we find that the long-term migration patterns survive in new ways. New modalities surge as a result of accumulation patterns, fluctuating economic changes, changes in science and technology, innovative means of communication and transport, political struggles, violent conflict, religious and inter-ethnic persecution, battles against drug trafficking, meteorological events, climate change, and environmental degradation. Thereby further complicating this phenomenon in terms of its causes and consequences in societies of origin and destination (Fernández, del Carpio, 2012)

In recent decades the proverbial migratory pattern between Mexico and the United States has seen changes in magnitude, intensity, form and characteristics, thereby sealing a new cycle in this phenomenon (Borjas and Katz, 2005). Scholars demonstrate the changes in migration to the United States and show that the characteristics of this new landscape differ very significantly with those recorded in previous periods. Repercussions in the socio-cultural field are no less significant (Fernández, del Carpio, Reyes, Vila, 2015). Among the most important consequences are the expansion of transnational organizations, changes in community practices, and tensions in processes of identity and socialization of new generations (Ariza and Portes, 2007).

Moreover, it is not surprising that Mexico is the leading exporter of human resources in the world, and 98% of migrants reside in the United States. Currently, 4% of the total US population is Mexican and about 30% of the migrant population is Mexican (CONAPO, 2010). Clearly, and Borjas and Katz (2005) confirm, Mexican immigration has reached unprecedented levels in recent years, and Mexicans were numerically and proportionately the largest group of immigrants in the United States throughout the twentieth century.

Therefore, it is little wonder that the large sum of money in the form of remittances continued to flow in significant quantities, despite the deeply felt economic hardship. Cervantes (2011) reports that Mexico's income in remittances has been significant in its absolute magnitude and very positive for alleviating levels poverty for millions of recipient families. However, the amount is modest when compared to the size of the Mexican economy (equivalent in 2010 to 2.1% of GDP). Resources from abroad have allowed many families to achieve higher standards of welfare and access consumer goods, education, health, housing, and some of them family businesses. Thus, the evolution of income from family remittances has had a much-accelerated growth in recent years. In 1999, 5.9 billion dollars were arriving, by 2007 it was a little over 26 billion dollars and fell to 21.2 billion dollars in 2010 (Fernández, del Carpio, Reyes, Vila, 2015).

The aim of this research is to undertake a comparative analysis of remittance based businesses and returned migrant investors, viewed from the theoretical perspective of migration as a process in a region with a high intensity and a tradition of migration. We must first explore the topics in-depth in the literature. Although the results are presented modestly in both forms of investment, we believe that the novelty of the research lies in a comparison of the different structures of analysis. Future work will thoroughly explore these intricate topics of international migration.

Theoretical framework

Throughout the twentieth century, the constant migration theory was reductionist and deterministic approaches that saw the phenomenon unilaterally. In recent decades, we have witnessed a reassessment of the microstructures in the historical-social analysis. Historiography has expanded and fragmented at a rapid pace (Burke, 1993). Sociology has addressed the link between micro and macro social theories and the micro and macro levels of analysis (Ritzer, 2005).

The theory of *the migration process* (Fernández, del Carpio, 2014; Fernández, del Carpio, Reyes, Vila, 2015) reflects these contemporary sociological concerns and raises some questions that are worthy of being mentioned at the time of theoretical discussion of this phenomenon and its epistemological elements. Since the end of the 1990s, Alejandro Portes (1997) noted that there were reasons to be optimistic about the theoretical progress in the field of migration. According to Portes, research "has achieved an exploration of the structural determinants of contemporary migratory flows and microstructures that support us at all times".

For Castles and Miller (2004), migration is usually generated by the existence of prior links between sending and receiving countries based on colonization, political influence, exchange, investment, and cultural ties. Hence, migration from Mexico to the United States originated in the expansion to the south and west by the United States in the nineteenth century, and the deliberate recruitment of Mexican workers by US employers in the twentieth century. There is, thus, a tendency for movements towards long-standing metropolis, which adds an interesting vein to the study of chain flows and the idea of the existence of an immigration system that is rooted deeper than mere economic considerations.

We may consider any migration to be a consequence of the interaction between macro-structures, meso-structures, and micro-structures. The former are large-scale institutional factors and are composed of the political economy of the world market, the relationship between states, the laws that govern them, and the structures and practices established by the countries of origin and destination that control migratory flow.

As for the microstructures, they are informal social networks created by the very migrants themselves to overcome the obstacles that are implicit in migration and establishing oneself in a new country. Microstructures include personal relationships, family norms, and home organization, and community ties of friendship and solidarity, regarding economic and social issues. Networks provide information, cultural capital, and social capital by providing knowledge of other countries, travel arrangements, finding work and adapting to a new environment. Finally, meso-structures are the institutions and individuals that make up the "*migration industry*", which consists of recruitment organizations, travel agents, currency exchanges, lawyers, translators, and assistants who fill out transnational paperwork, bankers, couriers and post offices, and smugglers who act as mediators between migrants and political and economic institutions. Agents also have an interest in pursuing and perpetuating migration, and consequentially its organization, so that migration continues, even when governments try to restrict population movements (Fernández, del Carpio, 2014; Fernández, del Carpio, Reyes, Vila, 2015).

The three abovementioned structures, (macro, meso, and micro) as Castles and Miller (2004) assert, are interrelated in the migration process, and there are no clear dividing lines between them. No single cause by itself is sufficient to explain the reasons why individuals decide to go to another country.

The above leads us to see migration not as mere personal or collective decision-making process, but as a response to a range of successive circumstances that tend to converge. We are therefore dealing with a process in which some elements interact and determine the course, duration, time, and physical location of migration.

This framework may well apply to the consequences of migration seen from its various structures that are concatenated and occur at once, for example the impact on development and investment in both countries of origin and arrival (Fernández, del Carpio, 2014; Fernández, del Carpio, Reyes, Vila, 2015). Castles and Miller (2004) insist that we need to find ways to understand the relationships of the macro, meso, and micro as factors of change. Global factors have different effects on various places at the local and national levels, due to the presence of historical experiences and cultural norms. They are therefore tools for joining the analysis of global forces with local experiences.

Methodology

For this research, our information sources were both primary and secondary. Regarding the first, we undertook essential fieldwork, which constitutes the most direct means of gathering information. We based our work on observations and exploration of the terrain, which is basically the direct contact with the object of study (in this case participant observation), using a questionnaire and interview technique, which consisted of quantitative and qualitative collection of oral testimonies. We set out with the purpose to capture the richness of experiences of questionnaire respondents and interviewees. We were able to find information that is often ignored, such as descriptions, aspects of situations, difficulties, and workplaces. Additionally, we were allowed a greater closeness with the reality of ex-migrants, current migrants, those who returned, their family members and neighbors, and we obtained greater reflections on our object of study (Fernández, del Carpio, 2014; Fernández, del Carpio, Reyes, Vila, 2015).

