

THE CITY OF OAXACA

FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT

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## PREFACE

This is a document on the meaning of being poor in the secondary cities of Latin America. We have chosen to focus upon a single case: the city of Oaxaca, Mexico.

We are social anthropologists and sociologists and have been in the city for the past ten years. We started with single informants, then studied the colonias, or neighborhoods, in which they lived. Now we have drawn a sample of the whole city. In the next series of reports we will examine Oaxaca in comparative perspective, seeing how it structures experience compared to others of the intermediate cities of Mexico with better than 50,000 inhabitants which are currently the target for development.

The data reported here were drawn from a study carried out by Arthur D. Murphy in collaboration with the National Institute for Community Development (INDECO) in Oaxaca and Mexico City. We are indebted to many people: to William Glade at the Institute of Latin American Studies at The University of Texas at Austin, who has supported our work over the years; to architects José María Gutiérrez and Romeo Olivárez Rodríguez, who have supported this work morally and materially as well as intellectually; to Ignacio Cabrera, Gerardo Díaz Díaz Infante, Ignacio Ruiz Love, Mario Orozco, Alberto Solbes, Elena Solís, Blanca Susana Venegas and Rosa María Salgado, who during the course of the project became valued colleagues and close friends; to the Fulbright Foundation, which supported Murphy during the crucial year; to Bill Miner, Director of the Office of Urban Development at the Agency for International Development, who provided stimulation at critical moments; and to Eric Chetwynd and his colleagues in the same office, whose comments were as helpful as they were germane. Finally, a special debt is owed to Ing. José Luís Aceves Martínez, Director of INDECO-OAXACA, who introduced the North American elements of the study to the world of development and whose unflinching support for the project made it all possible.

In September 1976 Arthur Murphy of this research group arrived in Oaxaca to continue studies that had been going on there since 1966 and, particular, to develop his own Mexican work which had begun in 1971. He was interested in economic development, not as an economist, but rather as a social anthropologist. Because of previous collaboration with INDECO-OAXACA and Ing. José Luís Aceves, its director, he came in contact with the team sent by INDECO-MEXICO (the national office) to implement a study of the city of Oaxaca as part of the National Urban Plan which had recently been developed in the President's office. It is the results of this collaboration which are partially reported here.

The study has two aspects. There is the architectural aspect--studies of housing styles, specifications for needed and standing buildings, and engineering studies of services wanting and existing. Abundant maps and plans showing the distribution of water and water resources, sewers, electric lines, sanitation facilities, transport, schools, and public facilities all attest to the industriousness of the many architects and experts at drafting who worked on the project. We have had access to their work, thank them for it, and apologize for lacking the wit and experience to take full advantage of it. All the social scientists have felt a need to go back to school with the recognition of how much data from the architectural side they have failed to use well. The other aspect--the social, economic, and cultural aspect--is reported here.

The entire study was carried out in two phases. In the first phase social scientists carried out a reconnaissance of the city accompanied by an architect and an engineer. There are over a hundred colonias, or neighborhoods, in the city of Oaxaca, and they visited them all. In each colonia drawings were made by the architects, and an inventory of services, along with estimates of their cost effectiveness and the cost of putting them in, was made by the engineers and architects together. The social science team interviewed people on the street, people who would talk to them, people--like store keepers and cantina owners--who were unable to escape, as well as interested householders and political officials, in order to get some feeling for the history, the social and economic status, and the problems of the neighborhood. At the end of this informal interviewing and history taking of the city, they were able to categorize the neighborhoods of the city into eight different living spaces, which are reported upon in this document.

A random sample of the city was then drawn, and a pretested questionnaire given to an adult in each of 1,479 households. The questionnaire elicited data on the following topics:

1. House type and use of house
2. Building materials in house
3. Educational and demographic data on household head
4. Economic data on household head
5. Education, social, demographic, and economic data on all members of the household
6. Distribution of expenses in the household
7. Distribution of time in necessary travel by household members

8. Type and degree of regularity of land and house tenure
9. Availability of services in the colonia
10. Migratory history of the household
11. Priorities of respondent for social betterment
12. Attitudes toward and evaluation of present situation and future possibilities.

There were 233 items in all.

A group of fifteen social workers was recruited to administer the questionnaire. Either Murphy or a member of the Mexican social science group checked each questionnaire and kept close tabs on the interviewers.

The data were analyzed at The University of Texas at Austin on its CDC 6000 machine and the University of Georgia's CDC Cyber 70, using the SPSS statistical analysis package.

A few people to express thanks to include: Gisela Weis, for drawing; Virginia Howard, for editorial work; Linda Adams, Ann Worley, and Jackie Anderson, for typing.

In this report and those that follow, we are trying to analyze the anatomy of adaptation of the contemporary urbanite in the Mexican cities outside the Distrito Federal. These cities are called secondary to distinguish them from the primate capital, and it is here that development is to take place in the 1980's. The people of the seventies are paying a high price for living in a secondary center, and we record their struggles in this data report. We are particularly interested in those who are "making it" socially and economically even now. They are a special breed, willing to pay a specially high price. Their sacrifices, for that is what they are, are greater, we believe, than any other comparable group in Mexico. And in turn, for no thanks, they are making it possible for Mexico to at least contemplate a future that foregoes that nagging dependency and economic and social distortion that has been its lot since the Revolution.

If planners are going to be as good as their word and turn to the little cities, why, then, they can begin familiarizing themselves with their new clientele in this report. For there will be a need for introduction, since they apparently have not yet met. Permit us to introduce the city of Oaxaca!

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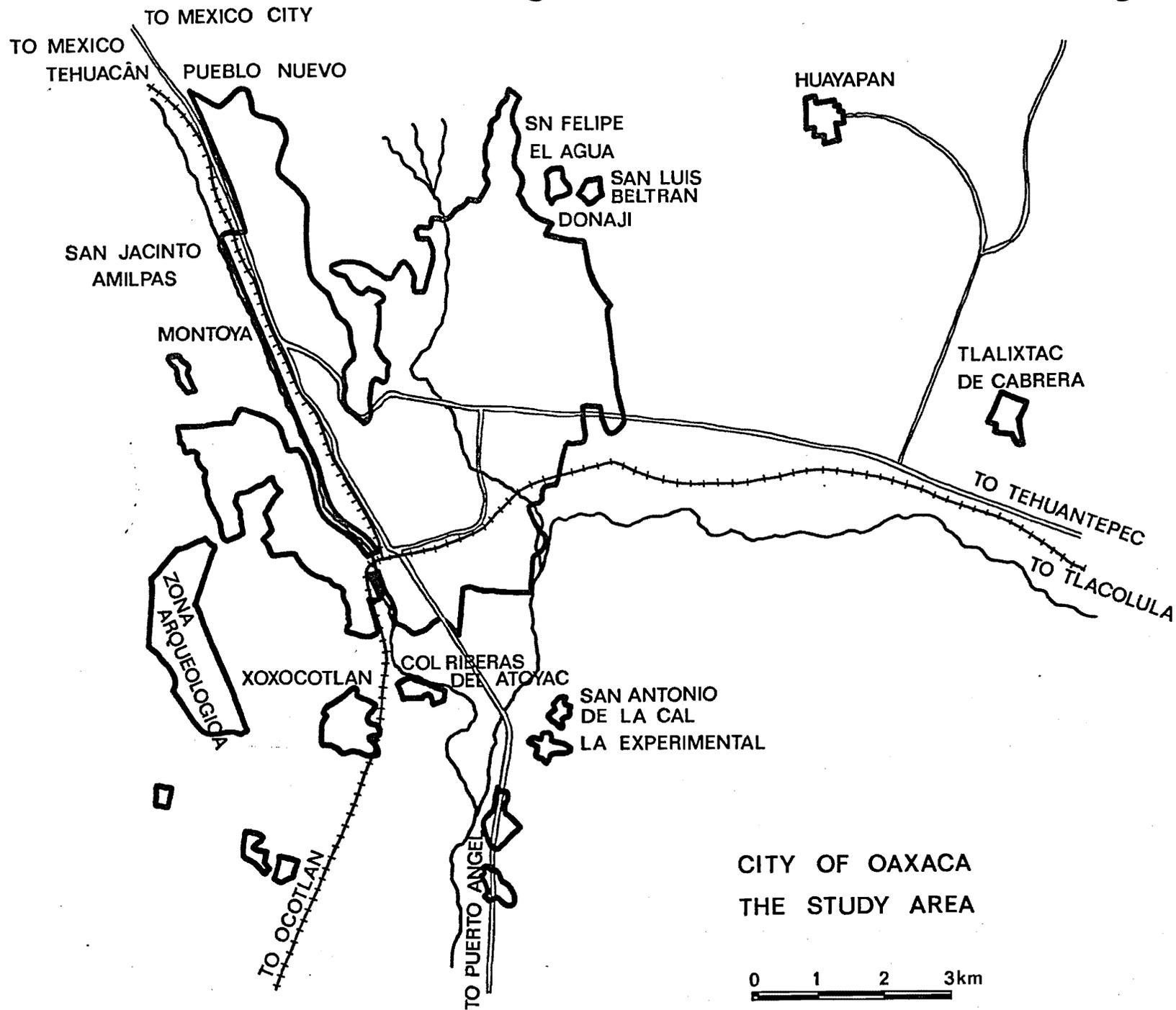
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NOTE: The two maps appearing in chapter 1 have been adapted from other sources. The Frontispiece (City of Oaxaca: The Study of Area) comes from the Edicion Preliminar, Julio de 1977, of INDECO's Guia Para Reconocimiento y Evaluacion de Medio Ambiente Urbanos y Prototipos de Vivienda. Fig. 1.1 (Oaxaca, Oaxaca, Mexico) comes from Mapa No. 1 in "La Ciudad de Oaxaca, El Hombre y La Urbe," by Jose Inigo Auilar Median, 1976.



## Chapter One

### THE CITY OF OAXACA

The state of Oaxaca can be divided into six zones: Oaxaca-Centro, the city and its surrounding area in the valley of Oaxaca; Oaxaca-Tuxtepec, on the easternmost slopes of the Sierra de Juarez by the border of Vera Cruz; Oaxaca-La Cañada, its neighbor to the west; Oaxaca-La Costa, on the Pacific; Oaxaca-Mixteca, in the western mountains of the state; and Oaxaca-Sierra de Juarez, in the mountainous area to the north of the city and the valley. The state is one of the poorest in the country. The six regions are all classified as exhibiting very low levels of socio-economic development in Stern's national study (1973); they are all in the bottom quartile in the country.

In this state the city of Oaxaca is the capital (Figure 1.1). According to Stern's conclusions, it is the poorest capital in the country. Similarly, Luis Unikel (1976) places Oaxaca at the bottom of the thirty-two state capitals in measures of gross product. Among the thirty-eight largest Mexican cities, he ranks Oaxaca thirty-first in degree of urbanization and only slightly better (twenty-eighth) in the style of life it affords its residents. Oaxaca is clearly a target red-flagged for development in Mexico. As such, it is also for our purposes a city that will serve as a test case for the second development decade. The first passed it by, almost without disturbance, as did the Revolution before it. It can now provide a worthy laboratory for the study of social change and economic development over the next decade.

#### GEOGRAPHY AND POPULATION

The city of Oaxaca is located 550 kilometers southwest of Mexico City. It is the largest city in the valley of Oaxaca, a Y-shaped valley of over 1,600 square kilometers which forms one of the largest expanses of flat arable land in the southern highlands of Mexico. It has been inhabited for over four thousand years (Flannery et al. 1967).

At 1,550 meters above sea level, the city enjoys a semi-arid climate with little humidity and an annual rainfall of between 420 and 790 millimeters. Temperatures are temperate, with a mean annual reading of about 20<sup>o</sup> centigrade (Aceves de la Mora 1976).

Historically, the city has been isolated from the rest of Mexico. Not until the turn of the century was a narrow-gauge rail link forged to connect Oaxaca to Tehuacán and northern Mexico. A standard line has since replaced it, but service has always been slow

FIG. 1.1

OAXACA OAXACA , MEXICO



(current travel time to Mexico City is twelve to sixteen hours). Even today, no rail service joins the city of Oaxaca to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and the rest of southern Mexico. For anyone in northern and central Mexico, it is simpler to bypass the mountainous areas surrounding the city of Oaxaca and take the coastal routes if she or he wishes to travel to the industrial and commercial centers further south and in the Yucatán.

The city has grown slowly, except during the last thirty-five years (Figure 1.2). In 1819 it had a population of 17,000, which climbed to 46,000 by 1900 (Welte 1978). A severe population decline between 1928 and 1940 resulted in large part from two earthquakes (in 1928 and 1931) which destroyed great sections of the city. The 1940 census recorded 35,000 inhabitants, and from this point on, the city has experienced dramatic population increases. By 1943 the Pan-American highway had arrived, opening Oaxaca city up to the outside world. Jobs were created in tourism and commerce, and migrants from the hills and mountains around began to swell the population. By 1970 it stood at 122,000; it is presently estimated at around 160,000.

With its increasing rate of growth and increased birth rate, the population pyramid for the city of Oaxaca exhibits characteristics similar to those of Mexico as a whole (Figure 1.3). The median age of the city of Oaxaca is 16.5 years. The sex ratio is slightly in favor of women (50.6%). Our data indicate that the often rumored arrival of the demographic transition in Latin America is more than a rumor. There is a slight but significant reduction in the proportion of children under five. The age-dependency ratio for the city is .97, usually low for an expanding population.

The majority of the population (60%) were born in the city, and 85% of the household heads have lived in the city for over ten years.<sup>1</sup> Oaxaca is not, then, a city of country bumpkins and urban villagers.<sup>2</sup>

### THE URBAN ECONOMY

The economy of the state of Oaxaca is one of the least developed in the Republic. In 1970, according to Unikel (1976:179), it ranked last in per capita production, with a figure of M.N.\$661

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<sup>1</sup>Basic citywide data for measures discussed in this and succeeding chapters may be found in Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup>Sometimes we have to remind ourselves that the valley of Oaxaca has been the center of an urban civilization since the formative period two thousand years ago.

