Mexican Educational Policy Implementation:
A Study on Outward Migration as a Social Influence in the Primary School Classroom

Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

In the discussion of immigration among policy and lawmakers as well as the news media, focus is typically on the phase when the migrants are already in their place of destination. Nonetheless, there seems to be fewer examples of scholar research of the migrant communities before they start their journey and at their place of origin. Given the circumstances under which Mexican migrants decide to cross the border to the US, it is necessary to understand their cultural and educational background. This study focuses on the teachers as intermediaries between the Mexican government and Mexican primary students who belong to transnational families given their socio-cultural upbringing. Using a mixed methodology that includes discourse analysis, semi-formal interviews and teacher surveys, I explore the attitudes of teachers as “street level bureaucrats” regarding their work and its relationship to the social and emotional development of Mexican students who come from transnational families. Over the time that this study was conducted it became evident that the attitudes of teachers varied among beginning teachers and those with more experience. This study also examined the formal curriculum content and the teacher’s readiness to adapt it to the different social contexts of students.

KEY WORDS: TEACHERS, AGENCY, STUDENT, MIGRATION
Dedication

I dedicate this work to my children Denzel Ramon, Alita and Victoria, who are my pride, my comfort and my reason to never give up.

I also would like to dedicate this to my family, especially to my mother Maria Elena who taught me to be persistent and resilient. Mamá, te quiero mucho. Descansa en paz.

And to my sister Adriana whose encouragement has become essential in my life.

To the shelter of New Beginnings and the Licking County Coalition for Housing who received me with open arms when I most needed it.

To all the beautiful people I have met since I came to Ohio and who have been making this journey full of wonderful memories and have been there to hold me up through thick and thin: Yvette, Deb, Jeanine, Tammy and the Gebara’s, James, Mariela, Karen, Dwan, Gonzalo, Danielle, Miriam, Stefanie, Laura and the Segna’s, Sharen and the Rice Family, Janet and family, Brandie, Fran, Katie and family, Dr. Antoinette Errante, Aldo… and many others.

To Dr. Marcia Farr, for understanding and believing in me when even I doubted myself.

To my friends in Mexico who are always available to communicate, and especially Veronica who is always ready to talk on the phone whenever I need it.
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Fields of Study

Major Field: Education in the School of Policy and Leadership.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .............................................................................................................. ii

Dedication ............................................................................................................ iii

Acknowledgments .............................................................................................. iv

List of figures ...................................................................................................... xi

List of abbreviations ........................................................................................... xi

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION ........................................................................... 1
  Paradigms .......................................................................................................... 3
  Research questions and hypotheses ................................................................. 8
  Theoretical Framework ....................................................................................... 9
  Statement of the Problem .................................................................................. 11
  Delimitations ..................................................................................................... 12
  Definition of terms ............................................................................................ 13
  Summary ........................................................................................................... 15

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .................................................................. 16
  Theories in Educational Policy ........................................................................ 16
  History of Mexican educational policy making ............................................ 25
  Conditions in the educational system at the State level ................................ 52
Migration studies and emergent themes related to education.................55

Constructivism in the Social Sciences and its application to Comparative Education..................................................63

A critical theory for the context of the impact of migration on Mexican Education.........................................................65

Summary and contributions to the literature........................................69

CHAPTER 3: STUDY SITE, METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS........71

Research design.............................................................................71

Study site and sampling..................................................................73

Data Generation: A multimethod approach........................................75

  Anonymous teacher survey.........................................................78

  Semi structured interviews and focus groups...............................79

  Textbook analysis......................................................................81

  Secondary data.........................................................................82

Data analysis..................................................................................83

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS.................................................................88

Context of the study.................................................................91

The migration experience as a family........................................91

Family life......................................................................................92

The influence of the community and the culture of migration.........96

Aspirations for adulthood..........................................................97
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official discourse</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Textbooks</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROBLEM</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The perspective of teachers as mediators within micro and macro</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ opinions</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions to be drawn based the findings</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation for the findings</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of the study in terms of what was learned</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths, weaknesses, and limitations of the study</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications for professional practice or decision making</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications for a scholarly understanding</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications for the theory building</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications for future research</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations for further research</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A: Teachers Survey</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B: Map of Mexico with delimitation of Jalisco</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C: Map of Jalisco with delimitation of Villa Corona</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Figures

Figure 1.1. Categories of knowledge.................................................................8

Figure 1.2. Diagram of the research subject.........................................................11
List of abbreviations

CONALITEG: Consejo Nacional de Libros de Texto Gratuito (National Council of Free Textbooks)

INEGI: Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, Geografía e Informática (National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics)

NAFTA: North American Free Trade Agreement

PROBEM: Programa Binacional de Educación al Migrante (Binational Program for the Education of Migrants)

SEP: Secretaria de Educación Pública (Secretary of Public Education)

STF: Students of transnational families

SNTE: Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores para la Educación (National Teachers Union)

ANMEB: Acuerdo Nacional para la Modernización de la Educación Básica (National Agreement for the Modernization of Basic Education)
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Scholars in the field of education have done little research to understand the nature of the needs of migrant children before they begin their journey. Although there is an increasing emphasis in the study of childhood and migration this kind of research tends to focus on education as a secondary variable to explain life conditions in this population.

In the 1990’s the Mexican government joined the international trends towards liberalization, privatization and decentralization of many sectors that normally were considered public and had been under public administration. Within these new trends, the Mexican government joined the USA and Canada by signing the NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement). The agreement included in its statutes the gradual opening of the borders to free trade among enterprises within these three countries (http://www.ustr.gov). Therefore, job market and life standards have been gradually changing as well, resulting in changes of expectations of employment in Mexico. In particular, it opened labor markets in the Unites States.

The social issues of education and migration are closely linked but such relationship has been largely ignored thus far. As Macias (1990: pg. 292) mentions: “The immigrant educational experience in the United States is rarely examined in its full context as a transition from one constellation of related phenomena schooling that takes
place within a particular family, institutional, social and cultural environment to another, nonequivalent set of experiences in the United States.” Although Macias’ observation is focused and explains problems within the US educational system, his position reinforces the evidence of the strong need to revise the education of children, especially those from transnational families. Demography, labor relations and healthcare are principal concerns in the existing research, nevertheless some other issues still remain insufficiently explored. This is a concern for Macias.

The fact that the experience of migration has an impact on the development of the child is unquestionable¹. Given this premise, we need to explore a paradigm that will connect different sectors of Mexican society and government and their impact in the US sociopolitical field. This outlook is increasingly required since migrants emerge as a transnational culture that has an unquestionable impact back into the fabric of the Mexican society. The social issues of education and migration are closely linked but such relationship has been largely ignored thus far. As Macias (1990: pg. 292) mentions: “The immigrant educational experience in the United States is rarely examined in its full context as a transition from one constellation of related phenomena schooling that takes place within a particular family, institutional, social and cultural environment to another, nonequivalent set of experiences in the United States.” Although Macias’ observation is focused and explains problems within the US educational system, his position reinforces the evidence of the strong need to revise the education of children, especially those from

¹ Debry (2010) illustrates this extensively.
transnational families. He agrees that research on the topic has been too narrow since it has focused only on demography, labor relations and healthcare. \(^2\)

**Paradigms**

The idea for examining how STF’s\(^3\) are represented in the curriculum came out of an effort to make an analysis of the interaction among education and the social reality of the child. I am doing this by considering several interrelated societal factors. In this sense, historical realism is the ontology behind this study. The issue analyzed here and what I am trying to observe has been shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, and ethnic and gender values that defines the state of the educational system in Mexico and the concern (or lack thereof) for the migration experience as an impending event in many children’s lives. This ontology is best framed as historical realism because the issue in question is

…apprehendable in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature (although elements are often shared among many individuals and even across cultures), and dependent for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions… (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, Pg. 110)

The study of Mexican education, regardless of the topic that the observer focuses on, has to include the historical facts that have shaped educational actors from the beginning of the establishment of the educational system in the beginning of the 20\(^{th}\)


\(^3\) From now on STF will be used to abbreviate students from transnational families.
century. Although I am not going into detail of how the Mexican educational system has evolved, I do not assume that the issue at hand is isolated from how studying the history of education in Mexico reveals, particularly in the choice of curriculum in Mexican education, the trajectory and evolution of the corresponding political trends that are shaping the nation (Chreighton and Park, 2010).

Migration has a strong national economic impact: in 2004, 2.75% of Mexico’s GDP was made up of remittances. Between 1990 and 2000, remittances sent within Mexican family networks added up to 45 thousand million USD (Banco de México, 2010). Further, migration has profound social impacts, to the point that scholars have coined the term “culture of migration.” It is inevitable, then, that the lives of children from transnational families are strongly shaped by the migration of their family members since they are left to the care of other close relatives and their relationship with parents and siblings is deeply affected. Achotegui (2004) explains the patterns in emotional and psychological disruptions that people suffer from transnational living by oneself or through family members. Additionally, through an extensive ethnological research over the period of 4 years, Debry (2010) shows how entire lives and generations are deeply shaped in this manner.

I approach this research with a focus on the interrelation between the traits of the Mexican social and political dynamics that affect the public school environment. I am therefore, using two perspectives: constructivism because of the outcomes that can be achieved with different discipline approaches to one issue; and critical theory because of the need for insight that can link education and migration in a holistic manner (Denzin

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4 For details about the term “culture of migration” refer to Kandel and Massey (2002).
and Lincoln, 2003). The problem that I explore in here pertains to binational politics and educational policy as well as the history of migration, the sociological patterns and the geographical proximity of Mexico and the US. I criticize the seemingly absent interest from scholars and policy makers to understand the complexity and multidimensional nature of migration and national development.

The purpose of this work is to unveil the different ways teachers are coping considering that their students of primary schools project themselves as adults and very often as migrants living in the US. The social context is something that is deeply affected by migration and teachers in primary schools are constantly adapting the national curriculum keeping in mind that a great proportion of their students belong to migrant families and that they are expected to migrate towards the US (Cornelius, 1989). Thus, I will explore the perspectives of teachers and other people involved in the education of children who belong to migrant families.

The basic significance of this study rests in the fact that research studies focusing on migration as an influencing factor in education are significantly more rare than the ones that study the migration phenomenon with Education as a secondary variable. Furthermore, its applied significance will be the reconsideration of the curriculum implemented in primary schools as something that could not be isolated from the social reality of the child. This so, especially because it is during those years that the emotional and social development of the student is highly influenced by the absence of family and/or community members who have migrated to the US.

5 As an example refer to Durand et al (1996a, b); Garcia (1981); Giorguli and Serratos (2009)
The approach of this work will be from the point of view of educators and policy makers who have traditionally worked with students in urban and rural areas of Mexico. Such communities are not excluded from the dynamics of social and economic trends and therefore migration is a factor that is undeniable in the dynamics within public primary schools. Teachers are classified as workers who represent the government as agents of public education (Lipsky, 1980; Honig, 2010; Croll et al, 1994). However, they also are members who belong to these communities and are well aware of the tradition of migration of people. Teachers’ work is continually influenced by the social context and therefore it is not difficult to assume that migration is a condition that has consequences in the students’ behaviors and attitudes towards schooling.

At a macro level, it is evident that efforts of the Mexican government to support the social and economic development of migrant communities are inconsistent. On one side, NAFTA is constantly changing the job market and the expectations of people even from childhood ages. On the other hand, we have the teachers as “street level bureaucrats” (Lipsky, 1980) representing the SEP (Department of Education) who are intermediaries between the educational policy makers and the students who are surrounded by a variety of factors that keep changing their social reality. It is reasonable to approach such an issue as another manifestation of the concept elaborated by Bhabha (2008) who perceives the inconsistency of the different branches of the State as extremely ambiguous.

In addition, Yuren et al. (2005) have shown that children of migrant-sending communities manifest disenchantment in schooling and the different abilities and wisdom
acquired while enduring poverty and the value that is given to the migration experience (See figure 1.1.). These authors also relate school desertion to problems that affect the child such as the fact of belonging to families with only one parent and their lack of access to school facilities. Yuren et al. argue that life in school contrasts drastically with the life that the context of poverty offers. In the first, a milieu that aspires to be structured along with vertical organization, irrelevant school subjects, strategies to undergo formal procedures such as standardized examinations, emphasis on school success measured by scorings, and the belief that formal schooling leads to social mobility, fall into total contradiction to the second. The context of poverty on the other hand, requires from the individual knowledge of socialization, learning by doing mistakes, self-regulation in the use of resources, self-motivation to search for learning strategies, low concern on school success and confidence in the assumption that important knowledge will be acquired outside of school.

These authors (Yuren 2004) created the following categories of knowledge:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>School Normality</th>
<th>Life in the real world within the poverty context</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Prevalence of theoretical knowledge in the contents and assessment criteria.</td>
<td>• Relevance of knowhow, knowing how to live in society and how to be as a person.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Assumption from the teacher that knowledge is only acquired through study.</td>
<td>• Competence acquisition through experience and learning from mistakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Topic with no relevance and unrelated to real life.</td>
<td>• Self-regulation of personal activities and administration of resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strategies to improve scores and no emphasis on the improvement of the quality of learning.</td>
<td>• Topics related to self-care and care of the other in real life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emphasis in school success and focus on scores.</td>
<td>• Self-designed strategies to search for learning situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Belief the schooling has social mobility as a consequence.</td>
<td>• Little concern about school failure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Confidence in that valuable</td>
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Research Questions and Hypotheses

Based on this classification and with the support of other theoretical propositions I will address the following questions:

1. What are the considerations that Mexican primary teachers give to the effects of family migration on their students’ social and emotional development?
2. How are the SEP and primary school teachers adapting the official curriculum to the needs of STF?
3. Do teachers as governmental agents and the SEP view migration as a condition that leads to obstacles or advantages in the development of STF’s?
4. How, if at all, is the Mexican government addressing career aspirations of the curriculum content?

By exploring these questions, I hope bring to light the need to consider public policies in a holistic view, since the actions taken by SEP and the economic initiatives taken by the government are in subtle interaction by offering individuals opportunities and sometimes obstacles for their own economic and social development. This work will also explain the need to include in the formal curriculum more explicitly the migration

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6 Secretaria de Educacion Publica (Ministry of Education)
7 From now on, I will use STF to abbreviate “students of transnational families.”
phenomenon as an event in STF’s lives as any other significant event that affects their academic performance and their expectations for development as adults.

According to the López Villar (2006), during the period between the years of 1990 through 2000, 96% of the international migrant population originated in Mexico headed towards the United States. Other authors (Cisneros et al., 2003) have sustained that for children from the year 2000, 20% of the migrant population. For children, reason given for migration is the intention to join the part of the family that has already left and the search for job opportunities.

Theoretical framework

I have built my theoretical framework on propositions such as the concept of "ambiguity" explained by Bhabha. She explains that governments and legislators in receiving nations tend to see migrants either as a social problem or as victims of the social dynamics. She questions this ambiguity by declaring that migrant children also have agency, as individuals who must cope with the system.

Human capital is defined by the OECD as the “knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes embodied in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being” (OECD, 2001). To further complete this notion McGinn and Street (1984) explain that in Mexico the reproduction of human capital has been traditionally collaborating with the market by maintaining and lowering labor costs without the intention to work for a better distribution of income. The OECD (2001) in the same document defines the social capital as “the networks together with shared norms, values,
and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups” (OECD, 2001, p.41). Portes (2000) describes social capital as “a source of social control”; “a source of family-mediated benefits”; and “a source of resources mediated by nonfamily networks.”

Overall, the central subject of study will be the role of teachers as intermediaries between the national and state educational policies, and the children as receptors of these policies through the curriculum and the way teachers deal with their societal problem that is so much ingrained in the interactions inside the classroom of primary schools in Mexico.

The diagram below represents a framework in which the central subject of research rests in the work of teachers who are not only government representatives or “street-level bureaucrats” (Lipsky, 1989), they are also immersed in the “culture of migration” as many of their own personal stories have been affected by such a familiar event. This premise allows us to conceive teacher performance as a regulating process in which the teacher negotiates the discrepancies from the macro-level approach of the formal curriculum, and the relevance at the micro level that the home and the local community have as an impact in the achievement and life expectations of their own students.
Statement of the Problem

As noted by Kandel and Kao (2000) sociological studies have shown over and over that families’ educational and career paths normally become models to their children, while for migrant families children are provided with psychological support and encouragement in their plans to migrate (pp. 19-20). The same authors concluded that “once children acquire decision-making autonomy in early adolescence, and normative and regulatory mechanisms for enforcing enrollment diminish, children become more strongly subject to the influences of occupational and educational activity within their homes and among their acquaintances and extended relatives” (pp. 30-31).

Implications for this are that it is during the years of secondary school (7th through 9th grades) that individuals who belong to migrant communities are already deciding
whether to migrate or keep going with their education at the preparatory level (10th through 12th). The priority in the minds of these children is to start earning money rather than continuing their studies (Debry, 2010). If they intend to continue their education, low English proficiency becomes a big obstacle.

**Delimitations**

Research for this study concentrated on a small community in the State of Jalisco. The town of Atotonilco el Bajo is part of the Villa Corona Municipality in the State of Jalisco, Mexico. Such a community offers an environment in which many families are affected by the fact that many of their members have migrated, although some of them return frequently. According to the “Consejo Nacional de Población” (Mexican Institution in Charge of Population Census), the population of the municipality was 15,196 for 2005. According to the same source, the number of schools was 17 for the year of 1995, with a total of 2,709 students and 112 teachers for the primary levels only.

Villa Corona is a traditional producer of corn, soy, beans, tomatoes and peppers, although the main industry is manufacturing. This rural community has slowly moved towards the city and/or the United States. In the year 2000, 18.20% of 3867 families in Villa Corona were considered Migrating Families (with at least one migrant member who had left). Additionally, 7.91% of the total families were considered “circulatory” migration family, in which the migrant members go and come back home, and leave again. In addition, 5.48% of the total families have members who have migrated but have returned definitely. This gives a migration rate of 2.50, which is considered a very high
index of migration intensity in relation to other municipalities (INEGI, 2008). The Mayor of Villa Corona, who viewed Atotonilco el Bajo as the community most affected by migration in the municipality, suggested the town chosen for the study.

Definition of terms

Throughout this study, I will use several terms. In the next lines, I lay out their definitions so the use of them will be clear as I present them in my study.

*Formal curriculum.* This concept includes the content of the textbooks as well as the explicit descriptions of what is essential in the education of a child given either during the training of teachers. The formal curriculum, according to the UNESCO, is “the planned program of objectives, content, learning experiences, resources and assessment offered by a school. It is sometimes called the 'official curriculum.'” (http://www.unesco.org/education).

*Hidden curriculum.* The hidden curriculum is the knowledge delivered to the student without being aware. This is due to predispositions, prejudices, stereotypes and behaviors that are embedded in the work of teachers as well as in the surroundings such as the classroom and school environments, teacher expectations of students in relation to gender, race, socio-economic status, disability, or any other factor that could be studied with the use of power structures. (Diaz Barriga, 2006)

Unesco also defines the hidden curriculum as “the lessons about behavior, personal relationships, the use of power and authority, competition, sources of motivation

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8 For maps of Mexico, Jalisco and Villa Corona, refer to appendices B and C
and so on that students learn at school” (http://www.unesco.org/education).