The secondary sources used included books, journals, and censuses. Together, primary and secondary sources gave us theoretical and methodological elements, such as the historical and contextual panorama of international migration between Mexico and the United States, and migrant investment around the world. We also had access to national, state, and local data and statistics that would have been difficult to obtain in the fieldwork.

This article focuses on the experience of two types of migrant investment which are remittance-based businesses and returned migrant investors. We obtained data through conducting interviews with relatives of migrants (in the case of remittance-based businesses) and returned migrant investors. In total, we conducted 64 semi-structured interviews (32 for each) between February and September 2014. The interview sought to identify the main factors that influence migrants, be it through remittances to family members or returnees who invest in their community.

We obtained data on socio-demographic and economic variables such as employment, skills, marital status, sex, leaving age, educational level, and migrant family history. Participants were asked to report on places of residence, work performed, income, savings, remittances, legal status, their entrepreneurial vocation and their similarities to the line of work of their parents, the age when they became entrepreneurs, the financial capital that they started up with, the type of business they set up, skills, habits and behaviors that are not applicable in the current conditions of the destination community, and their visits, contacts, and investments in their home community.

Remittances and return migration

We affirm that the unraveling of the effects during the migration process is what best reveals the peculiarities of this phenomenon. However, many authors indicate that there is a large vacuum in the study of the consequences of migration, the literature is notoriously scarce. Roberto Herrera (2006), tells us that this lack of analysis is due to the intricacies of the global effects of migration found in analysis, and because the study has fundamentally defined the aspects concerning the individual migrant. However, the viewpoint of this researcher of the phenomenon, in both communities of origin and destination, has not been relevant in either quantity or results. Despite the lack of accuracy in terms of quantities, the author's theoretical contributions on the consequences of migrations have been relevant in certain nodal aspects.

One of the effects of migration is at the individual economic level and the macroeconomic level. The concept of "human capital" and "discounted value" in the life cycle investment has been dealt with periodically to observe the consequences of this phenomenon. Using this analytical approach, we emphasize that the individual can display the alternative of accessing better performance in future years of work by migration, which is considered an investment in the "human capital" that incurs costs and produces benefits. Macroeconomic effects have raised heated debates on the consequences (positive or negative) that fundamentally depend on the theoretical orientation of the author. Marxists incline towards the negative impacts that migration provokes, such as inflation, loss of human capital, and dependency on remittances. Those more inclined towards neoclassical models highlight the positive effects of migration, and consider that sending remittance reflects a greater stability in exchange rates, the balance of payments and other important rubrics of the economy, such as at the macroeconomic level, which is positively reflected in family income, consumption, and education etc. However, the positive effects of remittances are not the only ones observed, but also the migration of the return investor (partner-business remittances) and the concurrent impact on development and job generation.

International migration is an important milestone in the lives of individuals, families, and communities. It influences the life course of migrants and the individuals around them. Migration leads to a restructuring of the home and also generates demographic re-adjustments and changes to the productive organization of the community, influencing, either positively or negatively, economic development, and social structure. Therefore, the consequences of migration for the communities of origin are multiple and have different meanings depending on what aspect they allude to (political, cultural, behavioral, socioeconomic), the scope of analysis (individual, home, community, region, state, country) and the specific context of migration (the historical moment in which it occurs, the migratory tradition, and the biography of the migrant).

All these features vary from region to region and have an unequal impact on the lives of families and communities. The impact of economic and social remittances on communities does not forego these considerations. In fact, much of the discussion and conception of the positive or negative consequences of migration in countries and communities have focused on the controversy over the use of remittances. Thus, it seems that most of the literature on the impact of remittances has focused on economic aspects including its productive or non-productive use, its potential to boost economic growth, and its impact on poverty and inequality. The pending issue is, therefore, the impact of remittances in stimulating change within a variety of sociocultural institutions such as local status hierarchies, gender relations, reorganization of the household, the norms of community consumption, perceptions of migration and its influence on the expectations of life paths among the younger generations (Vertovec, 2006).

Mexican migration to the United States, according to Fernando Lozano and Fidel Olivera (2007), has meant, throughout its century-old history, a significant monetary influx, which has enabled millions of Mexican households to be supported, especially in those states with the highest concentration of migrants. However, the authors emphasize that the economic impact of remittances in Mexico is profoundly unequal and heterogeneous.

Since the late twentieth century, economic relations between migrants and their home communities have been the subject of a broad yet scattered multidisciplinary research on the relationship between migration and development (Clemens, Ozden and Rapoport, 2014). Analytically, remittances reflect long-distance social ties of solidarity, reciprocity, and obligation that bind migrants to their relatives and friends across national borders controlled by the States.

Before we delve deeper into the importance of remittances, we must say that these are not a homogenous package, rather there are different types of remittances. That is to say, remittances go beyond purely economic considerations. It was Peggy Levitt (1998) who suggested using the concept of *social remittances* to observe, mainly in the communities of origin, cultural changes and social activities derived from migration, including return migration. Meanwhile, Catherine Amuelo-Dorantes and Susan Pozo (2006) consider the savings brought by returning migrants as another form of remittances. Other researchers have documented the political changes associated with migration, which have been labeled political *remittances*. This conceptual diversity is nothing more than a reflection of the complexity and multidimensionality of migration that includes different facets, which are economic, social, cultural, technological and political (Goldring, 2005).

Even though monetary remittances have attracted the most attention from academics and public officials, emphasizing the benefits of migration, the advantages and costs of social and technical remittances put into practice by returning migrants (investors, uprooted, sick, etc.) they are increasingly drawing the attention of the academic community.

The complexity of remittances is also in the economic field itself. Here also the dissemination of meaning has taken shape. In the classic work of Jorge Durand, *Más allá de la línea* (1994), he distinguishes three types of remittances on the basis of the criterion of their use or function is distinguished. First, there are the wage remittances that migrants send sporadically or frequently to their relatives. Second, investment in land or buildings for housing, such investments are usually brought with the migrant on a trip or upon their return. Investment in land and buildings has enabled the architectural transformation of many towns. The third type of remittance are capital remittances that have the explicit objective of productive investment. According to Durand, capital remittances are the most difficult to achieve, due to the regional inequality, market limitations, and other contextual circumstances that are out of the hands of migrants. Remittances as investment and capital have a favorable impact at the local level to diversify economic activities and create alternative employment.

Luin Goldring (2004) also identifies three different types of remittances: 1) remittances from family members that are mainly used to cover living costs (food, clothing, and housing) and to improve health services, education and social security; 2) collective remittances sent by clubs of countrymen for community projects; and 3) business remittances with the explicit objective of investment because migrant investors are trying to return.