FIGURE 1.2  
POPULATION GROWTH CHART,  
METROPOLITAN AREA OF OAXACA

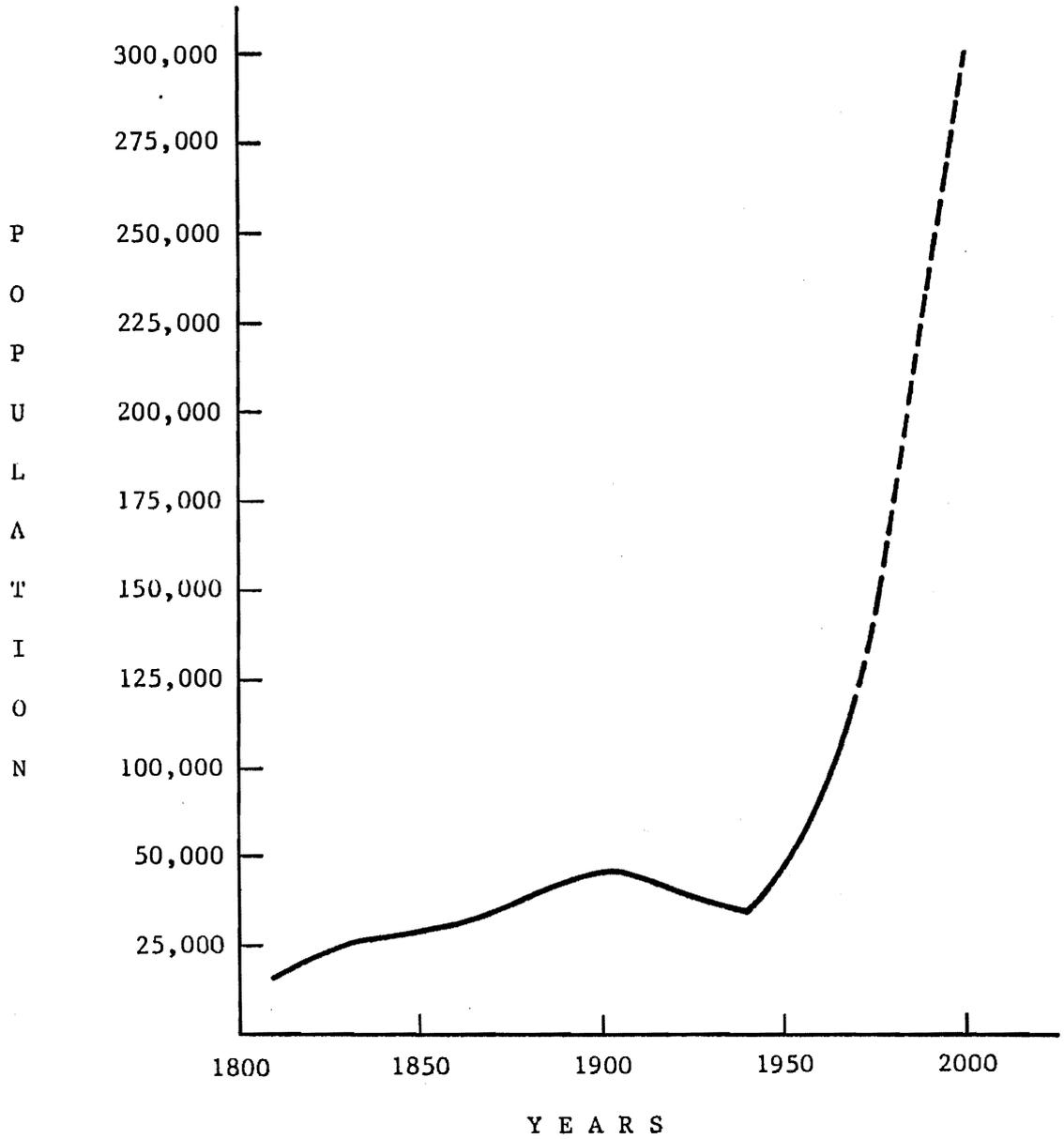
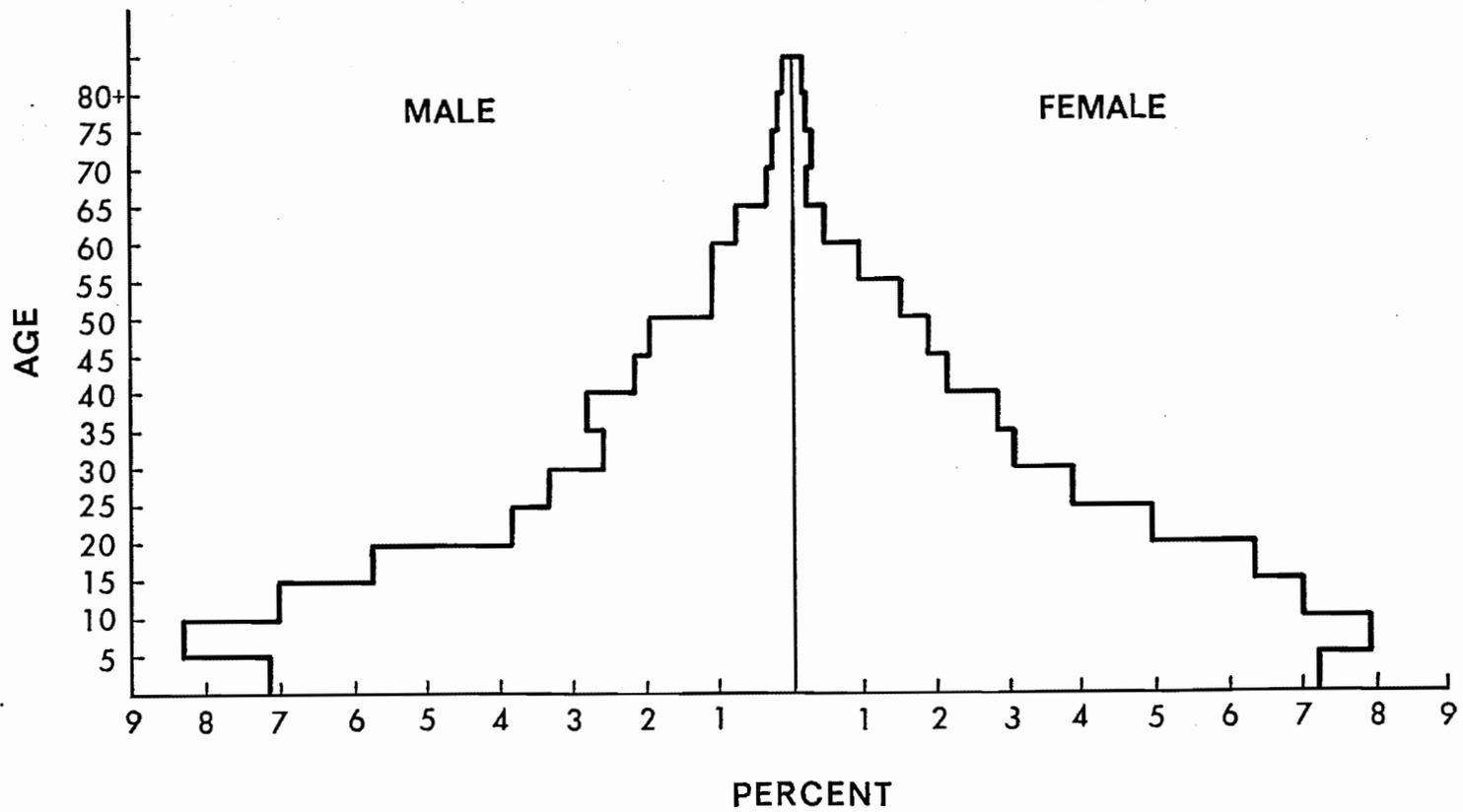


FIG. 1.3  
POPULATION PYRAMID



per economically active person.<sup>3</sup> In the city of Oaxaca economic development is greater, obviously, than it is in the rural areas. Still, the city ranks at the bottom of Unikel's development scale (1976: Apendice Estadístico, Cuadro V-A4). With a 1970 work force of 31,750 people, 34% were in the service sector--a large percentage that attests to the low level of manufacturing activity. Wages are low: Our own survey shows that 25% of the households fail to earn the minimum salary, an amount that was exiguous enough when last adjusted, but is now hopelessly insufficient in view of the recent inflation.

A survey of the central part of the city by Aguilar Medina (1976) gives some feeling for the economics of living conditions; 12% have telephones, 50% of the households have beds, 43% own an electric iron, 25% a blender (important for making local dishes), and only 13% have a (wringer) washing machine.

There is virtually no industry around the city or in it. The only major employer is a plywood factory. Processing activities consist of two lime extraction plants. There are three bottling plants.

Table 1.1 gives the proportions of people engaged in the different sectors of the economy. Two things stand out. First, there is a shift in importance of occupations from that reported by Unikel. By 1977 the greatest percentage of workers was in the governmental sector, with the service sector falling to third place behind private employees.<sup>4</sup> Second, the rate of unemployment stands at 6.5%, a figure considerably lower than the 30% to 52% figures often quoted for Mexico as a whole. It must be kept in mind, however, that this figure includes all occupations, regardless of productivity. While the overwhelming proportion of the respondents to the questionnaire felt they were

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<sup>3</sup>Throughout this report we shall use the cumbersome but correct convention of prefacing amounts in Mexican pesos with the initials "M.N." (moneda nacional). One hundred pesos is therefore written as M.N.\$100. With the present exchange rate at around twenty-two pesos to the U.S.\$1.00, a peso is worth a little under a nickel.

<sup>4</sup>The increase in the percentage of government employees follows naturally with the increased government activity of the Echeverria presidency. The discrepancy between our figures and Unikel's for the service sector, however, results at least in part from differing definitions. INDECO and we defined service persons only as maids, gardeners, cooks, and the like working for private families or individuals, or for the proprietors of very small commercial establishments. Service persons employed by the larger hotels, restaurants, and other business establishments were considered empleados en empresas privadas, or employees of private businesses, as were all other employees in private business, with the exception of manufacturing and industrial workers. This distinction would not have been made in Unikel's census material.

TABLE 1.1

PERCENTAGES OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION\*  
(NOT STUDENT OR HOUSEWIFE) IN OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY**	PERCENTAGE
Government Employees	19.8%
Private Employees	17.8%
Service Workers	15.7%
Construction Workers	12.1%
Industrial Workers	9.5%
Merchants	8.8%
Agricultural Workers	4.5%
Artisans	4.5%
Professionals	.6%
Entrepreneurs	.2%
Unemployed	6.5%

N = 2,235

\*Ages 15 to 60.

\*\*These categories may be defined as follows:

Government Employees: All persons who work for the city, state, or federal government.

Private Employees: All non-manufacturing/non-industrial personnel who receive a compensation from an employer in a business of any appreciable size. (These individuals are lumped into one category because, for the purposes of development programs in Mexico, they are potential clients of INFONAVIT and Seguro Social and would not in the long term be the concern of INDECO.)

Service Workers: Persons who perform domestic service for private individuals and for proprietors of very small commercial enterprises.

Construction Workers: Persons in the construction trades.

Industrial Workers: Persons working in manufacturing or extraction, corresponding roughly to industrial blue-collar workers in the United States.

Merchants: Street vendors, long-distance traders; vendors who sell from stalls in the market; owners of merchantile establishments.

Agricultural Workers: Workers in agriculture at all levels.

Artisans: Petty commodity producers.

Professionals: Lawyers, doctors, accountants, etc.

Entrepreneurs: Here, those people actively investing substantial amounts of capital in the development of business enterprises.

employed, with 31% of the household heads (classified as the person making the most money in a household) making below minimum wage, clearly large numbers are not fully employed in a stable sector of the economy.

### CITY NEIGHBORHOODS

Aerial photographs of the city of Oaxaca would reveal three characteristics of the city. First, small, unsubstantial houses are springing up like weeds on the hills surrounding the city, so that one can almost see the city expanding at its peripheries from day to day. Out in the colonias populares, as they are called, land values are still comparatively low, but then so is the frequency of urban services. To some analysts and substantial citizens these are shanty-towns ridden with crime and social pathology. To the anthropologists, who have lived in them for the past seven years, they are vital, young, bustling, and energetic places where a heterogeneous mix of classes and ethnic groups try to make a decent life for themselves despite appalling public health conditions, poor nutritional status, and a lack of those services that make urban living possible and sometimes pleasant.

The second noticeable characteristic is the busy central area of the city. Here population densities are very high (second highest in the country after Mexico City (Aguilar Medina 1976:54), and city life dominates. Traffic, crowds, markets, vendors, a street life, noise--above all, noise--and movement abound. There is no rotting inner-city core here. Some of the colonial buildings are beginning to give up the ghost after two-hundred-fifty years, but others remain pristine, and still others have been restored.<sup>5</sup>

Lastly, one would be able to pick out the colonias of the rich--the upper-middle class of professionals and upper-level bureaucrats, the coffee finqueros, and the members of the chamber of commerce. Here we find heterogeneity, too. Just as we find substantial homes in the colonias populares, poor shacks back up against the (comparative) mansions of the well-to-do with no feeling of interloping.

Oaxaca is not a stratified city in the way most American cities are. There are no slums and no rotten core; the parts of the city that perhaps attempt to mimic the lily-white suburbs of their northern neighbor so far have seemed (thankfully) to fail. We do not find homogeneity by neighborhood yet--though there is some tendency towards stratification as well as a good deal of de facto support for it in development agencies.

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<sup>5</sup>The Centro Regional del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia has been instrumental in the preservation of the colonial section of the city.

In Chapter four we will focus more closely on these processes. The population of Oaxaca is projected to double again by the year 2000. If the population begins to age, and if the vibrant energy that strikes one so forcefully in the colonias populares declines, we may well see the forms of urban pathology with which we are so familiar: inner city ghettos, deteriorating marginal neighborhoods, vast tracts of the urban landscape set aside to warehouse the poor. But not yet.

#### FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS

The data on households in Oaxaca surprised us because they indicated homogeneity. Compared, for example, with Mexico city (Lomnitz 1975), with its range of extended household arrangements and variation of budget types (shared and independent), the Oaxacan pattern is quite simple. Compared to Lima (Hammel 1961), where household structure is consciously manipulated to serve the strategic interests of poor wage earners, Oaxacans seem naive. But the simplicity is deceptive and the naiveté a clear misinterpretation. What our data show is that the structure of the household is closely tied to the domestic cycle--the household's own life cycle--and that household arrangements, investment policies, and the like are very sensitive to ecological and economic conditions. The simple aggregate pattern, in other words, conceals a multiplicity of strategic outcomes.

Table 1.2 gives the number of persons in the household.<sup>6</sup> The mean household size is 5.3 members, and the distribution is skewed to the positive side, but only slightly compared to many Latin American populations (see, for example, Foster (1976) for data on a similar city in Colombia).

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<sup>6</sup>A full discussion of our use of the term "household" appears shortly in chapter 3. We will merely say here that we are referring to all individuals who inhabit a single domicile and who function together as a single unit. "Family" and "household" refer to two different social units.

TABLE 1.2

PERCENTAGES OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH A  
GIVEN NUMBER OF PERSONS

NUMBER OF PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD	PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS*
1	3.0%
2	7.7%
3	13.4%
4	15.8%
5	17.2%
6	12.8%
7	12.9%
8	6.6%
9	4.5%
10	2.9%
11+	3.1%

Mean = 5.3; Median = 5.1; Mode = 5; N = 1,466

\*In this, as in succeeding tables, a slight deviation from a 100% total results from rounding of percentages.

The degree of extension in households is slight (21%). Lineal extended families comprise 13% of the household formations, while extended households of other kinds account for 7%. Table 1.3 presents this data. For Latin American urban populations, the proportion of lineally extended families is not out of line. However, in Oaxaca one does find a smaller number of anomalous extended households made up of distantly related members or unrelated people than have been reported in other places. Such households have been described in Peru (Hammel 1961) and in Brazil (Schmink, 1979) as being ad hoc formations which serve the purpose of cutting living expenses, maximizing the availability of information about jobs, and providing psychological and social security. Such living arrangements are rarely found in Oaxaca.

TABLE 1.3

PERCENTAGES OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH SPECIFIC TYPES  
OF EXTENDED MEMBERS

RELATION OF EXTENDED MEMBER TO HOUSEHOLD HEAD OR SPOUSE	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS*
Parent	8.5%
Sibling	5.7%
Grandparent	1.3%
Grandchild	3.9%
Other	7.3%

N = 290

\*Since households may have more than one extended member but extended members are listed separately here, the total of the percentages given is greater than the actual percentage of extended households.

Household data show that Oaxaca is a family town. Those forms of "social pathology" studied so closely in the 1960's--the female-headed household, broken homes, and the like--are almost absent in Oaxaca, despite the poverty of its inhabitants. Almost eighty percent of the households are nuclear; 87% are male-headed. Put another way, only 19% of the living units are single-parent households, and of these, only two-thirds are female headed.

Divorce is uncommon;<sup>7</sup> we recorded a rate of 3%. Consistent with the stability of the family, we find that home ownership is very widespread. Over three-quarters of the people own their own home.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>By divorce, we do not mean simply legal separation. Divorce also occurs when one of the partners abandons the other. Common-law marriage, by far the most prevalent form, is none the less stable for being common law.

<sup>8</sup>Experienced analysts and observers of the urban scene in Latin America will be hard put to suppress a smile at the simple-mindedness of this statement. After all, land tenure and home ownership are two of the most complicated and vexing problems for planner and social scientist. We treat some of the complexities below. It is worth noting, however, that the local people do not share our confusions--they know whether or not they own a site and house. We report their feelings here.

Having briefly introduced various aspects of the city of Oaxaca--its location, climate, economic and population growth, and nature of neighborhoods and households--we are now ready to focus our attention more closely on the people themselves in the context that is most crucial to their adaptation to the city--their household. We will first consider the household as it grows, develops, changes, and declines over time. After a more general discussion of what it is like to live in Oaxaca and how Oaxaqueños perceive their own situation, we will present a discussion of the various types of living spaces available to households in the city. We will then examine households from a third perspective by grouping them in income classes. Finally, based on this careful examination of their lives, we will offer our own advice to Oaxaqueñan householders on how best to arrange their lives so as to extract the maximum benefit--however paltry--from their society. In many ways, it is depressing advice; but if things seem bad, they are somewhat brightened by a contemplation of the youngest group of Mexicans bearing the responsibility of a household--those whom we shall shortly meet as we begin to examine the nature of the life cycle of the Oaxacan household.

## Chapter Two

### METHODS AND APPROACHES IN THE STUDY

#### INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we describe the data and how they were obtained. The data are part of a set gathered by A.D. Murphy and a group of professional social scientists and architects from the national offices of the Instituto Nacional Para el Desarrollo de la Comunidad y de la Vivienda Popular (INDECO-MEXICO) during the spring and summer of 1977 in the city of Oaxaca, Mexico. This study was part of a nationwide study, to be completed during the next three years, of every city with over 50,000 inhabitants. The purpose of the study is to enable INDECO to rationalize the process of urban planning in the secondary cities of Mexico, where the government hopes to concentrate a larger portion of the future urban population of Mexico. Because INDECO's prime concern is to provide housing and services to those households that fall outside the government's social welfare programs (such as Seguro Social and ISSSTE), the agency is interested in obtaining information that will allow them to understand the situation of households that lack social security and welfare. Oaxaca was the first city to be surveyed and served as a test for the method and instrument to be applied throughout the country.

The study has two phases. The first is a study of the whole city using A Method for Survey-Evaluation of Urban Dwelling Environments (Baldwin 1974), developed by the School of Architecture and Planning of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.) and related publications (Davila et al. 1973; Caminos et al. 1969). The second phase of the study consisted of giving a socio-economic questionnaire to a sample of the city's population, making it possible to bring together the physical/social environment as described by the first phase with pertinent socio-economic data which can be analyzed statistically.

#### PHASE I

The method devised by M.I.T. was adapted with virtually no modifications by INDECO for the first portion of the study.

First, available information was used to put together a general picture of the city's population growth, climate, spatial configurations of growth, types of land tenure, patterns of land use, and so forth. This information was gathered from government agencies and from "qualified informants" such as local social scientists and politicians who had knowledge of the city. The data were then used, along with

the observations of project people, to divide the urban area into "localities," which were

relatively self-contained residential area(s) within an urban context. In general, [a locality] is contained within physical boundaries that are of two types: barriers and meshing boundaries. Mountains, water, limited-access highways and sharp changes in land use are considered barriers. Main streets and political, or municipal, divisions are considered meshing boundaries. (Caminos et al. 1969: x).

Because the M.I.T. criteria for defining localities were physical for the most part, the city of Oaxaca was initially divided by a team of architects in consultation with the social scientists. After looking at air photos of the city and making several inspection trips to different areas, we identified twenty-four localities in Oaxaca meeting the criteria set out in the research design.<sup>1</sup> These localities became the units of investigation in the next step of the survey.