*Teachers as street level bureaucrats.* For Michael Lipsky (1980), teachers as well as other agents of social policy, are agents who cope with the conditions given by their own work places, while making an effort to accommodate to the directions and instructions given to them by a bigger bureaucratic structure. They, as Lipsky says, deal with “conflicts that they encounter wanting their organizational life to be more consistent with their own preferences and commitments.” The author says “Bureaucracy implies a set of rules and structures of authority; street level implies a distance from the center where authority presumably resides.” (P. xii)

*Students who belong to transnational families.* Kandel and Massey (2002) explain that “children from families involved in U.S. migration are more likely to aspire to live and work in the U.S. and that these aspirations, in turn, influence their behavior, lowering the odds that they will continue in school, and raising the odds of their eventual out-migration to the U.S.” This is explained by the authors while defining the “culture of migration” that many times have started as an economic reason but that it also has become a “cultural trait” of many Mexican communities as they start seeing the migrating experience as a step into adulthood. The concept of “students who belong to transnational families” will be abbreviated in this study as STF and it will refer to this specific population of students in the Mexican classrooms and it will also be limited to the primary level due to the crucially importance of this period in the social and
emotional development of the child.

Summary

The purpose of this study is to explore the role of teachers as mediators of the formal curriculum and the social and emotional context of the students in Mexican primary schools. In this chapter, I have exposed the scope in which perspectives of teachers might be imbued regarding the nature of the culture of migration and its insidiousness in the lives of people and particularly in schools. I mentioned several theories and concepts that I utilize to answer the four research questions that guide this study. In the next chapter, I discuss the existing literature on educational policy and its correlation to STF’s probability of migrating. This is a point of obvious influence in the success of people and nations and yet the crucial nature of the migration-related issues makes it too obvious to count on education as a possible point of influence in the betterment of the lives of people either migrants or non-migrants. In chapter 3, I provide a detailed account of the research methodology I used for the exploration of the questions exposed in this introduction. In chapter 4, I present the findings that I obtained after making a thorough analysis of the data obtained and the implications that they have for educational policy. Chapter 5 subsequently helps to explain the limitations of this study and the different suggestions for further research and future questions to explore. After a thorough analysis, I develop some of the implications that stem from the findings. I also make recommendations for further research concerning educational policy and present my conclusions.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I review theories and empirical studies of the issues related to culture of migration and the educational policy particular to the Mexican system. I begin with the overview of studies of migration regarding the treatment of children in the academic world and its position towards the definition of childhood in the scope of education in the 21st century. Then, I describe the Mexican history regarding the education in general and its traditional considerations to cultural diversity and the consideration of the social context of the students. I also describe the structure through which the Mexican educational policies are implemented. In this section, I include the branch and dynamics of the administration of free textbooks and the Program created especially for the education of migrants. Subsequently, I introduce the work of the department of education in the state of Jalisco regarding the reforms in the administration in the period of 2001 through 2007. At the end of this chapter I present a summary of what is known and the still unknown regarding Mexican Educational Policy and its relationship with Migration as a social factor, that trickles its effect down to the dynamics in the classroom.

Theories in Educational Policy

Since the late 90’s some experts in curriculum reform have invited the research
community to consider research agendas that are flexible and resilient and the labor
demands and recognition of rights are in constant negotiation with industrial and post
industrial practices in the labor market and within countries as they become the arena for
enterprise competition. Dimitriadis and Kamberelis (1997) contended the international
theory of center-periphery as being obsolete due to its prescriptive nature. “In fact”, they
declare, “education is becoming increasingly linked with business interests as institutions
are embracing –often as a last resort- the promise of technology in an uncritical fashion.”
The economic liberalization that prevails nowadays in international negotiations provides
an environment in which “companies can draw students into a constructed set of cultural
and economic circumstances as if these circumstances were both neutral and inevitable”
(p. 144).

Scholars have created theoretical propositions that define the dynamics of social
policy creation and implementation. The educational system is guided by various forces
within which teachers evolve as they enter the workforce and become experienced
teachers. In Street-level bureaucracy (1980), Lipsky explains that individuals in public
services cope with pressures from above by creating some leeway for their individual
interests and, to some degree, providing a service that they find proper for the given
circumstances. Those who make it to retirement have dealt with contradictions and
“develop conceptions of their work and of their clients (students and parents) that narrow
the gap between their personal and work limitations and their service ideals” (Lipsky,
1980, p. xv). Lipsky essentially concludes that exercise of discretion is a crucial
dimension of the bureaucratic workers. In addition, that they have to settle for a kind of
service that is less than ideal because they lack time, information and other resources necessary to provide the best service for each individual case. Teachers adapt to the work conditions, according to Lipsky’s view, developing some routines and psychological coping skills that allow them to stay in the job and yet tend to be “unfair” for their students and/or the different conditions that affect the teacher-student relationship. If we take Lipsky’s perspective on the work of teachers in schools in migrant communities, the service of teaching is given with little freedom of choice from the part of the client (STF in this case) who normally has no economic means to pursue another kind of education. In consequence, the students and families have to abide to the conditions already in place for their schooling with little room to request improvement in the services they receive. Teachers, however, as Street Level Bureaucrats try to reach a balance between their common practices either in the classroom and those that pertain to the administration. Lipsky explains that the street level bureaucrats create coping mechanisms to fit into a margin of satisfaction with the given conditions provided by the schools and the educational system as a whole (Lipsky, 1980).

The reforms that are being borrowed and spread among nations through standardization reveal what Dimitriadis and Kamberelis (1989) denounce as the ideology of contemporary education which is liberal and pluralist and which renders the questions of difference, distribution and mobility in terms of equity and not in terms of social justice.

Regarding fairness in the provision of public services, Stone (2002) declares that inequality will always be a characteristic in the practice of policymaking and
implementation. However, she explores how this inequality is influenced by the governmental agencies and the priorities at the core of a bureaucratic structure. She then uses the metaphor of a cake that has to be shared and yet no matter what criteria is taking it to make the repartition fair, the outcome will end up giving relatively less quality or quantity to some members of the community. To understand this paradox, she analyzes the recipients of the service, the item (education in this case) and the process through which distribution is done. Systems can provide services regarding the direction of the implementation, which can be horizontal or vertical. It can also be based on the ranks defined by the merits of the providers.

Fairness in provision of services also depends on a given epistemology that defines property, which could be an individual or a collective creation. In this sense, Stone explains that

“If one conceives of property and value as individually created, then one is likely to favor policies that respect individual freedom to acquire and use things as one wish. If one conceives of property and value as socially created, one is more likely to favor redistributive policies that guarantee everyone some access to socially created goods” (Stone, 2002, p. 59)

Another dimension to analyze the fairness of public policy is the level of “efficiency” of the service provision. This evaluation of efficiency depends on the priority given to the aims in which a government or system chooses to spend its financial resources and on how the outcomes are measured. In the case of STF’s, priority is obviated regarding the particular demands that some communities present.

Another important idea from Stone (2002) is the assertion that roles of providers sometimes do not correspond to the people who actually take those roles and the
individual has to be flexible enough to match to the specific role. The roles, generally, imply duties and obligations that may not be acceptable when given to the individual without the role. The symbolism of words also plays in the way priorities are set regarding the provision of services, and, in this case, education.

The educational policy making towards STF’s is inferred by the absence of it in their representation in the curriculum as well as the tacit understanding that migration is part of life and nothing can be done about it from the point of view of education.

Some authors like Raab (1994) recognize that there cannot be a direct identification from the legislation of policies to the actual outcomes. As many other concepts in the policy making research, the policy implementation is still contested by different authors while trying to match the official discourse with the actual implementation of such regulations to the work of educators and the unexpected results that may be collateral to the intended outcomes. It is as controversial as trying to divide the dichotomies of global vs. local, micro vs. macro and the structure vs. agency. In the study of educational policy research, Raab (1994) mentions the concepts of “top to bottom or bottom to top” approaches, the redefinition of state, the formal and informal “policy networks.” He also tries to illustrate the use of the concepts of “networks”, “market” and “hierarchy.” There is also, according to Raab, the “governance perspective.” A concrete example of this would be the PROBEM as an initiative to attend to STF’s needs and their families. After all, the aforementioned concepts are dissected in order to make a better theoretical framework that would allow the researcher to ponder over the policy making process without excluding the actual results at the “street level.”
The teacher as the focus of this study is part of a bureaucratic structure with hierarchies that highly influences their level of agency as individuals. A way to explain such reality is well expressed by Klesner (2003) who said:

Mexicans who tended to see themselves as “subjects” instead of “participants” were simply reacting rationally to the clientelist institutions that had been created in the 1930s and 1940s. Indeed, in research based on surveys conducted in the 1970’s…that Mexicans held democratic attitudes.

Although the agency of Mexican teachers cannot be described in a simple way, this project demonstrates to some degree the level of freedom teachers hold in their classroom interactions with migrant children.

In *Beyond Agency*, Fuchs (2001) makes a more sophisticated analysis concerning the perceived dichotomy between agency and structure. He says that such polarization makes an obstacle to a more realistic approach on the work of bureaucrats. “Becoming micro or macro,” Fuchs says, “are not reversible or incompatible.” No matter how big the organization, it comprises smaller groups of more personal interactions among agents. Teachers (for this case) are agents that have to negotiate constantly between their resistance and their accommodation to the structure and the individual needs of their students and themselves. The role of a teacher is linked to a certain status and expectations from the clients that make it difficult to see outcomes as mere effects that can be objectively analyzed or even conceived. However, the intentions of a new teacher can differ considerably in contrast with the intentions of an experienced teacher and yet the results have sometimes very little to do with these. Fuchs states, “Where routines and repetitiveness rule, structure takes precedence over agency, since discretion and
individualism are neither being observed nor encouraged then.” Accordingly, the teacher intentions matter more in less routinized bureaucracy, thus how teachers see their agency and the structure they work in matters more than the validity of these concepts for the researchers. In his conclusions, Fuchs says that

“as a variable, ‘agency’ increases when the numbers are small, the distance [between policy maker and agent] is short, the relations are intimate, and the observer takes an intentional stance; as a variable ‘structure’ increases when the numbers get larger, the distance between observer and referent becomes longer, and the observer employs more mechanical and deterministic explanatory frames.” (p. 40)

The elements to consider in this study include the educational policies at the federal and state level of Mexico that determine the curriculum included in textbooks and the professional training provided to teachers. As a basis for the analysis of such elements, I use the theoretical proposition of Lipsky (1989) that defines the teacher as a “street-level bureaucrat” along with the complementary propositions made by others such as the definition given by Fuchs (2001). By analyzing the concept of “agency” Fuchs established the artificiality of the dichotomy between “agency” and “structure” and he explains how both concepts are different variables but each is not exclusive from the other. Through empirical observations, it is obvious that policy agents (Teachers in this case) show fluidity depending on the circumstances and the interests that guide them at the moment. Such fluidity goes back and forth in the continuum of resistance and accommodation, and they receive a significant influence from factors such as roles, statuses and expectations from the agents. Intentions, according to Fuchs, matter more in relatively less routinized bureaucratic systems. Additionally, the constructivist stance of this author reveals that the way teachers see the agency they exert along with the
structural dynamics matters more than the validity of these concepts. In other words, it is more relevant to observe the teachers’ perceived roles within the school environment and beyond.

Valencia (2001) explains that social policies in Mexico (including Education) correspond to a model that could be localized somewhere between a “corporative” model and a “minimalist residual” model in which important social sectors are systematically excluded and left to the market and to discretionary clientelism. This explains, Valencia says, the popular trend of these excluded social sectors to seek ways to survive outside formal markets. Applied to the issue at hand, the “corporative” model signifies that the State represented by the SEP has been evolving towards a kind of decentralization that allows the advantage of a good education for those in a situation already privileged by their social and cultural capital. This leaves the discretion of interest groups like the teachers union to provide and/or deprive of incentives to those who conform to the system. In my research, the excluded social sectors are those families who are in the search for a better future and make the decision to migrate to the US.

When talking about Mexican education and the teacher as a bureaucrat we must not exclude the significant influence of the teachers union. Teacher unions in Latin America hold very strong political influence. In the case of Mexico, the Teacher’s Union (SNTE for National Union of Educational Workers in Spanish) has so much influence that practically every teacher has to become a member without being given the option to
opt out. This universal membership among teachers has been tacitly affiliated to the PRI⁹. For almost five decades, the SNTE has been characterized as vertical and centralistic. This makes educational reform more complicated because these descriptions have to match the union’s interests. Even though the strikes are very influential, the personal interests and needs of the common teacher are not easily taken care of due to the pervasive prevalence of the union’s powerful demands and conditions given by the highest hierarchies within their own bureaucratic system (Heckok, 2006 and Street, 1992).

Another crucial aspect of the work of teachers in Mexico is the lack of understanding between the personal needs of the teacher in contrast with the interests that the Union holds as a priority. As an example, as we will see in the findings, teacher’s absenteeism is promoted with the systematic rotation of teachers. There is also an informal ladder in which the teachers have to climb to have access to “better positions” that provide better services or closer to their place of residence or origin and these positions are often at the disposition of leaders within the union. Teachers in some rural communities are often pressed to leave those places and the merits within the union can help speed up this process that does not have to correspond to the time that the school year is in session. Ezpeleta and Weiss (1996) denounce that even though there are programs in place to provide a more stable presence of teachers in rural schools, the politicization of the teacher profession is too strong to be solved in the near future.

The excessive political power of the SNTE can be partially attributed to its

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⁹ Partido Revolucionario Institucional. The political party that ruled for more than sixty years.
function within the government to exert dominance over a very significant part of the population (Street, 1992). The union shares the responsibility to sustain a system of political control of in-service teachers.

In the next pages, we will see how the education making in Mexico has evolved along with the intertwined history of the Union both as part of the system and as an informal but recognized tool of dominance of teachers as they have intended to exert some agency.

**History of Mexican Educational Policy**

After a long history of foreign influence in politics and economy, Mexican educators in the second half of the 20th century intended to build an educational structure within which patriotic love and national common values would be promoted. This evolution did not happen without continuous reconsiderations on how and why the textbook policymaking was being implemented.

The third article of the Mexican Constitution provides the compulsory character of Mexican education, which at that time was expected to be only for the primary grades (1st through 6th). Nowadays the compulsory levels go from 1st through 12th, meaning all six primary grades and three secondary. The system is now getting ready to include preschool and kindergarten grades as compulsory. This legal provision also demands for education to be free. The creation of the free textbook program was intended to give the opportunity to the student to become an agent of his/her own education, giving him/her the elements to link both school and home while allowing equal opportunity of education
By summarizing five different periods in the history of Mexican education, Chreighton and Park (2010) define the political tendencies and their results in educational organization at the national level:

- The first period (1936-1946) is the one that was defined by the political struggles remaining from the Mexican revolution. This “socialist” period is marked by the promotion of class consciousness and equal access to education. Such movement resulted in the amendment to the article 3 that assures the equal access to education to every person.

- The “transition” period (1946-1958) was a time for reconciliation and consolidation (Cardiel Reyes, 1981) and it was focused on the expansion of the system without much coherence in the educational reforms.

- The “11 year plan period” (1959-1975) was a time for expansion especially focused in the infrastructure and, to guarantee equal access to primary and lower-secondary education (Mier y Terán Rocha and Romero, 2003). School enrollment and educational investment increased in unprecedented quantities. It was during this period that the initiative to provide free textbooks to every student in the nation took place. (After the definition of the next periods, I will go back to explain in detail the history and background of this very important initiative). The budget for education increased up to 40% of the GPS and it was targeted mainly to the construction of schools and the training of teachers (Mier y Terán Rocha nd
The next period (1976-1992) is defined by the slogan of “Education for Everyone” during which there was a push to extend education into rural areas (Mier y Terán Rocha Romero, 2003) although the expenditure for education diminished considerably (Hayashi Martinez, 1992). The economic crisis of 1982 marked a decrease in the efforts. In 1992, the president Carlos Salinas de Gortari along with the federal teachers union and the governments of the 32 states made an agreement for decentralization and expansion (Tatto, 1999). Although the system was set for these goals, the economic instability without a lot of investment. It was at the end of this period that the Problem was formed as part of the strategy of expansion and to give more attention to migrant groups.

The period starting in 1993 was marked by the constitutional amendment that made the lower-secondary level mandatory and was the basis to allow state governments to propose curriculums for this level. This was another step towards decentralization (Tatto, 1999). The decentralization of the system was manifested in the shift to the state control of education. More recently, programs such as “Oportunidades” were created to motivate families to send their children to school and increase enrollment (Chreighton and Park, 2010).

In 1960, the National commission for free textbooks (Commission Nacional de Libros de Texto Gratuitos-CONALITEG) was created by the Secretary of Public Education (SEP for its abbreviation in Spanish), and its main executive Jaime Torres Romero. 2003).
Bodet. Such initiative provoked controversies all over the Mexican territory by groups who denounced the creation of the free textbooks as a clear imposition of the government’s agenda. On the other hand, Torres Bodet\textsuperscript{10} and his supporters emphasized that these textbooks were made as a guarantee for all Mexican children to have the basic educational materials without the financial constrains for acquiring textbooks (www.conaliteg.gob.mx). They also insisted that these books could be supplemented with any other book of material that each teacher would find necessary according to the specific circumstances that each classroom may present. Thus, according to Torres Bodet the demands of people to reconsider this textbook system were unreasonable. Rather than being a partisan political measure, he insisted, the free textbooks were introduced as a helpful resource for every teacher and student, regardless of their socioeconomic situations and/or constrains. Hence, from the beginning the free textbooks were also provided to every public and private school in order to standardize the basic knowledge on Spanish, mathematics, natural science, history and geography. For Torres Bodet, a good textbook represented the “synthesis of a slow and steady mixing process between pedagogy, literature, science and even politics” (original text written in Spanish). He did not see any imposition of interest groups. On the contrary, he claimed that, by allowing every child to possess the means of a textbook in order to acquire learning skills, the government would promote liberty of the individual.

Some Mexican researchers such as Cecilia Greaves Laine (2001) have exposed the reasons that certain groups have opposed the initiative of the creation of the

\textsuperscript{10} As explained in the history of Conaliteg in www.conaliteg.gob consulted on December, 2006)
CONALITEG. In her article, Greaves Laine makes a historical portrayal of the particular context that surrounded the beginning of the Mexican free textbooks initiative in the late 50’s and that materialized in 1960. The fact that it has been obligatory to all children across the nation provoked a debate in which political interests and different actors (including the newspapers and mass media) have had different invested agendas (Greaves Laine, 2001).

However, as Greaves Laine remarks, the presidential period of Adolfo Lopez Mateos during which the Free Textbook Program was first implemented, was a time when nationalist sentiment along with an effort to integrate the Mexican society were two clear tendencies of the government. In order to attain these, the free textbooks were the best means to promote certain ideology across different social groups, including those with more economic privileges. The free textbook program seemed to be perfect instrument to guarantee the maintenance of the hegemony with a stronger control over the educational system. According to Greaves Laine, Adolfo Lopez Mateos wanted to reinforce the “revolutionary” spirit claimed by the PRI (Partido Revolucionario Institucional) and which constantly reminded Mexican people that the official party members were deeply invested in solving the problems of the underprivileged. Greaves Laine also uses a quote from a presidential speech by Lopez Mateos. In the speech he claims that the new educational initiatives within the Free Textbook Program was intended to prepare children for a practical life, induce them into national solidarity, orient them towards civic virtues and to overall, reaffirm a patriotic love nourished by the great historical facts that have provided the foundation for the democratic growth of the
Mexican nation. By sustaining this argument, the State handled its opponents’ criticisms in a subtle manner (Greaves Laine, 2001).