The problematization of remittances has reached the level of the deepest motivations of migrants send these resources to their motherland (communities of origin). Bernard Poirine (2006) there are two models of the remittance motivation: altruism and self-interest. When remittances are considered an altruistic consideration, the welfare of the family members is the factor of functional utility, its deepest springs are ethical-emotional in character. Moreover, they are considered self-interested when: 1) migrants aspire to inherit if the estate is improved through the behavior of migrants toward family and particularly parents; 2) the investment of migrants in their place of origin requires care and maintenance by other family members, and 3) the intention of migrants is to return home and prepare for the return (Lianos, 2008).

The fluctuating academic and official interest in remittances is much like the ups and downs in the volume of these money transfers, which in turn reflect the changing conditions in the American context of reception as well as the socioeconomic situation of Mexico. Interest has so far focused on development, therefore the majority of research on remittances has focused on measuring the volume and determining the degree of contribution to local development, observing the transfer channels, and finding the variables relating to sending monetary resources to a migrants place of origin (Guarnizo, 2007).

The issue of international migration, remittances, and their impact on countries of origin has a significant history and literature. It is therefore important to understand and analyze the results that this research has yielded, which are concentrated in very concrete socioeconomic, cultural, political, and historical realities. Findings have provided an understanding of the factors that encourage or discourage the productive use of remittances.

A growing intellectual debate has arisen about the importance of remittances for development. Many affirm that given the dynamic flow of significant amounts of money sent home by migrants, remittances positively contribute to development (Diaz Soydemir, 2013). Others minimize the hypothetical positive effects, underestimating the contribution that these monetary resources make to development (Leon-Ledesma and Piracha, 2004).

On the positive side, the key points are that remittances allow increased living conditions of the households that receive them, there is momentum for productive investment in the promotion of enterprises, and there is investment in human capital, education, health, entrepreneurship and poverty reduction (Adams, Cuecuecha, 2013; Ravinesh, 2013). In addition, we observe a range of multiplier effects that strengthen the regional domestic market. It is also an important parameter for the economy of developing countries, contributing to the balance of payments and foreign exchange and provides significant economic development funds (Karafolas, 1998). At the micro level it also has major repercussions on the household labor supply, and consumption (Guha, 2013).

Meanwhile, the negative approach warns that remittances are a non-productive expenditures that bring economic dependency with it, and the exclusive use for the survival of the family. Moreover, there are few incentives for regional and national development, which has been manifest in the inflation of goods and services, labor, and social and wage inequality. Another aspect that has been little discussed is about the effect of remittances for development in countries of destination. Alkathlan (2013) in the case of Saudi Arabia, asserts that the transfer of billions of dollars has negative repercussions on the country's growth, as these resources leave and not consumed internally.

Other researchers also link remittances with targeted investments in business or agricultural activities. Some researchers (Dennis Conway and Jeffrey H. Cohen, 1998; Davis, Lopez-Carr, 2014; Fransen, Mazzucato, 2014) found that spending remittances, the migrant flow, and return, have positive effects on the homes of communities. Investment of remittances has more positive than negative effects when examining relationships between people and interactions at a micro-scale. According to authors in Mexico, Latin America, and the Caribbean, remittances have positive influences on the lives of rural people and that in situations of crisis and wider social deprivation, spending remittances on basic needs may not be admitted as negative.

Some authors (Goldring, 2004; Adams, Cuecuecha, 2013) that say we should pay particular attention to what is called the social development argument, i.e. that remittances are a factor of investment in human capital due to improvements in nutrition, education, and health, and that this investment is a fundamental element in the development process. This idea is part of what may be called as wage remittances is actually an investment in the development of human and social capital, rests on a definition of development that is broader than economic development, job creation and increased productivity. Consistent with this reasoning Ismet Koc and Isil Onan (2004) argue that remittances have a positive impact on household welfare, and households that receive these resources are richer than those who do not. These authors criticize those who use the term non-productive investment when referring to the direct consumption, housing, and land purchases. They are arbitrary definitions of "productive investment". Koc and Onan conclude that access to better nutrition, and allocating more resources to education, are certainly forms of productive investment. Equally interesting is what Germán Zarate-Hoyos (2004) says, when he establishes that remittances have various uses, for example, spending on a new home or improving the dwelling, which has a positive impact on health and physical wellbeing, therefore simultaneously increasing labor productivity and the value of the property. In Peru, Salas (2014) analyzes the effect of international migration and remittances on children left behind. He asserts that remittances have a positive impact on the possibility of sending their children to private schools.

Another interesting aspect is that suggested by Anzoategui, Demirguc, and Martinez (2014) who analyze the impact of remittances on financial inclusion. Households that receive remittances are more likely to have a deposit account at a financial institution and request and receive a loan Karunarathne and Gibson in a study of Sri Lanka and Samoa (2014) state that many people are poorly prepared to make significant financial decisions. An important subset such as migrants have specialized in the financial needs associated with remittances. Kosse and Vermeulen (2014) claim that concerning financial markets, recent studies show that remittances can promote domestic financial development.

Some studies argue that the existence of family goods may act as a stimulus for remitting money because migrants wish to reclaim those goods in their communities of origin when they return. The literature suggests that the relationship between remittances and investment in business is complex. Remittances can induce business investment, but also their very existence, which by itself can attract remittances and return migration with potential investment opportunities.

Interestingly, the arguments used by Fernando Lozano (2007) who points out that analyzing the impact of remittances is not black and white, and that they bring both positive and negative effects. It all depends on the context and conditions in which they are immersed. The impact is unequal, according to the geography being analyzed. Moreover, the significance of remittances acquires specific nuances.

In terms of the problematization of economic, social, and technological remittances, among other aspects. Now we see that some is about the investment of returning migrants.

Research on returning migrants is more recent (barely half a century of existence) and has received less attention. However, there are outstanding theoretical and empirical works. Similarly to stakeholders on the issue of outgoing migration, historical, anthropological, sociological, demographic, economic, and political analysis has been conducted on returned migrants. Studies use qualitative or quantitative approaches, or may be more concerned for theoretical or empirical analysis. Our literature review suggests that there is a large interest in return migration among social scientists worldwide in recent years³ [3]. As Bruce Newbol and Martin Bell (2001) affirm, it has become a specialized niche within the literature of migration.

Like Ravenstein, the initiators of the study on the phenomenon of return migration, are European social scientists (Sjaastad, 1962; RT Appleyard, 1962; Goldstein 1964). The pioneering studies of returned migrants in the 1960s, the few that exist, focus on the European continent. We have observed a theoretical concern to decipher return migration, a reflection on the methodological approach that confines the research (sources of data, analysis unit, and analytical techniques), and the construction of typologies through the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. We identified a window of opportunity for research.