Two-person teams consisting of an architect or engineer and a social scientist checked for homogeneity within each locality by walking every street. In accordance with M.I.T. methodology, areas found to differ in land tenure, housing styles, age of settlement, and the general socio-economic condition of the population were designated "sub-localities" and noted on a map. There were 116 in all, and they corresponded almost exactly with the political divisions--the colonias, or neighborhoods--of the city. These sublocalities, or colonias, then became the units of study for Phase I. Having canvassed an entire locality, the research team chose within each sublocality a representative segment of 400-by-400 meters.<sup>2</sup> Detailed notes were taken as to the most common house types and construction

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<sup>1</sup>While the M.I.T. method specifies heavy reliance on air photos, we found that in Oaxaca this was not possible, because the latest photos of the city date from 1973 and have been considerably outdated by the changes occurring since then. The project did take its own air photos, which were later used to construct maps of most of the localities in the city, but resources were not available to obtain photos of a sufficiently high quality to be used as the M.I.T. methodology suggests. In any event, the project's on-the-ground approach, while more time-consuming, afforded the research team with greater direct knowledge of the city.

<sup>2</sup>The use of a 1600-square-meter area as the basis for the sampling of available services is based on the assumption within urban geography and planning that this is the ideal usable space for an urban household. The M.I.T. survey is designed to see if it is possible for a household to fulfill its needs within a reasonable walking distance from its home. We found no such segment in Oaxaca.

materials, available infrastructural services, socio-economic situation of the residents, and land tenure within each neighborhood.

With this information in hand it was the job of the survey team to choose the most typical block in each colonia.<sup>3</sup> The team surveyed this block by measuring its dimensions, counting the number of lots and houses, and drawing a detailed map of the use of space. In addition, a typical house within the block was measured and a plan drawn with notations as to construction type, services available, age, and general condition of the dwelling. This home was then considered to be the typical house for that neighborhood.

While the architect was measuring a home and gathering physical data on the lot, the social scientist interviewed an adult member of the household living in that home and with one other on the block. These interviews concerned family life history and the history of the neighborhood.

With the completion of this phase of the investigation, we had a good general picture of the city--its history, economic structure, climate, demographic profile and spatial distribution of its population.

In addition to providing the data for a general description of Oaxaca, the first phase of the study was designed to develop a typology of distinctive living systems, or neighborhood types. The M.I.T. designers and most urban planners see a high positive correlation between systems of housing and site tenure and socio-economic status of the inhabitants. (This proved to be only partially true in Oaxaca: socio-economic status and these two variables were partly independent. For this reason, the socio-economic and cultural characteristics were included in the criteria for establishing the eight distinctive living systems of Oaxaca.)

The notion of housing/tenure system, while central to the study, is not a rigid concept which requires that all regions of a city be placed in a prescribed set of categories--e.g., suburb, shanty town, invasion, apartment. Rather, it is important that systems of land use and housing for a particular city or region be ethnographically as well as empirically valid. For example, in Mexico City, where an M.I.T. survey was carried out, for the poorer populations four types of housing systems were identified: ciudades perdidas, containing approximately 2% of the entire population of the city; vecindades, 23%; colonias populares (which tend to have their origin in land invasions

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<sup>3</sup>"Within each locality segment a primarily residential block [is] selected to allow comparison of areas and densities that are homogeneous. The block is bounded on all sides by circulation so that the ratio of circulation (or service) to areas served can be compared." (Caminos et al. 1969:x)

or some other type of irregular acquisition), 39%; and unidades de habitacion (government-sponsored projects), 6%. This division of a city contrasts with Nairobi, another M.I.T. study site, where vecindades take in 49% of the population; garden houses, 23% and apartment complexes, 28%.

In Oaxaca we wanted our classification of living spaces in the city to reflect the complex relationship between land tenure, type of housing, and the social welfare of the population, rather than simply housing/tenure systems. To do this we took into account the income of household heads and a series of socio-cultural variables which would give some indication of the quality of life in the locality. On the basis of our discussions and interviews with people during Phase I, we looked at indices of education level; migration; the degree of intracolonia social cohesion (as reflected in the number and types of local organizations and whether the colonia used a communal labor system for the development of local infrastructure); the attitudes of the residents towards political and economic development; and the general morale of the colonia, as suggested by the residents' expressed feelings about the neighborhood and its relation to the rest of the city. The combination of these physical, legal, economic, and social variables led us to define the following eight types of living spaces: invasions, colonias populares with very low incomes, colonias populares with low incomes, and colonias populares with moderate incomes, site-and-service projects, pueblos conurbados (or urban villages), the center city, and middle-class housing. They can be briefly described.

### Neighborhood Types

Invasions. Settlements recently established on invaded land are not a frequently encountered living system in present-day Oaxaca, although invasions historically have played a role in the development of the city. The area presently occupied by invasions is about 1% of the total area of the city, and, except for one group near the old zoo, invaders tend to be holding land of marginal value. The defining feature of invasions is insecurity of rights to one's house site. Because of the recency of their invasion, residents may be removed by the civil authorities or the soldiers. Land tenure is irregular by definition in invasions. There is little permanent housing and almost all residents are extremely poor.

Colonias Populares. Generally colonias populares are older, irregular settlements which have either given regular title by the government or are in the process of "regularization". They cover over 50% of the city's area, and a major portion of its population live in them. Because there were so many of them, and they were so heterogeneous, we divided them into three types on the basis of incomes reported during the block interviews. The three types were colonias populares with very low incomes (those in which reported incomes for the head of household were less than the federally-established minimum salary of M.N.\$1800 per month). We differentiated

these from low-income colonias populares, where household heads reported incomes between one and two minimum salaries. The third type were the moderate-income colonias where household heads reported incomes of two or more minimum salaries. There was an increase in the quality of life in the colonias populares as one moved up the economic scale from very low to low to moderate incomes, though this was not always the case. Because of effective organization and political cohesiveness, in some instances poorer colonias have been able to construct facilities and get the city to provide utilities and services not available in wealthier areas. This was especially true if the poor colonia had existed for a significantly longer period of time.

Pueblos Conurbados. These neighborhoods are distinguished from the rest of the city by their unique historical and political relationship with the center. They are older independent communities which have over the years become either bedroom communities for the center city or colonias directly under the political control of the city government. While the incomes in these regions are not as high as in other parts of the city, there is a great deal of community spirit which enables the inhabitants to organize themselves for community improvement. In addition, the homes are older, and a fair number of poor families have had the time to build good, permanent houses, spending money and time in small amounts over a longer period. Pueblos conurbados cover approximately 11% of the area of the municipio of Oaxaca.

Site-and-Service Projects. These living sites were a special category distinguished by the way they were developed. In Oaxaca, they are all under the jurisdiction of INDECO, who purchases blocks of land, builds in urban services and sells lots to poor, unsalaried applicants. Because the lot-owners build their own houses, the site-and-service projects look like colonias populares. But there is evidence in our data that the projects are very successful in providing decent housing in an integrated community efficiently and cheaply. The projects occupy only about 8% of the urban area of the city.

The Central Area (Centro). The oldest portion of the city is the central area, which despite its heterogeneity was designated as one living system. Because the citizens of the city agreed that the centro was one place we decided to follow their lead, as we had in all the other types. The physical boundaries of the central area coincide more or less with the boundaries of the city as of 1940. State and federal governments have focused their attention on this area and all services are available. Social integration in the centro, despite its relatively small size (20% of the city) is low. But it is regarded as a favored living location.

Middle-Class Housing. The middle-class housing system of the city has many of the characteristics of the moderate-income colonias populares and the site-and-service projects, except for their higher income levels and modernity of the houses. They are of two major types: governmental mass housing projects where large numbers of

detached and semi-detached homes are built for middle- and upper-level salaried employees, or private subdivisions (fraccionamientos). These last range from improved lots to imposing rows of developer's houses. These housing developments are easily recognized because of the regularity of their layout and modernity of construction. As in similar communities in the rest of the world, social cohesion within these middle-class enclaves tends to be low, as the conditions of the colonias generally do not require collective action on the part of the residents to improve their situation.

## PHASE II

The stratification of the city for the purposes of the sample relied on the data from the first phase of the study in conjunction with the division of colonias into living systems. We wished to sample each neighborhood type appearing in each of the twenty-four localities defined in Phase I. This would allow us both to determine how similar the households were socially and economically and to see what prevailing modes of property tenure and type of house were having on the availability of services and peoples' attitudes towards development. The result was a sample of fifty-two different areas of the city ranging from the poorest sections in the most recent invasions to the wealthiest new developments.

Within each of the fifty-two areas to be sampled we chose at least 10% of the households at random, with the stipulation that a total of thirty households be reached in each area. The thirty-home limit would give us the minimal number necessary for valid statistical analysis.<sup>4</sup> Without this lower limit on the number of interviews, some samples would have contained no more than fifteen cases. In the end, we had 1,479 interviews for a city of approximately 150,000 people. This represents about 5% of the households of the city, ranging over the entire economic spectrum.

### The Survey Questionnaire

The instrument used in the investigation had three parts in its final form. After an initial identification of house type and usage and record-keeping items, the first section dealt with the socio-economic situation of the household. For the first twelve members, beginning with household head, we requested the following information: relationship to the household head, age, marital state, sex, education,

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<sup>4</sup>We were successful for all neighborhoods save the invasions, where interviewers were asked to leave the vicinity before the survey was completed. Because of their uncertain status, residents were perhaps understandably perturbed by the presence of information-gatherers in their midst.

ethnicity, place of birth, occupation, stability of work, location of work, and wage. We then asked for figures or estimates on monthly household expenses for rent or mortgage payments, taxes, food, fuel, water, electricity, transportation, health care, entertainment, time payments for household goods, savings, and "other expenses." We also asked for transportation information: type, time per month, and distance (round trip) to work, market, and school.

The next section of the questionnaire dealt with the physical and social security of the household. Questions covered costs and actual value of the lot and home; the year in which the present lot and house were purchased; the type of ownership; and types of financing the household was or was not able to obtain in purchasing the lot or building the home. Next, data were collected on house size, services available, and construction materials used in the walls, roof, doors, floors, and windows. In this section we also gathered information concerning how the residents of an area felt about their neighborhood and the house they were living in. Further, we asked about plans they had for improving their home or colonia and about improvements they had made over the past two years. Concerning social security, we obtained information about whether or not the household had access to any of the governmental or private social security programs in the country,<sup>5</sup> and if so, what types and with which agency. Finally, we asked about the most common illnesses in the household and the causes of these illnesses.

The last section of the instrument dealt with household history, aspirations, and attitudes toward development. A two-part migration history--the first dealing with moves in and out of the city of Oaxaca, the second with moves within the metropolitan region--was taken for each household. This data covered the last three moves of each type and included data on the location from which the move took place, reason for the move, and the year. We asked people whether they would like to see any changes in their household situation, their work, their house, or their neighborhood, and what those changes would be. Next, we asked people to rank-order and scale five areas of the city with respect to desirability as a place of residence, and eleven items (such as land tenure, electricity, and the political organization of community members) with respect to their importance in achieving a higher standard of living. Finally, we asked people about their attitudes toward social and political integration with their neighbors and whether or not they had formed ties with them through compadre (fictive kin) relationships or voluntary organizations.

This, then, was the instrument as it stood after three revisions in the field. The original was given in one of the areas surveyed,

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<sup>5</sup>It is the distinction between those individuals who have access to such programs and those who do not which marks the salaried from the nonsalaried workers in Mexico. INDECO's concern is with the latter group.

modified, given in another, and then modified for the last time before being used in the entire city.<sup>6</sup> We chose the arbitrary number of two modifications, because we realized that if we allowed ourselves, we would be changing the questionnaire each time the interviewers returned from the field.

### The Interviewers and Controls on Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered by a group of interviewers who were trained for the task by Murphy and the professional staff of INDECO-MEXICO. Most were second-year students from the local school of social work, and the rest had worked with anthropologists in varying capacities in the past. Before they went to the field interviewers participated in a three-hour seminar on the questionnaire. They were all asked to interview her/his partner, and the responses were then discussed with one of the directors. If it was felt that the correct question had not been asked, it was discussed with the interviewer until we were certain of a good understanding. For an interviewer's first few days, she or he went to the field with an experienced member of the crew.<sup>8</sup> When the more experienced person was convinced the candidate could handle the interviews without further supervision, an interview was carried out by the candidate on one of the professional staff. If this interview was successful, the social worker was considered a fully-qualified fieldworker.

In addition to these data controls, the professional staff kept constant watch on the field personnel to ensure the integrity of the sample and the proper application of the instrument. Each questionnaire was reviewed by Murphy or one of the individuals from INDECO every evening, and any inconsistencies or data that did not fit with the pattern being established in an area was discussed with the interviewer to ascertain if the data were correct or if possibly there had been some mistake in collection. We found what we estimated to be a 5% error rate in the questionnaire, which we then cleared up either by interviewing again or by replacing that individual in the

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<sup>6</sup>There were no major changes in emphasis or direction; rather, modifications involved relatively minor changes to improve the quality and specificity of the information being gathered. The comparability of questionnaires from the first two areas was not seriously compromised.

<sup>7</sup>We did not want this to be a traditional closed questionnaire, but permitted a degree of leeway in the questions so that our people could frame the questions in a manner suitable to the population they were dealing with at the time.

<sup>8</sup>Teams always went to the field in pairs. We found that there was better response if more than one person went to a neighborhood and began to ask questions that if a single individual went and attempted to convince people that she or he was part of a larger effort.

sample. Most of these inconsistencies had to do with the definition of stability of work or with income and expenses.

A final and unexpected check on the quality of our interviewers was the chance falling into the sample of several acquaintances of the members of the team. When such an individual appeared in the sample, we returned to her/his home, informed the person that we were the ones directing the study, and asked about the quality of the interview personnel. Several of these individuals were professional Mexican or North American social scientists, and since they felt the interviewers had done a first rate job, we felt certain that we had a data set as secure as could be expected.

#### DATA ANALYSIS

The data were transferred to a machine readable form and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) on the CDC 6000 computer at The University of Texas at Austin and the CDC Cyber 70 at the University of Georgia. Descriptive statistics were analyzed for the original 233 variables, and SPSS routines were used to create another 116 new variables and indices. Regressions and correlations were run on a set of eight variables resulting in the models presented in chapter 7.

## Chapter Three

### FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD: A LIFE CYCLE

#### FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD

In this report and throughout our research, the household has been used as the unit of analysis. It is ethnosemantically defined, as we say in anthropology; that is, we let the local people define it themselves. In local terms the household consists of caseros ("people of the house"), headed up by the jefe (or jefa) de la casa; its membership is given by the response to the question, "Quiénes son de la casa?"<sup>1</sup>

In more analytic terms, the household is defined as all commensals who participate in the joint budget of the household both as consumers and contributors, or as dependent minors. The household and the family are not the same things. A family is defined in the domain of kinship as consisting of close kinfolk by blood and marriage--parents and their children. Households can include distant relatives or people who are not related at all. Servants belong to the household, though not to the family; no genealogical ties link them to family members by blood or marriage.

Not all family members are part of the same household--children, for example, who have been educated and have gone to live in Mexico City. They sometimes contribute to the household (though less than one might think); nevertheless, they are not among its members. The household consists of all those people presently sharing a budget and living together.

The household is the unit of adaptation and advancement. It is the decision-making unit. Demographic decisions are taken within the household and affect all its members. If a married couple decides to continue having children, the whole household will be affected.

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<sup>1</sup>There are two reasons for this kind of approach, one of which is derived from the anthropological preoccupation with defining terms the way the people they study define them. Because we are always concerned about the difficulties that proceed from imposing our assumptions and analytic categories upon other people, we are always careful to distinguish the two different modes of definition. Here we are using local definitions so that the translation gap between what we and they are talking about is minimized.

A second reason is somewhat less well theoretically motivated: our way avoids those tiresome arguments over nominal level definitions which used to plague social science and persist in places even today.

Educational decisions are taken within the household. The decision to educate one child past primary school will affect the lives and futures of the other children. Failure of a child to do well with secondary education (doing well means getting a good, salaried job and contributing generously to the household budget) will affect the chances of the younger children. Successful completion of secondary followed by a unilateral decision to leave town and failure to contribute to the household budget will, again, affect the lives of all members of a household. For these reasons, decisions about the education of the children are made jointly.

Decisions about investments aside from education are likewise made by the whole household. Staking a child to a career in another city will affect all. Moving the family to some other locale will affect all. A decision to purchase a pickup truck or a television set will be jointly arrived at and affect all members. A decision to spend money on drugs at the pharmacy or consult a doctor or put a member of the household in the hospital will be arrived at collectively. About the only decision affecting the disposition of income or savings in the household that is unilaterally arrived at is the decision to take a lover or a mistress. And despite the transparent economic implications of such decisions, they are viewed as belonging more properly to the emotional and private realm of experience.

In other words, the household lives together, rises and falls together, survives together, succeeds or fails together. For the vast majority of people, there is no definition of economic and social success outside the household (and family). Moreover, the vast majority of the people in Oaxaca are poor. They have only the resources of the household (and family) to rally in order to sustain themselves under extreme economic straits. They know that security proceeds from the family alone, that the fortunes of the household are indissolubly their own. For these reasons we will concentrate our attention throughout this report on the household as the unit of adaptation in the city of Oaxaca.

#### DOMESTIC CYCLE

When anthropologists discuss domestic cycle, they are speaking of the life cycle of the household. Household composition changes according to the ages of its members--expanding and contracting, getting richer and poorer--through time. No understanding of poverty nor of income generation and distribution can ignore the variability that comes about as a result of changing household characteristics over time.

Because our interests lie in adaptation to the city and because we believe that the major dimension along which adaptation takes place is economic, we have typologized domestic units so as to catch them when their demographic structure and economic needs and capabilities are distinctively different. We are trying to contextualize the

meaning of income, savings, ownership, and consumer choices, in the knowledge that people evaluate their needs and possibilities differently under different household and family conditions.

