

Illusions, sacrifices and results. The actual scenario of remittances of migrants to the United States.

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- ❖ Migration is the most important political, economic, social, cultural and demographic phenomenon of the last century.
- ❖ In the present, it constantly continues to grow.
- ❖ Initially, only males migrated, but in recent years, females have also started to migrate.
- ❖ See both faces of migration.

Some causes of migration:

- Economy liberalization processes.
- Free trade agreements, far from reducing the gap between signing countries, has widened it.
- The Mexican rural sector moved from having an important presence in the State to one of free market.



- Speculative economy
- Predominance of multinationals
- Increase in poverty and concentration of wealth
- Increase in labor force needing work



Ways in which migration has been analyzed:

- Neoclassic: pull factors from receiving countries.
- Segmented markets: Demand of labor force in developed countries.
- New migration economy: Emphasis on individual decisions.



- Networks: maintain the process and make it easier.
- Capitalist expansion brings about mechanisms by which non-capitalist economies are inserted into a global market economy.
- Theory of Articulation: how the different sectors of the economy come together.
- Social change and functional imbalance.

Economic explanation:

- 21.8 billion dollars enter the country in the form of remittances.
- Remittances are the largest source of income, after oil.
- They are the support for the economies of poor rural families in Mexico.
- Remittances are a survival strategy.
- Migration is caused by poverty but it is a way to overcome it.

Work in the destination point:

- Getting a job is the first motivation for migrants.
- Their previous work experience helps them get low-specialisation jobs, sometimes with no social or work security.
- Services, cleaning, meat packing, farmwork are jobs they generally take.



- It implies cultural and social changes and segregation.
- Work hours are long and some bosses are arrogant.
- Wages are low, yet higher than what they are paid in their country.
- Remittances satisfy everyday needs of the family that stays in the place of origin. And to "pay the expenses" here – "pagar los biles".



Increasing presence of women in migration processes:

- According to the Consejo Nacional de Población (National Population Council), around 25,000 women migrate yearly.
- It is a heterogeneous group that undergoes great stress due to the conditions of vulnerability that they are in when they leave their homes.
- They have been noticed to be dependent of men.



• Women have been studied little, as bearers of social change.

Causes of female migration:

- Breaking of the classical vision of family.
- Men are no longer the only providers.
- The **patriarchic** structure is being affected by changes in the work process and women's awareness.
- Proliferation of large, incomplete families, female leadership.



- Increase of transnational and binational families.
- Problems of solitude, rootlessness, poverty, lack of networks.
- Family reunification (irreversible processes if women migrate).



Home and education as a cause of migration:

- Offspring born in Mexico or U.S.A. are not interested in an education.
- Those in Mexico are thinking on going north from an early age.
- The desire to make money is more important than education.



- Difficulty of illegal migrants to get better jobs and improve education.
- The construction of a house is another priority that translates into large houses, far from rural Mexican style and almost empty in the towns. For wives, the places are "cold" due to the absence of a husband.
- Despite the difficulties for obtaining resources, investing in luxury goods (large cars) is quite common.



Emotional cost of migration:

- Emotional traumas in women who stay (they believed happiness was to have a united family).
- Alcoholism (translated into violence) when they return to their towns.
- If they travel with their husbands, they are not allowed out of the house and are locked inside all day.
- They are not allowed to work either.



- Difficulty of raising children in the town with parents absent.
- Their children don't remember their fathers when these go back home.
- They face problems crossing the border with "coyotes" and possible kidnappings for more ransom.

New roles of women in local and transnational spaces

- Insertion in the labor market (increased autonomy).
- Modifies productive and reproductive functions and power relations, not only for the migrant women, but also for those that stay behind.



- Reorganization of the domestic group and the activities they carry out.
- Complement family income with productive community activities.
- For women that stay behind, community networks can be a support or they may mean the reproduction of patriarchic power.

Roles of networks (in the towns and in the destination)

- They ensure permanence of migration.
- Generally move to places in which relatives have settled down.
- Networks provide information on job opportunities, living conditions and access to services.
- Keep in contact with people in the towns.

- Expectations of returning.
- Increasingly hard due to difficulty to cross border.
- They live for the day, but believe they could not survive in Mexico.
- Expectations of their children learning English and have better opportunities.
- Those who have families in the U.S.A. do not consider returning.