In the 1970s and 1980s interest in return migration was still not very great. However, there were some outstanding works elaborated, such as those of Cerase (1974). We attribute the dearth of research to the inertia of the theoretical and methodological contributions of academic predecessors. Interestingly, the research field is spreading to other geographical latitudes, mainly to North America, the United States and Canada (Vanderkamp, 1971; Lee, 1974; Da Vanzo and Morrison, 1981), Europe (Kirwan and Harrigan, 1986; Papademetriou; 1985; McLean and Kousis; 1988), Israel (Toren, 1976), and is even attracting interest at the level of the United Nations (Glasery Habers, 1974). While global studies predominate, and return migration, in general, they are beginning to emerge with more timely investigations and specific topics such as returning professionals. Combined with previous works, the studies trace the key dimensions of this type of movement: its spatial patterns, characteristics of migrants and the reasons associated with their return, stressing the importance of the chronic migrant, its selective nature, and its various impacts.

In 30 years of research on return migration, studies were mainly conducted by Europeans and Americans, and also focused on these geographical areas. It was not until the 1990s that researchers from the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific Islands started to look into this phenomenon that was occurring in their countries and regions. They studied quantities, as well as the spatial and thematic diversity observed in these years. There is concern surrounding the discovery of the historical roots of migrations (Chandra, 1997), ethnic backgrounds (Vasileva, 1992), gender differences (Gmelch and Gmelch, 1995), the investment of savings (Galor and Stark, 1990), the economic behavior of the returned migrant (Galor and Stark, 1990), cultural implications and family (Sakkay Kiosseoglou, 1999), and globally (Diatta and Mbow, 1999), also shown in case studies (Muschkin, 1993). Theoretical determinisms are being questioned, and now, some researchers are using different fundamental principles upon which to frame their research, such as those previously proposed by Papademetriou (1985).

³ And about its conceptualization. Gmelch urges us to differentiate *return migration*, *re-migration* and *circular migration*. The return is defined as the movement of migrants back to rejoin their homeland; re-migration refers to people who return to his/her homeland and then migrate again; and circular migration is the frequent movement between two or more locations such as seasonal or temporary labor migration (Gmelch, 1980: 138).

In the early decades of this century, we have seen a tangible increase in the literature on return migration and research on this phenomenon around the world. Besides more traditional topics based on economic repercussions, domestic circulation, return of retirees, return for ethnic reasons, new and novel issues become more prevalent: mental disorders of the returned, returning children and impacts on mental health and school performance, illnesses such as AIDS, integration issues (Vuorenkosky et al, 2000; Pino and Verde, 2006; Verde, 2006, Arowolo, 2000; Knodel and Vanlandingham, 2003), return for business reasons, comparative studies (Klinthall, 2006), case studies based on oral history, studies with an integral focus on economic and socio-cultural effects, and the relationship of return with different transnational factors (Gowans, 2006; Ni Laoire, 2007; Tannenbaum, 2007; Potter, Conway, and St. Bernard, 2009). The neoclassical view of human capital continues to dominate both theoretically and methodologically (Constant and Massey, 2002; Hunt, 2004; Williams and Baláz, 2005). Marxism and neomarxism are absent, and the analysis of social networks, transnational bonds, and a neo-institutional perspective began to emerge. Further, we discuss some of the highlights.

Barry McCormick and Jackline Wahba (2001) studied the link between employment abroad, savings, and business upon return. On an econometric model of the probability of business activity we found evidence to support the hypothesis that both savings abroad and the duration of residence abroad increases the likelihood of a migrant becoming an entrepreneur upon returning to Egypt. While among illiterate returnees, only savings abroad increases the possibility of becoming entrepreneurs.

In a comparative study of return migration to Ghana and Ivory Coast, Richard Black and Adriana Castoldo (2009) highlight the importance of micro, small, and medium enterprises for economic growth in Africa, and, therefore, may play a vital role to alleviate poverty in many households. Given the increase in migration and remittances, the potential of migrants to become entrepreneurs has grown. With a theoretical concern, Wenfei Winnie Wang and C. Cindy Fan (2006) attempt to demonstrate migrant return through the study of the urban-rural domestic return in China, it is the most feasible theory to address return when it is not the classic model of the success-failure dichotomy. The authors point out that returnees include not only successful migrants who return to invest in their communities, but also unsuccessful migrants who were forced to return, and many others who returned to satisfy family needs related to marriage, childbirth, or care. Our findings support the theoretical perspective of domestic strategy and indicate the need to expand the success-failure model.

Nir Cohen (2013) states that return migration is known for its relevance as "the greatest unwritten chapter in the history of migration". Consequently, in recent decades, return migration has become a major issue on the agenda of the institutions and public policy. The growing interest in return as a political tool has been attributed to several factors, including the increased volume of returnees, and the repatriation policy of the countries of destination, including voluntary movements to countries of origin or third countries. Another reason is to maximize the wealth of skills and experience of returnees, as Dustmann, Fadlon and Weiss (2011) claimed sum the individual capacities in terms of productive strengths. Thus, in recent years, several countries have channeled their programs to attract top talent from abroad.

Jonkers and Cruz-Castro (2013) analyze the effect of the return of highly skilled migrants on networking and innovation capacity in their country of origin. Besides conducting a comparative analysis of the productivity of returnees and those who remained in Argentina. Dai, Liu, and Xie (2014) study the concept of *Brain Drain Reversal in China*, which refers the return of highly qualified individuals to their countries of origin. Specifically, after residing in a developed country and returning to a developing country. The researchers also exposed the difficulties that these students have faced when searching for well-paying

jobs, which has inhibited the return of other highly qualified individuals. Seen from an eco-feminist political perspective Ge, Resurrección, and Elmhirst (2011) this article analyzes the impact of returnees on the environment and caring for water in China. Importantly, the authors observed that returnees bring back knowledge, skills, and relationships accumulated abroad, enabling the introduction of new forms of leadership and community action.

Bertoli and Marchetta (2013) in an investigation in Egypt established that migrants in countries with a strong democratic tradition promote democracy in their home countries when they return, besides impacting positively on business skills and in another little-analyzed dimension - fertility.

Marchetta (2012) explains that the literature shows that international migrants have a high propensity to opt for entrepreneurial activity when they return, but the prospects for survival of these activities have not been explored. This study in Egypt states that the returnees have higher chances of survival over time as entrepreneurs when compared with non-migrants. Other research in China (Vera, and Schatzl Revilla, 2013) reaches the same conclusions and considers that returnees are more likely to be linked to the business than non-migrants.

Salvatierra, Guanajuato

Mexico, as is well known, is one of the most important destinations in the world of remittances and the return of international migrants, either cyclically or permanently. The effects of remittances and investor return are not limited to receiving Mexican households but extend to the entire community. For example, money orders sent to traditional Mexican states of migrant departure (Michoacan, Jalisco, Guanajuato, Zacatecas) are higher than the federal social expenditure (on education, health, and programs to combat poverty), and in the case of Guanajuato up to 14 times higher (Zarate-Hoyos, 2004).