We take household heads<sup>2</sup> from the time they become responsible for a household and are still without young children and follow them (cross-sectionally) until their children have left home and set up independent households.

We define our household types as follows:

1. Young households with no children.
2. Households in which at least one child is under the age of five years.
3. Households where all the children are over the age of five years. We assume that the five-year lapse is diagnostic of completed fertility.
4. Households in which all children are 15 years of age or more.
5. Married couples or single householders over the age of 45 living without children in the house.

Table 3.1 gives the frequencies for the sample, or city as a whole.

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<sup>2</sup>Our definition of household head is the one used by development and social-welfare agencies in Mexico and generally accepted in economic development literature--i.e., the person in a household who earns the greatest income.

TABLE 3.1

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGES OF HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH STAGE  
OF THE DOMESTIC CYCLE IN OAXACA

STAGE OF DOMESTIC CYCLE	HOUSEHOLDS	
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Young Household Heads With No Children	141	9.5%
Households in Which at Least One Child Is Under Five Years	683	46.2%
Households Where All Children Are Over Five Years of Age	422	28.6%
Households of Parents and Adult Children (i.e., Over Age Fifteen)	155	10.5%
Older People Without Children	76	5.1%
N = 1,479		

#### STAGE ONE: YOUNG HOUSEHOLDS

The gloomy atmosphere that usually permeates reports on the less developed regions of the LDC's is alleviated somewhat by a consideration of the social and economic conditions of the members of the city's population who have most recently entered the job force. They are the youngest group of the sample (median age of 26), the best educated (median education, some secondary school). Sixty percent are unmarried, living with their parents, and supporting them. One in three has established an independent household. They have no children (by definition), and household size is thereby small (a mean of 3.2 persons). Not surprisingly, they have been born in the city more than any group (49% are of urban origin).<sup>3</sup>

#### Housing Conditions

The housing conditions of this youngest set of household heads are quite similar to those of the oldest group--as one would expect since such a large proportion are living with parents. Their houses

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<sup>3</sup>Again, basic citywide data for all measures discussed in this and following chapters may be found in Appendix A. We also note here that we have used median figures for aggregate data unless otherwise stated.

tend to be slightly smaller than average and have fewer rooms (2.2 rooms), but the house is predominantly a permanent dwelling (casa definitiva) of brick and cement. Forty percent of the houses have glass windows.

### Economic Conditions

The youngest members of the sample are the most "modern" in their job choice. They have the lowest percentage in service of all groups and are empleados<sup>4</sup> more than householders in the other domestic stages. A significant number of husbands and wives both have government jobs (albeit some fairly lowly ones such as rural school teacher), and this very desirable situation yields two minimum salaries, i.e., more than the 1.8 minimum salaries that we calculate are necessary to survive in this system.<sup>5</sup> More importantly, government jobs are salaried for the most part, which means that incumbents have access to financial guarantees, loans, mortgages, pensions, medical care, and housing opportunities in the projects designed and reserved for them.

These young household heads enjoy a greater measure of job stability than any other group as well: 77% report they have held their job a year or longer;<sup>6</sup> almost all are currently employed.

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<sup>4</sup>The word empleado is used in this report to lump two occupational categories--empleado publico ("public employee") and empleado en empresa privada (a private sector employee in non-construction or manufacturing types of occupations). When interpreting this category, one must remember that it includes a range of individuals who, by North American definitions, would not normally be lumped together--e.g., waiters in the better eating establishments, secretaries, clerks, administrators, building attendants for governmental offices. However, within the thinking of Mexican middle-government officials and many of the population of Mexico, being an employee of the government or of one of the commercial establishments in a non-industrial capacity places one above the normal crowd. This stems from the degree of security which working for these types of institutions tends to supply the employee.

<sup>5</sup>A full discussion of minimum levels of income appears in chapter 7. Here we merely note that our 1.8 minimum wage level is a compromise between what the government claims the poor ought to be able to get by on and what the private sector believes is the minimum level for participation in the commercial economy.

<sup>6</sup>This was our measure of job stability.

These young householders are not doing badly; their median income is more than the minimum salary at M.N.\$2000 per month. Forth-five percent of the households have a second worker, and the median contribution of M.N.\$1400 from the wife (or father, in the case of an extended household) brings the household income up to the median of M.N.\$2500 for the whole sample. For their youth, these householders are doing quite well for themselves. But they are better off even than their incomes would indicate; because their dependency ratios are so low (the mean ratio of dependents to workers stands at 1.1<sup>7</sup>--lower than all but the oldest, "retired" households), their per-adult income level<sup>8</sup> is nearly the highest, exceeded again only by the oldest households in the city. It stands at M.N.\$950. This increased per-adult income is reflected in the proportion of income spent on food--at 47%, it is the lowest of all the domestic types.<sup>9</sup>

These younger couples and singles were leaving school when Luis Echeverría came to power. His expansion of the government sector and inclusion of more of the private sector under the umbrella of the national social security commission have made it possible for a greater number of them to construct a life, or at least an income-generating strategy, which is qualitatively different from that of the other, older groups. How different this strategy is we shall see next when we look at the group which in many ways is the worst off--those couples who have at least one child under the age of five.

#### STAGE TWO: GROWING HOUSEHOLDS

The greatest proportion and number (46%: 683) of households is in stage two of the domestic cycle. With at least one child under age five, fertility is still incomplete and the family is in the process of growing--thus their designation as "growing households." Obviously, they are older (household head median age is 32), overwhelmingly nuclear (88%), and with but 6% matrilocal units among them. The modal household size is five people. Having split off from their family of orientation, these households are engaged in raising their children. They have gained independence, but not any new workers--quite the

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<sup>7</sup>The worker-dependency ratio is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Number of non-workers in household}}{\text{Number of workers}}$$

<sup>8</sup>What we are referring to here is more precisely a per-adult-equivalent income level. All children under the age of 15 were counted as one-half an adult, while children 15 and over were considered full adults. A complete explanation of the rationale for this index appears in chapter 7.

<sup>9</sup>This figure is arrived at by taking the following ratio

$$\frac{\text{Median expenses for food}}{\text{Median household income}}$$

contrary, as we shall see below when we note the very high measures of dependency in these households.

For the typical heads of growing households, educational achievements are dramatically lower than for their younger neighbors, as low as for the oldest people in the city. The typical educational level for this group is a mere grade-five completion. Since their median age is only six years older than the childless couples and singles, this drop from some secondary education to a failure to complete primary is drastic. This may reflect their more rural origins; 49% of the younger group were born in a city, but only 40% of this group were.

### Housing Conditions

Housing conditions of the growing households were judged worse than those of other types of households by the social worker-interviewers, who were themselves familiar with the types of houses they visited because they had lived in similar housing. The proportion of jacalitos<sup>10</sup> is higher (at 24%) than for any group, and the frequency of tar paper roofs highest (at 20%), while the frequency of windows is below average. The proportion of houses with masonry construction is about the same as for the whole city.

### Economic Conditions

The heads of growing households are more frequently to be found in the blue-collar, or obrero, job category<sup>11</sup> than those at any other stage of the life cycle. While they are not the least well-represented in the empleado category, they are not so well represented as either stage one or stage three.

These households show the lowest frequency of second workers in the sample--a reflection of the bias against working mothers and wives in Mexico. Only 16% of the households in this category have second workers. Third and fourth workers are least frequent in this stage: third workers are found in only 4% of the households, fourth workers

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<sup>10</sup>A category of housing well-understood by all Mexicans. A jacalito is essentially a shack of whatever description; materials may consist of cane, thatch, wattle and daub, tar paper, thin sheets of otherwise useless scrap wood (obtained in Oaxaca at the local plywood factory), or any manner of scavenged goods. Needless to say, they offer only the most tenuous protection from the elements.

<sup>11</sup>Obreros are the unskilled and semi-skilled laborers in the construction, manufacturing, and extractive industries of the city. The greatest number are in construction.

in 2%. They have almost the largest families--a mean of 5.9 members--at the same time that they have the lowest number of workers (a mean of 1.3 per household), except for the oldest households.

Thus, households with growing families are almost the worst off in the city so far as their economic welfare is concerned. This is not the fault of the head of the household. Earning M.N.\$2360 a month, he is second from the top of the five household types, and his work is only marginally less stable than that of the youngest householders. His household's low economic status derives from the fact that there are so few workers and so many dependents. The dependency ratio is at 4.0--the highest in the sample--because of the small number of workers.

As a result, household income slips to the second lowest level of the city (only the elderly are lower) at M.N.\$2444, and per-adult income in corresponding fashion is second from the bottom at M.N.\$640.

Expenses are very high for this group. Sixty percent of their household income is spent for food, a nearly intolerably high figure.

We might emphasize here that even at this early stage of our discussion it begins to be apparent that the key to domestic economic development is workers. For 95% of the people whom we are studying, it is almost impossible to raise oneself up the economic scale by getting a better job at higher wages. Fixed educational levels on the part of the household head and a depressed wage scale (even the city government does not always pay minimum wages) make it difficult to find new employment in a better-paying position. And for the most part, the income from the "better" jobs is only marginally higher than for the lower-scale jobs. The successful household deploys "warm bodies" into the employment market, where they may earn close to what the household head makes and much more than the marginal salary increase the head could get by changing positions. These growing households, however, cannot take part in this strategy. Their children are too young to make significant contributions; and a prejudice against women in the work force, in particular, married women with children, combined with the real need for having the mother at home when the household type is nuclear, converge to exclude these women from the work force. These growing households will not be able to breathe at all easily until the children can go to work.

The contrast between the households in the first stage and those in the second is quite stark--it is the contrast between the traditional strategy of having many children, marrying young, low investment in education, high dependency ratios, and retention of the mother in the home instead of in the work force, as contrasted with the pattern of the younger households, different in every way from what we have just described. The younger people are certainly family oriented; the majority are living with their parents and supporting them. But they have postponed marriage and family for an "unnatural" number of years; they are only six years younger than their successors in the domestic cycle.

There are almost five times as many households in stage two as in stage one. It is still too early to say whether those young people who are staying at home, supporting their parents, working at government jobs, abstaining from getting married and having children are the wave of anyone's future. But we have ample reason to hope that the present parents of growing households will be the last cohort of young Mexicans to live in such poverty and reproduce so richly that the pattern of partial development will continue as it has from the revolutionary period to the present day. Their childless counterparts represent, at the least, a new adaptation, and one that bodes well for the future of the Republic.

### STAGE THREE: WHEN FERTILITY IS COMPLETE

Households in the third stage of the domestic cycle (fertility completed, children growing up) are those who either have members entering the labor force at the present time, or will have within the next few years. The changing age structure of these households can be seen in the increased (median) number of people in the age class of the economically active;<sup>12</sup> 3.1, as against the 2.2 of the two previous stages. These households are in a critical stage of development because decisions are being made that will affect the children (and the nation) for the coming generation. The expenses of the children, compared to their earnings, are as large as they will ever be. During these years households must make decisions about how their children will be educated (secondary school? preparatory? technical?) and whether the household will be able to sustain the increasing expense associated with each step of the post-primary education process.<sup>13</sup> The poorer families at this stage who elect to withhold their children from

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<sup>12</sup>The economically active age group is defined as including all individuals from age 15 to age 60. These are the cut-off points used by both the Organization of American States and by the United Nations.

<sup>13</sup>We are not considering that a child's education becomes the focus of an important decision until he or she is advanced in primary school. There are several reasons for this. First of all, primary education is included in the household budget as a matter of course. Young children do go to school in Mexico. There is a tremendous commitment on the part of the parents and the communities to primary education--and it works. Not that all children go to school all the time, and not that all parents believe that all children should go to school all the time. Children are routinely withheld from school when they are needed for looking after sick siblings, when important errands need to be run, or when their mother wants them to accompany her on some long-distance trip.

And expenses are low in primary school, except in those regions or towns where a school superintendent or school master insists on paramilitary uniforms and the like. Free books and supplies are provided; neither tuition nor fees are charged; and the only time the

the labor market will be making a very great sacrifice indeed, and one that will never benefit them except vicariously in the improved conditions for the children's families after they leave their present household.

The educational level of the household head is a little lower than that of the heads of growing households. They are older (median age, 43), and their families are overwhelmingly independent and nuclear (83%), but with a growing incidence of matrifocality (15%). There are 422 such households, 29% of the sample.

### Housing Conditions

In these households with older children, we see a change for the better in the style of housing. The mother has been freed from constant child care and has found a job; and the physical dimensions of the house are growing. Floor area increases from 38 to 48 square meters, with more rooms than the previous group enjoyed (median 2.6, compared to 2.0), and a higher proportion of permanent construction material (88%, compared to 72%). It is clear that by now the system of auto-construction used by most Mexican households (even those of middle-level government employees with fairly substantial incomes), in which building is done a little at a time as savings and free capital permit, has begun to pay off.

These households and those in the previous group cannot make major investments during the years when they are raising and educating their children. They simply do what they can with the little free capital available to them. Major lump-sum investments (such as moving to a government complex, adding a new room all at once, or laying a tile floor) must wait until the children are out of school and have gone to work.

### Economic Conditions

The level of employment for these households is very high: 98% of the household heads reported being currently employed. Job stability is down slightly compared to the younger groups, but by an insignificant 2%.

The kinds of jobs held by the head of household are the same as for the previous group (they have 5% fewer blue-collar workers;

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average parent has to pay money for the child is at school opening and closing, when new clothing is provided. Much of this clothing would have to be provided in any case.

The expenses rise sharply when the child enters secondary school, however. And the opportunity costs rise when the child turns 14 or 15-- that is, when he or she can consider getting a job. We tend to think of the decision node as occurring then.

otherwise, there is virtually no variation). But there is a significant change in the contributions of second workers to the household budget. The number of workers per household has increased almost half a worker to a mean of 1.7, and the proportion of households having second workers has increased 17% to 33%. The second workers in these households have good jobs. They are concentrated (46%) in the empleado class, and their contribution to the household income has risen M.N.\$380 per month to M.N.\$1567. As a result, total household income has risen about M.N.\$100 to M.N.\$2522.

Having the same kind of jobs is not the only way these older parents are similar to the younger parents just discussed. In some respects they are "suffering" in not dissimilar ways. True, the number of workers has risen and the worker-dependency ratio has consequently dropped by over half a person, to a mean of 3.4. But household size has remained quite high (at a mean of 6.0), and--this is crucial--the children are growing up and costing much more. They are beginning to be counted as full adults. This group has far and away the highest number of adult-equivalent units--a mean of 4.7 as opposed to 4.1 for households with small children. As a result, their per-adult incomes have dropped to the lowest of all at M.N.\$600, and the proportion of their incomes spent for food has risen above high level of the previous group--about 63% of their incomes.

The household is well developed by this stage--children are married, and some of the household heads are grandparents. One can begin to see the beginnings of a solution to their problems of economic deprivation emerging along the lines that the more desperate situation of the younger households suggested. They are putting more workers into the work force--children, as well as wives who, freed from the burdens of child and house care, are going back to work. The number of households having at least three workers has increased from 4% to 16%.

The burdens of dependency are still heavy, the expenditures for the minimum necessities of life are still high, but there is the beginning of a solution which, for some at least, will be realized in the next household stage when all children have come of working age and can contribute to the household budget, and when the household begins to shuck off some of the older, married children.

#### STAGE FOUR: THE YEARS OF REWARD

The fourth stage includes households where the children are all grown and able to contribute to the household budget. The number of economically active household members increases from 3.1 in the former stage to 3.6. Most of the important decisions about the children's future have been made by now. The children are either in school, or working and planning to get married. They are living with the family and sharing household expenses. There are 155 households of this type in the sample, or 11%.

### Housing Conditions

In form their houses are much like those of the previous group. By now 71% of the households have built permanent dwellings. The houses are bigger; they have increased in floor area from 48 to 60 square meters. The number of rooms in the houses has increased from 2.6 to 2.9. Concrete construction is being increasingly favored: 61% of the households, compared to 54% of the previous group, live in concrete-walled houses. Forty-three percent of the houses have glass windows, the highest proportion of the different domestic cycle stages. Savings are clearly being amassed and invested in housing.

Households in this stage of development tend to live in the better areas of the city. They founded the colonias that have now risen in the economic scale, and therefore we find them very frequently in the better-off colonias populares.

The households are much smaller (modally three members), heads are older (at a median of 52 years); households are still predominantly nuclear (68%), but with a continuing increase (now at 18%) in the incidence of matrifocal organizations.

### Economic Conditions

These are the "years of reward" for a hard life. Now the children who stay at home are contributing much more to the well-being of the household. Household heads and their spouses who have been toiling in the unsalaried sector of the economy all their lives are consolidating their success and moving into entrepreneurial roles and becoming owners of small businesses. The number of such job classifications rises sharply in this group: 12% of the household heads are owner/professionals, half again as many as in any other household type. Second workers in the household--a wife or a child--have gone into a business or petty commercial enterprise as well. Fifty-three percent of the households have second workers, thus increasing their incomes and reducing their dependency ratios dramatically. Job stability has remained at its fairly high level, with 71% reporting they have held their job for a year or more.

The degree to which the contribution of second workers raises the economic level at this stage can be seen in the fact that the median income of the household head is down some M.N.\$350, putting it at the same level as the youngest people in the city. But the contribution of the second worker has increased M.N.\$400 to M.N.\$1964, which has in turn increased total household income almost M.N.\$500 to M.N.\$3011.

Incomes are higher, then, and dependency is lower. There is now a mean of only 1.8 non-workers for every worker--half what there were in the former group. The number of workers per household has increased to the highest it will ever be, a mean of 2.0 workers per household. As a result, per-adult income has risen M.N.\$125 to

M.N.\$725, an increase of 20% in this crucial measure. Household size is lower than it was at other periods when a complete family lived in the same household; the mean is 4.8 members.

