

The Economic Absorption of In-migrant Laborers in a Northern Industrial Community*

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I

Introduction

THOUSANDS OF PERSONS who were formerly agricultural laborers have been settling in Northern urban, industrial areas in recent years; many have previously had only scanty contact with city dwellers. Considerable attention has been focused on the adjustment problems of these in-migrant workers since they constitute a sizable group and since for many of them the process of transformation to the urban, industrial way of life has not been easy.

In the case of in-migrant groups that may be differentiated from the larger population by their ethnicity, there is always the temptation to explain their adjustment difficulties largely in terms of such an observable difference. Whenever a highly visible in-migrant group has not been absorbed into the economy and when members of this group seem to be unconcerned about the unhealthy or otherwise undesirable conditions under which they are living, the ethnic or racial explanation of their behavior may seem appropriate and sufficient to many persons in the community. The attitudes toward life that are necessary for short-term sacrifices in order to insure long-run or future benefits are so commonplace and readily acquired by middle-class persons in our society that there is a tendency to perceive the attitudes of the in-migrants as almost unexplainable or, as we have indicated, explainable only in terms of some biological or equally

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unsophisticated frame of reference. As a consequence, it is not uncommon for the middle-class observer to believe that members of the in-migrant group possess, among other characteristics, attitudes toward life that render their upward mobility virtually impossible.

At the same time that the urban, middle-class observer may be satisfied with an ethnic explanation of the behavior and adjustment difficulties of the in-migrant, rather than an explanation based on his social antecedents,¹ the in-migrant may be making essentially the same judgment of himself. The in-migrant, faced as he is with the problem of incomplete absorption into the economy (*i.e.*, unemployment, only partial employment, or employment at levels below his capacity) and incomplete cultural integration as well, comes to perceive of himself as one who has problems because he is, for example, Mexican or of Mexican descent—without realizing what it is about being a Mexican or Mexican-American that is so disadvantageous. For the in-migrant to attempt to explain every adjustment difficulty in the urban, industrial milieu in terms of the treatment received by persons of his ethnicity is to seize upon another easy and all-sufficient explanation—the discrimination explanation. On the other hand, some in-migrants have responded to the difficulties of urban adjustment by thinking of themselves as actually being inferior.

II

Theoretical Formulation

THIS PAPER EXPLORES the urban adjustment of Mexican-Americans of Southwestern rural origin. Mexican-Americans face a dual problem—one of adaptation to Northern urban life and one of adaptation to the host or dominant culture. The consequences of migration have usually included great transformations in the customary behavior of people, involving the forgoing of some of the ways of the past.

Two of the concepts most frequently used when referring to this process of change among in-migrants are acculturation and assimilation. Acculturation refers to the borrowing of specific culture traits from one society by people in another society. Assimilation has been defined as a process whereby the individual slowly acquires a new set of definitions and values. It is possible to think of assimilation and acculturation as qualitative states on a continuum extending from a point of maximum differences between people to a point where two groups are no longer distinguishable.

¹ Social antecedents are defined as life experiences that have come before the behavior we are attempting to explain and which, it is hypothesized, are modifiers or determinants of such behavior.

This continuum might be thought of as a cultural integration continuum, having as its opposite poles cultural pluralism and complete cultural integration. At one end of the continuum would be societies consisting of more than one cultural group; at the other end of the continuum would be societies in which the in-migrant has completely conformed to the host or dominant society. The emphasis, then, is on the process whereby the in-migrant acquires the behavioral patterns of the larger society and learns how to play the roles appropriate to his position in this society. S. N. Eisenstadt has referred to this as a process of absorption.²

If attention is turned to the integration of the in-migrant into the economic life of the community, the concept of absorption becomes particularly useful. Economic absorption is one aspect of cultural integration; it might be thought of as a sub-continuum. Cultural integration refers to integration into the whole gamut of institutional life, while economic absorption refers to the process of securing work at levels appropriate to one's abilities and becoming a member of the regularly employed labor force. The relationship between economic absorption and cultural integration is, to a certain extent, mutually supportive. For example, it has been postulated that economic absorption is an essential foundation for cultural integration, that it is a way station to cultural integration,³ while almost simultaneously it has been said that economic absorption is facilitated by cultural integration, one important aspect being the acquisition of the host language. The contention is that a limited amount of cultural integration facilitates the in-migrant's entry into economic institutions and that economic absorption may then facilitate further and more complete cultural integration. Another relevant hypothesis is that economic absorption can proceed faster than cultural integration because fewer changes in roles and institutional behavior are demanded.

We shall take the position that the social antecedents of the in-migrant are just as likely to explain his adjustment difficulties, particularly the extent to which he has been absorbed into the economy, as are any biological or psychological characteristics—or the discrimination that he may encounter in the urban, industrial setting.