During the period 1990-2005, 113 000 802 820 000 dollars entered Mexico in remittances. In terms of participation by the state in 2005 Michoacan received 12.95% of the total remittances, Guanajuato 8.56%, Jalisco 8.45%, the State of Mexico 8.36%, and the Federal District 7.25%. Another important indicator for measuring the importance of migration to the country is the number of municipalities with some migrant intensity in America. In 2000, only 92 municipalities reported zero immigration participation (mainly villages south and southwest of the country); 2350 municipalities reported some contact with the northern neighbor. Of these, 492 show high and very high migration; 392 were of medium intensity, and 1466 municipalities exhibit a very low migration intensity. It is also noteworthy that more than half of the municipalities of Aguascalientes (72.7%), Zacatecas (71.9%), Jalisco (65.3%), Michoacán (62.8%), Durango (59.6%), and Guanajuato (58.7%) have high or very high intensity of migration (Reyes, 2006).

The state of Guanajuato in 2010 had a population of 5.4 million, of which 1.4 million houses León, Irapuato to 529 000, 468 000 Celaya, with the cities with the highest number of inhabitants. In addition to historically being a state where many international migrants depart from, Guanajuato has a large influx of immigrants from other states in Mexico. Furthermore, 10% of individuals residing in Guanajuato were born in another state, mainly the Federal District (131 thousand), followed by Michoacan and Jalisco (56 thousand and 68 thousand respectively) (INEGI, 2010).

Taking data from INEGI (2010), migration of Mexicans to the United States from 2005 to 2010 was just over 1.1 million, the state of Guanajuato contributed most 119 000, followed by Jalisco and Michoacan (86 000 and 85 000 respectively). Over the same period, there was a 31.5% rate of migrant return nationally, and in Guanajuato 27.8% of migrant flow returned.

Remittances in recent years, as CONAPO (2012) indicates, were among the major currency income for the country. In 1990, remittances were the fourth largest income after oil exports, tourism, and the balance of trade of manufacturers. In 2010, remittances were placed second, behind only by oil exports that reached 41 billion dollars. It is worth mentioning, to provide greater dimension to the importance of remittances that in Mexico in 2010 there were a total of 29 million households, of which 4.7% were receiving remittances. Guanajuato in this context has been the major recipients in recent decades. In 1995, Guanajuato received \$ 376 million, less than Michoacan with 597 million, and Jalisco with 467 million. The jump was spectacular in 15 years, by 2010 Guanajuato was placed second with 1 978 million (9.3% of the national total), second only to Michoacan, which received 2.141 billion (10.1%). Still retaining its position since the first quarter of 2012, according to information issued by BANXICO 498.7 million dollars entered the State of Guanajuato, 40 million less than in Michoacan over the same period.

Another parameter to measure the importance of international migration to the Mexican States is migratory intensity rates. In Mexico, based on data from CONAPO, by 2010 four states had the category of very high migration (Zacatecas, Guanajuato, Michoacan, Nayarit), ten with high intensity, eight medium intensity, two low intensity, and eight with very low intensity. This means that of the 2456 municipalities in the country, there are 178 municipalities with very high migration intensity, and there are 431 municipalities with high migration intensity. Therefore, almost 25% of the municipalities in our country have a migratory movement of considerable importance. In Michoacan, for example, of the 113 municipalities, in 23 there is a very high migration and in 46 high migration, i.e. more than 50% of municipalities in Michoacan show significant international movement.

Something very similar happens in Guanajuato, which ranks second nationally in migration intensity, only surpassed by Zacatecas. In 2010, of the 46 municipalities of Guanajuato, 15 show a very high intensity, and 20 high intensity, this means that 76% of municipalities in the state have among the most dynamic immigration to the United States.

Salvatierra, with a range of high migration, ranks 31 in the state and 503 nationwide. This municipality has a total of 23 896 households, of which 15.74% receive remittances (twice the national average), 4.50% of households have immigrants in the United States, 1.33% have circular migrants, and 6.36% with returned migrants.

There is a large information vacuum regarding the percentages and amounts of spending of remittances by household, state, and towns in Mexico. There are very generic figures that give an idea where families spend these resources. Between 2003 and 2005, the Bank of Mexico conducted a series of surveys on migrant Mexican border cities. The results obtained show that the use of remittances was 86.4% for living expenses, 6.3% for education, 3.2% for property improvements, and 4.1% in other community improvements, and small commercial operations (BANXICO). The abovementioned figures are very similar to those given by a newspaper in Zacatecas⁴ which tells us that of the 25 billion dollars in remittances were sent to Mexico in 2007, and 98.5% of the money was spent on purchases related to auto-consumption, cars, and household goods, and the remainder was invested in productive projects. According to data from the Survey on Migration in the Northern Border (EMIF), 2000-2009, remittances were mainly used to cover basic needs. More than 8 out of every 10 dollars was spent on food and rent, purchases or improvement of housing, 6.5% was spent on land or businesses, and the remaining 5% for paying off debts (CONAPO, 2010).

⁴ *Image, the newspaper Zacatecanos Monday August 4, 2008.*

However, the amount directed towards business investment should not be regarded insignificant. If we take the official data from the Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares (National Household Income and Expenditure Survey) (INEGI, 2010), the quarterly total current expenditure at the national level of the population in 2010 was 31 260 million, was mainly spent on food, clothing, transport, health, education and personal care. The investment observed is practically absent.

It is naive to think that remittances will automatically multiply individual and family investments, or that migrants *per se* displayed or considered business scenarios. Companies arise when multiple circumstances are integrated beyond volitional determinants. The architects of public policy should consider that to understand the phenomenon of transnational investment of remittances an interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach to studying its many variables, both quantitative and qualitative.

Although the relative remittance amount is not high enough to create a family business, they do represent important resources for poverty alleviation and they facilitate development through investment in human and social capital, and detonate the multiplier effect generated by the increased purchasing power. As mentioned before, the social argument that triggers remittance based development (economic, social, political and technological) as an investment and as capital has a positive impact at the local and regional level in economic diversification in the levels of welfare, health, education, housing, and the wealth of knowledge and skills that immigrants bring with them.

According to statistics from INEGI (2010), the percentage of migrants returning between 2005 and 2010 was 31.5% across Mexico, Nayarit had the highest percentage with 53.3%, and the lowest was 15.8% in Oaxaca. Guanajuato recorded 27.8% of migrants returning over the same time period (85.4% of them in a household with at least one other migrant and 5.7% the only migrant in the household), almost equal to that of Michoacan, which reached 29.7%.

According to the INEGI, in 2010 the total population of Guanajuato was 5 486 372 inhabitants, of which 494 894 were born in another state. Salvatierra had a population of 97 054 in 2010. And if we take the figures issued by the Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social (National Council for Evaluation of Social Development Policy), on the Medición Municipal de la Pobreza 2010 (Municipal Poverty Measurement 2010), Salvatierra shows high poverty rates. In Salvatierra, 59.7% of the population is living in poverty, 49.7% are in moderate poverty, 10.1% in extreme poverty and only 6.3% of the population is poor but not vulnerable, 90% have at least one social deprivation and 26.4% with at least three deficiencies.