Those who opposed the new program were at first, private publishers who were later joined by people who wanted to keep the religious influence of the Catholic Church over the education of the masses. For the latter, the governmental intervention over private schools was something that hindered the principle of freedom of education and learning (Greaves Laine, 2001).

In the aspect of national politics in general and during most of the 20th century, the PRI had been affected both internally (through division in different factions) and externally (by mass mobilizations) in spite of many efforts to convince Mexican people of its legitimacy. Some ancient administrative systems have survived the change in 2000, when finally the National Action Party (PAN) took charge of the government. Despite many reforms have been made but authors such as Andere (2006) have denounced the superficiality of such actions, specifically in the educational system.

In their article, McGinn and Street (1984) made a historical review on the educational and economic development over a period that goes from 1940 through 1984. By revising each governmental administration period, they pose the argument that Mexico has traditionally evolved into a lack of governmental coordination with the educational branch hindering the reproduction of human capital. Instead, they say, Mexican political leaders have focused on an economic development totally disconnected from the educational objectives. These authors advocate for a market
model that could be focused on the efficiency of investments in education. For them, Mexican education has only generated political capital in order to maintain an egalitarian social structure, which has been reproduced to maintain a dependent capitalism. McGinn and Street state that the Mexican government structure has evolved into a bureaucracy quite similar to the one defined by Weber; such concept refers to “a kind of organizational structure and process in which decisions are made on the basis of procedures rather than objectives.”

Pertaining to the reforms made in recent decades, McGinn and Street (1984) mention the radical shift of the Mexican government under Jose Lopez Portillo (1976-1982). They say that his government included a group of technocrats who started a strong neo-liberal approach to economics and all other areas of governmental control favoring a stronger political control over the educational system. They declared that the failure of curricular changes across different governmental periods has been the “ever-insufficient educational opportunities that has limited the state’s capacity to mould a quality education which could contribute to nationalist and revolutionary values of liberty, justice and equality. Education will contribute to these values only when they are inherently structured and reproduced within the economic system.” (McGinn and Street, 1984, P. 336)

McGinn and Street (1984) say that “the bureaucratic ideology… (contributed) to the propagation of an official culture emphasizing national identity and unity” (McGinn and Street, 1984, p. 325), rather than to ensuring that individuals learn particular social attitudes and values. In the end, there has been a shift towards a
technocratic management of objectives. Therefore, for these authors, the government policies have only provoked a vicious cycle that goes from income concentration to economic growth followed by an economic crisis that leads again towards income concentration. They also describe the context by underlying the importation of foreign technologies that were used by the national monopolies, which were also nourished by a trade system of import substitution. These authors explained how these different facts originated issues such as the centralization of labor unions, which only promoted lower labor costs and the worsening of income distribution. Specifically in education, they criticize the initiative of the creation of the CONALITEG as one of several initiatives of president Lopez Mateos in order to “reduce dissension through increased social spending.” (McGinn and Street, 1984, p. 325). They claimed that, the government of this period responded to the dissatisfaction about job conditions of teachers by expanding primary education but with no significant increase in wages and without diminishing classroom sizes. In other words, the expansion of education needed by Mexican people worsened other chronic problems that have not been tackled directly. Such problems only grew because of the official implicit and explicit concerns to make financial resources more efficient (macro level) without consideration of the problems faced by students and teachers in the classroom (micro level).

The neo-liberal transformation of the State that began in the mid 70’s has been reinforced by the subsequent administrations lead by Carlos Salinas de Gortari, Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon and Vicente Fox Quesada. Ironically, the interruption
of the PRI’s masked hegemony for more than 60 years was not enough to stop the liberalization of the Mexican economic and political system, which now more than ever is leading to the reproduction of a socioeconomic structure by a kind of education that caters to the demands of cheap labor from the foreign investment (Coll, 2006).

Furthermore, as early as 1989, authors such as Aziz Nassif (1989), considered a decline in the tendency in Mexican politics to promote a unified nation supported by the Institutionalized Revolutionary Party (PRI). For the most part of the 20th century, this party took in charge the government of the Mexican state at the same time that it homogenized majority groups, controlled the dissident interests and defeated minority groups, although it called itself a democratic government. Consequently, the crisis of representation of groups of any order –Aziz Nassif mentions “regions, zones, localities, groups, classes, ethnicities, languages, and organizations” (p. 92) – has been manifested in new forms of representation. The implication of this is the lack of diversity in the curriculum reinforced by the centralist approach in the role of national versus local control of resources and decision-making.

According to Andere (1994), agreements such as the National Agreement for the modernization of basic education (ANMEB) have failed in the effort to decentralize the educational policy-making. Instead, he says, it only brought some operational aspects of education to the state and local level of the system (p. 47). In the case of the Free Textbooks, up to date they are still elaborated and updated by the central authority while the local educational authorities have the job of doing an
efficient distribution of the textbooks. Such fact may be an indicator of the ineffectiveness of the de-centralizing efforts from the government, regardless of how well intentioned they have been.

McGinn and Street (1984) also claim that there was no connection between the economic industries with the educators. They denounced an overproduction of high skilled labor force that was being underemployed. Therefore, the perception that there was no tangible advantage in trying to pursue higher levels of education began to spread. On the other hand, for the authors, the creation of the national textbooks program was one of several steps towards the centralization of governmental power and bureaucratization. They also denounced that educational research has a tendency to focus on the goals of the plans (prescriptive) instead of the real outcomes (descriptive). They declare that “the civic formation of ‘the people’ would have required much better training of teachers and smaller class sizes; specific attention to curricular content and its effects on students, both while in school and after graduation; and incorporation of all Mexicans into the education system” (McGinn and Street, 330-331).

At this point, I find it pertinent to remind the reader of the definition of human and social capital given by the OECD (2001). In The Well-Being of Nations, Role of Human and Social Capital, the OECD expresses that the conflict inherent in the interaction between all the different groups involved in education seems to reside in the priorities that motivate each one of the different parties involved in the educational process. In the discussion of the role of education within the political
agenda of a nation it is mentioned that human capital is defined as the “knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes embodied in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being” (Ibid, p. 18). Therefore, we need to elaborate and assess the relevance of such a concept in reference to the creation and adaptation of Mexican curriculum. For McGinn and Street, the human capital defined above has been neglected within the classroom dynamics. The skills and attributes that give the individual a competent and proactive performance in other aspects of life are not being significantly promoted in the curriculum. Yuren et al. (2005) support such observation when they denounce that the school provision does not correspond to the way individuals learn in real situations; and therefore there is disenchantment in schooling as a means to prepare for life and work (p. 12). Such problem is caused not only because of poverty conditions or academic failure, but also by the lack of access to higher educational levels and the perception that further education does not guarantee professional success.

Concerning social capital, the OECD (2001) defines it as “the networks together with shared norms, values, and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups” (p. 41). The concept of social capital has been usually borrowed in order to analyze economic development in migrant communities. As an example of this, we can take the article by Winters et al. (2001) in which it is declared that “community networks may be found to significantly influence migration not because they represent common unobservable community characteristics such as community development or organization”(p. 162). Such a statement leads to the
search of other variables necessary to consider that may be out of the realm of economics. The authors express that policies to reduce migration need to focus on increasing expected incomes, lowering income uncertainty. Although education is not mentioned, this aspect of development along with a focus on human capital is the best approach in order to counterbalance the important role that the social capital obtained through migrant networks have on migration decisions.

In relation to the relevance that the development of either social and/or human capital within schools Yuren et al. express that:

While the problems explored at school are related to imagined situations and the solutions are already given and could be easily found in the textbooks; in real life problems, certain actions and interactions are required and these are the ones that trigger the desire and need to learn. When individuals realize this, and learn by themselves “how to learn”, the impression they perceive about school and academic knowledge losses value and practical wisdom and experience are more appreciated (Yuren et al. p. 18)

Therefore, under these circumstances the social capital seems to be more useful to the individual since it is through social networks and available resources through social ties that the individual could find their way to what is perceived as success and realization in life for the long term.

Additionally, as noted by Kandel and Kao (2000) sociological studies have shown over and over that families’ educational and career paths normally become models to their children, while for migrant families children are provided with psychological support and encouragement in their plans to migrate (pp. 19-20). The same authors concluded that “once children acquire decision-making autonomy in early adolescence, and normative and regulatory mechanisms for enforcing
enrollment diminish, children become more strongly subject to the influences of occupational and educational activity within their homes and among their acquaintances and extended relatives” (pp. 30-31). Implications for this are that it is during the years of secondary school (7th through 9th) that individuals who belong to migrant communities are already deciding whether to migrate or keep going with their education at the preparatory level (10th through 12th).

Evidently, the crisis of representation of diverse socio-cultural backgrounds and their connection to the curriculum denounced by Aziz Nassif (1989) has prevailed although indicators such as the 99% of national enrolment in basic education overall are traditionally used to demonstrate the changes being done. Accordingly, as demonstrated by Arroyo-Alejandre et al. (1991), the state of Jalisco has a long history of migration that has created certain sociocultural dynamics within small communities. Concerning the educational attainment of Jalisco’s general population in the year of 2003, the students promoted from elementary to middle school (primaria a secundaria or 6th to 7th grade) is 41% out of the total of 878,870 students who were promoted from 6th grade. (INEGI, 2006). This percentage is surprisingly low because it seems that 59% of these students have opted for other paths in life away from school. This claim is supported by Andere (2006, p. 49) when he says that although the national enrolment of primary education was of 99% in the year of 2001-2002, the overall enrolment in secondary education (7th grade) normally drops to 60% of the national population.
The fact that many curriculum reforms focus on teaching materials such as the textbooks is supported by the perception that such changes are for the betterment of the national education. This assertion stems from the fact that although there’s a proven correlation between the textbook provision and school achievement in developing countries (Crossley and Murby, 1994), authors such as Martin are not satisfied with such reforms and see them excessively superficial (Martin, p. 210).

Crossley and Murby (1994) posit that when textbooks are published by the national Ministries of Education, such as in the Mexican case, there are potential advantages such as the direct control over the nature and content of the books. They also suggest that curriculum policy and guidelines could give place to a closer articulation, and the input of individual teachers and schools is made easier, (Crossley and Murby, p. 109). The pitfall these authors see in such a system is that the flexibility to produce information attuned with local curricula is little or none. These authors conclude that each nation has to find out the textbook production system that is best fit to their specific contexts and that there’s no given prescription that could fit all developing countries. However, they see that textbook production from private sources is a complementary feature that could add some culturally sensitiveness and relevant knowledge.

Concerning the kind of knowledge that is presented in the formal curricula in developing countries, Spring (2008) mentions that:

There is considerable criticism of the growing global [or national for this study] uniformity in education. World systems theorists argue that it is part of a process for legitimizing the actions of rich over poor nations. Those using postcolonial
analysis criticize the trend by arguing that it will ensure the hegemony of global elites.

Applied to the Mexican case, attention must be given to the creation of textbooks that are attuned to the socio-cultural reality of migrant sending communities. In addition, there must be an honest assessment of the kind of value we place on education and whether it matters to educate people who will be capable of holding reliable jobs and aspire to live productive lives without the having to migrate to another country in order to obtain these objectives. In other words, “What kind of human and social capital should the Mexican policy makers strive to promote?” and “How could textbooks and other material foster that?”

Montero-Sieburth (1992) insists that crucial areas must be assessed in order to provide more effective curricular changes. Therefore, the author suggests that it is absolutely necessary to consider issues such as: access to a variety of resources; student perception of his or her learning capabilities; teacher ability to use instructional materials; teacher reflection of their own work; the connection between curriculum content and the student’s information processing; and the relation between school policy and the classroom dynamics.

On the other hand, concerning the question of what kind of reform ought to be implemented in educational policy-making and textbook contents, Michael Apple (2000) wrote that “long-lasting transformations in education often are shaped not by the work of educators and researchers, but by social movements that puts our major political, economic, and cultural institutions in specific directions.” For this author,
textbook policies are powerful mechanisms that are a result of social movements and class struggles over culture and power. In the progress of social evolution, definitions of ethics and social justice are in constant redefinition, however, Apple implies that anyone who claims to advocate for values such as freedom and equality, derivatively acquires significant political strength regardless of the disjunction between the varieties of perspectives related to these concepts. In Cultural Politics and Education, Apple (1996) endorses the idea that policy analysts should avoid the total elimination of traditional structures and recognize the utility of some features already in place.

In contrast, Vazquez de Knauth (1967) recognizes in her article that “Mexicans by and large are politically immature” but “they (Mexicans) also have a true concept of unity as a result of shared values, a common past, and a desire to perpetuate that unity, and that his loyalties are at the service of the nation.” (Vazquez de Knauth, 1967, p. 215) Therefore, the challenge for educational policy-makers would be to strive for a balance that would avoid the conflict between socio-cultural differences and the common identity of Mexicans. The curriculum then has to promote the skills and abilities that children are already practicing outside of school while being taught that as long as they pursue further education they have the same opportunities in the job market as any other Mexican child regardless of any socio-cultural and economic background.

In the Mexican case, an aspect in the inequality of the curriculum across different groups includes factors such as migration to the big cities and to the United States that have been increasingly affecting the demographics of rural communities,
and now more than ever, the social needs of these children have to be considered in the school curricula. Montero-Sieburth (1990) reflected on different educational models in the developing world and concluded that changes in the formal curriculum are not effective unless they are also related to the quality of teaching, the process of teaching, the activity of teaching itself and the description of the change in the curriculum rather than following prescriptions that tend to be superficial. Curricular practices, Montero-Sieburth continues, are highly affected by correction and supplementation from different social actors such as teachers, students, parents, and the whole community. For the author, the traditional tendency to apply curricular innovations as some isolated process implies a “misleading epistemology” that underestimates the daily practices of teachers in the classroom. As an example of this we may consider the article written by Vargas (2001) in which two textbooks created for the first grade of elementary school on the subject of Spanish (one edited by the SEP and the other by a private editor) were studied. In his conclusion, Vargas found out that these textbooks’ written exercises are limited to the reproduction of isolated words and phrases, and those that are not, lack of any immediate and useful meaning in relation to the student. (p. 6)

In relation to policymaking and implementation, I would like to borrow a theoretical tool created by Deborah Stone. According to Stone (2002), the sociopolitical paths of societies tend to follow either a rational market model versus a community (polis) model. Stone’s observations on the pitfall of the democratic paradigm and policymaking in modern days are found on whether the concept of
property is an individual or a collective creation. It is claimed by those who advocate for an individualistic market model that this paradigm prevents the domination and/or imposition of a certain group in charge of the government and with the strongest power within the State. This liberal model also tends to be related by political scientists to the ideal of Democracy. However, if we consider the explanation of Stone, even when every individual is pursuing his or her own happiness and well-being, the realization of Democracy may still be far from sight. In relation to this, Stone mentions that:

It should be clear by now that if one conceives of property and value as individually created, then one is likely to favor policies that respect individual freedom to acquire and use things as one wishes. If one conceives of property and value as socially created, one is more likely to favor redistributive policies that guarantee everyone some access to socially created goods. (pg. 59)

The official knowledge reproduced by the State through education certainly tends to obey the market (or rational choice) over the polis, even in cases where the State claims to be apolitical in many policy decisions. The fact that the government allows the inclusion and exclusion of certain ideals by letting interest groups influence the contents of a textbook implies that the State is facilitating a prevalence of the interests of people with more social influence and advantages over others. Stone (2002) maintains that the polis model involves a community with intentions that are independent from the individual’s interests. Therefore, the difference between coercion and influence is not always clear. Stone insists that people are expected to be loyal to the common ideals, however the information available to people tends to be
incomplete and strategically constructed with hidden agendas. By taking the theoretical construction that Stone proposes, the Mexican textbook program could be defined, in a superficial way, as one in which the distribution of benefits is based on a horizontal equity: every child across the nation is entitled to the same books and contents according to their school level. However, those who can complement it either through parent active participation on the child’s education or who have teachers with availability of other significant curricular resources are in a more privileged position than the ones whose resources available to parents and/or teachers are limited and are obliged to use only the free textbooks as a curriculum guide. This fact reflects that equality, although fair in the “process” of sharing the cake (using Stone’s metaphor) the outcomes are not necessarily equal.

Those who are allowed to construct and make amendments to the formal curriculum have in their hand an instrument that, besides mass communication, introduces an interpretation of reality that tends to be perceived as an “accurate” description of reality. However, in the Mexican case, the creator of the free textbook program, Torres Bodet himself declared that textbooks are always a work in progress that often could be mistakenly improvised, essentialized or basically deficient (McGinn and Street, 1989).

Although CONALITEG has considered the language diversity in order to make the same curricular knowledge available to all Mexican children, there is still the need to analyze the level of inclusion of the social and natural contexts represented in the textbooks. Hence, as Farrell and Heyneman (1988) mention,
“educators tend to regard their work as apolitical. This is far from the truth. Decisions about curricular content, and therefore textbook content, frequently reflect deep-rooted political conflicts within a nation. In relatively open political systems, textbook content often represents delicate compromises among groups with different ideological positions or different religious beliefs and practices or different ethnic and tribal backgrounds.” (p. 74)

Regarding the curriculum’s formal character, it seems almost impossible to include the wide range of socio-cultural patterns among Mexican people. Nevertheless, it needs to allow the teacher and student to accommodate their own social contexts and use the indigenous knowledge to develop the skills and interactions that are needed to promote human capital as defined by the OECD and included in earlier pages.

In the search for a more articulated view of the social reality in the curriculum and the pertinence of the school provision, Martin (1994) expresses his concern on the imbalance that exists on the families’ expectations of the schools and the mistrust they have on them. In this sense, Martin argues, “it is not insufficient demand but unsatisfied demand which corrodes the relationship between clients and teachers, with the attendant negative consequences for children’s educational performance” (p. 178). Martin articulates the problem surrounding the failure to meet parents and children’s expectations of school that steam not only from their relationship with the teacher but with the educational service as a whole. Such broader meaning of school service include, Martin says, bureaucratic requirements made of parents, the curriculum, the building, all the physical resources and all the rules and regulations that surround the practice in school. In the same sense, Martin states, “parents are
caught between resentment at the autocratic exercise of teacher discretion, and their
dependence on the individual good faith of the teacher” (p. 179).

Accordingly, Ezpeleta and Weiss (1996), mention that such mistrust placed in
local schools from the communities is the cause of the quality of services that are
provided by the schools themselves. The findings of the study Ezpeleta and Weiss
obtained after a long period of observation of several poor rural schools in Mexico,
support that the teachers are absent from their jobs too often. The authors also
concluded that teacher absenteeism is a common problem due to the administrative
practices that are traditionally done throughout the educational system. This is due,
they explain, to the focus on bureaucratic processes in the interaction between the
central and the local levels rather on the real needs of the schools and teachers.
Therefore, the problem of absenteeism seems to be only a symptom of the lack of
support that teachers have from the system itself. Such a problem coexists with the
high level of rotation of teachers in rural areas and the perception that certain
communities are rather places where teachers are sent as a step of a kind of
“initiation” into the profession, since these teachers are those with less experience.