² Samuel N. Eisenstadt, *The Absorption of Immigrants* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1955), p. 15: ". . . the process of absorption, from the point of view of the individual in-migrant's behavior, entails the learning of new roles, the transformation of primary group values, and the extension of participation beyond the primary group in the main spheres of the social system."

³ Wilfred D. Borrie, *The Cultural Integration of Immigrants, A Survey Based upon the Papers and Proceedings of the Unesco Conference on the Cultural Integration of Immigrants held in Havana, Cuba, April 1956* (Paris: Unesco, 1959), p. 101.

III

The Populations, Samples, Schedules, and Interviewers

THE TARGET POPULATION of this study consists of Mexican-American in-migrants, primarily from Texas. More specifically, the target population was composed of Mexican-American, ever married, heads of households or their spouses. The control group was defined as Anglo, ever married, heads of households or their spouses. Half of each sample was male and half was female.

The Mexican-American sample was selected from a list of Spanish surnames compiled from the 1958 City Directory for the community and from other sources, including about 20 leaders of the Mexican-American community. The Mexican-American areas of concentration were drawn on a map, and Anglo controls were selected from areas contiguous to these; these areas contained approximately 14 per cent of the 40,736 Anglo dwelling units in the community. The Anglo sample consisted of every twentieth eligible dwelling unit within the boundaries of these (five) areas of Mexican-American concentration within the city.⁴

Two hundred and nine interviews were completed with Mexican-Americans and 189 with respondents from the Anglo sample. The Mexican-American completion rate was 81 per cent, and the Anglo completion rate was 73 per cent.⁵ Each interview lasted approximately two hours,⁶ and the length of the interview appeared to be a factor in an increasing rate of refusals toward the end of the summer, when respondents became quite aware of the imposition that would be made upon them in terms of time.

Whether or not the samples that have been selected are representative of the populations from which they have been selected is always a question of considerable interest. Unfortunately, there are no data available on the characteristics of the Mexican-American population in Racine, so it has not been possible to compare the characteristics of the larger population with

⁴ A detailed description of the sample is available from the author upon request.

⁵ The lower Anglo completion rate can be partially explained by the fact that after interviewing had presumably been completed it was discovered that about 30 Anglo interviews had not been obtained, but there was no record of contract or refusal. Twenty of these interviews were secured during the following year. These interviewees were not significantly different from the other Anglos, and inasmuch as the other interviews had been coded and scaled, these have not been included in any analysis.

⁶ Designing and pretesting the interview schedule took place over a five-month period in 1959. Eleven different versions of the schedule were pretested with 140 interviews in a Mexican-American industrial community in northern Illinois before the final bilingual version was accepted. Nine Mexican-American bilingual interviewers were recruited and trained in the northern Illinois community, and nine Anglo interviewers were recruited and trained in the Wisconsin community.

that of the sample; persons of Mexican descent have been classified as white in the census. The Anglo control sample was intended to be representative of the adult Anglos residing in the five areas from which the sample was selected. Here again it has not been possible to compare the characteristics of the population with those of the sample.

That the Anglo sample differs from the larger population of the city is readily shown by comparison of the 1960 census for the city of Racine with some of the characteristics of the Anglo sample. For example, 8.1 per cent of the entire population of Racine was foreign-born in 1960, but 19 per cent of the Anglo sample was foreign-born. The median number of school years completed for persons in Racine 25 years of age or older was 10.5, but the median number for the Anglo sample was 9. The median income of Racine families in 1960 was \$6,756, but the median income of the Anglo sample was approximately \$4,500. Only 10.2 per cent of Racine's families had incomes of less than \$3,000 in 1960, but at least 20 per cent of the Anglo sample fell in this category. Although 18.2 per cent of Racine's families had incomes in excess of \$10,000, only 2 per cent of the Anglo sample had such incomes. The low income of the Anglo sample is probably explained by the fact that it was selected from low socioeconomic areas contiguous to the Mexican-American group.

IV

Some of the Social Antecedents of the Sample

THIS PAPER WILL DESCRIBE some of the social antecedents of the Mexican-American in-migrants, the migration process by which they arrived in a Northern industrial community, and the relationship of their social antecedents to several measures of economic absorption.

The Mexican-American sample was predominantly from Texas; Mexico was the next most frequently mentioned place of origin. The Anglo sample either grew up in the community under study—*i.e.*, in Wisconsin—or in other North-Central states (Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, or Kansas), with a considerably smaller percentage coming from Europe.⁷ Most of the older Anglo sample had always lived in the community or arrived in the community between 1900 and 1945, while the bulk of the younger Mexican-American sample arrived after 1940.⁸ Although the males and the females in the Mexican-American sample were

⁷ Place of origin of Mexican-American and Anglo respondents was determined from the following question: "Where did you live while growing up?" The data are presented at the foot of the following page.

somewhat different in their origins—*i.e.*, males were from Mexico to a greater extent than females—there were also differences in the origin of the Anglo group, but these were of an opposite nature—*i.e.*, females were from Europe to a greater extent than were males. Males and females are combined wherever this may be done without sex differences serving as a basis for bias or distortion.⁹