If we take into account certain social indicators we find that the educational gap is 31.2%, and 22.3% have no access to health services, 78.7% have no social security, and 20% have no access to food. Moreover, in terms of economic well-being 22.5% of the population gets an income below the minimum welfare line, and 63.4% earn less than the wellbeing income.

According to the Census of Population and Housing INEGI (2010) in 2005, Guanajuato had 967 206 economically active heads of households, of which 59 591 are migrants, of these, 23 990 are state migrants and 35 601 international migrants. Regarding education, we find that 91 272 have no education (almost 10%), 616 747 have basic education, upper secondary education 119 954 and 137 316 have higher education. Salvatierra in the same period featured 16 755 economically active heads, of which 1199 are migrants, 189 domestic migrants, and 1010 international migrants. Of all those heads of households 2144 have no schooling at all, 11 458 have only basic education, 1565 have high school education, and 1559 have higher studies.

Results

Remittance based businesses

We were interested in a comparison of methods of migration research and the results of fieldwork yielding fieldwork on the different kinds of migrant investment. Regarding businesses based on remittances, we undertook interviews in ten towns of the municipality of Salvatierra (Salvatierra, San Jose del Carmen, San Isidro, El Capulin, Maravatío of Encinal, El Sabino, Rancho Nuevo, Urireo, San Miguel Eménguar, and San Nicolas de los Augustinos).

The average age of the managers of the businesses based on remittances is 44.59 years (19 women and 15 men), 25 are married, two single, two widowed, and three divorced. We observed that the educational level of interviewees is not very high, 11.76% have no education, 29.41% have incomplete or completed primary school, 41.17% with at least one year of secondary school, and 17.64% with high school education.

It is interesting to note that 96.87% of the owners of businesses based on remittances had a family member living in the United States at the time of the interview. Some only have one member in that country, and others who have more than 20 relatives living in the neighboring nation. We also found that 55.84% of the business owners have visited the United States at least once (slightly more than 50% did so without documents) and the rest have never been.

When they were asked about the reasons why they or their families decided to go to the United States, responses were basically economic (economic improvement due to economic need, lack of jobs or low wages in Mexico, debts, and better working conditions in the USA), and also family reasons (to see husbands and children, help their family, and to see sick relatives).

Most owners of remittance based businesses have a favorable perception of migration to the United States. Arguments focus on asserting that the municipality benefits economically from remittances, there is more to eat, to pay debts, to help their families, and to build and remodel homes, new things are learned and there are greater commercial activity and investment. On the other hand, there are comments that highlight the harm that migration can effect on the towns where it occurs, such as the separation of families, many children are left behind, the flight of many young people, the lack of values and respect, vices learnt abroad, and the abandonment of the land and agriculture.

Migrants are asked for their motives and causes for migrating, but they forget to talk to those who stay behind, and their reasons for not leaving to find work or live in the United States. Non-migrants answers revolve around how hard it is to go due to lack of legal documents and the danger of an increasingly guarded and protected border, others are very comfortable with their children and family here, and others flatly respond that they do not want to go, nor are they attracted to the idea of moving.

One of the positive consequences of migrant transnationalism is the growth of self-employment, new business formation, and job creation in communities of origin. The remittance-based businesses are a manifestation remitters represent, often modestly, upward social mobility. At least, the worker becomes the owner of a micro or small business. Of all owners surveyed, the vast majority of them were employees before starting the business (tinsmith and painting, cleaning, masonry or building, mechanical, factory worker, laborer in the field, realtor, shop workers, among others) some were housewives, and others worked their land or helped to cultivate land belong to relatives.

More than half of the businesses that have been created are grocery stores and clothing stores. The rest are bakeries, renting plots of land to farmers, food-related businesses, vegetable stands, liquor stores, beauty and cosmetic product stores, construction of premises to let, office supply stores, and fruit stands, among others. Remittances from relatives in the United States were crucial for building these businesses. In the majority of cases, support came from more than one family member, and the consistent receipt of money allowed business owners to save, and later invest. The sum invested in business creation ranged from the considerable amount of 170,000 USD to the more modest 15,000 or 3,000 Mexican pesos per business. The ties of solidarity and family and community involvement were key links to consolidate the transnational businesses of migrants in recent decades, in populations with a high tradition and incidence of immigration to the United States.

Over at least the last 20 years, this labor alternative has permeated investment dynamics in Salviatierra. Of the 32 remittance-based businesses analyzed, two have more than 20 years in operation, five from 5 to 20 years, seven are in the range of 5 to 10 years, and 14 between 1 and 4 years; and four of them are so recent that they have not passed a year since inauguration. Moreover, in relation to employment generation we find that 46.87% are businesses are sole traders; 21.87% operated by the owner and one employee; 21.87% by the owner and two employees; 3.12% by the owner and three employees; and another 3.12% the employer is responsible for four workers.

In response to the specific question regarding monthly income, 50% of respondents did not answer citing security reasons and distrust in a climate of instability and organized crime that has exerted the systematic pressure of bribery in large swathes of the geography of western Mexico. Of all respondents, 37.5% said that earnings per month ranged between one thousand and five thousand pesos; 9.37% between 6000 and 10000 pesos; and only 3.12% above eleven thousand pesos a month.

It is interesting to note the many reasons why respondents decided to start a business. The reasons not only a response to the economic order, but also consider family considerations, prestige, and social status. Thus we have the need to be one's boss, bring in more money, prove oneself, take advantage of good land. Additionally, other responses linked to family, to support parents, so that the spouse returns from the United States sooner, death of a spouse, or so that the children do not want to work so much.

An equally important factor to determine whether or not to open a business is the family history of running a business. Of those interviewed, 65.62% declared that their family owns or has a history of owning a business, it may belong to grandparents, uncles, parents, or siblings. The main businesses were butchers, farms, and grocery stores, selling seeds and grains, fruit stands, and other activities. While the remaining 34.37% have no background in self-employment nor in starting a business.

Another issue that we investigated between remitter's business owners is whether they would like to or if they think they might go back to America to work and live. Of the respondents, 57.70% expressed negatively, mainly arguing a lack of legal documents to stay and settle in the country; the difficulty of going for reasons of age and disease; the children follow; they feel comfortable in their town and for family reasons they don't want to leave their parents alone. Moreover, the remaining 42.30% mainly expressed their approval for being with the family, and another reason is to save, return, and inject more resources to expand their business and get more dividends.

When approached about whether there was government support to establish and promote their business, the overwhelming majority (96.87%) of respondents said they received no support. Respondents said that there are many steps, and others just aren't aware that there is an official program for government assistance of businesses. There is much distrust of the government apparatus because they consider it dishonest and incapable of eradicating the impunity of organized crime that extorts the business sector in the region.