Nevertheless, the problem described above has been tackled by giving economic
incentives to teachers who stay longer in rural schools as a part of several initiatives
being implemented since 1991 (Ezpeleta and Weiss, 1996). On the teachers’
perspectives, Martin also explains that they “find that the more they exercise their
powers of discretion, the lower their standing in the eyes of their clients (parents and
children), a standing already undermined by deteriorating service and conditions” (Ibid.).

Martin also elaborates throughout his book on the argument that any theoretical approach that is critical to the curriculum is insufficient to analyze Mexican education and any other developing society because by conceiving education as an imposition, they all ignore the integral connections of education with wage labor and the increasing social expectations in developing societies. He observes that Mexican families have different motives to demand education for their children which include the legal requirement by the State, along with conceiving formal schooling as necessary but insufficient to obtain employment, and also because it is considered beneficial for the children themselves.

Martin does not address the specific consequences stemming from school withdrawal, including migration. Nevertheless, he elaborates on how family ethos are affected by poverty and how it is not the lack of economic resources that cause the child to drop out of school, but instead it is the whole inadequacy of school meeting the needs of the child in many other aspects. Such factors that may force a child to “self-select” and decide to drop out of school include the rigid schedule of the school hours versus the child’s need to be there for the self-regulated family at different hours of the day and doing different chores when domestic work is necessary to survive. “This means,” Martin, says, “each child is subject to different, normally prejudicial pressures at home.” In addition, “It is the teachers more than any other social service that come face to face with these problems (p. 191).”
With respect to reasons for migration, the Mexican government has elaborated a wide variety of what Stone (2002) calls symbols, numbers, stories, interests, and so on. These have been presented to evade the responsibility that the Mexican government has regarding the causes of migration. Such is the argument made by several authors including Latapi Sarre (2006). In his review of the 5 year report on educational development made by the SEP, Latapi Sarre acknowledges the positive effects that educational advancement has had with respect to the restructuring of the Secretary; the creation of Institutes for educational evaluation and assessment; the formation of a council of decision making at the state level; and the inclusion of indigenous knowledge in the curriculum. He acknowledged other positive changes such as, included the curriculum change at the secondary level concerning the subjects taught, the creation of school and classroom libraries and the improvement of higher education towards the professionalization of the career through program evaluations and accreditations for teachers. Nevertheless, he also points out the lack of efforts in the recognition of the inefficacy of educational policy implementations among other challenges yet to resolve. Martin in other words by explaining that educational failure remains internal and less visible rather than external and attributed to the government articulates this argument. In short, Martin states, “the educational practices based on formal equality of school place distribution, not inequality, are what perpetuate low retention” (p. 202). “Full enrollment,” Martin explains, “thus leaks into high wastage; any (limited) reduction in wastage seeps into repetition. Educational failure thus infects the internal functioning of schools rather than
remaining an external, visible scandal of government neglect” (*Ibid.*). The bureaucratization of education provision makes it difficult for the teacher to meet the needs of specific students.

Contrary to what critical theories try to undermine, teachers do not benefit from selectiveness because this implies further complication of their already overloaded schedule. In contrast, teachers appear autocratic because of their use of discretion when they promote students, refer them to other social services or have them repeat the school year.

Overall, Martin’s argument is based on the essential role that the relationship between parents and teachers plays in the education of the child. In the case of migrant communities, it is necessary to considerate the not rare absence of the one or both parents and the impact this factor has on the relationship already mentioned, and the effect this has on the educational process of the child beyond the constrains presented to the teacher. While advocating for teachers, Martin proposes changes not just to salaries but also to working and service conditions of teachers and not any more control over their work. For him both parties have an investment in the education of the child, the teachers as “producers-earners”, and the parents as “client-consumers” (p. 213). In the context presented by the migrant-sending communities, teachers evidently have to deal with problems related to the social reality of the child that have been poorly analyzed due to the complication that migration represents to the social development of the child.

My aim, in exploring the topic of Mexican textbooks, is to find out how the social
reality of Mexican children could be used as an asset towards attaining a society in which democratic citizenship and the polis model could lead Mexican society towards a reasonably mature stage of democratization. In this model, the continuous dialogue between the private and the public interests in the society, as well as the day to day decisions made by the teachers versus the policy implementations made by the central government through the delineation of the curriculum, could lead to a more comprehensive view of the needs of Mexican children. This could also lead to the consideration of development policies that would allow students to continue their education beyond the secondary level becoming prepared to compete in a highly qualified job market that could provide income certainty and better chances to use the human capital created in schools and elsewhere.

The curriculum reforms that have been taking place recently are still significantly ineffective. The epistemological approach of the policy makers is one that separates the curriculum from the way that it is practiced in the classroom. The Mexican formal curriculum is one that focuses explicitly on the values of freedom, democracy, justice and legality. On the other hand, teachers study the methods of teaching while they are being trained. Nevertheless, once they start working in the field they are faced with multiple aspects that influence the way they communicate with their students. For Montero-Sieburth (1992), when the curriculum is limited to being an objective rather as a process, the results from the educational process are very limited. This author describes the curriculum as “part of a larger process in which teachers, pupils, parents, and the community correct and supplement the experiences of each other” (Montero-Sieburth,
When this is ignored, educational reforms become dwarfed by the fact that the innovations in the curriculum become a prescription that has little to do with the reality in the classroom.

With respect to the hidden curriculum, the attitudes, Diaz Barriga (2006) says, observed by the student as their teachers expose their appearance and vocabulary, present sometimes a conflictive view as they learn social standards. When the rules of coexistence are broken, a professional and ethnic conflict is not easy to solve. First, he continues, because the teacher adopts and identifies himself as an employee and factory worker as the experiences force him/her to abandon a professional identity that they had as a goal when they began their careers. (Diaz Barriga, 2006). Such experiences are nonetheless effective although not intended. There is no awareness either by the teacher or the student regarding attitudes although they are the most transcendent as the student internalizes these.

This taxonomy of the curriculum is useful to the present study because sometimes the policy makers’ perspectives tend to be only limited to the formal curriculum and little consideration is given to factors such as the absence of parents or siblings who have migrated as well as the role models exerted by the teachers. This experience is already shaping the way a student sees his future because his interaction at home and in the community distorts the message in the textbooks and the importance that is formally given to “freedom, democracy, justice, and legality.” When such principles are lacking in the way lives are approached by the society as a whole, there is a mismatch because the experiential, the operational, and the perceived curriculum is completely disconnected.
Deborah Stone (2002) elaborates on the differences among actors in a specific system and their perspectives regarding fairness. In the case of Mexican education, the knowledge that is taught in schools corresponds to how educators construct society and whose interests have a priority. It seems that Mexican schools are interested in producing human capital to be able to provide capable workers ready to enter the job market. On the other hand, the high level of reliance among families to migrate or just get ahead to make a better living makes the social capital essential to the idiosyncrasy of Mexican people. The relevance of the concepts of human and social capital into this project stems from the fact that the drive of educators to provide human capital in order to attain a certain level of market competitiveness makes education a tool for market purposes (Corrochano, 2005). Nevertheless, the prevalence of social capital within family networks make the intentions of educators become secondary regarding their own efforts to provide a good quality of life.

Overall, the central subject of study will be the role of teachers as intermediaries between the national and state educational policies and the children as receptors of these policies through the curriculum and the way teachers deal with their societal problematic that is so much ingrained in the interactions inside the classroom of primary schools in Mexico. Teachers are very much involved in the creation of human capital as much as they are also aware or even participants of the social arrangements that make the families rely among themselves. The street level bureaucracy (Lipsky, 1980), then, provides the perfect theoretical framework to explain how the teachers cope with the contradictions or
mismatches in their interests as professionals as well as members of the community.

Conditions in the Educational System at the State Level

The state of Jalisco created the Plan Estatal de Educacion 2001-2007, which gave direction to the reform process. The document presents the recognition of the weaknesses in the educational system that is marked by lack of equality. They also admit that there are deficiencies in the development of educational processes at all levels and all its modalities. They argue that there is still a lot to improve concerning the quantity of people who are served, the educational attainment, desertion of students, and inefficient educational outcomes. Nevertheless, the government recognizes that they have been sustaining and will continue to follow the traditional principles given in the National Constitution. The third article of the Mexican constitution expresses that education should have no religious content or influences, it requires no money and it is obligatory (www.sep.gob.mx).

This document also acknowledges the lack of coordination between the different levels of administration of education. Although many efforts have been made to decentralize the system, the local government is not completely autonomous. In addition, in many cases it only is responsible of for the assignation of resources given by the state government. The absence of consideration and visibility of diversity in the student population is also a problem identified. They explain that diversity should be considered an asset and not an obstacle in the educational process.
They also understand the need to use both formal and informal experiences of the
student in the classroom. Initiatives are already being well on their way concerning the
indigenous students who are sometimes being taught in their own language and are taught
about the value of their native culture.

The professionalization of teachers is mentioned as a task that needs to be taken in
the training process. The state government had the intention to develop the skills in
teachers that make them innovators and able to adapt to different sociocultural contexts
and different technologies.

The authors of the textbooks understand that the ages between 6 and 12 are
crucial in the development of the child. This is the period in which the basic skills are
cultivated as well as the essential attitudes and values. This period in the life of an
individual is also recognized as the time when self-esteem and national identity are
created.

Primary education in Mexico has different modalities according to the
geographical, social and demographic context given by the community. Schools,
therefore, can be complete (such as the ones studied here), multi-group (with different
levels of learning in the same group), bi-group or unitary (in which all students are in the
same group regardless of the age and level in which they are learning)

The specific problems expressed by the government of Jalisco that need to be
tackled include:

- the large number of activities assigned to the teaching-learning time;
• the low achievement of students;
• the mismatch between the formal curriculum and the everyday lives of students;
• the lack of consistency in teaching styles;
• the lack of precise data;
• the shortage of service considering the demand;
• the need for an increase in the time the schools are in session.

The involvement of the community is also reported to be low in several places.
(Secretaria de Educación Jalisco, http://portaleducativo.jalisco.gob.mx/pge/pge.html)

If there is ever the mention of migrant people per se, it is only considered that they migrate from the rural to the urban areas. However, the document says that the students need to acquire the capacity to live in a competitive environment and that the individual has to be capable of planning his or her future and act in order to attain it. Other policy scholars have elaborated on the concept of “street-level bureaucrats”; teachers in Mexico work in a role summarized by Honig (2006). The people who work as street level bureaucrats are not too pressured by their staff superiors, however, they also have to face daily demands that put pressure on them due to their lack of time and make them feel uncertain. Such contradiction is called by March and others as the “means-ends ambiguity”. According to Honig (2006), the boundary spanners (what Lipsky called street-level bureaucrats) have an ability to understand the language of multiple professional communities to identify relevant information for the organization (school in this case); they also take an orientation in their work that is shaped by past and present social cues (which means that they do not work only responding to their rational functions, but their work is shaped by their wants and needs and personalities, their past
experiences; how and in what context they expect the information they acquire to be used; and whether that information repeats itself. Their work is also influenced by their position on the organization; their ability to manage role conflicts; their perceived organizational influence and the length of their tenure. All of these factors combined define the kind of work that the street level bureaucrat expects from himself and what their clients need to be satisfied with.

According to Street (1998), the following three problems are detrimental to educational reform: (1) the system to compensate the work of good teachers and results of good schools is not efficient; (2) programs developed to improve the educational experience tend to be duplicated at different administrative levels and therefore become inefficient and limited in their function; and (3) the policy making process is still being controlled by the central government with little intervention from the local authorities.

Some resolutions included in this document are the inclusion of the participation of parents in the educational process; to give special attention to the vulnerable populations and; to revise the strategy to offer a better attention to the migrant population that are bound overseas. Consequently, the foremost concerning issue regarding the role of teachers as mediation between policy and theoretical dichotomies seems to be how they conceive themselves within the community.

**Migration studies and emergent themes related to education**

The study of the migration phenomena presents several distinctions between the type of migration (permanent or circular), the legal status and the length of time; social classes, urban or rural residence, occupation, acculturation level and educational
background. In spite of this, there exists a disconnection with a relatively low presence of educational research and a predominance of demographics, socioeconomic factors, labor relations and healthcare (Macias, 1990). According to Macias, the migration experience must be understood in a complexity of “contextual factors.” In his article, Macias distinguishes three curriculum categories that are present while he studies a school community in Mexico. He says that standardization, core content and local adaptation are these categories. Standardization prevails with the help of the books that are used across Mexico and are published for every Mexican student in primary school.

Migration is a family and personal event that affects every member at the psychological and emotional level and has lifelong impacts in every aspect of the life of an individual (Achotegi, 2004). The stress lived as a member of a transnational family affects deeply the social and emotional development of the child. These emotional conflicts reflect in the quality of the learning experience of the child. Kandel and Kao (2000) have argued that migration lowers educational attainment since “children aspiring to work and study in the U.S. may be less concerned about their education because most Mexican migrants work in low-wage, low-skill occupations in the U.S. and are prevented from advancing to better jobs…”(Kandel and Kao, 2002, p. 18). These authors also state that the causes for hindering educational outcomes of the students are the decreasing parental supervision and a greater psychological strain. In contrast, they expose that with the migration of family members the quality of the social capital of the student either increases or decreases but never stays the same. Their argument is supported by observing that the SES level of the families is inversely related to the migration tendency.
After some statistical sampling Kandel and Kao proved that, the aspirations of the students to work in the U.S. are strongly associated with the father’s migration. Nevertheless, these authors reveal that migration lowers educational attainment because the children become less concerned with their own education in the place of origin and, paradoxically, as the family income increases with as a result, there is more support for education of their own children.

In addition, as stated above, Yuren et al. (2005) have shown that children of migrant-sending communities manifest disenchantment in schooling and the different abilities and wisdom acquired while enduring poverty and the value that is given to the migration experience. These authors also relate the school desertion to problems that affect the child such as the fact of belonging to families with only one parent and their lack of access to school facilities. These are enhanced by the poverty condition that is not rare in many of these communities. Yuren et al. describe the type of education that is needed by these children and the inadequacy of the actual schooling process that rarely promotes and otherwise becomes an obstacle or simply ignores the actual needs of the students. The most effective learning required by these children, the authors say, is the one that involves real situations such as fieldwork and hands on activities. After an extensive study, they concluded that schools provide norms, ways of interaction, contents, teaching strategies and pedagogical styles that are counterproductive to the effective learning style described above. In their conclusions, they also manifest the importance that is given by the students to practical wisdom including discourse mastery, moral and prudential judgment, as well as auto regulation, which are not transmissible
but rather internalized by experiences that demand action, interaction and reflection in the real world experiences. In contrast, the authors say, the school environment only provides theoretical and procedural knowledge that is transmitted by indoctrination. If we use the description of Mexican education and elaborate it through the distinction between human and social capital, it seems that the educational process as it is, gives the student the basis to consider the available social capital provided by the community along with the expectations created within the family to create aspirations for her/himself outside of school. Unconsciously, this also hinders any kind of human development favorable for professional development and academic continuity.

Concerning the comparison that transnational families have expressed in relation to schools in Mexico and the US, they say, “US schools have an advantage in that they provide computer instruction. Despite acknowledged advantages in specific subjects, however, many teachers and parents still believe that children study more subject and are better schooled academically in Mexico” beyond the primary level (Farr, 2009, p.113). However, “many parents see Mexican elementary schools as inadequate, partially because the teachers are drastically underpaid and often hold down two jobs. Because of this, parents say, some teachers frequently arrive late or do not show up at all” (Farr, 2009, p. 113).

Debry (2010) has revealed deeper understandings in the specific ways that migration is reflected in the lives of children. In her book *Divided by Borders*, Debry explores the transition between caregivers as the parents decide to leave and allow other caretakers to watch for their children. She then follows some of them during a few
months and becomes aware of the difficulties that the children face and the inability of society to undertake the different needs these children present. Their vision of authority is completely transformed as grandparents or other caretakers struggle in allowing the parents to keep contact with the children while trying by other means take the control over their schooling, which is many times useless. Even though the parents’ main motivation is to improve the quality of life and obtain a better education for their children, the children perceive them as neglectful as they develop resentments towards them. As a result, this causes children’s interest towards school to become less relevant. In the normal development cycle, children are already going through transitions that imply internal conflicts, which are exacerbated by the practical absence of their parents no matter how much they try to keep in contact in the distance. Debry (2010) explains that

“…in the transnational context, children may exert leverage, both as intended recipients of the benefits families gain through international migration and as independent agents whose divergent needs are intensified by separation from parents, while simultaneously being the least powerful actors within their families… For older children, the emotional price of separation becomes evident over time, particularly in term of their educational prospects in Mexico.” (p. 141)

National reports, however, declare that studies on how migration affects the community seem to be mostly pessimistic due to the high disruption of the family life and separation (Giorguli and Serratos-Lopez, 2009). In the official report of the CONAPO (Consejo Nacional de Población-National Council for Demographics), these authors call researchers to take a different approach to discover the potential benefits of the effects of
migration in the education within migrant communities. They seem to denounce that there is an uncovered potential in approaching specific mechanisms in which the migration experience exacerbates societal problems, instead research needs to be done in order to discover the benefits that such mechanisms could bring for the wellbeing of migrants.

Debry also concludes that:

“This practice [migration]…does not appear to be a process in which parents pass on pro-migration values or attitudes, what scholars call a “culture of migration” to their children. Instead, it arises out of a combination of life course changes, children’s experiences of power in their families during separation, and the lack of educational and professional opportunities available to children in Mexico.” (p. 142)

Nevertheless, she agrees that educational actors and the society in general need to understand the particular needs of these children of which little is considered in the adult world including the development of curricula for them.

In order to make schooling more inclusive for STF’s Zúñiga and Hamman (2009) propose a new taxonomy for sojourner students who hold remarkable traits, which include the “susceptibility to dislocation and a plural sense of belonging or partial belonging.” (p. 330). In contrast, they explain, “schools are meant to prepare good citizens who are loyal to the host community and feel a sense of belonging to the nation.” The sojourner students do not fit in these functions and yet they are capable to “build, understand, maintain, and reinforce a network of useful contacts …that surpass national boundaries.” Paradoxically, transnationalism places them in disadvantage because they belong to several cultures and do not hold the same academic proficiency as their mononational peers, which can end up in school failure.
In *Order and disorder: The contradictions of childhood*, Roger Smith (2000) categorizes three levels of experiences in childhood. He explains that children can take the role of consumers, of interpreters and of actors simultaneously and across different and overlapping contexts. Children become consumers because of globalizing tendencies and the powerful and persuasive techniques of marketing through mass media. Children are also interpreters in the sense that they evolve (either through schooling or just in their social lives) and learn to question, reframe and develop ideas. The third role proposed by Smith is that children become actors in an effort to be included in society. In the next section, I use this concept to explain how children interpret the decisions of their family members and become actors who emulate their predecessors in deciding to leave their place of origin following the patterns of their family members.

In the specific context of Mexican schools, the teachers are only trained in the distinctions between rural and urban, indigenous and special needs students. Even though Zúñiga and Hamman understand the need to adapt to students who come from the US, it may also apply to students who are born in Mexico and yet they have several national identities as they are already inheriting a transnational identity derived by their family. The authors reveal that the students identify a relationship with the teachers that seems impersonal and communitarian in contrast with their US schooling experience. Sojourner students also resent the lack of bilingual teachers; they also experience racism by their peers. These authors also found out that transnational students tend to be invisible to teachers. When they are visible, they are labeled low achieving. English is not perceived as an asset and teacher develops a kind of “otherness” regarding moral values and
behaviors.