Closely related to differences in their place of origin, and perhaps a con-

Location	Mexican—Per cent		Anglo—Per cent		Location
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Texas	68	74	3	2	Southern United States
Mexico	18	9	14	20	Europe
Southwestern					
United States	0	12	0	1	Western United States
Wisconsin	7	2			
Midwestern			82	74	North-Central United States
United States	1	2			
Other	6	1	1	3	Other
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	

N=104 N=105 N=78 N=111

⁸ The dates of arrival of males and females were not significantly different for either the Mexican-American or the Anglo samples; the dates of arrival of Mexican-Americans and Anglos were significantly different. The data are shown below:

Date of Arrival in the Community	Mexican—Per cent		Anglo—Per cent	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
1900–1920	0	1	12	15
1921–1939	6	7	13	19
1940–1944	12	13	10	4
1945–1949	23	30	6	5
1950–1954	28	21	6	8
1955 or later	15	8	13	6
Not Ascertained	13	17	4	7
Always lived in the community	3	3	36	35
TOTAL	100	100	100	99

N=104 N=105 N=78 N=111

Mexican, male-female: $\chi^2 = 4.448$ 2 d.f. Not Significant at .01 level.

Anglo, male-female: $\chi^2 = .644$ 2 d.f. Not Significant at .01 level.

Mexican-Anglo: $\chi^2 = 70.688$ 2 d.f. $p < .001$.

When place of origin and date of arrival were compared, the only clear-cut relationship revealed was that persons from Europe were early arrivals in the community, hardly a startling finding, considering what we know about the growth and development of the community and many other urban communities in the United States. The relationship of early arrival in the community and a Mexican origin as contrasted with a Texan background among persons in the Mexican-American sample was not as distinct.

⁹ One problem that should be mentioned relates to the difference in response of spouses to the same question. In some cases there are statistically significant differences between male and female responses, particularly when respondent is reporting on the status or behavior of his or her spouse.

sequence to a considerable extent, is the geographical mobility of the Mexican-American respondents as contrasted with that of the Anglos. Mexican-American males and females were significantly more mobile than their Anglo counterparts.¹⁰ In addition, and lending emphasis to the significant difference in mobility, is the fact that 80 per cent of the sample of Mexican-American males stated that they had engaged in agricultural labor.

While the geographical location of the respondent's place of origin is an important antecedent, data revealing whether the respondent's socialization took place within a rural or an urban context are certainly just as pertinent.¹¹ Considering the manner in which questions were asked and responses were given, the best indicator of the rural-agricultural versus urban-industrial background of the males or male spouses of the two samples seems to be occupation of the male's father. It is here (reference

¹⁰ When number of moves was cross-tabulated with place of origin, all that was clearly revealed is that it took at least two moves to arrive in the community if Mexico was the place of origin. Migrant labor for Mexican-Americans was counted as only one move. The number of moves between place of origin and arrival in the Northern industrial community is shown below:

	Mexican—Per cent		Anglo—Per cent	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
One move	18	41	29	27
Two or three moves	65	51	17	23
Four or more moves	10	3	15	8
Not Ascertained or Inapplicable	7	5	39	42
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
	N=104	N=105	N=78	N=111

The following values of chi-square were obtained: Mexican-Anglo males, $\chi^2 = 24.09$ 2 d.f. $p < .001$; Mexican-Anglo females, $\chi^2 = 10.59$ 2 d.f. $p < .01$. The "Not Ascertained or Inapplicable" category was eliminated for the purpose of computing chi-square.

¹¹ It was unfortunately discovered that respondents named large metropolitan centers as their place of origin even though other questions on the schedule revealed that Mexican-American respondents had predominantly rural backgrounds. Size of community where male respondents or female respondents' husbands grew up is shown below:

Size of Community Where Respondent Grew Up	Mexican—Per cent	Anglo—Per cent
Under 2,500	13	24
2,500-50,000	42	20
50,000 or over	45	56
TOTAL	100	100

There appears to be no simple relationship between ethnicity and size of community of origin as given by respondent. What is probably the case is that the Mexican-American respondents gave the largest community adjacent to their small town or fringe place of residence. Texas has 16 cities of over 50,000 population; Wisconsin has five. Frequently mentioned cities were Austin, Brownsville, Corpus Christi, El Paso, Laredo, San Antonio, Fort Worth, Dallas, and Houston. The predominance of small towns and absence of large cities in Wisconsin tended to increase the probability that the Anglo sample would name small towns as places of origin when they were in fact from rural-farm areas nearby.

should be made to Table 1) that the difference in the antecedents of the two samples is most meaningfully contrasted. The fathers of the Mexican-American males had significantly lower-level occupations than did the fathers of the males in the Anglo sample. The data on occupation of