As a result, the proportion of income spent on food is lower than for the previous two household types, indicating there is more disposable income as well as more net income for this type of household.

Households in the fourth stage of development are as well off as they will ever be. These are the years of most vigorous commercial and work activity. They are the years when the investment that one has made in one's family pays off. Thirty-five percent of the households in this group have workers both in the formal and informal sectors of the economy. Typically, the father or mother is working at an unsalaried job, but the parents have invested enough money in their children's education so that these children can get a salaried position as empleados. How long this period lasts depends a great deal on the parents' persuasive skills at keeping their children close to them. If they get along well with their children and can endow one child with an inheritance, then they will not be bereft and can live out their years with their grandchildren around them. After all, children, as it is well known and agreed to by all, are the sole obligated source of security and support for parents in their old age. Children should remain at their parents' side and bury them with sadness and respect. Ultimogeniture, the practice whereby the youngest son stays in the house and receives the inheritance, is an old tradition in all of Mesoamerica.

But the tradition is breaking down. Children do not always appreciate the great sacrifices of their parents, nor do they adhere to their duty the way they should. Sometimes the children will hive off. Some will emigrate to Mexico City and never be heard from again. Others will move away and attend their parents fitfully, on saint's days and fiestas. Some parents will be left to themselves, partly by preference, partly against their will. It is their situation which we next examine.

#### STAGE FIVE: THE YEARS ALONE

The final stage occurs when the children move out and leave their parents; and when one dies, the survivor will move in with one of the children. Obviously, the heads of household are older (median age 62 years). The modal number of members is now down to two, and 31% are headed by women. The median number of household members in the economically active age group has dropped to .29. These households comprise 5% of the sample, 76 households in all.

#### Housing Conditions

As a reflection of the age of these households, one finds a higher frequency of the traditional adobe house (27%) as compared to

12% in the previous group). Only the growing households have as high a proportion of earthen floors (35% for them, 32% for the older households). The houses of these old couples and singles are small in floor area (37 square meters), and the number of rooms at their disposal is similarly reduced in number (though there are not so few as stage two households have) to 2.3. They have fewer concrete constructions (only 45% have them) and more tin roofs than any other household type; and in general, their houses are most comparable to those of households in the first stage of development.

Since these households are poorer, we find them more in the poorer popular colonias than the previous households. These older households are slightly underrepresented in the well-established colonias populares, but they have managed to secure lots in the site-and-service projects even more successfully than the households with working children.

### Economic Conditions

Half the household heads do not have steady employment. The largest proportion of household heads are empleados, but they are down to about one third of the group. The education level of the older group is very low, and even the empleado jobs here are low prestige--sanitation worker, sweeper, janitor, and the like. The next greatest proportion work in the service sector as lowly paid domestics in private homes or small tourist businesses. Second workers in these families are very rare; only 11 out of the 76 households report them.

This group is lowest of the five household types on almost all income and dependency variables, as one might expect. The median income of the head of household is down M.N.\$250, at its lowest level. The total household income is last by about M.N.\$600, at M.N.\$1798, just at minimum salary. The number of workers in the household averages 1.0, and the number of dependents in the house is (by definition) so low as to produce a deflated worker-dependency measure of 0.9. The average household has just over two members (a mean of 2.2).

Not all these people are bereft and unfortunate. Some are well off and living in middle-class retirement. And not all older people are in this kind of household either. After all, some have managed to keep their earnings up--ahead of their children's--and are still enjoying the relative prosperity of the previous household stage. Still others have lost their spouse and have given a place to the married or unmarried children, who have taken over the role of the household head in the family. These we encountered in the first stage of domestic development--the children who were heads in their parents' household. A culture-bound sympathy for the plight of the old, derived from the callous treatment they receive in American or Canadian society, should not induce us to assume that older Oaxacans must submit to this "nursing-home," anti-old-people mentality. The Mexican society may be young and energetic, but it does not abandon its old people. There are still strong cultural and social pressures to respect old age and to

repay one's parents for the inevitable (culturally defined) "suffering" one has caused them. Often children have moved away, to be sure, but many do not move very far away. They may be in the next block or in the next colonia.

It was the oldest living people's parents who deserve our sympathy, if it is at all appropriate. They raised their children traditionally in the countryside to be subsistence corn farmers, peones, or jornaleros ("day workers"). But they moved away. Seventy percent of this older group were born in the countryside and moved to the city. Their ties to their parents were necessarily less close than their own children's to them.

Still, the durability of family and kinship ties in the Mexican social system cannot be taken as an excuse to evade the necessary reforms of the economic system and the system of social security. More than we can imagine, these older people (and their families) are at the mercy of illness and catastrophe and the financial ruin, or more likely, death that they entail. They do not go to hospitals for treatment, after all. They cannot afford hospitals if they do not have the benefits that come from a salaried job, with perhaps a pension besides. The doctors are quite right. The elderly ill wait and wait. Their families delay and delay until the patient is too advanced in illness to recover. They go to the hospital to die.

These were the people who were born at the time of the Mexican Revolution. They were the children of the generation of the "golden ones," but rural reforms came too late to give them the education needed in a new society. The advantages and opportunities afforded by the revolutionary governments have forever remained beyond their grasp.

#### FINAL OBSERVATIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

We will first summarize the data on the domestic cycle in the city of Oaxaca and then see what recommendations we can give to the householders of Oaxaca.

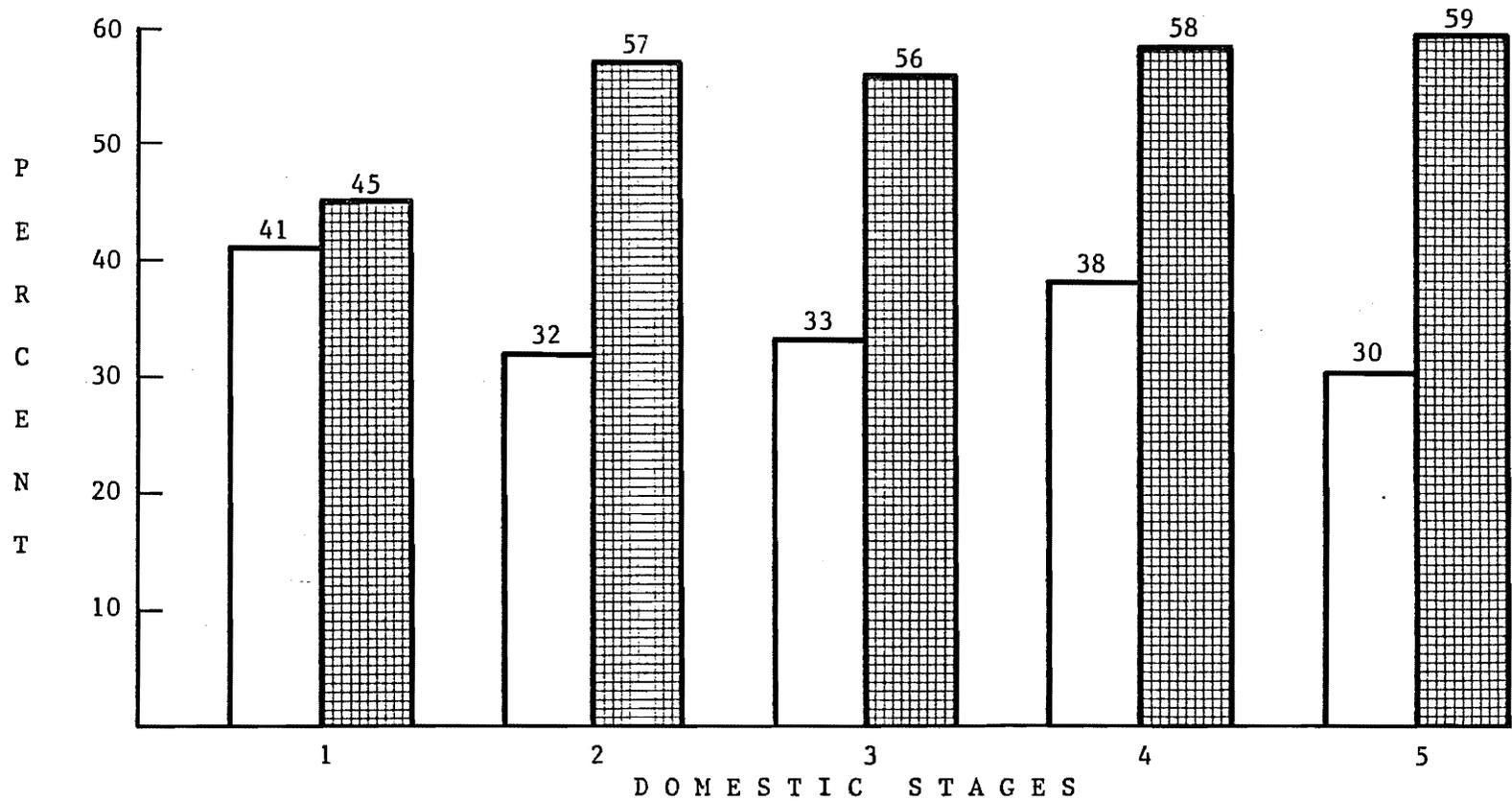
#### Origins and Population Makeup

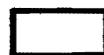
While as a group household heads were predominantly born in the villages and ranchos of Mexico, a greater proportion (41%) of the youngest ones now originate in the city of Oaxaca (Figure 3.1). And as was noted earlier, the large influx of rural migrants to the city has created an urban mass of sufficient size so that the present population increase is due primarily to internal growth rather than migration.

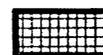
Another indicator of the changing nature of the city population is that the majority of the households of Oaxaca are native to the city;

FIGURE 3.1

PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS BORN AND HOUSEHOLDS FORMED  
IN THE CITY OF OAXACA FOR EACH DOMESTIC CYCLE STAGE



 = Household Heads Born in the City

 = Households Formed in the City

that is, most (56%) were formed there. This majority holds across all domestic cycles save the young households of stage one, 55% of which were formed outside the city. The very small differential between proportions of household heads born in the city and households formed in the city, taken together with the very small proportion of single households in the population, is a clear indication of the fact that Oaxaca is not attracting young single males to the city in search of jobs, as has been reported for industrial cities of Latin America and Africa (Schmink 1979). Despite the fact that a majority of stage one households are headed by people who are not married, these people did not come to Oaxaca alone; they came with other family members, usually their parents. Since their arrival, the children have become employed in more remunerative positions and have replaced their parents as the primary breadwinners for the household.

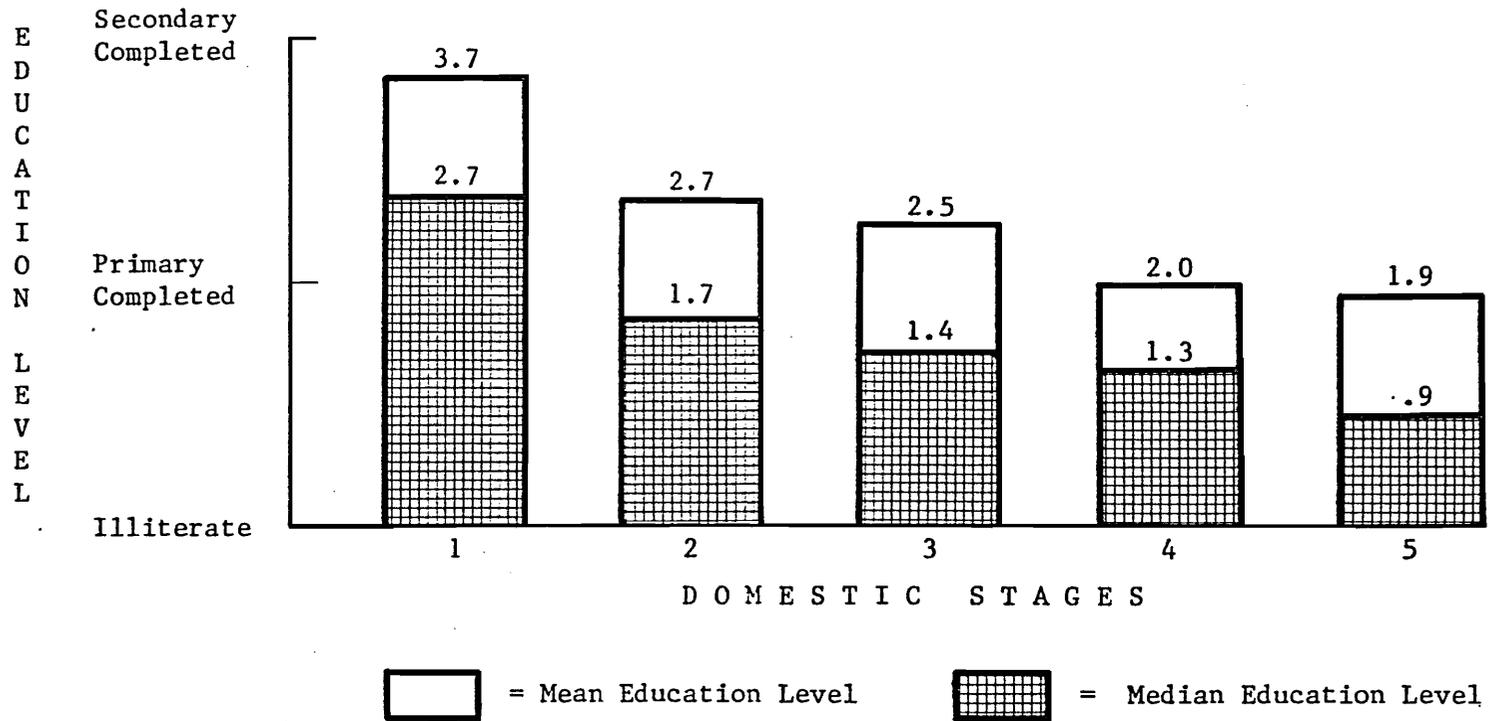
### Educational Levels

Obviously, household heads get older as they pass through the domestic cycle, and as a result, education levels decline simply because there was not much opportunity for education when the older householders were young. Educationally, household heads are ill-prepared for participation in an advanced industrial economy of the kind Mexico wishes to develop. Half have not completed primary school; another 20% have no more than a primary education. This low educational level reflects heavily on the types of jobs and incomes these individuals can aspire to.

One hopeful sign is that increased educational levels are associated with the youngest household heads in the domestic cycle (Figure 3.2). They are the only group which has a median educational level of some secondary education. All others have failed to complete primary school. This is a reflection both of the fact that a larger portion of the young household heads have been raised in an urban environment with increased educational opportunities and also of the fact that Mexico's past efforts to bring schools to all the rural areas of the country finally are paying off. The importance of this higher level of education for the head of household will become apparent when we look at the importance of household heads' education in determining the strategies available to a household as it attempts to raise its per-adult-equivalent income levels.

FIGURE 3.2

MEAN AND MEDIAN EDUCATION LEVELS ATTAINED BY HOUSEHOLD HEADS  
IN EACH STAGE OF THE DOMESTIC CYCLE



### Incomes

Juxtaposing income data on household heads, second workers, and total households points out the importance of some of the factors already mentioned in raising a household's level of income (Figure 3.3). Most salient is the effect of the rising income level of the second worker as households pass through the domestic cycle. Second workers in households with young children contribute by far the least to the household's budget. There are few older children who may be employable, few extended households in which an extra adult can either work or care for the home so that the wife will be free to seek employment herself. Finally, the demands on the women of these households rarely allow them the option of working without help in the house (though remarkably, a few do--working all day as maids in a well-to-do house, their small children with them, and coming home to wash clothes for their own household late at night). The strategy of trying to raise the number of workers in the household (as we have seen) and to increase their income-producing capacity becomes clear in stage three households, when most children are school-aged. At this point some of the conditions that mitigated against households' having second workers have changed, and second workers are getting better employment, as well. By the time all children have reached a majority, households are deploying second workers into the labor force of the city who are doing almost as well as the household heads; the result is the highest median income in the city.

In contrast to the rising levels of income for second workers, the incomes of household heads are fairly level as households move through the domestic cycle. This is because income is affected by two confounding factors: the time a person has been working in Oaxaca tends to raise his or her income, while the depressed levels of education in the older households tend to keep heads out of the better-paying occupations.

### Expenses

The expenses of the household are remarkably stable across the stages: food expenses, for example, hover around a median of M.N.\$1500 until the household splits up and the older people are left alone, when it falls. Payments, health expenses, and utility bills are all almost identical for all the domestic stages, strongly implying that people spend only as much as they have to, and not a penny more, to maintain themselves. Table 3.2 presents expenses data.

