Determinants of Mexican Migration in the Early Twentieth Century: Markets, Geography or Networks

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1 Research questions
1) Why Mexicans migrated to the US before 1910?
2) Which were the effects of such push and pull factors?
3) Did railways reduced migration costs?

2 What do we know so far?
Previous literature has agreed that:
1) Mostly, Mexican immigrants came from the Bajio region (Cardoso, 1980; Clark, 1908; Durand, 2016; among others).
2) The migration to northern Mexico was the first step to cross the border (Cardoso, 1980).
3) The fast expansion of the Mexican railways was determinant for a mass migration after 1900 (Gratton and Klancher, 2015 and Cardoso, 1980).
4) The stagnated wages and depressed living standards in Mexico induced migration (Durand, 2016; Rosenzweig, 1965; Henderson, 2011).

3 The Data
The research exploits an original dataset with four core components.
1) Migration flow: Individual-level border crossing records (N=15,216).
4) Networks: Mexican immigrants registered in the 1900 US Census.

4 Revisiting the flow’s patterns (1906 - 1908)
1) Bajio immigrants represented only one third of the flow. Mexicans migrated mainly from the border states.
2) Bajio immigrants actually came from a small group of adjoining municipalities.
3) Migration was more intense in the border states.
4) Migration was not a generalized experience but a local phenomenon.
5) The Bajio as a migrant-sending region was not consolidated.

Wages in the US were the most important pull factor in the Bajio.
1) Migration was not determined by geographical distance.
2) Immigrant networks in the US increased migration from the Bajio.

Geography (distance) determined migration from the border states
1) Networks had a small effect on border region immigrants.
2) US market potentials increased emigration from the border states.

The stagnated and depressed wages were a consistent push factor in both regions.

Mexican railways did not reduce migration costs

1) Migration of laborers from central to northern Mexico was minimum before 1910.
2) 73% of the immigrants reported to be born in the same location of last permanent residence.

Findings: Push and Pull effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Complete</th>
<th>Bajio</th>
<th>Border</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance (km)</td>
<td>-0.65***</td>
<td>-0.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>MX pop</td>
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<td>US pop</td>
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<td>MX wages</td>
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<td>US wages</td>
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<td>Network</td>
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<td>0.33***</td>
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REFERENCES