Table 1
Occupation of Husband's Father as Reported by Male or Female Respondent

	Mexican—Per cent	Anglo—Per cent
Professional, Technical, Managerial, Proprietor, Clerical and Sales	4	10
Craftsmen, Foremen	9	26
Operatives, Maintenance and Service, Laborers (industrial)	20	21
Laborers (agricultural), Tenant Farmer, Farmer	43	28
Not Ascertained	24	15
TOTAL	100	100
	N = 209	N = 189

The following value of chi-square was obtained: Mexican-Anglo, $\chi^2 = 28.46$ 3 d.f. $p < .001$. The "Not Ascertained" category was eliminated for the purpose of computing chi-square.

fathers clearly show that the modal category of the Mexican-Americans had agricultural backgrounds and that the Anglos, though bimodal, were skewed more so toward the industrial, urban end of the occupation scale.

Place of education is another basis on which to compare the antecedents of the Mexican-American and Anglo samples—assuming that both groups were at least partially socialized in their place of education and that there are regional differences in the nature of the socialization experience in schools. Most Mexican-Americans were educated in Texas or Mexico, while Anglos were educated outside the South or Southwest. The data are presented in Table 2.

It can be inferred that the nature of the educational or socialization experience for Mexican-Americans and Anglos differed on a basis of its regional setting. The educational experiences of Mexican-Americans in the Southwest cannot be described in this paper but place of education may be taken as an indication of antecedent differential association and experience having a bearing on ability to interact successfully in the urban, industrial milieu.

First place of work, it is hypothesized, is fully as important as place of education, because the subculture of a region may dictate the level at which a person enters the industrial order. Discrimination may channel members of an ethnic minority group into low-level positions, on one hand, and on the other, industrial work opportunities may be scarce. Thus, first work

experience may serve only as an added impediment to the economic absorption of Mexican-Americans in a Northern industrial community.¹² It appears from examination of Table 3 that the Mexican-American does not have as much appropriate work experience as the Anglo with whom he must compete in the urban, industrial order.

Table 2
Male's Place of Education

Location	Mexican—Per cent		Anglo—Per cent		Location
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Texas	56	53	3	2	Southern United States
Mexico	14	9	11	14	Europe
Southwestern					
United States	0	0	0	1	Western United States
Wisconsin	10	18			
			44	37	North-Central United States
Midwestern					
United States	1	5			
Other	1	1	38	41	Other
Not Ascertained and Inapplicable	18	14	4	5	Not Ascertained and Inapplicable
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	

N=104 N=105 N=78 N=111

In addition to the differences in the place that formal education took place, there is a significant difference in the level of formal education reported for males, as shown in Table 4. Fifty per cent of the Mexican-Americans had no more than a fourth-grade education, but only 11 per cent of the Anglos had so little formal schooling. The Anglo has not only obtained more education than the Mexican-American but also has probably had fewer interruptions.

In order to make what might be termed a summary presentation of the antecedent residential, travel, and work experience of the Mexican-American

¹² Further evidence of the Mexican-American sample's lack of qualifying work experience prior to arrival in the community is demonstrated by a careful analysis of their job histories. The data for the Mexican males are shown below:

	Agricultural Labor	Non-Agricultural Labor Only	Agricultural Labor and Non-Agricultural Labor	Total*
Mexico	45	44	11	100
Texas	34	28	38	100
Midwest	52	27	21	100
The Community	1	75	22	98

* Total based only on number who said they had worked in that location: Mexico, N=9; Texas, N=58; Midwest, N=52; The Community, N=102.

can sample, respondents were placed in exposure categories ranging from those with at least a year's residence outside Mexico and Texas prior to coming to the Northern industrial community, to those who came directly to the

Table 3
Place of Male's First Job as Reported by
Mexican-American and Anglo Respondents

Location	Mexican—Per cent	Anglo—Per cent	Location
Texas	39	1	Southern United States
Mexico	6	6	Europe
Southwestern			
United States	1	0	Western United States
Wisconsin	0		
Midwestern		31	North-Central United States
United States	5		
Other	1	34	Other
Not Ascertained and Inapplicable	48	28	Not ascertained and Inapplicable
TOTAL	100	100	
	N=209	N=189	

community. Among those who came to the community, 37 per cent had had only agricultural labor or travel outside Texas or Mexico, and only 18 per cent had resided in a non-Mexican-Texas area before final settlement in the community.

Table 4
Education of Mexican-American and Anglo Males*

Years of School	Mexican—Per cent	Anglo—Per cent
No School	19	4
1-2 years	9	2
3-4 years	22	5
5-7 years	21	13
8 years	9	22
9-12 years	12	43
13 + years	1	7
Not Ascertained	7	4
TOTAL	100	100

* "How many years of education have you (your husband) had?" Mexican male respondents=104; Mexican female respondents=105; Anglo male respondents=78; Anglo female respondents=111. Mexican-Anglo, $\chi^2=109.59$ 7 d.f. $p < .001$.