Bhabha (2008) has defined the concept of "ambiguity" as the lack of continuity and consistency across different sectors of the government who are providing services to the population. This scholar gives special attention to the children of transnational families. She has concluded as many others that some governmental agencies either at the national or international level have taken two stances towards migrant children that are totally out of place. On one hand, we have the conception and perception of the migrant child as somebody who is a victim of social injustices and should be the recipient of benevolence from society. On the other hand, the migrant identity of people is considered a threat to the social order due to the perceived burden they give to the community; migrants are perceived as potential criminals and they represent a point where government economic resources have a leakage through welfare.

Examination of the discourse used in this study has helped me to understand (1) the influence that migration has had on the transformed family and social relations, (2) the disconnection that Mexican teachers declare regarding this factor as a determinant in their relationship with STF’s and (3) the strong impact that family migration has on the learning experience of their students. In order to understand this I am borrowing several conclusions drawn by Vavrus and Seghers (2010). In the analysis of discourse as a discursive practice, these authors propose the deconstruction of discourse practice as policy with three different stages: The first stage is production, followed by transformation and ending in consumption of the policy. With respect to the topic of our concern, the production is set at the stage of policymaking through textbooks and
PROBLEM. The transformation takes place in the classroom at the moment when teachers and students are interacting. The consumption manifests itself when the student builds self-aspirations and makes decisions to migrate or not because of what he or she sees as path towards successful adulthood.

The discourse as a social practice in the context of analysis of this work seems to be one in which the concept of the migration experience is so imbedded in everyday life. Migration as part of life has permeated every aspect of every person in the community. This translates into an unrecognizable acceptation of the status quo that Mexican teachers seem to find very new.

The considerations I had during the discourse analysis cannot exclude the utility that textbooks have for the teacher’s work. It should be obvious that the textbook is a tool for the teacher and the way the teacher approaches the content can have a strong influence on the perspective that is presented to the children and what the student will learn. In other words, the student’s learning process has more influence because of the approach that the teacher adopts towards the knowledge in textbooks rather than just the content of the book (Wong, 1991). Wong clarifies that it is not whether the knowledge promoted in textbooks is appropriate in providing space for ideological discussions and critical thinking but rather the way that the teacher manages time and instructional tools so as to allow for a deeper construction of the knowledge that is not limited by the need to perform well on standardized tests.

Constructivism in the Social Science and its application to Comparative Education

The new and global cultural economy has to be seen as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order, which cannot any longer be understood in
terms of existing center-periphery models (even those which might account for multiple centers and peripheries (Appadurai 1990).

As expressed above, Appadurai (1990) has been dissatisfied with the research that corresponds to views of the world that seem more and more limited and obsolete due to their narrow scopes to explain social reality in the search for an educational theory that would be appropriate for the specific community setting. However, he does not want us to believe that former practices of research need to be discarded. As educational theory evolves, new research ought to be self-reflexive and never complete. In fact, he states “education is becoming increasingly linked with business interests as institutions are embracing- often as a last resort- the promise of technology in an uncritical fashion” (Appadurai, 1990: pg.6).

Morrison (2004) has also argued that the studies on curriculum theory have been limited since they have focused in creating a “grand unified theory” or some reductionist guidelines for theory. The same controversy can be seen in the study of comparative education. Dimitriadis and Kamberelis (1997) argue that because globalization has permeated in every aspect of the modern human experience demands that educational theory be an area in which research has to be flexible and resilient.

Furthermore, I find an ideal blend of traditional and innovative perspectives through Vavrus and Seghers (2010), who propose a framework similar to a vertical case study. Such an approach defines social reality as a very fluid and interrelated complexity in which events in one realm affect directly and/or indirectly many conditions in other realms. As an example, they explain the gathering of information to make an
international report on economic development and its repercussions in the discourse among people in other more general areas of everyday life.

_A Critical Theory for the context of the impact of Migration on Mexican Education_

As stated above, the interactions taking place among teachers, administrators, students and parents cannot be understood in isolation. The social encounters that characterize the relationships among teachers and other social sectors, the political reality of patronage or _clientelismo_\(^{11}\) which has historically shaped how bureaucrats interact, and the economic and administrative nature of a centralistic infrastructure is very much what defines the Mexican educational system. Accordingly, Valencia (2001) explains that social policies in Mexico (including Education) correspond to a model that could be localized somewhere between a “corporative” model and a “minimalist residual” model in which important social sectors are systematically excluded and left to the market and to discrentional clientelism. This explains, Valencia says, the popular trend of these excluded social sectors to seek ways to survive outside formal markets. Applied to the issue at hand, the “corporative” model signifies that the State represented by the SEP has been evolving towards a kind of decentralization that allows the advantage of a good education for those in a situation already privileged by their social and cultural capital.

This leaves the discretion of interest groups like the teachers union to provide and/or

\(^{11}\) See Klesner, Joseph L. “Political Attitudes, Social Capital, and Political Participation: The United States and Mexico Compared.” _Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos_ 19(1), (Winter, 2003), pp. 29-63. University of California Press on behalf of the University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States and the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. This author explains that “So long as people saw the government as a dispense of individualized benefits via the clientelist networks promoted by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional: PRI) and by government agencies, they would not likely organize viable civic organizations or parties to oppose the PRI and the captive organizations it had created (like the official labor and peasant movements)."
deprive of incentives to those who conform to the system. In my research, the excluded social sectors are those families who are in the search for a better future and make the decision to migrate to the US.

Critical theory used for other cases has been applied to contexts very different from my focus of study. Some scholars have been critical concerning the American educational system. Apple (2000)\textsuperscript{12} for example, has denounced the role of education as a means to conserve the sociopolitical structure of the modern American society in favor of certain interest groups. In \textit{Official Knowledge} (2000: pg. 62) he states:

“While there is a formal right for everyone to be represented in the debates over whose cultural capital, whose knowledge “that”, “how”, and “to”, will be declared legitimate for transmission to future generations of students, it is still the case that…a \textit{selective tradition} operates in which only specific groups’ knowledge becomes official knowledge. Thus, the freedom to help select the formal corpus of school knowledge becomes official knowledge.”

Although such criticisms may be valid for the American case, the Mexican settings present a “hybrid” version of challenges that demand a critical theory that goes beyond the dichotomy of seeing education as a field where political power determines how society is being shaped. As Appadurai suggests, I am not discarding the fact that the selection of values and principles states the priorities of the formal curriculum. However, I complement this statement regarding Mexican Education by explaining that the selection of concepts implies not only the kind of knowledge that is delivered but also the practices of teachers.

The question that applies to the Mexican educational paradox (at least in the beginning) is not whether education is democratic or hegemonic; nor is it the question whether it brings development or reinforces a stagnant condition within migrant communities. Although the technical conditions in which teachers work suffer from everyday limitations, the critical suggestions given by Apple do not quite apply to many of the Mexican educational practices if we keep his suggestions and do not go deeper into the forms that knowledge is delivered.

I find it necessary to mention the critical observations from scholars who denounce the authoritarian character of the Mexican teachers union (SNTE- Sindicato Nacional de los Trabajadores de la Educación) and the way this makes a profound impact in the way teachers execute their duties in the classroom. The Union has institutionalized bureaucratic practices that impinge on the teacher’s actual work either through the way finances are managed and/or by controlling the degree in which educational reforms take place and reach the classroom practices. The teachers union in Mexico has grown to be a strong political conglomerate that controls who is given teacher jobs and the terms in which people are hired. Such reality has made every reform initiative to turn into a very peculiar manifestation of the negotiation of interests among the policy makers and the teachers union.¹³

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SNTE has denied the fact that bureaucratic practices, that slow down and interfere with the quality of education, have become institutionalized and represent a great obstacle to the effectiveness of educational reforms (Ornelas, 2004). Carlos Ornelas (2004) states that such practices include “…the absenteeism of many teachers; the incompetence of many supervisors (usually political appointees); corruption (a term avoided in official documents), and political conflicts between the groups of the SNTE.” (p. 407). He also discusses the fact that educational improvement is far from happening as long as the “union’s long tradition of corporatism” (Ornelas, 2004, p. 341) and its political power continue as strong as it has traditionally been.

In this sense, teachers are seen as people who try to balance their professional and personal interests in such a way that the student’s emotional and psychological needs are not necessarily in their foremost priorities. In terms of the actual work inside the classrooms, I also study the free textbooks that are used by teachers across Mexico. It is through the study of these texts that we can find the official position of the Mexican government towards migration and transnational families either by excluding their representation or by stating indirectly the attention to their social needs. Additionally, to enhance the utility of this study, I expose some opinions expressed by educational policy makers in the state of Jalisco who are in charge of the Binational Program for the education of migrants (PROBEM for its title in Spanish) create for the migrant students as well as some professors with the responsibility to train teachers.
The teacher as the focus of this study is part of a bureaucratic structure with hierarchies that highly influences their level of agency as individuals. A way to explain such reality is well expressed by Klesner (2003) who said:

Mexicans who tended to see themselves as “subjects” instead of “participants” were simply reacting rationally to the clientelist institutions that had been created in the 1930s and 1940s. Indeed, in research based on surveys conducted in the 1970’s…that Mexicans held democratic attitudes. (Klesner, 2003, p. 30)

Although the agency of teachers cannot be described in a simple way, the analysis of their answers to the survey of my study (see below) demonstrate to some degree the level of freedom teachers hold in their classroom interactions with migrant children.

**Summary and Contributions to the Literature**

This project focuses on the work of Mexican teachers while being aware and/or unaware of the different explicit and implicit factors around the social and cultural traits of the communities in which STF’s live. This issue will take into consideration the studies and conclusions found from the research on educational policy, history of Mexican education and the migration studies that relate and somewhat explain the tendencies of this population to project themselves into adulthood.

The contribution of this study will bring new insights in the research of the effectiveness of policymaking and implementation of education towards STF’s. At the same time, it will also open new questions regarding the different factors in the hidden curriculum that hinder the work of teachers from being more related to the “actual world of the child.” In the formal curriculum it is mentioned the “meaningful learning” as a way
to provide a feature to assess the relevance of the knowledge delivered in the classroom. The connection between the essential knowledge and the practical experience outside the classroom need only to be closer in order to build a successful society regardless of the decision to migrate or not to migrate from the part of the STF’s.

The recognition of this will make for a more congruent action in the planning across sectors from the governments when they make their own planning either at the national or international level. It will also provide insight to understand other populations who, regardless of nationality may present similar traits.

As Zúñiga and Hamman, conclude:

“Imagining binational or transnational pedagogy and curricula, that is, imagining the schooling that would be most circumstantially responsive to the students described here, is daunting. Converting such imagining into a blueprint for new practice would entail much more than having a binational framework for coordination.” (p. 350)

The bi-national framework is only the beginning of a much more complex set of projects that would obviously include education but also a holistic perspective that would entail coordination across sectors and over time.
CHAPTER 3: STUDY SITE, METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

Research Design

The idea for examining how STF’s are represented in the curriculum came out of an effort to make an analysis of the interaction among education and the social reality of the child. I am doing this by considering several interrelated societal factors. In this sense, historical realism is the ontology behind this study. As mentioned in Chapter one, the central topic to this project is constantly influenced by social, political, cultural, economic, and ethnic and gender values. These diverse factors define the state of the educational system in Mexico and the concern (or lack thereof) for the migration experience as an impending event in many children’s lives. This ontology is best framed as historical realism because the issue in question is

…apprehendable in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature (although elements are often shared among many individuals and even across cultures), and dependent for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions… (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, Pg. 110)

The study of Mexican education, regardless of the topic that the observer focuses on, has to include the historical facts that have shaped educational actors from the beginning of the establishment of the educational system in the beginning of the 20th century. Although I am not going into detail of how the Mexican educational system has evolved, I do not assume that the issue at hand is isolated from how studying the history
of education in Mexico reveals, particularly in the choice of curriculum in Mexican education, the trajectory and evolution of the corresponding political trends that are shaping the nation.

Migration has a strong national economic impact: in 2004, 2.75% of Mexico’s GDP was made up of remittances. Between 1990 and 2000, remittances sent within Mexican family networks added up to 45 thousand million USD (Banco de México, 2010). Further, migration has profound social impacts, to the point that scholars have coined the term “culture of migration”\(^ {14}\). It is inevitable, then, that the lives of children from transnational families are strongly shaped by the migration of their family members since they are left to the care of other close relatives and their relationship with parents and siblings is deeply affected. Achotegui (2004) explains the patterns in emotional and psychological disruptions that people suffer by transnational living by oneself or through family members. Additionally, through an extensive ethnological research over the period of 4 years, Debry (2010) shows how entire lives and generations are deeply shaped in this manner.

I approached this research from the viewpoint of the interrelation between the traits of the Mexican social and political dynamics that affect the environment of the public school. I am therefore using two perspectives: constructivism because of the discoveries that are made with different discipline approaches to one issue and critical theory due to the need for insight that can link education and migration in a holistic manner.

\(^ {14}\) For details about the term “culture of migration” refer to Kandel and Massey (2002).
This study focuses on teachers because the different interactions they have in the macro level with the institutional system already in place that gives them an official curriculum to work with. At the same time, their knowledge and experience they have in the micro level makes them modify the curriculum and bring it to practice to the best of their abilities. The definition given by Lipsky (1989) of teachers as “street-level bureaucrats” allows me to explain the permanent negotiation of the role of teachers and their work. Teachers have implicit and explicit responsibilities and are expected to meet the obligations to the educational system, as well as to the community. They are also expected to meet certain needs of the children that are usually implicitly or explicitly assumed by the parents depending on their level of involvement in the educational process.

The following paragraphs outline the study area and research methods.

*Study Site and Sampling*

The state of Jalisco is located among the three states with highest rates of migration in Mexico. CONAPO (Comisión Nacional de Población or *National Council for demographics*) declared that the North bound migrating population in the period of 2000-2005 totaled 612,927 people from which 229,834 succeeded in arriving at their destination in the US, while 383,093 migrants stayed at the border (CONAPO, 2009). Jalisco is one of the states that has been recognized as one of the top three states from which there has been significant waves of migration to the United States in the last 50 years have originated.
The process of the selection of my study community was based on the data provided by INEGI (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática-National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics). The researcher made trips regularly to this community. My access to this area has been eased by the fact that was born and raised in the capital of this state and therefore was acquainted with the cultures and the players involved in Education.

According to the same report mentioned above, the municipality of Villa Corona was considered to have a “very high” degree of migration intensity. This municipality has reported the existence of 3,867 households from which 18.10% have family members residing in the US and 7.91% which family members who travel to and from the US. 5.48% of the households have members who returned permanently to their homes in Villa Corona. In this sense, the migrant households represent 31.49% of the totality of households in the municipality.

I focused on two groups. First, I considered practicing teachers who work in rural schools within a typically migrant community. Second, I invited subjects who were teachers and student teachers working at the Benemerita y Centenaria Escuela Normal de Jalisco15 (Teachers college for its abbreviation in Spanish). I also chose to interview some of the policy-makers involved in Mexican education in order to illustrate the perspectives from the government.

The participants were thoroughly informed about the objectives of interviews and focus groups. There was time lapse of a couple of days between when they were

15 From now on I will refer to this school as the Teachers’ college for purpose of clarity.
informed and the actual sessions. The sessions took place in the classrooms during break
time in the teacher’s college. Each session lasted between 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Data Generation: A Multimethod Approach

I collected data from a variety of primary and secondary sources.

1. Anonymous Surveys

   In order to begin to understand the context in which the teachers do their work, I created a survey that reassured the subject of the confidentiality of the information gathered in case they decided to participate. I allowed them to remain anonymous and be confident that their answers were not going to affect their work situation in any way. The data collected from the survey allowed the teachers to express their own perspective as to how the factor of migration has had implicitly or explicitly appeared in their interactions with their students. There were 45 collected surveys were 45: 5 of them were collected from a federal administered school; another school with state administration facilitated 13 completed surveys; and, the Teachers School provided me with 25 completed surveys. The findings through this specific survey covered issues such as teacher expectations, how involved the teachers think they ought to be in students’ social life, etc. The questions used in this survey are reproduced in the appendix at the end of this work.

2. Focus groups

   The focus groups that I organized with teachers allowed me to understand a little bit more the relevance that the social reality of students has in the classroom experience. Additionally, they gave me an opportunity to unveil the implications of being a beginner
teacher in contrast with the teacher who has had enough experience and be less idealistic in their roles as teachers. The focus groups allowed the teachers to become aware and express the prevalence of the “culture of migration” not only in their performance in their classroom but also as their own personal and family experiences. The first focus group included five teachers who have had approximately ten years of experience. The second group included four student teachers. In both focus groups, I allowed them to feel free to talk about their own experiences, although for the first one it was base on their firsthand experiences and prior knowledge of stories from colleagues. They were for the most part very open to sharing their knowledge. During the second group, however, the student teachers were prompted several times to answer regarding imaginary situations due to the obvious absence of first hand experiences in the classroom.

3. Formal Interviews

I conducted 3 interviews in which the director of the PROBEM was by herself while there were two faculty members of the Teachers College; and two other teachers from the rural schools who worked second shifts as principals. The interviews with the director of the PROBEM, the faculty members of the Teachers college and two teachers who were also principals, gave me the opportunity to approach the official perspective of the migration as a factor that influences the academic journey of students. Through these interviews, I had the opportunity to add a different dimension that is more formal and is more explicit in relationship to what the importance of the social life of Mexican children in the educational achievement and performance.
The director of the PROBEM invited me to her office about a week in advance of my other scheduled interviews. The interview with the director lasted for about an hour and a half and since it took place in her own office, she did not feel any imposition or interference with the ideas that she expressed. Additionally, she provided me with some documents to understand in details the mission and accomplishments of the Program under her authority.

The two faculty members that I interviewed simultaneously were available by appointment arranged by the director of the Teachers college and the interview took place in a terrace that is part of the school and by the hallways. This happened in between the classes they were teaching. This interview lasted for about an hour.

The teachers I interviewed in a rural school with both present were principals and teachers of the morning and afternoon shift of the same school building. The interview with these teachers lasted for about forty-five minutes as I was taking up their teaching and working time.

4. Textbook analysis

I have taken the textbook analysis of the free textbooks for the subject of civic education. I chose to study the workbooks for the students and the guidebook for teachers for the grades 4th in order to understand the priorities regarding the values and social expectations that the government has assumed as to be essential in the socialization of children. The samples I used were for the year of 2003, although the versions used for years that are more recent have not changed noticeably.

5. Secondary Data
In order to have a more complete overview of the issue I used secondary data that originated from 23 interviews with adult migrants who have explained the relevance and impact that formal education and schooling has had in their experiences as migrants.

The analysis and codification of the data were done with the program of Ethnograph® 5.0, which facilitates the codification of recurrent themes as well as taking notes of the reflections made by the researcher as she went along with the text analysis. All materials were analyzed in the same fashion and these included the anonymous questionnaires, informal interviews, textbooks and secondary data.

In the text below, I give more details about each method.