FIGURE 3.3

MEDIAN MONTHLY INCOMES OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS, SECOND WORKERS,  
AND TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS FOR EACH DOMESTIC CYCLE STAGE

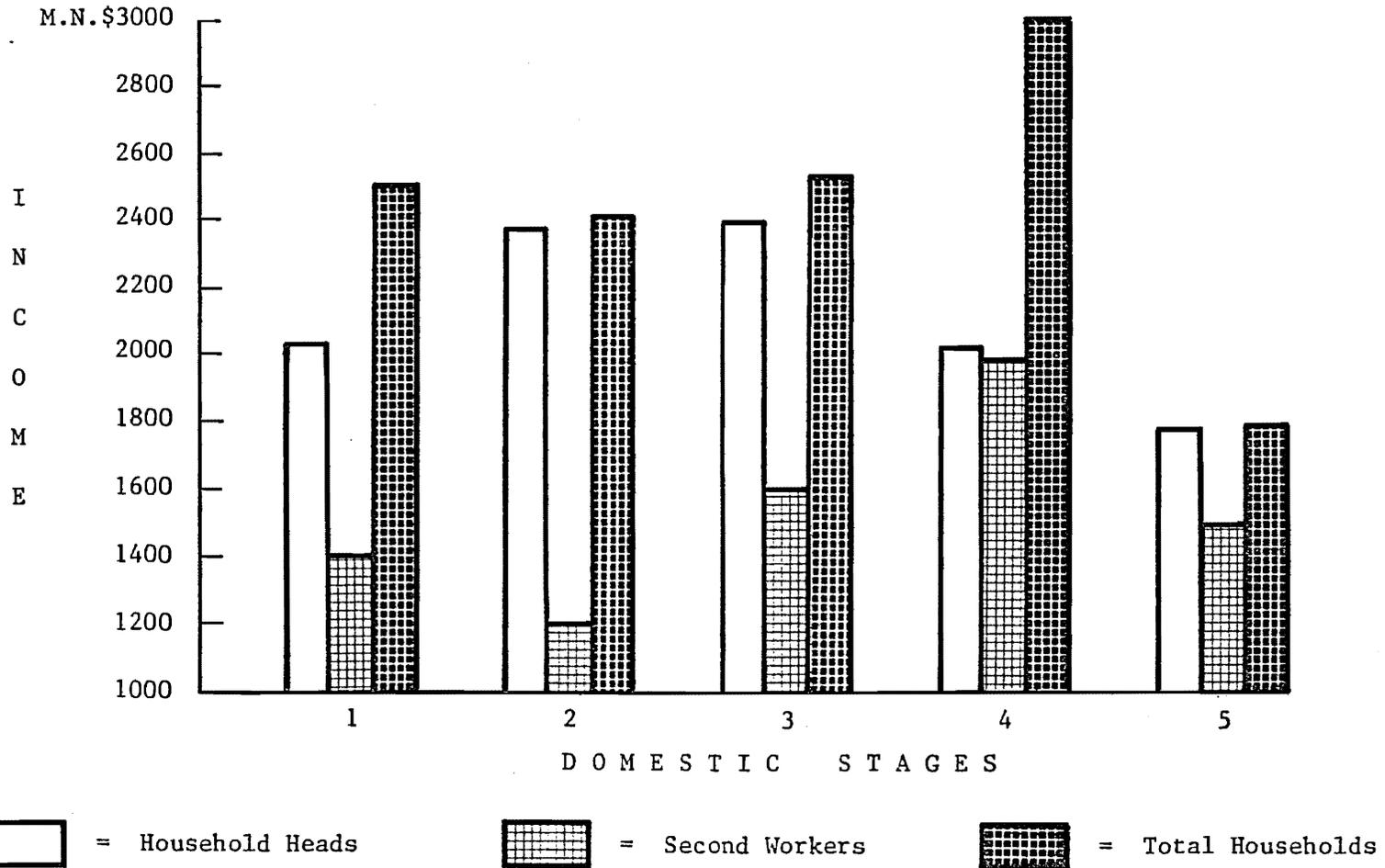


TABLE 3.2

MEDIAN MONTHLY EXPENDITURES FOR SELECTED ITEMS BY HOUSEHOLDS  
IN THE FIVE DOMESTIC CYCLE STAGE

EXPENSE	EXPENSITURES				
	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
Food	M.N.\$1202	M.N.\$1499	M.N.\$1599	M.N.\$1501	M.N.\$ 902
Fuel	48	48	48	48	48
Water*	13	14	14	15	20
Electricity*	38	44	50	58	33
Health*	200	150	100	200	160
Payments*	248	200	160	250	102

\*For these expenses, figures are median for those reporting expenditures.

### Household Size

Household size, as would be expected, follows an inverted "U" curve. Stage three households, where the children are growing up and fertility is complete, are the largest, while stages one and five, where no children are present, are naturally much smaller (Figure 3.4).

### Extended Households

Sixty-four percent of the households in the first stage of development are extended, but this high proportion is in some sense an artifact of the form of classification. That high figure states that there are a large proportion of young people who are living at home but making the highest salary in the household. Thus, we can state that 24% of the households in this stage are headed by women without implying that we are observing matrifocal households of the kind found in the Caribbean area, the Moynihan report, or Tally's Corner. The proportion of extended households in this sense is quite constant over the other stages of the domestic cycle (Figure 3.5).

### Policy Recommendations

So far as policy recommendations are restricted to a consideration of household policy and domestic cycle, they must be abbreviated. Here we will not anticipate the recommendations in the final part of the report which will incorporate this analysis and, more importantly, the economic analysis.

Oaxaca is a family town. There is no place in it for singles or for older, aging couples (and less so for aging singles). The very small proportion of aging couples, 50% of whom have fully-employed workers still productive, shows the degree to which the kinship principles are being honored and are effectively ordering people's lives.

FIGURE 3.4

MEAN HOUSEHOLD SIZE FOR EACH STAGE OF THE DOMESTIC CYCLE

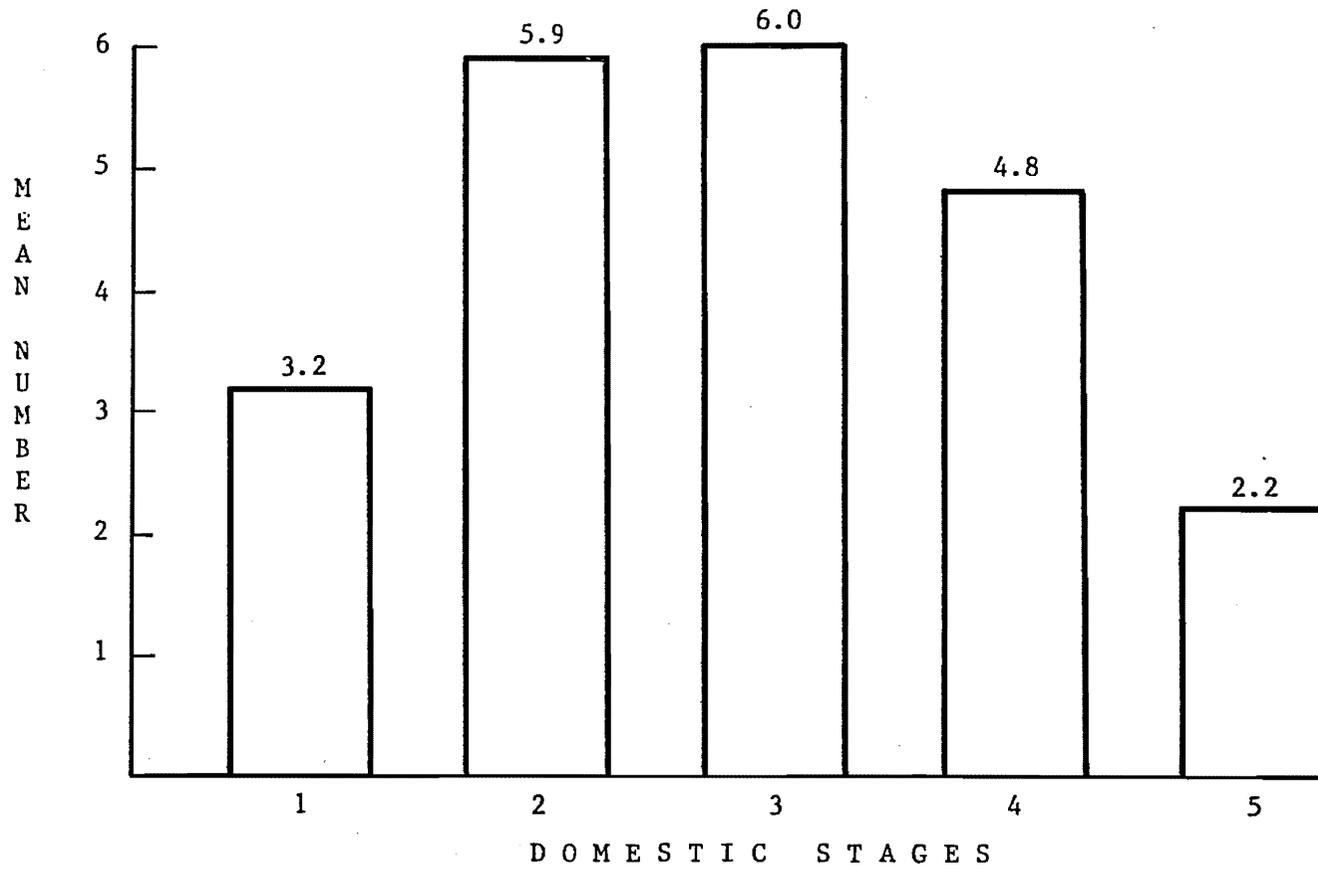
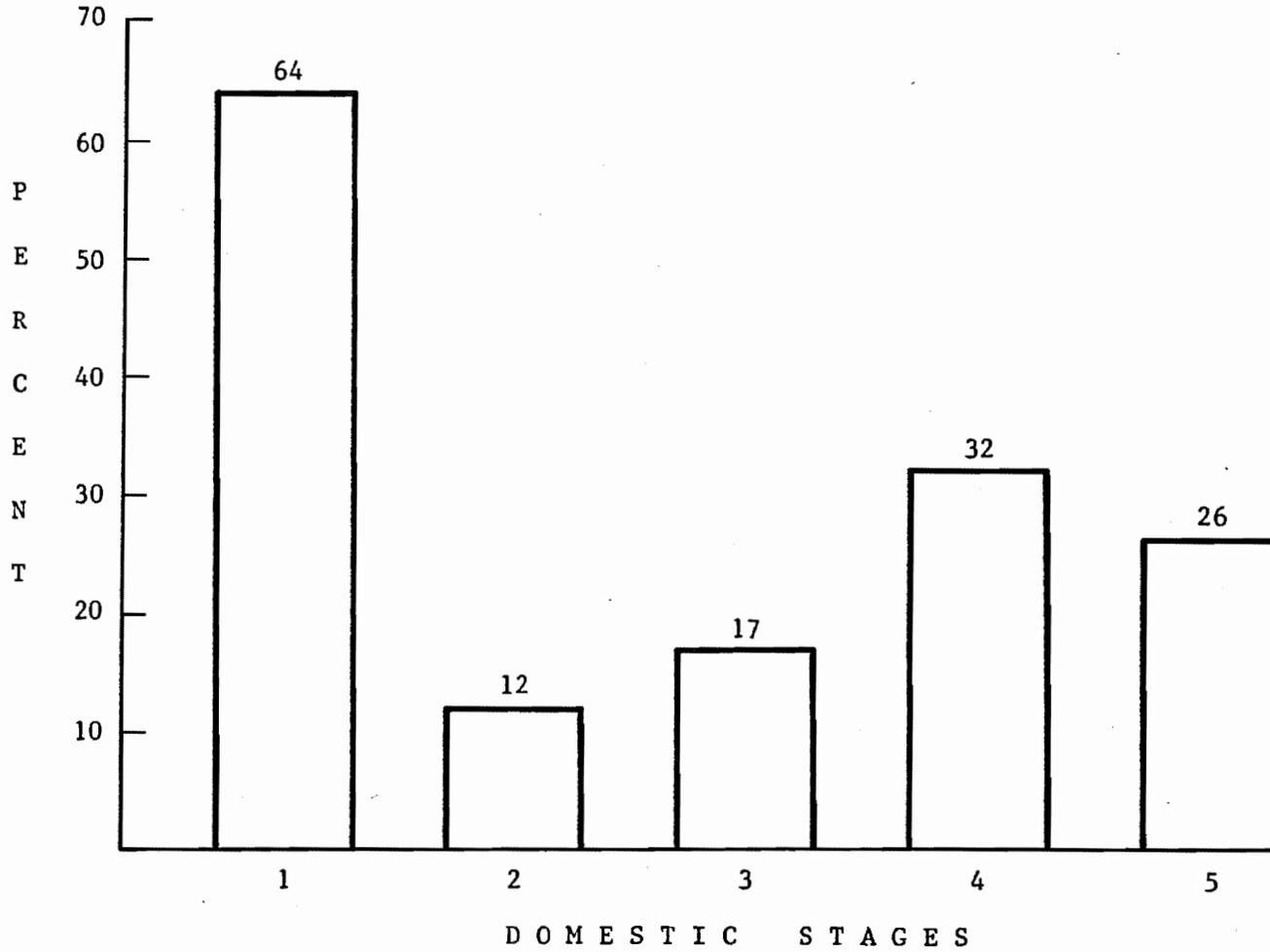


FIGURE 3.5

PERCENT OF EXTENDED HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH STAGE  
OF THE DOMESTIC CYCLE



It is important, then, to keep one's family together. But this is not easy. Much anthropological work has been carried out in the villages on the problems of keeping the family together. We know, for example, how parents arrange marriages for their children, how they manipulate bride price payments and groom price exemptions, negotiate with in-laws, and make side payments to parents who are losing the labor of their children, and how a web of debts is piled up that ensures the loyal service of one's children for the first years of their marriage. It is an effective system for building durable extended families, and it works because all the conniving and negotiating is carried out within the framework of a system of jural rules and customs that emphasize the propriety of patrilocal post-nuptial residence--that is, cultural practices that favor the residence of a bride with her husband's parents. We also know how both the tradition of ultimogeniture and the negotiation and manipulation of the family inheritance can be used to make it very profitable for the children to stay with their parents and support them. We know as well how the atmosphere and morals of the village operate to laud children who do this, and how these children are accorded prestige and acclaim for their pietas.

But we do not know how it works in the city. We do know that the moral framework, or set of rules, that makes the system so effective in the village is not as strong, if it is even present in the city. We know that parents do not have the resources to work with and manipulate during their negotiations: There is no land, for example, that can reasonably be given as a reward to the child who stays behind. Certainly, there is no elaborate system of prestations that immures a couple in a marriage contract arranged by and for their parents, as there is in the village. And children in the city, particularly educated children, have options that they simply do not have in the village--all of which include the ability to live in freedom apart from their parents.

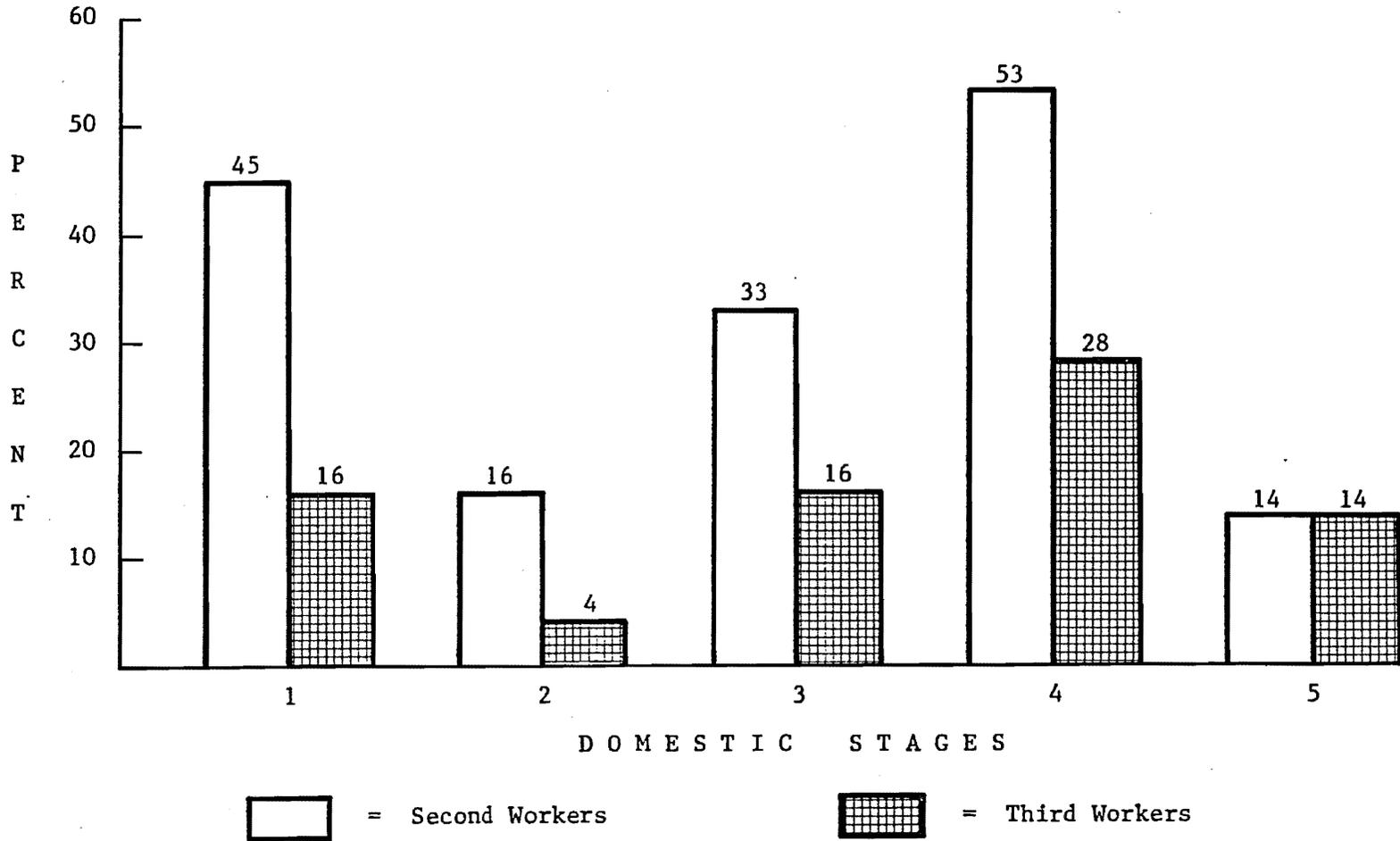
Even so, the evidence is clear that the household must be kept together. If one can keep the household together, or if the household can keep itself together, then the fifth stage of the domestic cycle can be bypassed; and the maturer years will be spent in a gradual transition from the "years of reward" to the years in which one's child takes over the major earning burden of the family and one slowly retires.