When age, rural-urban background, years of education, and agricultural work experience were combined to form a Guttman scale, the Mexican-American males in a sizable proportion of the cases were revealed to have characteristics that would make their absorption into the economic order something of a problem regardless of their ethnicity. Only 23 per cent of

the Mexican-American males were in categories indicating that they would not be without a handicap, comparatively speaking, when they sought industrial work in an urban setting. The data are presented in Table 5.¹³

V

The Relationship of Social Antecedents to Economic Absorption
 AN EMPIRICAL APPROACH to testing the hypothesis that social antecedents determine the differential adjustment of Mexican-Americans and Anglos

Table 5
 Migrant-Scale Types

	Mexican—Per cent	
	Male	Female
0. Over 35 years of age, rural background, less than 7 years of school, has done agricultural labor	34	24
1. Less than 35 years of age, rural background, less than 7 years of school, has done agricultural labor	21	18
2. Less than 35 years of age, urban background, less than 7 years of school, has done agricultural labor	22	14
3. Less than 35 years of age, urban background	12*	16†
4. Less than 35 years of age, urban background	11**	28‡‡
TOTAL	100	100
	N = 209	N = 209

* More than 7 years of school, has done agricultural labor.
 † Has not done any agricultural labor, less than 7 years of school.
 ** More than 7 years of school, has not done any agricultural labor.
 ‡‡ Has not done any agricultural labor, more than 7 years of school.

commences with the presentation in Table 6 of two measures of economic absorption—present occupation of males and total annual income for families in 1958. The Mexican-American sample differs significantly from the Anglo sample in both occupational classification and total family income.¹⁴ The difference between the samples is greater for occupational status than for total family income.¹⁵ Thus, the Mexican-American

¹³ The male scale had a Coefficient of Reproducibility of .911 and a Minimum Coefficient of Reproducibility of .687. The female scale had a Coefficient of Reproducibility of .882 and a Minimum Coefficient of Reproducibility of .577.

¹⁴ This conclusion cannot be accepted without some qualification because 20 per cent of the Anglo males were retired. Since retired persons were coded as being in their usual former occupational category but had the income of retired persons, the effect was to bring about 20 per cent of the Anglos down into lower income categories, thus reducing the likelihood of a statistically significant difference between Mexican-Americans and Anglos in the test. The social antecedents of the Mexican-American impede his movement upward into positions requiring more education and more industrial experience, but it is doubtful whether husband's income varies significantly by ethnicity within occupational categories.

¹⁵ The arrangement of the Mexican-American and Anglo samples in Table 6 suggests a test of the relationship of income to ethnicity within occupational categories. In the largest category, operatives, $\chi^2 = .39$ 1 d.f. Not Significant. This is not an exact test

Table 6
Present Occupation and Total Annual Income of Mexican-Americans and Anglos Stated by
Respondents in a Northern Industrial Community in 1959*

	<i>Professional, Technical, Managerial, Proprietor, Clerical, Sales</i>		<i>Craftsmen and Foremen</i>		<i>Operatives, Maintenance and Service, Industrial Laborers</i>		<i>Agricultural, Laborers, Tenant Farmers, Farmers</i>		<i>Not Ascertained</i>		<i>TOTAL PER CENT</i>	
	<i>Mex.</i>	<i>Anglo</i>	<i>Mex.</i>	<i>Anglo</i>	<i>Mex.</i>	<i>Anglo</i>	<i>Mex.</i>	<i>Anglo</i>	<i>Mex.</i>	<i>Anglo</i>	<i>MEX.</i>	<i>ANGLO</i>
\$7,000 or more	0	9	2	10	9	5	0	0	0	2	5	14
\$6,000 to \$6,999	0	8	3	10	17	5	0	0	0	1	9	13
\$5,000 to \$5,999	1	5	6	10	28	11	0	1	4	4	19	16
\$4,000 to \$4,999	0	2	6	9	60	16	0	0	4	3	33	16
Up to \$3,999	1	9	1	10	28	26	2	0	9	8	20	28
Not Ascertained	0	7	1	4	13	10	6	0	8	4	13	13
TOTAL PER CENT	1	21	9	28	74	39	4	1	12	12	100	100

* Approximately what was your total family income last year (1958)? Respondent's figure was not accepted if it was inconsistent with answers to the following questions: "Could you tell me, what is your (your husband's) hourly wage?" "How many hours do you (does your husband) usually work in a week?" "How many weeks do you (does your husband) usually work in a year?" "Does the family have any income besides these wages?" Occupation: Mexican-Anglo, $\chi^2 = 84.72$ 4 d.f. $p < .001$. Income: Mexican-Anglo, $\chi^2 = 24.10$, 4 d.f. $p < .001$.

sample, as measured by its position in the occupational hierarchy, has been absorbed to essentially the degree that might be expected, considering its antecedents.