**Anonymous teacher surveys**

I designed the questionnaire in an effort to allow participants to feel comfortable explaining their own perspectives while being reassured that no information that could be delivered would be used in detriment of their work conditions. We cannot neglect, however, the diverse influences in the answers obtained through it. The questions were formulated in order to explore the teacher’s own considerations about the social entourage of the student in relation their academic performance and its correlation with family migration and transnational nature of their own family life. In the field, the anonymity of the questionnaire seemed indispensable due to the very nature of the administrative system, which is implicitly understood under the “clientelist” definition mentioned by various scholars (Klesner, 2003; Valencia, 2001; among others). In the awareness of this traditional teacher self-perception, the questions had to be written
considering the specific circumstances where the SNTE is strong and it plays a significant role in the promotion of teachers and their working conditions, even though the Union was not mentioned in the forms. The formulation of the questionnaire considered the available didactic material that every teacher in Mexico has at their disposition and the special concerns towards their students and the proactive initiative this may show in their own classroom performance.

The questions of the survey are open-ended. The survey explains at the beginning the reason for this research and it allowed the subjects to understand that they were free to decide whether they would answer the questionnaire without any consequences or rewards. All the surveys were delivered by hand to the director or coordinator of their own school so it would guarantee their complete anonymity. Given the context, the level of direct contact was kept at a minimum between the researcher and the subjects of study.

The answers were analyzed following concurrent themes that the participants gave that implied a possible relationship between their work in the classroom and the social environment of the students. Such assumption was taken for granted regardless of the actual perspective of the teacher towards such association of themes. The variables included the issues of family profile, students’ perceived aspirations, social life (family, school and community), social values, national identity; discipline and behavior; and, relationship between teacher and student (disconnected or cooperative).

*Semi structured interviews and focus groups*
I conducted three semi-structured interviews in order to, as Spradley (1980) states, get at understanding rather than the traditional ethnographic goal of explaining. Within this approach, I made an effort to maintain a *deliberate naïveté* (Kvale, 1996), that is, an openness to new phenomena, rather than starting with pre-assumptions and pre-determined categories. I took notes during the interviews and I recorded the interviews with a portable tape recorder and transcribed the interviews for analyses. I interviewed two faculty members simultaneously at the Teachers college; another interview was with the director of the PROBEM in the state of Jalisco; and, I conducted a third interview with two teachers of one of the schools that received me in the community of Villa Corona. All of the subjects agreed to the tape-recording of the interviews.

The faculty members I interviewed were contacted, initially, by the director of the normal school Teachers college and received a request from him to meet me in the school building between classes. The interview with the director of PROBEM took place at her office in the time she allotted for the interview according to her schedule.

Concerning the focus groups, one was organized with 4 faculty members in one of the classrooms of the Teachers college and 4 student teachers at the same school formed the other one on a different day. Similar to the interviews, the questions were formulated in the moment and with the awareness that any intervention from the interviewer would give way to some predisposition in the subjects’ answers. As a result, the conversations taken among these groups were self-directed although the researcher made sure these were always around the topic of our concern.
Textbook Analysis

The study of the guideline given to teachers along with the textbook for students helped me to define the values and principles that policy makers have set as priorities in the curriculum. Additionally, the study of the PROBEM including its provisions to meet the needs of migrant students allowed me to explore the kind of approach that this program is taking towards the needs of transnational families.

In order to focus on the sociopolitical aspects of this work, I explored the Civic Education workbook used for fourth grade as well as the Teacher’s guidebook for this subject in the same grade. I scanned the books to unveil the values and principles that are promoted in the child as a citizen of a nation. Again, the idea was to reveal content relevant to the children’s sense of belonging, the success of the student in adult life, (the pragmatic knowledge defined in the dichotomy created by Yurén et al.) and the cultural attitudes towards migration as a social experience that has permeated the society.

Even though these books were used for the school year of 2001-2002, they reflect very clearly the ideology promoted in public education. These are textbooks used by every child in public school. A strong element that we need to consider in this section is that the creation of discourse as a social phenomenon is related to what is included in and excluded from the texts.

The considerations I had during this analysis cannot exclude the utility that textbooks have for the teachers’ work. It should be obvious that the textbook is a tool for the teacher and the way the teacher approaches the content can have a strong influence on the perspective that is presented to the children and what the student will learn. In other
words, the student’s learning process is influenced more so by the approach that the
teacher adopts towards use of the knowledge in textbooks rather than just the content of
the book (Wong, 1991). The knowledge presented in textbooks –according to Wong- is
not what needs to be changed. Rather, it is the preparation of the teachers to provoke
ideological discussions and critical thinking, which implies that the content would be
analyzed more deeply than taking it for the accomplishment of better scores in
standardized testing.

Secondary data

During the fieldwork period, I found a source of existing data already transcribed
from interviews with transnational individuals. These participants belong to the same
state of Jalisco although they belong to a region different from the one that this project
focuses on. These transnational migrants were interviewed in order to explore their own
migration experiences as a natural part of their lives and most of these interviews contain
some relationship with their own readiness in knowledge and skills before they migrated
as well as their own family lives during their childhood. These 23 interviews were
originally prepared by students of educational psychology of the Universidad de
Guadalajara, “CUALTOS” (University campus in the region of “Los Altos” of Jalisco),
and they were facilitated by the professor in charge of the class during the semester of
2005. The interviews were done in a very informal format so the subjects would explain
in detail their own experiences and how they believe it is related to their own education
and their experiences as migrants in the US.
Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data obtained through these methods, the use of discourse analysis seems the most appropriate. Discourse analysis has been defined as the translation and decoding of texts so that it can be interpreted in the present context (Vavrus and Seghers; 2010). In this sense, the use of discourse analysis is essential for the understanding of the exchange of knowledge and the socialization of people in Mexico, especially in the schools belonging to communities with a long time tradition of migration towards the US.

All discourse analysis is in itself descriptive, however, authors like Vavrus and Seghers (2010) have used what is called Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which embraces the view that certain meaning systems are privileged by their relationship with dominant groups in society and are themselves, constitutive of social relations. Discourse, therefore, is about what can be said and thought, who can speak, when and where and with what authority. Consequently, forms of knowledge can be included and/or excluded through policymaking. In this project, the CDA is used to link the micro level of the texts generated through textbook analysis, interviews and questionnaires to the macro level of sociopolitical dynamics in Mexican society, and specifically Mexican education with strict concentration on the migration experience as an educational factor.

The way CDA is used as a framework of study in Vavrus and Seghers (2010) seems very pertinent for this study. They have used Fairclough’s (1992) work to integrate
the linguistic features of discourse and the ideological dimensions of social relations. Such levels are comprised of:

1) discourse-as-text;

2) discourse-as-discursive-practice;

3) discourse-as-social-practice.

The discourse as text is manifested in the relevance of migration communicated during interviews and written surveys as well as the explicit values and principles expressed in written through the textbooks and teacher guides.

In the analysis of discourse as a discursive practice, Vavrus and Seghers (2010) propose the deconstruction of discourse practice as policy with three different stages: The first stage is production, followed by transformation and ending in consumption of the policy. In this sense, the production is set at the stage of policymaking through textbooks and PROBEM (Programa Binacional de Educación al Migrante-Binational Program for the Education of Migrants); the transformation happens in the classroom at the moment when teachers and students are interacting; the consumption takes place when the student builds self aspirations and makes decisions to migrate or not as a consequence of his or her own aspirations for adulthood.

The discourse as a social practice in the context of analysis of this work seems to be one in which the concept of the migration experience is so imbedded in everyday life. Migration as part of life has permeated every aspect of every person in the community. This translates into a voluntary but unconscious attitude of teachers when it comes to their work and actual interaction with children.
The concept of this project as being introduced to the research subjects was something that seemed a novelty since teachers do not have the habit to consider social and family related factors in the practice of teaching and learning. When I began to explain the intentions and the objectives of my research, teachers appeared to be surprised that the relevance of migration can have a relevance in the curriculum worth observing and questioning. Such realization leads me to question what has happened in the training and lived experiences of teachers that migration has blended to the level of obviating it in teacher-student interaction.

The lack of connection between the official discourse and the actual lives of children makes me believe that there is an aspect in their socialization that is not being tackled. Values such as patriotism and solidarity seem to be an important part of the official discourse, but as I explain in the next chapters, there are other life skills and family related issues that are not included or represented in the formal curriculum. The design of curriculum always implies an exclusive selection of life principles and therefore it implies the exclusion of concepts that, either intentionally or not, make appear to the student as less relevant at least in the expectations that the nation holds upon them.

Vavrus and Seghers (2010) created an example of analysis in order to understand who produces key texts. A first answer to this would be the policy makers. Thus, I analyze the stance of policy makers with reference to the interview with a policy maker, interview and focus group with some faculty of the ByCNSJ and the textbooks created at the state level with the authorization with the central government.
In defining success in adult life, I considered the experience of migration as part of the life of adults and their success. I hoped that this would unveil whether the teacher perceived migration as part of the successful life of adulthood.

Yuren et al. (2005) have shown that children of migrant-sending communities manifest disenchantment in schooling and the different abilities and wisdom acquired while enduring poverty and the value that is given to the migration experience. These authors also relate school desertion to problems that affect the child such as the fact of belonging to families with only one parent and their lack of access to school facilities. The relevance of pragmatic knowledge is based on the theoretical structure created by Yuren et al. The dichotomized deconstruction of knowledge transmitted inside or outside of schools is essential to this kind of study since, as many authors sustain, these two kinds of knowledge are disconnected and whether the student finds school-related learning experience as useful and conducive to a successful life as an adult.

Regarding cultural preconceptions about migration, I examined data for any attributes as to whether this life changing experience is conceived and how the degree to which respondents are including or excluding vocabulary related to this issue. It is pertinent to decide how migration is seen by the government and by the teacher as an intermediary who delivers knowledge and interacts with the child in the classroom.

The methodology used in this study has been shaped to understand in a comprehensive way a topic that still has many questions unanswered. The influence of social factors is still to be understood in terms of the extent to which they interact in the classroom dynamics.
The following chapter exposes the findings that, hopefully, will bring a new kind of interpretation, as education needs to become more comprehensive of the children's social needs and experiences. Students who belong to transnational families are multiplying not only in Mexico but also everywhere in the world; therefore, the educational efforts need to match their needs, as this new era is demanding from these children new understandings of their own roles as members of society.
Chapter 4: FINDINGS

Introduction

In this study I have chosen to focus on teachers because of their role as agents of education and mediators between “official knowledge” (Apple, 2000) and the realities of children in their communities. The “culture of migration” mentioned in previous chapters should not be underestimated if policymaking is to consider its influence on the learning process. Nevertheless, in spite of a long tradition of migration on the part of a large portion of the Mexican population, so far it appears that it has not been significant enough to highlight this experience with respect to the development of the child. Ironically, the prominence and role of migration in the life experience of many Mexicans have become so evident that it can be compared to the metaphor of focusing too much on the forest without seeing the trees. The “forest” of societal factors in the development of young generations makes the “trees” of migration invisible to those inside the Mexican landscape.

It is important that we highlight the special effects of migration on the socialization of children because of pressing issues resulting from global influences on the local communities as well on issues emanating from local traditions that have become global phenomena.
The complexity of the issue at hand includes multiple dimensions at the micro level as well as the macro. It is necessary that we start thinking about migration in a holistic way. If we are to understand the dynamics of the training and employment of migrants, we also need to understand their cultural background and for our concern, the perception of education and school in Mexican households. The macro dimension of the issue is the complex connection between voluntary or involuntary exchange among nations that happens as people begin to look for a better position in life that sometimes is absent in the country of origin.

Education, per se, cannot be removed from the political discussions within a nation and even among nations. It has been proven often enough that there are indirect results of the historical interactions among nations whether as colonizer, as a dependent state or even in the post-colonial era (Osei, 2010; Montero Sieburth, 1992; Appadurai, 1990). Spring (2006) even made the distinction of 4 different ideological trends within the academic world. In reference to the postcolonial stance he mentions that:

With the breakup of colonial empires after World War II, new forms of colonialism or postcolonialism appeared through the work of IGOs, multinational corporations, and trade agreements. In its current manifestation, postcolonialist power promotes market economies, human capital education, and neoliberal school reforms all designed to promote the interests of rich nations and powerful multinational corporations. In the framework of postcolonialism, these critics argue, education is viewed as an economic investment designed to produce better workers to serve multinational corporations (Becker, 2006; Crossley & Tikly, 2004; R. Rhoads & Torres, 2006; Spring, 1998; Stromquist, 2002; Stromquist & Monkman, 2000). (Spring, 2006, p. 340)

With respect to the education of children who have a high probability of migrating, we should not underestimate their ability to adapt to any circumstance. While
it is necessary to understand their socio-cultural environment, family upbringing is also a significant factor influencing the self-projection of these children (Debry, 2010).

In Chapter 1, I formulated a set of questions that served as a guide to inquire in order to illuminate possible issues in the education of STF. To remind the reader I am including again these questions are as follow:

- What are the considerations that Mexican primary teachers give to the effects of family migration on their students’ social and emotional development?
- How are the SEP and primary school teachers adapting the official curriculum to the needs of STF?
- Do teachers as governmental agents and the SEP view migration as a condition that leads to obstacles or advantages in the development of STF?
- How, if at all is the Mexican government addressing career aspirations of STF’s in the curriculum content?

In order to answer the first question I used the teachers’ survey to let them express their position towards this specific social factor, which I was also one of my topics in the focus groups. The second answer was answered in part by the survey though little was said about the actual efforts to adapt due to the evident irrelevance of migration as something that relates to the curriculum. The third question associates the teachers’ work with their role as street-level bureaucrats who represent the government. The last question was the basis for the interviews and the analysis of the textbooks. In the interviews I discovered the almost subconscious oversight of the experience of migration
as a factor for school performance. In the textbook analysis, I realized the portrayal of the social reality of the child that can be general and universal to allow teacher autonomy.

**Context of the study**

My use of discourse analysis in this study stems from the curiosity about the language that I heard and internalized as I was growing up. As a daughter of a family of educators, I was well aware of the language that Mexican teachers use in their classrooms. Even though I have become an outsider at different times and in different contexts, the insider perspective of the Mexican teachers is not strange for me. The details explored in the textbooks as well as in the answers from teachers confirm the assumption that the discourse used in the curriculum, no matter how unintended indicate an oversight regarding issues affecting the current generation of Mexican children. While this may not be particular to the Mexican case, its proximity to the US makes clear evidence of the need for a new definition of schooling that includes the social and emotional factors that strongly impact the development of transnational children.

**The migration experience as a family**

The need for this kind of study reflects a call for understanding the different needs of the “soon to be migrant” children while allowing them to feel that they are being included, represented and understood within the Mexican system of schooling. The purpose of such action is to begin a proactive resolution to the tendency of migrants to be represented as a socioeconomic burden in their place of destination. The proactive stance
proposed here is to begin to understand the views of teachers as their own work is intertwined with the social and emotional development of the children whose families are already very much affected by the migration experience and its consequences.

In *Order and disorder: The contradictions of childhood*, Roger Smith (2000) categorizes three levels of experiences in childhood. He explains that children can take the role of consumers, of interpreters and of actors simultaneously and across different and overlapping contexts. Children become consumers because of globalizing tendencies and the powerful and persuasive techniques of marketing through mass media. Children are also interpreters in the sense that they evolve (either through schooling or just in their social lives) and learn to question reframe and develop ideas. The third role proposed by Smith (2000) is that children become actors in an effort to be included in society. In the next section, I use this concept to explain how children interpret the decisions of their family members and become actors who emulate their predecessors in deciding to leave their place of origin following the patterns of their family members. Considering the effects of migration in the development of the child and the prevalence of migration in the everyday life of many Mexican communities, there is an impending demand of new research and an reconsideration of social policies that need to be more comprehensive.

*Family life*

Farr (2009) and Debry (2010) explore extensively the family dynamics in social networks and the struggles and conflicts resulting from migration and the unexpected
roles and meanings encountered by the parents, Children and extended family members.\textsuperscript{16}

An excellent example of the consequences of the migration of family members was expressed in an interview with a 30-year-old woman, Mariana (pseudonym) whose father was a circular migrant, a person who has left and come back several times, throughout her childhood and adolescence. She confided that:

\textit{La principal razón era por el trabajo… Se iba con la intención de mejorar el patrimonio familiar… hacia falta su autoridad en cierta forma aunque mi mamá sabía llevar las riendas de la casa cuando él no estaba. Pero cuando él no estaba había cierta escasez de dinero…al grado que la última vez que se fue nos tuvimos que ir a vivir con mi abuelita…para evitar los altos pagos en los arrendamientos y por el otro la seguridad moral que podía brindar una persona mayor.}

[The main reason (for her father leaving for the US several times) was work… He left with the intention of improving the family’s patrimony… his authority was lacking in some ways even though my mom knew how to manage the house when he was not there. But when he was not there, there was certain scarcity of money…to the degree that last time we had to go and live at my grandma’s house…to avoid (paying) high rent and, on the other side, because of the moral security that an elder person can provide.]

This segment demonstrates Mariana’s interpretation of her childhood experiences and her own rationalizations for her father’s frequent trips to the US. Later, she explains that moving in with her grandmother was another way to cope with the absence of the father figure.

Later on Mariana expresses the effects of this experience on her schooling:

\textit{Mariana:…como no estaba el con nosotros…yo notaba que mi familia no era como la familia de otras compañeras, como cuando había reuniones de padres de familia donde se presentaba el papá y la mamá, en mi caso solo se presentaba mi mamá…se hizo como una costumbre de que ella se encargara de esas cosas. Y por el otro lado en cuanto a la situación de familia, pues sí afectaba mucho al saber que mi mamá era quien te regañaba y quien te premiaba las dos cosas al}\n
\textsuperscript{16} For more details refer to: \textit{Rancheros in Chicagoacán}, 2009, Marcia Farr; and \textit{Divided by Borders}, 2010, Joanna Debry
mismo tiempo, ya después cuando el estaba, queríamos que cuando el llegara fueran puros premios; por que cuando el llegaba de Estados Unidos trataba de compensarnos pues por todo ese tiempo que no estuvo con nosotros.

Interviewer: ¿Consideras que él haya cambiado su forma de ser, de pensar sobre su nacionalidad, creencias en el tiempo que él estuvo por allá?

Mariana: Si, mucho. Al principio entre otras cosas que el cambio fue la forma de ver las cosas como más a futuro. Por que ya pensaba mas en el futuro, trataba más como en pensar más en que hará al día siguiente y prevenir, tanto la situación econòmica como la familiar, él quería ser mejor. Por que él creía que de alguna manera el haber conocido allá le daba la idea de que uno como mexicano puede ser mejor que los estadounidenses y por otro lado influyó mucho en él, por que él también, logro ver como sobre las veces que se fue pudo haber hecho mas cosas pero se hizo consumista allá en E.U. y después cambio esa visión que él tenía del materialismo.

Interviewer: De cierta manera tomó lo bueno y le sirvió para asentarse ahí, a partir de ahí tomo buenas costumbres y no tomar vicios, manías, forma de hablar?

Mariana: No por el contrario entre una de las cosas que el tomó es que dejó el cigarro, por que lo que era el vicio del alcohol ya lo llevaba desde aquí de México, por que desde que él tenía 13 años ya tomaba.

...Siento que también le hizo mucha falta la figura paterna a mi hermano el mas grande su presencia sobre por ser varón, él se crió con tres mujeres (hermanas) y mi mamá sin la figura paterna...

[Mariana:...because he was not there with us...I noticed that my family was not like others, like when there were parent-teacher meetings where both mother and father were present, in my case, only my mom showed up...it became like a habit for her to take charge of those things. On the other hand, in relation to the situation of the family, there was a lot of influence because my mother was the one who gave us the punishments and rewarded us at the same time. Later on, when he would come back we were only expecting rewards because when he came back from the US he tried to compensate for all the time he did not spend with us.