From the point of view of this analysis of the domestic cycle, the most important policy that can be recommended is one of entering early into the fourth stage and staying there as long as one can.

There is no magic to the fact that stage four households are the best off in the city. They have the highest incomes, as we have seen. And they have them because they have deployed more workers into the work force than any other type of household. Over half the households in these years have second workers contributing earnings to the budget, and a quarter have third workers--far and away the greatest proportion in the sample (Figure 3.6).

FIGURE 3.6

PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH STAGE OF THE DOMESTIC CYCLE  
WITH SECOND AND THIRD WORKERS



And one should not think these households are better off than the others because all the children have stayed at home. There has been a selection process at work, the ethnographic details of which we know very little, either here in the city or in the village. Since remittances do not constitute a part of the average household's budget (94% of the households report they receive none), we are satisfied it is unlikely that households choose to send members out to earn money for the house.<sup>14</sup> We believe that probably a decision, mutually agreeable to all parties, is taken that some members would be better off outside the house. Household size is reduced and thereby becomes more "efficient." This "efficiency" is shown in the reduced ratio of workers to dependents in these stage four households, which, 1.8 dependents for each workers, is sharply down from the previous stage (Figure 3.7).

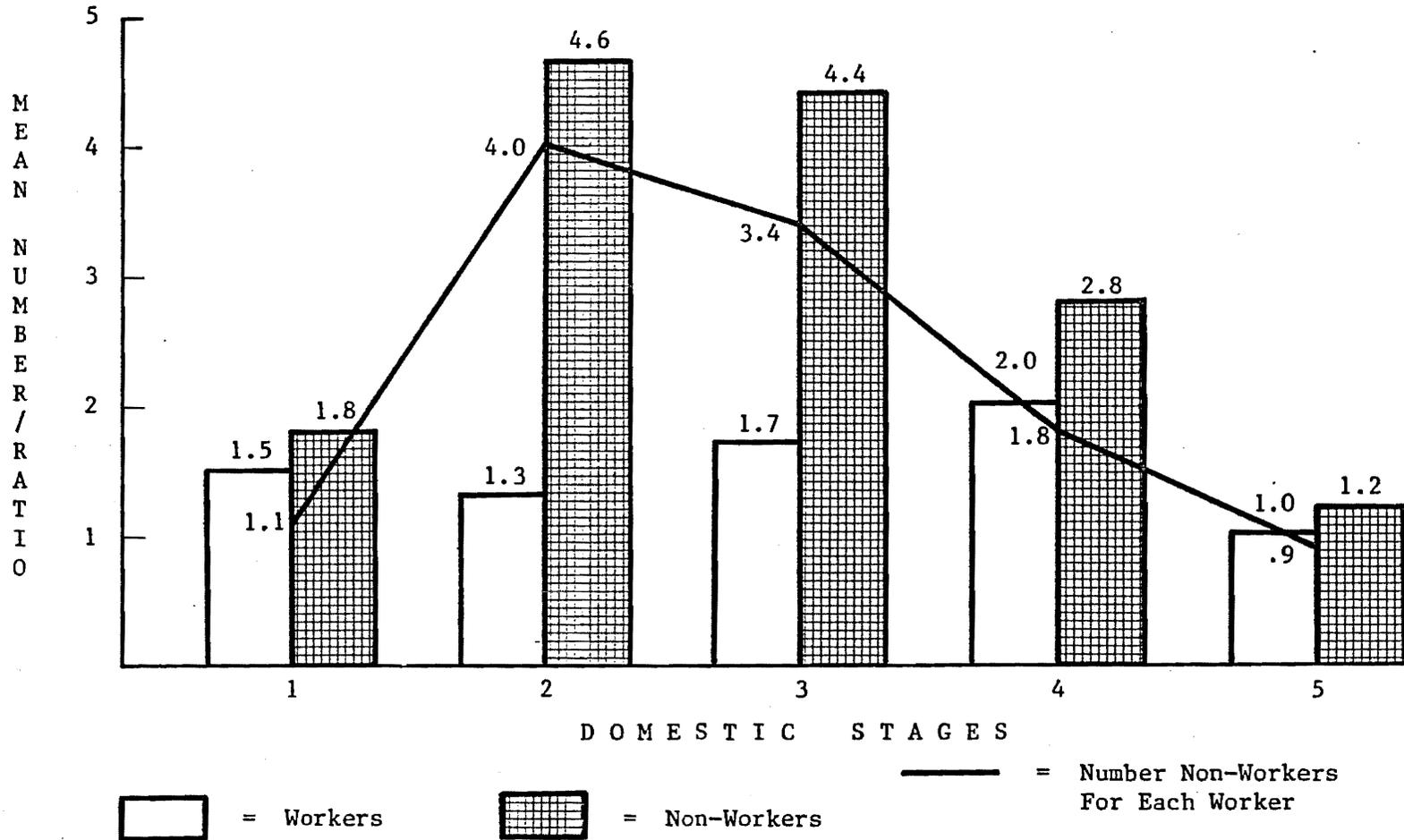
This policy recommendation has some implications, however, that will go against the grain of the individual. Keeping the household together in Oaxaca means ensuring that they are content with the job opportunities that exist there. For anyone with any education, this means contentment with a government job, since the state and federal governments are by far the largest employers of educated workers. If the rate of job creation in government slows down (as it must), households will have a difficult time keeping educated members at home. They will wish to emigrate, as many do already, to Mexico City and other industrial and commercial centers. So the future of Oaxaca depends either on a reduction of the educational levels of its young people (which would be a disaster on many grounds), or on an increase in government employment (and the present rate can hardly be sustained), or, finally, on some other source of jobs. Oaxaca must be further developed as a commercial center; and in addition, industrial development must take place. If it does not, the stable, family-oriented society of the seventies which has managed to persist despite great poverty and suffering will be changed or jeopardized.

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<sup>14</sup>This is not true in all parts of Mexico. Households, for example, in the state of Tlaxcala have been studied in which members commute to Mexico City, stay there during the week, and come home (with their pay) on the weekend. A. Palerm and his students at the Centro de Investigaciones Superiores have been studying this process in the Valley of Mexico for some time now. But in Oaxaca, absent family members contribute very little to the household.

FIGURE 3.7

MEAN NUMBER OF WORKERS AND NON-WORKERS AND MEAN WORKER-DEPENDENCY RATIOS  
FOR HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH DOMESTIC CYCLE STAGE



## Chapter Four

### GETTING ALONG IN THE CITY: CONDITIONS AND OPINIONS

There is no need in this report to re-examine the reasons why there have been such large migrations into the cities of Latin America in the period since the Second World War. Economies which were distorted into growth poles, themselves a product of dependency in a worldwide economic system, have brought about astonishing levels of city growth throughout Latin America. There are "push factors" aplenty, too. Rural hinterlands have become successively more and more impoverished, and land has been taken out of basic food production and put into cash crop production. National land reform programs have signally failed to raise the farming income of the rurally dispossessed. Rural small landholders in and around Oaxaca, for example, complain with reason that they are worse off now than they have ever been in their lives, including, for the oldest, since the Revolution. Public health conditions in the rural areas are simply appalling, as the live-born children fail to reach the age of five years. Today. 1978. Things are bad in the village. As Kappel and Selby (1978) have put it, the costs of village life are simply too high for anyone to bear. The city is far better from an economic, nutritional, and public health standpoint, as Graedon (1978) has recently shown. But there is more to the attractiveness of the city than that, as we shall see now, when we turn to an examination of city services and conditions and a discussion of the people's attitudes toward them.

#### JOBS

We were surprised to find the degree of employment stability among the city as a whole. Over 70% of the total population reported they had held the same job for at least a year. We found out in previous research that respondents were preoccupied with finding work, particularly in the unskilled categories, and were very adept at maintaining complex interpersonal networks of friends, neighbors, and kinfolk to secure information about new jobs. But we had no idea that employment was as stable as it turned out to be for the city as a whole.

Steady employment is the most important item in Oaxaqueños' rank-ordering of the prerequisites for "making it." It is the reason they give most frequently for coming to the city in the first place--63% give it as their motive for immigration. They will turn down (at least in principle) changes in their work situation in favor of keeping a steady job. Table 4.1 indicates the proportion of people desiring some change in their work situation: the vast majority want no change at all.

TABLE 4.1  
 PERCENTAGES OF RESPONDENTS WITH STATED DESIRES  
 FOR CHANGE IN THEIR WORK SITUATION

CHANGE DESIRED	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
Salary Increase	17.0%
Stability	7.8%
Higher Post	3.3%
Fringe Benefits	1.3%
Better Conditions	.6%
Other	3.8%
None	66.1%

N = 1,468

This antipathetic attitude toward energetic efforts at changing the economic conditions seems to be regarded as "rocking the boat" and probably underlies the repeated finding of Cornelius (1973) in Mexico which has been replicated by Dietz (1978) for Lima-Callao in Peru, that the urban poor are politically conservative and not revolutionary in any sense.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>We should explain here that we feel this result is about as fragile as a result can be and still be so widely found. Politicians of today can take heart from the conservative and stabilizing attitudes of the urban poor. Our feeling is, however, that a dramatic change could take place very quickly. We do not have any hard data to substantiate this feeling, but we have talked at some length to both rural villagers and city dwellers in the poorer colonias populares. In the past decade it seems that the poor in Oaxaca have begun to see that present economic arrangements do not favor them in the slightest. The students have been quite effective in helping people in the invasions not only to secure their house sites, but also to acquire city services for their colonias. They have also scored some significant victories over the local politicians. And the students are unabashedly proselytizing Marxists who are handed fresh ammunition daily by the middle and upper classes of Oaxaca. People seem to be listening, seeing, and understanding in a way that belies the picture of contentment always reported when attitude surveys are taken.

They are satisfied with the services they are provided with. As will be seen in the next section, their priorities and the order in which services are delivered by development agencies coincide almost perfectly.

### HOUSING

People move to Oaxaca for work. They move about within Oaxaca, once they have arrived and found work, in order to find themselves a decent site upon which to build a house. Sixty percent gave "purchase of home" as the reason for their last move within the city.

By and large, once again, they seem to rate their homes as adequate. Table 4.2 gives the proportions rating their home as "very good," "good," "O. K.," "bad," and "very bad." Only 13% rate their home as bad or very bad.

TABLE 4.2

PERCENTAGES OF RESPONDENTS RATING THEIR HOME  
IN CATEGORIES FROM EXCELLENT TO BAD

<u>RATING</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS</u>
Very Good	5.4%
Good	33.7%
O. K.	48.1%
Bad	11.3%
Very Bad	1.5%
<hr/>	
N = 1,456	

### WATER, SEWERS, AND ELECTRICITY

Though water supplies are not secured and although the major city sewer is open and dumps raw sewage into the Atoyac River--along which the city lies, in which people bathe and wash clothes, and from which some of them draw water for home consumption--the health dangers do not seem to excite much interest. Diseases are seen to come from God or are viewed in some other fatalistic fashion.

People are concerned about the availability of water. Half the households do not have water available to them either in the house or on the lot; they have to get it at the communal spout at the corner (where it may be available only at certain times during the day or week) or at the local water fountain. Two-thirds of the families do not have sewer service either, but have to throw their refuse into a vacant lot at the top of the hill, where they may also defecate.

Households do have electricity. Seventy-two percent report having it; and if we include those homes that do not have meters but tap a neighbor's line, the figure is closer to 85%.

### SCHOOLS

Primary schools consisting of grades one through six are available to Oaxaqueños at no cost in tuition or books. Well over half the population (64%) have to travel one kilometer or less to reach primary school. Education does not become a burdensome expense until secondary school. At this point, many parents wish their children, for economic reasons, to stop school and enter the labor market.

### TRANSPORTATION

Public transportation is readily available to Oaxaqueños, although the cost is rising (the price of a bus ride in the city doubled in 1977) and becoming a significant item in the household budget for the poorest families. But the cost of a city bus ride has not risen above a peso, though it took a student strike to keep it so. Most people do not spend more than two pesos daily to get to work, and most can walk to a nearby market, according to our survey results.

### ATTITUDE TOWARD DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF MODERNIZATION

The reigning attitude of "don't rock the boat" is to be found in the attitude of the people of Oaxaca toward development. They want no changes in their household situation (80%), except for the handful (10%) who want a greater degree of solidarity within the family unit--a prescription derived from and endorsed by the National Institute for the Protection of Children, duly promulgated. They want no change in their work situation--except for the rather bolder 17% who want a salary increase, as well they might.

A majority (57%) do not even want to make changes in their homes, reflecting their worry about any change being a change for the bad. Some (14%) would prefer a larger home, which is not surprising, since the most cramped quartile of the urban population live with their household in one 16-foot-by-16-foot room. A small minority (9%) would like to secure title to their home and house site, but this is only a third of the population that have irregular tenure.

Similarly, a minority modified their home in the last year (11%), although twice that number plan to do so this year. Many seem quite confident that no changes or improvements took place in their neighborhood in the past year, even when astonished city officials and development agents insisted that important changes had taken place. In one colonia sewers had been installed, but few of the inhabitants seemed aware of it. In another, a well had been dug and a water system begun, but this was not regarded as a change.

A minority (33%) want more utilities and services in their neighborhoods (sewers, electricity, water, better schools), but the majority (63%) want no change at all.

This resounding and repeated rejection of change or improvement of their situation contrasts with their vigorous efforts to improve their own situation--by migrating in the first place to find work, and then by moving around in the city to find a place to live (and a good investment in the one area where they have a chance for personal capital formation). This apparently irrational behavior is readily explained, however, and the explanation sheds a good deal of light on the urban poor's attitude towards urbanization and development.

#### RATIONALE FOR THE CONSERVATIVE VIEWPOINT AMONG THE URBAN POOR

The study of the values of rural and urban Oaxaqueños turned up one constellation shared by villager and poor urbanite alike: a desire for independency or autonomy--"getting the foreman off your ass," as it is indelicately phrased. Villagers say, "I know I should leave this place (the village), because it isn't good for me and my kids, but the only job I can get in the city means going to work every day and doing what somebody else tells me to do. I hate that. Here, if I feel like drinking and taking the day off, the only person I have to mind is my wife." Urbanites admire and envy people who are their own bosses, and show that they are willing to take a cut in their own already low standard of living to achieve that same measure of independence. Male sexual dalliance is coded in this same way. Having a mistress, or two, or a second wife is not an expression of one's sexual machismo, as is so often claimed by local people when they are boasting in a drinking group. Having mistresses and second wives is an expression of independence from the constraints imposed by nuclear family living in very close quarters under extreme domestic and economic demands. "You feel caged," as one man put it, "unless you can get away from that."

Libertad is the gloss that urbanites use. It is to be guarded. A development agency may come in and put in sewers and surface the roads, and the electricity or the public works commission a communal laundry--that's all right. All these things are going to cost more than one would want to pay for them, but they are useful appurtenances to modern life, even necessary to the city. One cannot be too careful about development agencies, however. They are like missionaries. They want you to live in some particular way. They send in social workers to change your diet and teach your wife how to sew. They ask you whether you would "like" to form self-help groups, get together with your neighbors and form cooperatives, choose your compadres from among your neighbors. They have a model of how you ought to live, and what is being rejected. LEAVE US ALONE is the message. We have paid enough for the small but material amount of progress that we have made. Now, please get out of our lives.

It is not surprising, then, that the development agency is careful to mimic the priorities of the people who listed the priorities of development in their terms in the following order.<sup>2</sup>

1. Steady work
2. A good house
  
3. Availability of water
4. Ownership of one's lot
5. Electricity
6. Political organization in colonia
7. Sewer service
  
8. Paved streets
9. Bus service in colonia
  
10. Privately owned car or motorcycle
11. Household appliances in house

The first group--house and work--are necessities. As was remarked above, and as every government official knows, tampering with housing rights is a sure-fire method of stirring up trouble. Equally, the surest road to political success lies in generating work and steady jobs--the most desirable item of all.

In the provision of local (infrastructural) services, we note a convergence of development agency policies and community interests. The order of emplacement in the colonias is consistent with the declared preferences: first put in the water supply, then electricity, and last, sewers. This is unfortunate since, while over 70% of the household have electricity and about 50% have water at least to their lot, only 30% have any type of sewer connection. Septic tanks are very rare. For the majority of the city, the great outdoors serves as the repository of human wastes and kitchen garbage. These may be deposited on a vacant lot, in the river bed--for as everyone knows, garbage will be carried away by the river when the rains come. Or they may simple be left where they fall--in a corner of one's yard or patio, which in any case the animals use--or if one must, on the streets of the city. After all, these things are part of life, and if they are not so pleasant, one nevertheless cannot afford to be too delicate about them.

And after all, even the sewer system of the city, which is designed to remove waste from the more affluent portions of the urban areas, simply dump the untreated human waste into the Atoyac River,

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<sup>2</sup>The items are grouped according to the breaks in the mean rank orderings.

where it further pollutes the drinking water of villages down stream. The result is that the dream of a secure water supply for the city or for the valley of Oaxaca is for the most part simply a dream.

Elevated rates of enteritic infections and diarrheal conditions, with concomitant higher incidence of protein-calories malnutrition, are direct results of this state of affairs. But as realistic politicians are aware, nobody can see a sewer, nobody moves up the governmental hierarchy for advocating their installation, and nobody is convinced of their benefits.<sup>3</sup> People will not even connect up to them if they are available because of the costs they involve. Electricity is visible, on the other hand, as is piped water.