Table 7
First Job and Present Job of Males*

Occupational Level	I	II	III	TOTAL
	Professional, Technical, Managerial, Proprietor, Clerical, Sales	Craftsmen and Foremen	Operatives, Maintenance and Service, Industrial Laborers, Agricultural Laborers, Tenant Farmers, Farmers	
Present Job—Mexican		First Job—Mexican		
I	0	0	1	1
II	0	1	14	15
III	3	3	96	102
TOTAL	3	4	111	118
Present Job—Anglo		First Job—Anglo		
I	14	3	12	29
II	1	9	24	34
III	4	6	37	47
TOTAL	19	18	73	110

* Data from questions on occupational history. First and present jobs for males were ascertained from 118 Mexicans and 110 Anglos. When chi-square values were computed from the marginals, Occupational Levels I, II, III, the following were obtained. Mexican: first job-present job, $\chi^2 = 3.08$ 1 d.f. Not Significant. Anglo: first job-present job, $\chi^2 = 11.45$ 1 d.f. $p < .001$. When the distribution of males within the four cells of the table was used as a basis for the calculation of chi-square, the following were obtained. Mexican: first job-present job, $\chi^2 = .23$ 1 d.f. Not Significant. Anglo: first job-present job, $\chi^2 = 4.69$ 1 d.f. Not Significant. The latter is not quite significant at the .02 level, but it is obvious that Anglos have moved up considerably more than have Mexicans between first jobs and present jobs.

The extent to which occupational antecedents may be determinants of economic absorption is indicated when Mexican-Americans and Anglos are compared on the relative amount of mobility that they have evidenced between first and present jobs. In Table 7 first jobs and present jobs are cross-tabulated with ethnicity controlled; the question is whether or not Mexican-Americans were employed in first jobs from which there is little mobility to a greater extent than were Anglos. If this is the case, and if the difference in first jobs according to ethnicity is considerable, then occu-

of the proposition because income other than husband's is included—it is a test of variation in total family income of males within the category of Operatives—but most of this income is wages earned by the male head of the household. There are not enough cases within several of the occupational categories for a proper test of the significance of the difference between ethnic groups.

pational antecedents may be considered to be important determinants of mobility. That is not to say that ethnicity may not have been one of the crucial determinants of first job or that it may not have served as a limiting factor on the range of first jobs available at point of origin—for whatever reason a person's work career begins at the lowest level, the probability of mobility is reduced.

In the Anglo sample the difference between first and present jobs was statistically significant, with the significance a function of both upward and downward mobility but mainly of upward mobility. Mobility in the Mexican-American sample was not statistically significant. Mexican-Americans started their occupational careers at the lowest level—at a level that is significantly lower than that at which Anglos started—and moved upward to a limited extent in comparison with their Anglo counterparts. Anglos also started their occupational careers at relatively low levels—low levels of industrial employment more than agricultural employment—but moved up disproportionately more than the Mexican-Americans and to a statistically significant extent.¹⁶

The relationship of education to occupation may be observed initially by comparing educational level with occupational level of first jobs, controlling for ethnicity, as shown in Table 8. In both the Mexican-American and Anglo samples there is a highly significant relationship between the stated amount of education of males and the occupational level at which they first worked.¹⁷ Although first jobs of Mexican-Americans are decidedly lower on the occupational-level scale than are those of Anglos, the level still varies with education. While education is usually an antecedent of first job, it is only one of the determinants of occupational level and it is probable that first job and educational level are each determined to a large extent by several variables operating in a particular subcultural milieu. This might well be the case as previously suggested, if we look at the Southwest as a generating milieu in which Mexican-Americans are educationally deprived and channeled into low-level jobs by both discriminating practices and the scarcity of industrial opportunities as contrasted

¹⁶ When the distribution of Mexican-Americans and Anglos according to first and present jobs was compared, with first job in the lowest category—Operatives, etc.—as a control, $\chi^2 = 31.61$ 2 d.f. $p < .001$. The significant difference between the Mexican-American sample and the Anglo sample was even greater when present jobs were compared than when first jobs were compared. Mexican-American-Anglo males: first job, $\chi^2 = 28.10$ 2 d.f. $p < .001$; Mexican-American-Anglo males: present job, $\chi^2 = 53.48$ 2 d.f. $p < .001$.

¹⁷ When the data were dichotomized, the r_4 coefficients of correlation were .25 or less, meaning that a significant but small portion of the deviation is explained by differences in education.