Interviewer: Do you think that his personality changed? His way of thinking about his nationality and beliefs during the time he spent over there?

Mariana: Yes, a lot. In the beginning among other things was his way of starting to prepare for the future. He tried to predict how he would spend the next day regarding the household finances and the family; he wanted to be a better person. Because he believed that somehow he could be better than an American person. It also influenced him in the sense that he realized how he fell into the consumerism; later on he regretted being so materialistic.

Interviewer: Does that mean that somehow he took the good things so it helped him to settle and then on he began to adopt good habits and forget about the bad habits and bad ways of talking?
Mariana: No, on the contrary, among other things, he had quit smoking. He was already an alcoholic when he was 13 years old and before he left from Mexico, he already used to drink. I also feel that my brother needed a person with the role of a father because of being a male; he was raised among three sisters and my mom with no fatherly figure]

Mariana is exploring her childhood and can be identified more as “interpreter” with respect to Smith’s categories. In her reflections, the role of her father is appreciated and questioned at the same time. The absence of the father appears to be an obstacle for Mariana to Mariana’s ability to feel included in the school community although she acknowledges the efforts of her mother. Nevertheless, Mariana also recognizes her father’s effort to provide for his family although his presence was rare.

Another participant to the same focus group (Pedro for purpose of analysis) explained that

Pedro: If the older family member leaves, then all the family follows him. As an example, there is my family. My own father and my own mother, along with all my siblings live over there. All of them are living over there, then as a natural process, everyone is leaving following the family.

Interviewer: do you leave because of family reasons or is it also because of economic needs?

Pedro: If the father or the older brother leave, then it seems much easier for other family members to follow. It becomes more feasible. The oldest sibling left right after he finished middle school. Then, because of the lack of educational opportunities, he left. Then, the next oldest brother followed him and it is like that. After a few years, the father gets the green card and that is how everyone starts leaving.

Pedro has a very clear vision on the family dynamics because he has lived in a transnational family and he seems to be also puzzled by the force to leave. The internal
conflict of the street-level bureaucrat seems to be coming to the surface in this teacher who seemingly is convinced in the nobility of the teacher’s profession, yet he also sees the advantages of leaving to the US given his own family circumstances. Pedro has experienced migration first hand since he left to the US after finishing High School and came back with an ideal for teaching small children who have the very high probability to follow on his steps.

Later on, Pedro also confides that:

A child who is younger is better able to adapt to that new environment. Because the older they get, then there are more rooted values. Probably, it would be easier for that child to develop and succeed in their education than somebody who is older and has to deal with other conflicts.

In his own experience both as teacher and as a child of a transnational family, Pedro understands the advantages of leaving to the US at a relatively young age. It appears that a child can have better chances to a good quality of education as the migration happens earlier in life.

The influence of the community and the culture of migration

It has been demonstrated that Mexican migrants are identified as a very rich community in terms of social capital (Corrochano, 2002; Buriel, 1993). Family members support each other and their ties become even stronger when they are helping each other during the migration experience. Children, therefore, grow up with an understanding that the family is a source of support and guidance towards adulthood.
Under normal conditions, children go through different social and emotional stages that are very well studied and taught in normal schools. Nevertheless, the peculiarities of the STF make the need to understand the additional emotional burden that some children have to go through as they live in homes where family members come and go and their roles tend to be more complicated and fluid. Children who belong to transnational families live the experience of separation from their father and/or mother and/or older siblings while they stay with other caregivers. Even though most of the time this happens so that these children can have a better future, the unexpected consequences bring emotional and social conflicts that take the student to crossroads at which they are forced to drop out of school to follow their families. They sometimes view such decisions as a heroic step toward adulthood.

*Aspirations for adulthood*

Yuren et al. (2005) explained the lack of practicality in the school “habitus” was due to the traditional conception of the school as being a place for learning formal knowledge that has little to do with reality. As teacher Antonio (pseudonym) revealed in his comments during a focus group, the priorities of the child very often are not connected with what he or she learns at school. Schoolwork slowly becomes a useless burden that hinders the possibility of the child to respond to the impending needs of the family. In another instance, a teacher Antonio who participated in one of the focus groups revealed that

In the communities that I have worked, I have seen that … "If my brother (the student's) migrates right after primary school, then it is easy for me (the student)
to do the same thing.” They go to school to learn to read and make basic arithmetic and it seems enough for them. They need to have some knowledge of math in order to sow in the fields. Then in the classroom, they don't have enough interest to learn more. Because the father or the older sibling left, they worry about their families. They do not care about school as much as they do for their work in the field planting corn or provide for their own families. When they come to school with all of those responsibilities, the students only care about the knowledge that is practical in their lives.

Antonio understands that the family influence over schooling goes beyond the apparent migration and it derives a complete way of life for the child who not only is a student with the responsibility of going to school but also as the other adults in the household are absent, the child assumes the various tasks that adults were to take if they were present.

Official discourse

Even though he talks about the US case, in Official Knowledge, Apple explains that the curriculum is shaped based on “what the education is for, what and whose knowledge is considered legitimate, and who has the right to answer these questions” (Apple, p. 9). In Mexico, as anywhere else, the knowledge that is included in the official textbooks as well as the discourse used by the PROBEM (Programa Binacional de Educación al Migrante-Binational Program for the Education of Migrants), consciously or not, a reflection of the kinds of citizens that are being created to educate the population served by public schools.

The position manifested through the formal curriculum by the government officials has three different modes:

1. National level - publication of free textbooks distributed across the nation
2. State level—in charge of distribution of free textbooks and publication of some books related to the history of each state. Also in charge of the preparation of teachers and providing guidelines for the Normales.

3. Both levels—by the creation of specific programs like PROBEM.

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**Free textbooks**

As a result of the discourse analysis that I have done on the textbooks of civic education I have found some civic values and principles for citizenship that, while they do not address migration per se, have given me some material to ponder on the concept of Mexican citizenship and how it is promoted. Additionally I have tried to determine whether the family situation is somehow visualized as a source of study. I have also tried to make a proposition for the kind of self-projection in adulthood. As children are socialized, there are implicit roles that are assigned to them and others that are determined by gender and SES among others. All the previous issues, although not clearly stated in the formulation of the curriculum content emanating from the textbooks, the absence of terms is an additional factor that informs the discourse.

In order to maintain a focused approach on the topic I looked for words related to:

- sense of belonging
- cultural attitudes toward migration
- productivity and success
- pragmatic knowledge
The sense of belonging is most important to this study since the identification with being a Mexican could be either very meaningful or have no significance for the child who is learning to socialize and is surrounded by (or missing) role models who are migrant workers. The cultural attitudes towards migration is linked to the sense of belonging due to the nature of the communities and the acceptance they offer to children who bring into the school different behaviors and values that would not be there if their families or themselves have already lived the migrating experience (Debry, 2010). The reason for this consideration has lead me to contemplate how values and principles are transmitted to the child and how the Mexican identity has something to do with the creation of desire to work when the child is still too young to make work-related decisions. The pragmatic knowledge seems important because of the potential for school knowledge to provide the student with better conditions when they enter the workforce.

First, I identified the textbook focusing on Civic Education provided for 4th grade. I also obtained the teacher’s guide. Though, that these textbooks are provided by the SEP to every school in the nation and that they are used in the public schools as the main support of the curriculum content (the use of these is optional for the private schools even though they also receive these books.)

The theoretical framework provided in the beginning of the teacher’s guide for 4th grade for civic education (SEP, 2002) explains that this subject is the “comprehension and acceptance of norms, political principles, social patterns and customs that are current within a society.” The epistemology that is used in this curriculum is called a
constructivist one, which is “a framework that explains the evolution of human thinking.” They suggest that Constructivism means that the individual person constructs their knowledge when they relate and confirm information through the senses.”

In the next section of the teacher’s guide, the teacher is reminded of Piaget’s psychological development stages. Fourth graders are assumed to be within the age range of 9 years through 16 years old. They remind the teacher about Piaget’s stages and focusing on the third stage, which corresponds to the social conventions and morality growth. Of course, the teacher guide mentions human rights, laws and judicial norms, and the strengthening of the national identity. It suggests in many ways the urge for strengthening the student identification with values, principles and traditions belonging to Mexicans and the importance to the respect for cultural diversity in humanity while allowing them to analyze and understand the different manifestations of human thought and actions. It also includes the relevance of meaningful learning which depends on the relationship between what is learned in the classroom and the knowledge from experiences in three spheres, school, family and community (SEP, 2004). The teacher’s guide insists on the need for practicing negotiations, agreements, cooperation and confrontation of different points of view.

This guide also reminds the teacher to use the lesson plans in the book with enough flexibility to adapt to the reality, characteristics and needs presented by the context and school environment. The teacher’s guide divides the school year in order to study in detail different themes such as”:

- “why do people tell stories and sing?”;
• “What is liberty?”; “what are the consequences of living in a polluted environment?”; “what actions to take in order to have a peaceful coexistence?”

• “How to act when faced with situations that put my security at risk?”

The next section in the guide explains the different factors related to the lesson plans and the first one is the work environment that can be affected, it says, by distractions to the student such as fatigue, insecurity, fear, anguish, sleep deprivation, hunger and thirst. These are in addition to other factors that are related to the school like noise, illumination, ventilation, temperature, furnishings, etc. The guidebook calls the teacher to establish a relationship with the students that will allow them to trust in them and to feel safe and protected. They need to promote, it states, to allow the students to feel accepted so they would not feel limited or uncomfortable to hinder the participation in activities due to teacher reprimands or bullying.

In this section, the book directly relates the work of the teacher with the conditions to promote good discipline:

En este sentido será necesario que el maestro tome en consideración las costumbres familiares y locales –que son las que el alumno conoce y a través de las que se relaciona socialmente con los demás- considerando que son los conocimientos previos con los que el alumno llega a las aulas y a partir de ahí, plantear nuevas formas de relación y comportamiento que les permitan elegir aquellas que sean más adecuadas y por tanto, socialmente mejor aceptadas.

[In this sense it will be necessary that the teacher takes in consideration the family and local customs –which are the ones that the student knows and through which he relates with others- considering that this previous knowledge is the one the student brings to the classroom and from that basis, to establish new norms for relationships and behavior which will allow them to choose the ones that are most adequate and therefore, socially more welcomed.] (Secretaría de Educación, Gobierno de Jalisco, 2003, pp. 23-24)
The teachers’ guide then provides the teacher with different strategies that include the formation of an assembly, the creation of an individual contract complemented with lifelike situations such as a coop, a school patrol, a friend club, a group “friend to nature”, and a sports league.

Some relevant findings from the actual textbook provided to the student in the 4th grade in the subject of civic education have helped me understand in some of the portrayals of the family and the foundations for adulthood. This textbook is, in my consideration an excellent resource for the promotion of different values using fables, text analysis, and the study of biographies, poems and narratives. I found a paragraph that lets the reader get acquainted with principles to grow up civically. On page 45, the textbook states:

*Creemos que la justicia debe estar con quien tenga la razón; que en la vida no hay un lugar señalado de antemano para cada individuo de cada grupo social, ni para cada raza, ni para hombre determinado, sino que la oportunidad de vivir dignamente está abierta a todos, y que a todos se concede la igualdad ante la ley. De ahí que ahora alcancen buen éxito en la vida cuantos luchan con rectitud, decisión y firmeza.*

[We believe that justice has to be on the side of whom is guided by reason; that life does not reserve for anybody a previously determined place for any individual from any social group, neither for any race, or any man, so that the opportunity for a life with dignity is open to everyone, and everyone receives and equal opportunity before the law. Therefore, those who live with discipline, strong will and firm decisions can reach success in life] (Concepción Barrón de Morán cited by Secretaría de Educación, Gobierno de Jalisco, 2003, p. 45)

Another text used in this textbook exemplifies the family environment that is portrayed.

*PROBEM (Programa Binacional de Educación al Migrante-Binational Program for the education of migrants)*
The need for addressing migration within the educational system has been manifested by the creation of the PROBEM. The goals of such program include the improvement of the quality of the education for migrant children mainly through the “Documento de Transferencia” (Document for Transference). Additionally they have consolidated a database of matriculation. Although with no specific examples of such efforts, they include the promotion of cultural identity and the rescuing of the native languages. They also contemplate the impulse of social participation as a way to engage the communities as well as the promotion of the exchange of life experiences. Other things mentioned in the PROBEM website include teacher training, support through teaching materials and engaging the research community.

The PROBEM was created as an “answer by both governments to the educational problems within the migrant population of both nations.” Continuity with equity and pertinence in the quality of education is the concern and foremost objective of this branch of the SEP. On their website, the PROBEM explains:

El sistema educativo nacional, a través del Programa Binacional de Educación Migrante México-EUA (PROBEM), te ofrece la posibilidad de inscribir a tus hijos en alguna de las escuelas primarias o secundarias, en cualquier momento del ciclo escolar, siempre y cuando sea antes del último día hábil del mes de junio.

El PROBEM, ha incursionado de manera intensa y directa en la comunidad educativa migrante binacional para estructurar proyectos, investigaciones y propuestas que conlleven: en principio a la identificación de sus características de vida y necesidades educativas, y por ende al otorgamiento del servicio educativo justo, expedito y continuo, que fortalezca de manera permanente su desarrollo afectivo y cívico-social, su capacidad, creatividad y potencialidad.

17 Taken from http://www.sep.gob.mx/work/appsite/probem/index.html.
[The national educational system, through the PROBEM, offers the possibility to enroll your children in any primary or middle school, at any time during the school year by the last working day of June. PROBEM has been introduced intensively and in first hand in the educational migrant community of both nations in order to formulate new projects, investigate and make proposals that will serve as a guide to identify the ways of life and educational needs, and therefore to bring a fair educational service, expedite and continuous to permanently strengthen their emotional and civic and social development, their capacities, creativity and potentials.]

In the mission statement of the PROBEM, they declare that such efforts will guarantee a harmonious and holistic development that will lead to a better quality of life. In addition they state that the program will improve the possibilities for migrant students to have continuity in their education and that they will become adapted in an adequate manner into the schools in either side of the border.

Evidently, there is already the recognition for the need to work in cooperation among Mexico and the US, however, the creation of agreements seem to be limited to administrative issues that transnational families need to face as they migrate from one nation to the other. During the recollection of my data, though, it became evident that the inclusion of transnational experience as part of the development of the students has not happened in the actual work in the classroom. The concept of migration linked to the educational process as a discursive practice is nonexistent among teachers.

In the interview that I had with the director of the PROBEM, several things became evident that corroborate what I state above. The relationship with the teacher, the director said, is relevant to the development of the child, but not as much as other cultural factors. “It is risky to assume”, said the director, “that the teacher would have an
influence in such experience as the cultural shock happens.” “Of course”, she continues, “the teacher has an influence, but the concept of a teacher is universal because their responsibility is to know their students and to know the content to teach as this is.” “The teacher will always provide positive elements to help the child to learn in any circumstance,” she affirmed. With such affirmation, she automatically discharged any possibility of assigning any role to the teacher concerning the social entourage of STF’s.

The director of PROBEM underplays any role that the teacher may have in the student’s life. In her view, there is no need to adapt the formal curriculum and the teaching content to the social reality of the child. The role of the teacher, in this sense, seems to be very much limited to the delivery of knowledge that is already determined in the teaching materials with little regard to the meaning it may have to the STF’s. This also reveals that the concept of school is also narrowed to be a place where the student goes to learn as if they were living in an ideal context. During the interview, there seemed a very optimistic projection of the child’s role as a self-reliant person with little control over life’s circumstances. She mentioned however, that there might be many challenges to the kind of communication that has to occur between the student and the teacher. “I have heard from many teachers, principals and superintendents”, she said, “that the problem with migrant children is not that the teachers are not ready to exert a proper relationship with the student because this is essentially the same, but that the students bring a lot of cultural luggage; there are special situations like the family question, emotions from a divided family.”
The experience of migration, therefore, seems to me to be viewed as an advantage, but only when the child has been living with their family for a while. Before then, the child is seen as a person with little influence over his own surroundings and the different processes that the student has to go through while their emotional and social development evolves.

Some people, she said, feel that they do not belong here or there, but what is really happening is that “they assume that they could be there [either in the place of origin or in the US] but they can’t…” “We know”, she continues, “that students need continuity in their schooling, we can’t say that a policy has been badly planned or to design to hinder the development of anybody, the fact that is that there are not enough resources to inform people about what is available to them.” “Did you know” she asked me, “that many people can finish primary, middle school or high school over there with the support of the consulates and the INEA, that if an adult has not concluded middle school that they can finish it there?”

The statement above tells that she agrees with the fact that educational policies are well intended even though the administrative processes hinder their information and promotion. Nevertheless, concerning the possible accommodations for STF’s while they attend primary school, she does not consider that it is worth focusing on.

The career aspirations of the students as a subject was considered by the director in the sense that they can be half prepared when people migrate, though they might be able to continue their studies with the help of the government through the consulates. As the interview went on, the director seemed to focus more and more in the training and
preparation of migrants when they were already over in the United States and while they are already working.

Additionally, the director mentioned that “Then [when students are in American schools] they get mixed with children from Laos, El Salvador, Guatemala, Polish…different places…such circumstances make that an educational policy would succeed -the PROBEM has had agreements that promote their own culture. If children know and respect their own roots it is easier to know and respect other cultural figures.”

The perspective of teachers as mediators within micro and macro

Teacher’s opinions

Concerning the role of teachers as service providers to students and families, Martin (1994) argues, “it is not insufficient demand but unsatisfied demand which corrodes the relationship between clients and teachers, with the attendant negative consequences for children’s educational performance” (p. 178). Martin articulates the problem surrounding the failure to meet parents’ and children’s expectations of school that stem, not only from their relationship with the teacher but with the educational service as a whole.

The answers gathered with this survey reflected a very clear trend of correlation between the years of experience of the teacher and the conception of the migration experience. Many of them have family members of their own whom have migrated and big parts of their own families live in the US. The study of these answers revealed the
meanings of different concepts such as sense of belonging, success in adult life and productivity; pragmatic knowledge and; cultural attitudes towards migration.

These answers were also a reflection of the inclusion or exclusion in their discourse of different meanings of migration. The results showed that the migrating experience might be:

- A hindrance to the development of the individual (approx. 30% of responses)
- A factor that is unrelated to their job (approx. 60% of responses)
- A life experience that needs to be tackled in the curriculum to strengthen the skills of the student to accommodate and adapt to their future environment (approx. 10% of responses)

Regarding the practical views of the teachers about any specific needs that children from transnational families may present. Several themes recurred in the answers to the survey questionnaire. I asked teachers to answer open questions from where the psychological effects of family migration and the discipline were highlighted. The behavior problems related to this seem to be reflected in the lack of affection, lack of attention and an absence of belonging. Two of them were concerned about their need to learn English to prepared them for the future. It seems peculiar that most student teachers observed the “lack of affection” as a special need, whereas the teachers with some to a lot of experience did not mention this.