Return migrant investors

Interviews with investors, who are also returning migrants, were held in six towns in the municipality of Salvatierra (Salvatierra, San Jose del Carmen, Urireo, El Capulín, El Sabino, and Maravatío del Encinal). Of these, 84.37% are men and the remaining 15.63% are women. The average age of these returned investors is 38.42 years. Education levels of the remittance-based business owners are not high. However, they tend to have a higher standard of schooling than those who stayed behind. Thus we find that 6.25% have unfinished elementary studies, and 25% completed primary school; 40.62% achieved secondary education, and 25% finished high school education. The highest level obtained by a returning migrant is a technical degree (3.12%), with bachelor's and graduate levels being absent.

Most of the returned investors (53.12%) do not have legal documents to go to America. The rest are legal permanent residents (34.37%) or are hired on temporary work programs (9.37%), or have a tourist visa (3.12%). It is noteworthy that none has the status of an American citizen, even though in recent years this process has become an option for many Mexican migrants due to the available benefits.

Looking at the age of return migrants when they first went to the United States we note that 53.12% were in the range of 15-20 years and 25% between 21 and 30. We note that only 3.12% were between 1 and 14 years. Therefore, we may infer that child migrants are less likely to return to their country of origin due to the diminished socialization and the few experiential cultural references with the community origin. It is very difficult to return 40 years after first migrating, since, as we explained some migrants interviewed feel that as they advance in age, their work capacity decreases, and so too the desire to save and start a business. Younger people are more likely to work overtime and have a stronger desire to invest, climb the social ladder, empower oneself through conspicuous spending and show off the role of being a success and replete in assets. Hence, we observe that 15.62% were 31 to 40 years, and only 3.12% were 41 years or older.

The decision to migrate, the hardships in adapting, the difficulties saving, negotiating with family to plan and opt for return, and complications, lead to a deadline for final return being set. The dream of many migrants to one day return to their land dies out as their stay abroad is prolonged. New routines, unprecedented lifestyle, new social spheres, family reintegration, economic asymmetries, adaptation to the otherness of the environment and culture, reverse the initial intention to live out their last years in their town. If returning is difficult, it becomes even more complex to become an entrepreneur.

Upon inspection, the average duration of the work stay in the United States of returning migrants was 10.68 years. We studied the respondents by duration and found that 18.75% only lasted 1-5 years, and 34.37% of returning migrants spent between 6 and 10 years in the United States, 21.8% spent 11-15 years, falling to 12.5% who lived abroad for 16-20 years, the remaining 12.5% spent between 21 and 30 years in the United States. In other words, more than half of returnees (53.12%) work for 1-10 years in this country before returning to invest.

The reasons adduced for moving to the United States were economic and cultural, such as the lack of labor opportunities, for further study, to help their parents, unemployment, inadequate wages, the children arranging legal documents, family members finding them jobs, following the husband, problems with relatives of their spouse, the illusion of knowing the United States, to have a house and a business.

Economic necessity is understandably one of the main causes of migration. Of those studied, 53.12% worked in agriculture before going to America, others were employed as drivers, carpenters, in grain warehouses, bakeries or were housewives, helped their parents to care for livestock and the farm.

Return migrants mostly (68.75%) settled in only one state in the United States. Texas and California each housed 18.75%, followed by Illinois with 9.37%, and 6.25% resided in Florida. The states where they were less likely to reside included Colorado, Georgia, Arizona, Tennessee, and Michigan with 3.12% each. Meanwhile, 31.25% of migrants settled in various states of the country, which shows that returning migrant investors had little geographical mobility in their years abroad.

The work expertise and skills learnt are diverse and we found that 65.62% of these migrants served in various jobs, and the remaining 34.37% worked at only one job during their period of stay in the United States. Those who worked in only one job were mainly dedicated to agriculture and gardening. Moreover, those who worked in several jobs worked in agriculture, construction, factories, gardening, and restaurants.

The types of return migration serve to clarify the different causes, consequences, and classifications of this phenomenon. Thus we find returnees who are motivated by entrepreneurship, others due to family reasons, retirement, illnesses, or by chance, either by deportation or death. In our case, one segment of investor returned as planned 84.37%, and 15.62% had to go back for reasons of deportation, family problems, or divorce, among others.

Within this spectrum of causes and motivations that allowed the migrant to plan and wish to return, there are considerations ranging from economic to family, cultural and psychological. The arguments presented by these entrepreneurs that went to the United States for a period to save money and start a business in their hometown. Many migrants planned to marry a woman from their hometown, missed their families, the people, their traditions, and the tranquility, wanted to work the land of their fathers, and other more sensitive reasons such as disease and caring for a family member.

Frequent visits to their place of origin (cyclic or return visit) ensure a more immediate or inevitable return. In this case, 34.37% of respondents made just one round trip coming over the course of 8-22 years and said they had to last without coming to their town. On the other hand, 65.62% made several visits to their place of origin. Although we note that 40.62% reported that the frequency of their visits was between several times a year and every other year. Thereby noticing that most returning investors did not make periodic trips. The nature of the transnational relationship was different.

Hence, we also understand that 52.25% said that if they had a hard time adapting to their place of origin, 34.37% said that it cost them nothing, and the remaining 9.37% only a little. Reintegration was difficult as they argued that the work, food, and routine are different, plus one earns very little and the standard of living is diametrically dissimilar. Another explanation is the absence of friends and family who have left the village either by migration or death. The major arguments for why the adaptation was so difficult are that they like to be here more, and the United States was only one step in order to save and ultimately return.

When approached about whether they liked their stay in the US 82.75% agreed, but 10.34% responded with a resounding no, and 6.89% said more or less. Those that liked it was because of the comforts and because they have more opportunities in terms of work, leisure, and savings. While cultural differences, the attachment to the land and the routine life were the main reasons for not liking to live on American soil.

Migrants saved at least \$10,000 to \$ 15,000 USD, and the maximum was between \$50,000 and \$ 150,000 USD. Most returned migrant investors saved through family members, for example, they sent savings to their wife or mother who then deposited it in a Mexican bank account, others chose to deposit in a US bank, and few saved cash in their homes.

However, not all returning migrants intended to invest their savings in productive activity in Mexico at the time of going to America. Of the respondents, 40.62% thought about this possibility before leaving, and 43.75% considered it when they were already in the United States, and the remaining 15.62% after deciding to return and were established again in their place of origin. We consider that a history of family businesses significantly influenced whether or not the returned migrant made the decision to invest, 65.21% of respondents had a family background in business. The other 34.78% said they had not inherited the entrepreneurial spirit.

In recent years, various forms of productive migrant investment have been triggered. Some people decide to start a business in the foreign country of residence, or through remittance-based businesses, or they return and invest. The obvious question is why returning migrants do not choose to stay in the United States and start a company in that country. Answers include sentiments such as it being harder, they are more stringent and ask many more requirements, and some did not because they were undocumented. Cultural reasons were also important, respondents want to be in touch with their roots and traditions and want to return to be with their family, friends, and acquaintances. These intangible reasons were also what respondents thought first when they were asked about why they would go back to a poorer country and leave behind the comforts of a nation with higher income and economic development.