Table 8
Stated Education of Male and Occupational Level of First Job of Male*

	No. Education		1-2 Years		3-4 Years		5-7 Years		8 Years		9-12 Years		13 or More Years		Don't Know, Not Ascertained, Inapplicable		TOTAL PER CENT	
	M	A	M	A	M	A	M	A	M	A	M	A	M	A	M	A	M	A
Professional, Technical, Managerial, Proprietor, Clerical and Sales	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	5	1	9	0	4	0	1	2	10
Craftsmen, Foremen	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	3	0	7	0	8	0	0	1	1	2	10
Operatives, Maintenance and Service, Industrial Laborers, Private Household Laborers	9	3	2	1	9	1	20	8	4	10	6	28	0	1	2	0	25	28
Agricultural Laborers, Tenant Farmers, Farmers	19	3	12	0	13	3	9	7	6	6	7	5	2	2	4	1	35	14
Non-Labor Force, Not Ascertained, Inapplicable	10	1	5	2	20	4	13	7	8	16	11	30	1	7	8	4	36	38
TOTAL PER CENT	19	4	9	2	22	5	21	13	9	13	12	42	1	7	7	4	100	100

* The following values of chi-square were obtained: Mexican-American, $\chi^2 = 15.07$ 5 d.f. $p < .001$ Anglo, $\chi^2 = 14.08$ 4 d.f. $p < .001$. Male had eight or more years of education: Mexican-Anglo, $\chi^2 = 15.58$ 1 d.f. $p < .001$. Male had less than eight years of education: Mexican-Anglo, $\chi^2 = .73$ 1 d.f. Not Significant. The "Non-Labor Force, Not Ascertained, Inapplicable" category was eliminated in computing the chi-square values shown in this table.

with the comparatively abundant opportunities to work at stooped labor in agriculture. In the North it may well be that education is not so closely related to occupational level of first job simply because of differential rural-urban employment opportunities or opportunities that are available to persons with a social-class advantage.

Another way of testing the basic hypothesis that education is a determinant of occupational level is to hold education relatively constant when comparing Mexican-American and Anglo first jobs. For those Mexican-Americans and Anglos with less than eight years of school there is no significant difference in occupational level of first job, but for those with eight or more years of schooling the difference is quite significant, Anglos having higher-level first jobs than Mexican-Americans.¹⁸ Although education is correlated with the level at which they are first employed, Mexican-Americans in the Southwest seem to be directed into the lower occupational levels as compared with Anglos with comparable levels of education. But the data permit no more than a tentative statement since there were too few Mexican-Americans with a high school or college education to make an adequate test of the proposition.

Turning to Table 9, we have data on the relationship of education to present occupational level. Here we find that among Anglos there is a significant difference in occupational level which is related to educational level but that there is no such significant difference for Mexican-Americans. Mexican-Americans have so very little education that, however much differences in educational attainment within the group may have assisted some Mexican-Americans in commencing work at higher occupational levels than others, their education has not been sufficient to result in much variation among Mexican-Americans in present occupational levels. Most Mexican-Americans are presently employed at occupational levels significantly below those of the Anglos. Even when educational level is held fairly constant, occupational level varies significantly with ethnicity, the Anglos holding jobs at higher levels than the Mexican-American.¹⁹

The difference between Mexican-Americans and Anglos who have had eight years or more of schooling is even greater than that among those with

¹⁸ When the data were dichotomized, the r_4 coefficients of correlation were .09 for persons with less than eight years of school and .46 for persons with more than eight years; the difference in occupational levels of Mexican-Americans and Anglos with eight or more years of schooling is not only significant, it is also of a fairly sizable magnitude.

¹⁹ When the data were dichotomized, the r_4 coefficient of correlation was .31 for persons with less than eight years of school and .42 for persons with more than eight years; the difference in occupational levels of Mexican-Americans and Anglos is significant and sizable.

less than eight years of education. This may be attributable in part to the fact that the Mexican-Americans were skewed toward the bottom of the eight-or-more-years-of-education half of the dichotomy to a greater extent than were the Anglos skewed toward the top of the less-than-eight-years-of-education half of the dichotomy; to the fact that the Anglos were older than the Mexican-Americans; and to the fact that some sort of job ceiling does exist for Mexican-Americans in this community. Over a period of time the Anglo has shown greater occupational mobility than the Mexican-American—and the Anglo has had more time.

Thus, occupational level is related to educational level, but the distribution of education among Mexican-Americans and Anglos makes it difficult to see the extent to which a higher education, an education more comparable to that of the Anglos, affects the occupational level of the Mexican-Americans. Since the Mexican-American is channeled into lower occupational levels early in his career, usually before migration takes place, variation in educational attainment among Mexican-American in-migrants does not appear to be a sufficient explanation of differential occupational levels among Mexican-Americans in the urban, industrial community.

To this point our major concern has been with a description of the relationship of social antecedents and economic absorption among the Mexican-Americans as contrasted with the Anglo sample. The antecedents of the Mexican-Americans are markedly different from those of the Anglos, and the Mexican-Americans and Anglos differ in their absorption. The other basic question, however, is the extent to which these antecedents differentiate between Mexican-Americans who have been absorbed and those who have not been absorbed into the economy. In other words, is the suggested relationship between migrant type and successful adjustment in the urban, industrial milieu validated? The facts of the case are that, however nicely these items scale, there is no significant relationship of Mexican-American migrant type of male and level of present occupation in the Northern industrial community.²⁰ Mexican-Americans have not been absorbed into the economy to the same extent that Anglos have been absorbed, but Mexican-American success in the community as here defined is not predictable by migrant-scale type. It suggests that factors other than the variables or social antecedents making up migrant-scale type (age, rural-urban background, education, and agricultural labor) play an important part in determining which in-migrant will make the best adjustment in the industrial community. Another possibility is that one or more of the

²⁰ $\chi^2 = .29$ 1 d.f. Not Significant.