One teacher replied that the absence of the father was interpreted by the child as a sign of disdain and that the child ignored the real (financial) reason for having migrated.
One respondent mentioned that the absence of the father had therefore decreased pressure from home to perform well in school. The fact that the mother went to work and was absent as well, added to this, another teacher stated that the curriculum content does not change for anybody and that the issue of migration was exclusive of the household. One of the student teachers that mentioned that STF’s did not have specific needs. The student teacher however, believed that it was important to instill in them the desire to serve their country (Mexico) and the understanding that this would ultimately bring them personal satisfaction and discourage them from migrating right after the primary education completion.

A subsequent question brings to the forefront the formal preparation the teacher has received and invites the subject to reflect on the specific social factor of migration as it pertains to its effects in a teacher’s work.

Migration as a direct or indirect life experience is ignored; however, they seem to understand that the diversity of the regions requires an ability to adapt. They also understand that their preparation to address migration as a social need is totally absent in the teacher education curriculum, nevertheless, a couple of subjects point out the practical training as a preparation for this. Five of the respondents understood this question assuming that the migrant person is somebody from outside of the country and not a person who belongs to their specific community.

One student teacher was very assertive by saying that “they (teachers) are being trained to teach in the whole nation rather than for staying in a locality”. It seems that all
subjects agree in the high degree of flexibility in the curriculum to adapt to different social contexts. Another respondent mentioned the preparation he or she received in order to provide a “meaningful learning experience.” Nevertheless, the teacher’s perspective varies on whether the underlined generality of the national curriculum is adequate and flexible enough for the real world and the social context of their students. It is worth noticing that those teachers who are satisfied with their own training are still admitting that their training did not provide them with enough preparation for their work in the schools.

Additionally, the teaching materials they are provided seem to be accepted as an adequate tool for their job. However, it is very relevant to mention that the availability of such materials happens late after the school year starts and in insufficient quantity. 85% of the respondents acknowledged the good quality of the teaching tools provided by the SEP, though they are not readily available. It is also worth noticing that the student teachers were the respondents with the most positive views on this issue, while the more experienced teachers clearly revealed the lack of provisions by the principals and the branches of the SEP in charge of administering the materials as inefficient.

A conclusion that I draw from these answers is the lack of consideration of the teacher’s work as a tool of preparation for the students in general towards their professional and/or vocational aspirations. In other words, the social development of the child is considered by the teacher only when the discipline and emotional struggles of their students is significant enough for them to consider an obstacle in their own work.
However, the professional and vocational aspirations of the child are rarely considered as they are attending school. It seems that the immediate circumstances hinder the potential relevance of the preparation of the students, as they are getting ready for the adult life.

Regarding the availability of the milieu as a possible source for complementing the lessons, the teachers seemed to view the surroundings only in relation to the natural sciences but none of them mentioned possible uses of the milieu as a source for enhancing the learning of social sciences and/or citizenship.

After the considerations drawn from the different data sources that I studied in this chapter, I have become aware of the lack of curiosity and understanding regarding the effects of the migration of people in the emotional and social development of children. The teaching content detailed in the free textbooks is an exemplary model for the promotion of social and civic values that would strive in a democratic society. Nevertheless, the immediate needs of both the teacher and the student make it hardly possible to reach a deep understanding of these values and principles. Additionally, the proposition of Yurén et al. (2005) is confirmed again because the knowledge transmitted in schools seems to have little relevance in the STF’s lives who are already adopting models of adulthood from their own family environment and because of the cultural celebration of migration as an important step into adulthood.

The position expressed by the director of the PROBEM proves as well the optimistic perception of the reliance of the child “regardless of the circumstances.” The conversation that took place during the interview with her also made me perceive and confirm a “clientelist” attitude in which the people who is informed are those who
achieve the best results. Most of the time, however, the best cases do not reflect what is found in towns such as San Miguel el Bajo, Jalisco. Discipline problems originated from emotional struggles make the students behave in such a way that is not easily understood and apparently become an additional burden to the already overloaded workdays of teachers who may or may not be well prepared.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions to be drawn based on the findings

It is necessary to understand the preconceptions of teachers while they enter the workforce and while they acquire experience. The observations manifested by some of the teachers who participated in this study, reveal the need for a new understanding of the role of the teacher. Teachers seem to be idealistic when they start in their duties with a fresh mind; however, as they gain experience bureaucratic requirements and economic pressures that come with being a teacher in a country like Mexico bog them down. It is also necessary to understand the informal coercion exerted by the teacher’s union (SNTE) which although we did not study here in depth, it has obviously a considerable influence not only in the conditions of teachers in their work but as they allow people who are trained to be placed arbitrarily. The policy making in the Mexican educational system is not excluded from some very influential and yet informal power structures that are reinforced by the way the reforms are being implemented and administrative changes occur.

Explanations for the findings

The opinions of the teachers revealed a very high awareness of the migration experience and the dynamics of transnational families. Among the subjects, 95% of
participants, either through the interviews, surveys and focus groups expressed their experiences both as teachers dealing with the circumstances of students, their own impending financial and family needs that very often bring them to perform below the level that they would like to have as professionals. This coincides with the characteristics of “street-level bureaucracy” and the struggles that they face.

It is also clear that the student teachers have a very idealistic view on their role as teachers and possible effects of their work in the lives of STF’s. They believe that they can motivate the students to see an optimist view and believe that if they finish their schooling at an advanced level and aspire to be professionals in Mexico they will succeed.

In contrast, it became evident that experienced teachers are more aware of the real motivations for students to migrate. When they explained the diverse circumstances the students present to them, it is obvious that the motivations for students to migrate cannot be reduced to economic needs, or pure cultural influence. Instead, it is a more complex reality surrounding the students that leads them to migrate.

Teachers, do not see yet, though that the new taxonomy proposed by Zúñiga and Hamman (2009) or any similar new vision for a new accommodation for transnational children could be needed. It was rather questioned whether I should even be researching this topic because for many of them the distinction of children as migrants or students who belong to transnational families should not even be brought up. They do not seem to be interested in this because they are struggling to make the curriculum effective in their
teaching and in many cases, this cannot be completely successful. Teachers are burdened by administrative tasks and seem to have settled to work in those conditions without expecting much of the people in charge to provide additional support for them either as a union (for the SNTE) or as a system (for the SEP).

Another finding worth noting is the contrast between the opinions of the teachers and the one expressed by the director of the PROBEM. In my opinion, she was rather optimistic in the sense that there are always good examples among the migrant student experiences and that migration is just another challenge in the life of certain individuals. However, she also agreed that there is not extra effort needed from the part of the teachers because the schooling experience would not have a significant impact in the life of the STF. Nevertheless, she only referred to a few good examples she was familiar with and illustrated the great success of the PROBEM. Nevertheless, the program seems to be still limited to a strong presence in the administrative mechanism to provide a common binational database to lighten the burden for administrators both in the US and Mexico when receiving students coming from the other country. This document of transference seems to be one of the main goals of the program, even though there are also efforts to familiarize teachers from both countries to the cultural and social environment of the other country.

Another conclusion to be drawn is the exemplary civic education presented in the textbooks and the unfortunate inability of the teachers to use this material to their full potential. The lack of an adequate teacher preparation and the poor conditions in which
some rural schools have to work make it very difficult for the teacher to contemplate the possibility of preparing to guide their students to see further in their future. As with other technical reforms such as the “mediateca” and the “Rincon del libro” the intentions of the reforms get lost in the overload of immediate needs of both students and teachers from disadvantaged communities. The mediateca is a tool of instruction for teachers in primary schools that allows the use of computers, projectors and screens to expose the curriculum content in a virtual way and that feeds from the databanks provided by the SEP to complement the curriculum in the classroom.

El “Rincon del libro” is another program that aims to provide the classrooms with a space where the students can feel invited to read in a relaxed environment inside each classroom. However, as one teacher said, there is no use for it because of the lack of motivation of the students to look into books that they are not seeing useful given their personal circumstances, family conditions or just plain lack of motivation. This also can be explained by the discipline problems that many STF’s present due to the stress already existing in their homes.

Regarding the access provided to me by administrators and teachers as well, I can relate to the complexity of networks within the system. I entered the community presenting myself as a researcher from The Ohio State University and nothing I said allowed me to start the fieldwork. It was not until I went to talk with personal acquaintances and I mentioned my family background as a relative to educators who have worked intensely in the state of Jalisco, that I gained the necessary “status” in the eyes of
the administrators that allowed me to start observing and interviewing members of the
schools in Villa Corona. Such experience exposes some of the characteristics of the
informal networks that resonate with the “street-level bureaucracy” and agency of
teachers. The rationality of people’s behaviors and the relationships among them and
with outsiders seems to be very influenced by the informal context in which daily
decision making takes place. The view of “clientelism” aforementioned seems to be a
very accurate definition for this example.

Impact of the study in terms of what was learned

It is necessary to mention that there were certain challenges to the process of data
gathering due to the apprehension from educational authorities to let a “foreign person”
into the schools. Additionally, the teachers work had been assessed less than a month
before this study was started and the general sentiment was that I was there to continue in
the evaluation of their work in the classrooms and that I was going to give a report of the
quality of their work to a certain institution in charge of their assessment.

This reaction to the presence of a researcher confirms the nature of the “street-
level bureaucrat” who is looking out to keep their work position and guarding the
interests of the structure as well the individual. Later on, as I gained their trust, the most
experienced teachers revealed other concerns regarding their own positions as teachers
and (a couple of them) principals in different shifts. One of them was a teacher in the
morning and a principal in another school in the afternoons. The other one was a principal in the morning and a teacher in the afternoon.

It also became very obvious that teachers were very interested in the way that the educational system in the US works. They want to have a better understanding of the dynamics that take place once the children they have taught or receive from “the other side” in American schools. A similar input from US teachers would be of value as a complement for better mutual understanding.

*Strengths, weaknesses, and limitations of the study*

In the beginning, I had considered two schools to participate in this research. Providing that each grade from first through sixth had one teacher, six teachers would have participated from each school. However when I got in the field I encountered several obstacles, it took almost 4 weeks to gain rightful access to the teachers. In order to make the fieldwork feasible I saw myself in the need to create an anonymous survey instead of using classroom participant observations and direct interviews. Administrators, but mainly teachers, were not ready to welcome a person like me into their classrooms and go into detail about their work.

Informal networks appear to be important to the way policymakers and teachers work within the system of education in Jalisco. My experience as a researcher who was not able to get access to the system until I had the intention to arrive to the schools as somebody who was doing a dissertation project and was Mexican studying abroad. However, as somebody “new” to the area I found a lot of resistance from the beginning,
even when I went to talk with the educational advisor of the Educational branch of the municipal government of Villa Corona. I introduced myself and was welcomed but I was not allowed to have access to the schools unless I had the written consent from the State Minister. This was something unexpected and I had to contact several people who would help me to get to the right direction and have a justified reason to get into the schools. After 4 weeks, I was still seen as an outsider who had no justification to be doing the kind of fieldwork I intended to do. Fortunately, my mother called the director of the Institute for Educational Research of the State (an old friend) and after I went to explain my project and my goals, he gave me a letter so I would be allowed to enter the schools in question. This is a clear example of the prevalence of informal networks and the way educators choose to exert their duties.

**Implications for professional practice or decision-making**

After coming to the conclusions aforementioned, I do not intend to come into simplistic and/or idealistic suggestions for the current state of the educational system in Mexico. However, while the supranational entities such as the UNESCO and the binational treaties like the PROBEM and the NAFTA between Mexico and the US are taking place, we should not ignore the nature and complexity of the informal structures within the classrooms. The teachers, by themselves are not completely responsible for the conceptions that children have for their own adulthood. On the contrary, greater than this is the pressure of society and the economic needs that make the student prone to migrate. As the flow of people across the borders is constantly influenced by morphing factors, we
need to equip the children of today to be more ready for an impending future of
competition and global influences that permeate to the very essence of the family
structure.

Following the theory that has evolved from Lipsky’s “street level bureaucracy”,
Mexican teachers are under supervision of the principals and by the regional supervisors
who make tours and pay visits to the schools in a regular monthly daily basis. The
teacher’s daily demands, however, are over extended by the prevalent economic pressure
that makes them decide to work double shifts. As some of them have expressed it in the
interviews and the focus groups, the teachers have an ability to understand the language
of the different communities (teachers and school community) and many of them have
lived migration second hand in the cases that they have not experienced it first hand. The
rational definitions of the duties of teachers as they are trained in the teachers college
obviously do not always correspond in their past and present social cues. Additionally,
the work of teachers within the educational system seems to have very little relevance
when compared to the policy making organization very much controlled by the most
influential within the Ministry and the teachers union.

Regarding the implications for textbook creation and distribution, it seems that the
need for a revision is not important as much as the necessary approach to teacher training
that would open a path for deeper understanding or sociocultural issues that affect every
member of the community.
Concerning the teachers union and the representation of teachers, it seems that the main actions taken by the union do not take effect in the schools that I studied. Nevertheless, the influence of the union is evident in the position openings and placement of teachers as mentioned by Ornelas (2004), McGinn and Street (1984); Street (1992) and others. These scholars agree in the observation of the teachers union as a relevant institution within the educational system, however, it is also obvious that the representation of the interests of teachers in the classroom does not happen unless they use the informal networking mentioned here.

**Implications for a scholarly understanding of the field**

Some scholars are already working on a new concept of childhood education and what the schools are obliged to provide for the citizens to be aware of democratic principles while taking ownership of their own future. The national structures and finances are being redefined and this process should not exclude a new concept of childhood and migrating population as factors of enrichment to the societies.

**Implications for theory building**

The basic significance of this study rests in the fact that research studies focusing on migration as an influencing factor in education are rarer than the ones that study the migration phenomenon with Education as a secondary variable. Furthermore, its applied
significance will be the reconsideration of the curriculum implemented in primary schools as something that could not be isolated from the social reality of the child. Especially because it is during those years that the emotional and social development of the student is highly impacted by the absence of family and/or community members who have migrated to the US.

**Implications for future research**

In the study of educational policy, the usefulness of the “street-level bureaucracy” seems indispensable at least for the study of teachers and their work within migrant communities. However, this should not be limited to the Mexican case and it would be rather very enriching to understand the variability among similar communities in migrant sending places across the globe.

People, networks and communities make constructions of education and its relevance in their lives that is very fluid and tends to be misunderstood (and yet influenced) by policy makers. Thus, bi-national efforts could be enriched by the knowledge that can potentially be provided by the migrant communities across both territories. A survey to understand the impact and influence that education and school make in the migrants professional and academic lives can provide more practical, effective and directed knowledge that can bring a development of communities that does not only reflect in foreign investment and low paying jobs.
Recommendations for further research

The limitations of this work are several. One of these is the brief time in which the data collection took place. It would be ideal to follow up the same research agenda in the schools in which this work took place. Additionally, participant observations would complete the perspectives on the classroom interactions among teachers and students.

Expanding this research to the secondary level of schooling would give an additional point of reference regarding the decisions of students to pursue their schooling or decide to desert school and migrate to the US to follow their family members.

The overwhelming diversity of identities within the Mexican nation and the infinite variations that populations present. Migration as a social phenomenon, however, has been occurring permanently and in waves from different regions of the Mexican territory. The particular case presented here cannot define some particularities that may be present in other rural areas of Mexico. Jalisco, nevertheless, is placed among the 5 most important sending communities of migrants to the US over decades in the history of Mexico.

Even though there is no evidence that education and the specific relationship between teachers and students can directly impact the decision of children to follow their families and migrate, the need for the further understanding the role of teachers in the education of STF’s is evident. This need resides in providing a more inclusive school environment in which skills for life center on migration and is acknowledged so as to improve their chances to succeed and fully integrate into modern society.
The Mexican case presents another peculiarity that is always affecting the work of teachers. The Union’s prevalence in the way they relate with their peers makes teachers interact with their work with very limited agency and freedom to provide a good service for the individual cases of their students. Mexican teachers rarely express the overwhelming presence of the structure consciously, and yet the evidence of the lack of agency in their work is unquestionable. Perhaps, the historical evidence would put more pressure both internally and at the international level to defragment the Union to make it more representative of the individual teacher’s needs and the overarching goals of education to liberate the mind. Mistrust and zealous guarding of their jobs while making merits not only in the formal ladder but also in the “clientelist” sense, disempowers potential professional and conscientious teachers.

The creation of PROBEM is evidently a very relevant effort to address the sociocultural effects of migration in the education of children. This office has also been tracing a bi-national relationship that allows teachers to understand better the background of migrant students that go to their classrooms. However, it seems that there has not been enough publicity within the teachers union and/or informal networks. The teachers that accepted to participate in this study did not seem very familiar with the actual initiatives made by the Probem.
## APPENDIX A

### Survey for teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>¿Cuándo usted tiene un alumno que pertenece a una familia en la que hay miembros que radican en Estados Unidos, que tipo de necesidades específicas del caso cree usted que el niño tenga que aprender mejor?</td>
<td>When you have a student who belongs to a family with members residing in the United States, what kind of specific needs do you believe the child has in order to be a better learner?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>¿Como calificaría la preparación que recibió usted en la escuela Normal con respecto al entorno social de sus estudiantes? Cree usted que el programa de la Normal considera la tendencia de algunas comunidades a emigrar?</td>
<td>How would you assess the training you received at the normal school regarding the social entourage of your students? Do you believe that the curriculum at the normal school considers the tendencies of some communities to migrate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>¿Como describiría los diferentes recursos didácticos que le proporciona la SEP? Le parecen estos adecuados y suficientes?</td>
<td>How would you describe the different teaching resources provided by the SEP? Do you believe these are adequate and enough?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Cuando usted necesita complementar sus lecciones, ¿qué consideración le da usted al entorno existente en la comunidad en la que trabaja o ha trabajado?</td>
<td>When you need to complement your lessons with other resources, how much do you think the surroundings provided in the community in which you work or have worked?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>¿Podría darnos ejemplos de esto?</td>
<td>Would you give us some examples of this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>¿Ve usted alguna discrepancia entre los recursos proporcionados por la SEP con las necesidades sociales de sus estudiantes? (Explique con detalle en caso de ser positivo)</td>
<td>Do you see any discrepancy among the resources provided by the SEP with the social needs of your students? Would you give some examples?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>¿Cuánta importancia debe dárselo a los antecedentes familiares de sus estudiantes considerando que muchos de estos niños ya tienen familiares cercanos que han emigrado (padres o hermanos)?</td>
<td>How much importance should be given to the home background of your students considering that many of them have close relatives (parents or siblings) who have already migrated?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>¿Cree usted que la escuela debe considerar y/o considera el hecho de que muchos de estos niños tienen alta probabilidad de emigrar? Porque?</td>
<td>Do you believe that schools need to consider or do consider the fact that many of the students present a high probability for migrating? Why so?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. ¿Ha tenido usted algún alumno que le exprese sus deseos de irse a vivir a Estados Unidos? Si así ha sido, ¿cuál ha sido su reacción como maestro?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. ¿Ha tenido usted algún alumno que le exprese sus deseos de irse a vivir a Estados Unidos? Si así ha sido, ¿cuál ha sido su reacción como maestro?</th>
<th>Have you ever had any student who has confided to you their wishes to go and live in the United States? If positive, how did you react in your role as a teacher?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. ¿Tiene usted algo más que comentar acerca del hecho de que algunos de sus alumnos estén ya considerando emigrar a los Estados Unidos en un futuro?</td>
<td>Do you have any other comments regarding the fact that some of your students are already considering migrating to the United States in the future?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

Map of Mexico with delimitation of Jalisco
APPENDIX C

Map of Jalisco with delimitation of the municipality of Villa Corona


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