Similarly to the remittance-based businesses, returning migrants invested their money in buying land for cultivation, grocery stores, carpenter, bakeries, butchers, fruit stands, restaurants, taco stands, body shop, and paint, hardware, among others. Moreover, like a remittance-based business, they are self-employed or employ few people. Businesses with the highest number of workers do not exceed five employees.

Another issue that stands out is related to government support for returning migrant investors. It appears that they have not received any support. On the contrary, many consider the government an institution that "instead of giving, takes it away from", and "it only steals". Many hear through the media about government help, but they do not know how and who receives the support. On the other hand, they were favorable in terms of the ease of legally establishing their business, such as filing the official paperwork. For 79.16%, it was not difficult while it was more difficult for 16.66% who were ignorant of the registration procedure.

Returning migrants bring different skills, habits, and knowledge they learned in their journey across the United States. They said they learned to live independently, to do housework such as cooking, washing, ironing, and also to work hard, be responsible, punctual and fend for oneself. Other important insights were learning English, handling tools and modern machinery, developed skills in building, painting, gardening, farming, and livestock, to interact with and manage staff, and auto mechanics. Others claimed that it taught each of them to grow personally, to think more reflectively, and learn about a modern, urbanized, and cosmopolitan world.

Many, 60.71%, feel a little frustrated because there is no relationship between the work and skills learned in the United States with the work they perform in their place of origin. Even when they are business owners, the nature of their business is far removed from work abroad. By contrast, 39.28% have said that the work is related, mainly in the field, building, and painting and baking. However, what was most praised was work ethic, effort, housework and English is what helps them in their daily lives.

Finally, and contrary to what one might think, 62.06% of returnee business owners think they would go back to the United States because they believe that life is better, and many have children living in that country. Others argue they would go back to save more and reinvest in the business, and others so that their children could study in America. For the remaining 37.93%, the reasons why they would not like to return to the northern neighbor were because the business is running, for not possessing legal documents, and because the entire family moved back with them, or other cultural arguments such as feeling freer in Mexico and its traditions.

Conclusion

The migration of Mexicans to the United States has wrought substantial changes in recent decades that constitute both the accumulation of previous trends and the effect of short term structural processes. Thus, the acceleration of the sheer number of migrants recorded in recent years form part of a wider trend in international migration since the eighties, partly a result of the stimulus for spatial mobility fostered by globalization. In other words, although there is a continuous, unidirectional, and centuries-old migration between two neighboring countries, the current intensity, size, and dynamism are unprecedented.

A century-old migration (which is very likely to be the longest-running contemporary migration flow worldwide), which has incidentally been surrounded by complex and contradictory circumstances that should be understood to observe the most significant changes that have occurred over the course time, and especially discover the watershed, milestones, and characteristics of contemporary migration as a new stage in scope, technology, mass, transnationality, and new migration patterns. The issue of remittances, its causes, and consequences in recent decades does not escape this complexity.

We observed the issue of migrant remittances and investment, which raise transcendental theoretical and methodological challenges. Depending on the scope of the research and analysis, either global, regional, or local, or urban or rural, and the epistemological models and paths applied, the results will yield different conclusions. Although the positive and negative effects have been discussed for years, controversy is still recent enough to review much of the current literature on the subject, to understand the differences in both the theoretical approaches and the findings of the impacts on communities, regions, and the countries involved. These are some of many topics discussed in the current and complex migration phenomenon.

For the state of Guanajuato, this is no small matter. International migration to the United States has a long history in the state. Therefore there have been multiple effects on many localities and municipalities. Without a doubt, social and economic remittances have disrupted the heartstrings of the region. For public policy, systematic comprehension, and holistic understanding of the phenomenon of Migration, and particularly migrant investment, a more selective analysis has its merits, and an understanding of context beyond shortsighted triumphalism.

The implication of this discussion is that the remittance investment and the investor surpass volitional and subjective considerations of potential entrepreneurs. The interweaving of macro-, meso-, and micro-structural conditions are essential to realize projects of this nature. Undoubtedly, the migrant spends productive investment, in many cases, well-oiled by family networks. Either through altruism or self-interest, the machinery of remittances, remittance-based businesses and, return investors starts up. However, it does not end there. It is necessary to take into account other variables such as macroeconomic institutional support from government and private institutions, political and social uncertainty, natural resources and infrastructure, dynamic local and regional markets, savings, local and family business background, perspectives, abilities, knowledge and skills of migrants, among other factors.

There is nothing wrong about resources entering by way of migrant investment and migrant transnational ties to Guanajuato. The potential of migrant entrepreneurship is considerable, however they lack guidance and support, keeping in mind that business vocations do not occur in spurts, and considering personal qualities, and external conditions.

Through interviews, it was possible to identify the main factors that influence migrants in Salvatierra, who invest in their community through their families. Moreover, in the case of returnees, the three phases of the migration experience, pre-migration, and the stay in the United States were detailed, although we focused on the returned migrants. For the first phase, we obtained data on socio-demographic and economic variables such as employment, skills, marital status, sex, leaving age, educational level, and migrant family history. For the phase of residence abroad, we obtained data on places of residence, work performed, income, savings, remittances, visits, and contacts to the community, legal status, and duration. And for the stage of return and investment, we were able to document the causes and conditions of macro-, meso- and micro-structures, entrepreneurial spirit and its relation to the work histories of their parents, the age of return, financial capital brought, the kind of business built, skills, habits and behaviors that might not apply to the particular conditions of the community, and their intentions to emigrate to the United States.

The aim of this comparative study was to put the causes and consequences of remittance based business and returning migrant investors into perspective, in the context of a municipality with high migration in Guanajuato, Mexico. We observed that the determinants and their impacts are diverse and of transcendental importance for the communities in the municipality. This research is preliminary, allowing us to open new lines of investigation of these two facets of the migration phenomenon.

Most of the literature on the impact of remittances, which is abundant, and returnees, who are little studied, has focused on the economic, productive, or non-productive impacts and its potential to boost economic growth. There is less research on the impact of this phenomenon in stimulating change within a variety of economic and sociocultural institutions and local status hierarchies, spaces and architecture, patterns and consumption norms, the decisive influence on the expectations about the life trajectories of children and youth, the collective imagination, symbolism and psycho-cultural motivations.

Finally, we are aware of the complexity of the phenomenon of migrant investment in its different facets. However, we hope to have fulfilled our modest aim of putting the potential economic and social remittances into a comprehensive, economic, and sociocultural perspective in Salvatierra, Guanajuato, Mexico. In future research, we aim to study the current impact of monetary, social, and cultural migratory value flows to the State.

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