Table 9
Stated Education of Male and Present Occupational Level of Male*

	No Education		1-2 Years		3-4 Years		5-7 Years		8 Years		9-12 Years		13 or More Years		Don't Know, Not Ascertained, Inapplicable		TOTAL PER CENT		
	M	A	M	A	M	A	M	A	M	A	M	A	M	A	M	A	M	A	
Professional, Technical, Managerial, Proprietor, Clerical and Sales	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	6	0	19	0	10	0	1	1	21	
Craftsmen, Foremen Operatives, Maintenance and Service, Industrial Laborers, Private Household Laborers	2	0	0	0	6	2	3	8	2	16	2	24	1	3	3	0	9	28	
Agricultural Laborers, Tenant Farmers, Farmers	24	6	16	1	36	6	38	11	14	20	19	28	1	0	7	1	74	39	
Non-Labor Force, Not Ascertained, Inapplicable	4	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	4	0	
TOTAL PER CENT	8	0	2	2	1	1	3	3	2	2	4	8	1	1	4	5	12	12	
	19	4	9	2	22	5	21	13	9	13	12	42	1	7	7	4	100	100	

* The following values of chi-square were obtained: Mexican-American, $\chi^2 = 2.69$ 3 d.f. Not Significant; Anglo, $\chi^2 = 14.28$ 4 d.f. $p < .01$. Male had eight or more years of education: Mexican-Anglo, $\chi^2 = 27.19$ 1 d.f. $p < .001$. Male had less than eight years of education: Mexican-Anglo, $\chi^2 = 14.31$ 1 d.f. $p < .001$. The "Non-Labor Force, Not Ascertained, Inapplicable" category was eliminated in computing the chi-square values shown in this table.

factors making up the migrant-type scale may serve to cancel rather than reinforce the effects of the other factors, thereby impairing the validity of the scale as a predictor of urban adjustment. It may well be that consideration of all possible combinations of handicaps, rather than perfect scale types, would lead to better predictions within the Mexican-American group. At the same time, we shall concentrate our future efforts on an examination of other sociological factors that are believed to be determinants of adjustment.

VI

Conclusion

THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN and Anglo samples described in this research report had different places of origin (Texas versus North-Central United States), were educated in different subcultural areas (Texas versus non-Texas places), differed in terms of geographical mobility (more moves on the average for the Mexican-American than for the Anglo), and had been in the Northern industrial community for significantly different lengths of time (the younger Mexican-Americans since 1940 versus between 1900 and 1945 for the older Anglos).

The Mexican-American males included in the sample had more non-industrial antecedents than did the Anglos, as measured by occupation of husband's father and analysis of Mexican-American job histories. Persons in the Anglo sample had significantly more education, were employed at significantly higher occupational levels on their first jobs and their present jobs, and earned significantly greater total annual family incomes than did persons in the Mexican-American sample.

Both Mexican-Americans and Anglos had first jobs at occupational levels that varied significantly with stated amount of education of males. When educational level was dichotomized Anglos with eight or more years of education had jobs at significantly higher occupational levels than did Mexican-Americans; there was no significant difference in Mexican-American as compared with Anglo occupational levels for persons with less than eight years of education.

Although Anglos were employed at significantly different present occupational levels that were related to the educational level that they had attained, there was no significant variation in occupational level with educational level for Mexican-Americans. When each sample was dichotomized at the educational level of eight years, Anglos had significantly higher-level jobs than the Mexican-Americans with whom they were compared.

The difference between first and present job levels was statistically significant for Anglos but not for Mexican-Americans. The likelihood of upward movement for Mexican-Americans in the urban, industrial milieu is diminished by social antecedents such as limited education and low level of first employment. Limitations have probably been imposed on the educational and occupational opportunities available to Mexican-Americans at their point of origin, education, and initial work experience—and with at least in part an ethnic rationale. Low educational status and low-level occupational experience now operate as impediments to economic absorption where the ethnic rationale either is absent or is not as important.

But in spite of the fact that it has been clearly demonstrated that a significant amount of the disparity in occupational levels of Mexican-Americans and Anglos may be attributed to educational antecedents and initial work experience from which it is difficult to move up easily, there is a significant amount of variation in present occupational levels between Mexican-Americans and Anglos that has not been explained by either of these factors.

A more comprehensive investigation of the total variation in occupational levels between Mexican-Americans and Anglos as well as other measures of economic absorption and cultural integration will be sought through analysis of primary and secondary group associations.

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