The inclusion of the political organization at this level of priority is consistent with earlier remarks. Once one has the necessary services, one wants a political organization to perform the urgent task of keeping the government and the agency off one's back. The agency wishes to create a sense of community in the area where it works, since it is only when the community is self-sustaining that the agency's job will be complete. The community wishes to extract maximum benefit from the agency while complying with a minimum of demands.<sup>4</sup> Once again priorities converge.

The fourth cluster has to do with transportation. Paved streets come first, as anyone who has spent a rainy season in an unpaved section of town can readily understand. Even buses and large trucks get stuck in the mud, and that unavoidable activity--walking--is best not even thought about.

The last group are the personal items. They are important, to be sure, but not essential to a decent life. The data we cited from Aguilar Medina's survey of the inner city's style of furnishing is deceptive in the sense that although most people lack what we would consider adequate furniture, they do not seem to miss it so much as we might. People do not live as much in their houses as we do, for both climatic and cultural reasons. The inside of their house does not give them that same feeling of security that it gives us.

These are the priorities and attitudes of the people of Oaxaca. To some degree and for some people, their goals and aspirations

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<sup>3</sup>As one government functionary put it to Murphy, electricity is generally available to the people in large part because of its visibility. On the other hand, sewers, which are underground, cannot serve the important function of reminding people of the goodness of the party.

<sup>4</sup>For a discussion of this, see Stepick and Murphy (1977).

are immaterial. The material constraints upon their lives render unattainable a decent life for them and for their families. But we should not make the assumption that we are studying a homogeneous city--that all households shape their goals and adjust their responses in the same way. There is a good deal of variability in the city, its neighborhoods and living spaces. We next examine this variability by studying the way that the goals of the Oaxaqueños are approximated in different parts of the city and the different adaptive styles of the inhabitants.

## Chapter Five

### THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF OAXACA<sup>1</sup>

#### INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the study, project personnel, including social scientists, architects, engineers, and city planners, carried out an extensive tour of the city. All of the city's neighborhoods, or colonias, were visited. Observations were made, householders interviewed, local histories of the areas taken down, and maps drawn. On the basis of this information, the neighborhoods or living systems were differentiated in light of four different criteria: (1) the history and legal status of the colonia, (2) the economic potential or status of the households in the colonia, (3) the availability of urban services, and (4) the general quality of life in the colonia apart from purely economic and infrastructural considerations.

All neighborhoods were evaluated on these four dimensions and classified into eight living systems. They can be listed in order of desirability starting with the least desirable.

1. Invasions
2. Colonias populares with very low incomes
3. Colonias populares with low incomes
4. Pueblos conurbados (or rural cantonments)
5. Site-and-service projects
6. Colonias populares with moderate incomes
7. The center city
8. Middle-class housing developments

The distribution of our sample population of households in these neighborhood types is presented in Table 5.1.

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<sup>1</sup>Readers in a hurry should turn to the comparative summary which appears as the last major section of this chapter, on page 88.

TABLE 5.1

## HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE

NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Invasions	21	1.4
Very Poor <u>Colonias Populares</u>	393	27.1
Poor <u>Colonias Populares</u>	335	23.1
<u>Pueblos Conurbados</u>	129	8.9
Site-and-Service Projects	100	6.9
Moderate-Income <u>Colonias Populares</u>	118	8.1
The Center City	213	14.7
Middle-Class Housing	143	9.8

N = 1,452

Our survey of the city of Oaxaca revealed considerably more heterogeneity within neighborhoods than one would find in cities of the U.S., Canada or Europe. One continually observes households in extreme poverty living next door to relatively comfortable families. This results from at least five factors. One is the absence of zoning laws, or the unwillingness to enforce them. Second, people are loathe to move once they acquire a place to live. In Oaxaca it is not a common practice to improve one's standard of living by moving into a bigger home in a nicer neighborhood. Rather, people improve the house and lot they have. Thus, a shack on lot next door to a comfortable house may once have been two shacks, one of which slowly improved. A third factor promoting heterogeneity is the lack of neighborhoods available to move into. The market for land is not very fluid. Thus households with relatively high incomes may move into a poor community because it is the only option available to them at the time they need it. Fourth, a household may simply seize the opportunity finally to acquire a house site. The overwhelmingly majority of people who invade house sites are desperately poor, but there are a very few who are not badly off. They need a site, join an invasion and build a comparatively imposing house. A final contributory factor to this heterogeneity is the pervasiveness of poverty. Because two-fifths of the households in the city belong to the poorest income group, which has a per-adult household income of less than M.N.\$600 a month, they are to be found everywhere in the city. In the most well-to-do neighborhoods, they constitute close to a quarter of the population. The poor are not contained in closely controlled and restricted areas, but they spill over into every section of the city.

But despite this heterogeneity the classification and rank ordering of neighborhoods into living systems as was done does provide us with a valid means of viewing the kind of life available to the preponderance of households in each living system. The heterogeneity

of the city is not so pervasive that it effaces the distinctive differences in physical characteristics, social cohesion, and income level. Neighborhoods can and do contribute to the overall well-being of their inhabitants, and they also provide a measure of that well-being. Starting at the bottom (invasion and the poorest colonias populares) and working up to the middle-class neighborhoods, we will discuss them one by one.

## 1. INVASIONS

It is common in Latin America for poor families living with relatives in the city to organize, invade land, and set up squatter settlements. The process has been studied in many cities of Latin America (Abrams 1966; Mangin 1967). In Oaxaca many of the colonias populares were founded in this way. Very often the land in question is either vacant state-owned land, which is very vulnerable to takeover, or privately-owned land over which there is some kind of disputed title. In either case, poor, landless households band together, quickly occupy a site, and then hang on until they are either pushed off by the army or local police, or manage to acquire squatter's rights and, finally, title to their land. Because of the speed of the occupation and the surprise and secrecy involved in successful attempts, the invaders are called "paratroops" (paracaidistas).

Sites that have been invaded lack rudimentary urban services and are generally regarded by people who do not live in them as being the least desirable locations in the city. However, the "paratroopers" view their situation in a somewhat different light: they are usually delighted to have a place of their own, however insecure.

### Physical Characteristics

There were several sections of the city still in an invaded state at the time of the study. Three were chosen to be surveyed. Of these, one had been sufficiently well-organized by the left-wing students to prevent the study from being carried out there. In another, interviewers were asked to leave the vicinity after they had visited only a few houses. Households in the third invasion, somewhat older than the other two, provided the most information to interviewers, but even so people were, perhaps because of their uncertain status, often reluctant to answer questions posed by strangers. The number of households is thereby reduced to 21, but these give a reasonable picture of the conditions under which the invaders live.

There are no services at the time of an invasion. A sign that the status of the invasion is being changed (unofficially) to colonia popular and that the invaders' claim to ownership will eventually be accepted is the provision of sewer connections and electricity in the area. Most invasions have neither. Running water is completely absent, although one lucky soul reports he has both running water and indoor plumbing. His comfortable (and unusual) circumstances derive from his having occupied the lions' house when he and his fellow squatters

invaded the old city zoo. Sanitary facilities are limited; a third report they use a communal toilet; half have constructed some sort of latrine or outhouse.

The houses are overwhelmingly jacalitos. Overwhelmingly, they have one room (mean 1.4) with flimsy walls and earthen floors (Figure 5.1). Half have simple window openings--ventilation ports would be a better description--while a quarter have no windows at all.

#### Social and Economic Conditions

The social workers regarded the houses of the invasion group as being among the worst in the city--but not so much worse than those of the poorer people in the colonias populares. The people themselves thought they were better off than the social workers did and displayed somewhat more satisfaction with their houses than people in the poorest colonias. They also were more satisfied with the services in the neighborhood, despite the fact they had none. This is an accurate reflection of the degree to which they have improved their situation.

The households of the invaders are not dissimilar from the rest of the city in some ways. They are a bit larger (mean 5.7, as compared to 5.3 for the entire city), but not the largest in the city. They are not the worst off for workers: the mean number of workers per household is high enough to bring the worker-dependency ratio (3.4) down below the highest in the city. They are not predominantly broken families or missing a parent either: the vast majority of household heads are married, the families are nuclear, and the great preponderance are in the second and third stages of development, with growing children.

Other characteristics set them apart, however. These householders are not the youth of the city. Not a single young childless couple turned up in the small sample. Household heads are older than in other neighborhoods--45, as compared to 39 for the city as a whole. The needs of households in the invaded areas are much higher than average because these areas have the most (43%) households in the third stage of the domestic cycle when the children are growing but not yet earning.

Their subsistence needs are high but their earning capacity is low. Household heads (and other workers) find it difficult to get and hold jobs. One reason is low education: only 5% of the household heads have completed secondary school. Three-quarters are illiterate or nearly so; 40% never attended school. The kinds of jobs they have reflect their education. Over 40% are service workers; another 16% are artisans. Invaders have by far the highest percentage of unstable jobs and the highest percentage of households with no form of social security available to them.

We should not be surprised to find they are among the poorest people in the city. The median monthly income of household heads is lowest in the city at M.N.\$1500. Second workers are able to contribute only very little: M.N.\$500 a month. Total household income



FIGURE 5.1

JACALITO IN AN INVADED AREA

thus reaches a median of only M.N.\$1600--M.N.\$200 below the official but inadequate minimum wage. When income is expressed in the amount available per adult-equivalent unit in the household (Table 5.2), their tenuous situation becomes more apparent: almost 70% belong in the poorest class of the city.

TABLE 5.2

MONTHLY PER-ADULT-EQUIVALENT INCOME RANGES  
OF HOUSEHOLDS IN INVADED AREAS

INCOME RANGE*	PERCENTAGE
M.N.\$ 0 - 599	68
600 - 1079	16
1080 - 2879	16
2880 +	0

N = 19

\*A full description of these four economic groups appear in chapter 7.

Finally, the full import of the conditions under which they live is most strikingly revealed by their patterns of food expenditures: They spend about an average proportion (56%) of their income on food--there is simply no way to spend more--or a median M.N.\$900 per month, an amount woefully inadequate for their larger-than-average households. Theirs indeed is a problem of survival.

But the invaders are different from people in other sections of the city not just because they are poor and uneducated and formerly were homeless, but because they have lived longer without being able to improve their position in any way. In fact, their situation most probably became increasingly untenable with the increasing size and age of their households. So desperate had they become that they seized an opportunity to establish themselves and gain some security in the only possible way they could. They have opted for change, taken a big step toward changing their lives and now want more. More than in any other living system, the people of the invaded sites express their desire for change. About 40% want changes in their household; over half wish for changes in their job; three-quarters want changes in their neighborhood as well as in their house.

But right now they are badly off, and atrociously served by their city and by their society. They are begrudged a miserable place in the city, where they occupy the lowest rung of the social and economic ladder. But if they follow the example of others they will work and work hard. Out of their own pertinacity they will raise themselves up from these lowly beginnings and will eventually join

the ranks of those in the very poor colonias populares. Given time, the chances that they will be removed will diminish, and their hold on their house site will become reasonably secure. They will be able to improve their home; and finally, with time, their children will perhaps be able to bring in that additional income that alone permits their poverty to be tolerated. They cannot hope for much more. Their whole neighborhood may well become "regularized" and become a very low income colonia popular.

## 2. COLONIAS POPULARES WITH VERY LOW INCOMES

For many purposes it is necessary to distinguish between two types of colonias populares: the ones where the inhabitants' household incomes hover around the minimum wage (M.N.\$1800), and the ones where the middle range of incomes is above this level. The first we have called the very poor, and the second just poor, colonias populares. Together they house 50% of the city's population. The colonia popular is the "typical" form of housing in the city of Oaxaca. We will deal with the poorest colonias first; but since the social characteristics of the two types are indistinguishable, the following description will serve for both.

### Social Conditions of Very Poor and Poor Colonias

The very poor (and poor) colonias are where the young people with growing families live. These are the places where the battle over the demographic transition is being fought, for it is here that the families whose fertility must be reduced live. Three-quarters of the households are in those stages of the domestic cycle where they are either actively reproducing (50%), or raising their dependent children (25%).

The "family-ness" of Oaxaca is nowhere more apparent than in the very poor and poor colonias. Female-headedness is way down, as would be expected from knowing that mothers are engaged full time in raising their children: 90% of the households are male headed. Household size is indistinguishable from the average for the city as a whole, which is 5.3 persons per household. The typical household head was born outside Oaxaca, reflecting their immigrant status.

But we cannot account for the differences in income by the age of the colonia, by saying that the very poor colonias are poorer because they are more recent establishments. They are about the same age, founded in the late sixties, with the very poor colonias being older, if anything, than their better-off neighbors.

### Economic Conditions

Colonias populares with very low incomes have the largest concentration of the poorest permanent residents in the city. These are truly the common people. Median monthly income of household heads is just minimum wage--M.N.\$1800. Second workers are doing better than

their peers in the invaded areas; median income is up to M.N.\$1000 per month. But even so median household income, at M.N.\$2000 is hardly adequately to meet monthly expenses. Proportions of households in per-adult-equivalent income classes have shifted upward compared with households in the invaded areas, but still a majority belong to the lowest group (Table 5.3).

TABLE 5.3

MONTHLY PER-ADULT-EQUIVALENT INCOME RANGES OF HOUSEHOLDS  
IN VERY LOW-INCOME COLONIAS POPULARES

INCOME RANGE		PERCENTAGE
M.N.\$	0 - 599	51
	600 - 1079	36
	1080 - 2879	10
	2880 +	2

N = 378

The improved economic conditions of the households can be attributed in part to lower dependent-to-worker ratios, which are right at the city-wide average (mean 3.15). Lowered ratios are a consequence of smaller household size and fewer dependents, but households are also faring better because of better employment of their workers compared to the inhabitants of the invaded areas. Just under a third of the household heads are empleados, and there are almost as many blue-collar workers. Service workers are down by half (to 21%) compared to the households in the invaded areas, and there is a substantially smaller proportion of artisans. A very few people are proprietors of their own store or business. Second workers are distributed widely throughout the labor market, with almost half being either service workers or empleados, primarily those with low-paying jobs. Fifteen percent are listed as owners/professionals--mostly wives or older children operating tiny sundries stands or stores at or near the home. In addition, there are a fair number of blue-collar workers and roving vendors.

Over half (58%) the household heads have enjoyed a stable job for the past years, and second workers have done about as well. Only 43% of the household heads have fringe benefits associated with a salaried status, but second workers in some cases provide fringe benefits to households that otherwise would not have them. The total number of households with some access to extra benefits is thus raised to just over half.

## Housing Conditions

A number of the very poor popular colonias began as invasions. This is reflected in the low proportion of regular land tenure in these areas--only 28% report regular ownership. The housing conditions in these neighborhoods, then, can be viewed as indicative of the prospects of present invaders over the next ten or so years.

Dwellings are more permanent than those in the invaded areas. The number of jacalitos has been halved to 42%, and the number of permanent houses has risen to 46%. The houses are bigger (18 square meters more to a mean of 43 square meters), with an extra half room, so that the average house now has two rooms. Figure 5.2 will give the reader some idea of what housing consists of for these people.

The materials in the houses are permanent and of better quality. Adobe and concrete have replaced scavenged materials in over half the cases--although the people are so poor that these latter persist as wall materials in 42% of the houses. Roofing materials have not changed; corrugated metal sheeting prevails. The majority (56%) of the houses still have earthen floors, although cement flooring is beginning to replace them (32%), and there is even a small proportion of houses that have the very desirable mosaic, or tile floor. More of the houses have windows, although only 17% actually have glass ones.

The people in the very poor colonias do have electricity now--or at least half of them do (57%). But 94% of them still lack sewers, and most (76%) still do not have water available. Indoor plumbing is rare.

In type two (and type three) colonias, people are somewhat more realistic than the invaders in their opinion of the quality and availability of utilities. They think they are less than O.K., "bad," in fact. Likewise, they think worse of the conditions of the streets and sidewalks, the quality of police and health services, and urban amenities like telephones than do people in the invaded areas. Somewhat paradoxically, they are much less likely to express a desire for change in their living conditions. Approximately half would like to see changes in their house and neighborhood; only 35% would welcome a change in their work situation.

Although the people living in the lowest-income popular colonias are better off than those in the invasions, most of them are still very, very poor. By any objective standard, their housing situation is substandard and their economic and social prospects bleak. The invaders will come to enjoy this living in time, as these people did before them. But there is little hope they will ever be able to raise their living standards above what is represented by the middle-range households in these colonias, for they are not equipped to do so. The true nature of their predicament will be presented in chapter 7. Suffice it for the moment to say that household heads here, as in the invasions, lack



FIGURE 5.2

A COLONIA POPULAR WITH VERY LOW INCOME

The residents here are not so very far away from the time of invasion.

the basic educational training that would allow them to assume a strategy based on advancement through employment in the formal economic sector. They must adopt, by default, a program that can lead them only to the enjoyment of a more tolerable poverty.

### 3. COLONIAS POPULARES WITH LOW INCOMES

It is important, as noted earlier, to distinguish between popular colonias where the majority of households are very poor with incomes around one minimum salary and those where the median household income is high enough that the presence of the very poor is not so dramatically in evidence. These latter colonias can be characterized as merely "poor." The sample included 335 households in poor (as opposed to "very poor") neighborhoods, or 23% of the city.

One significant advantage poor colonias have over the very poor neighborhoods is that the very poor households are truly invisible, because householders earning less than minimum salary and laboring in the informal sector as unsalaried workers are not eligible for any kind of aid from the government. The householders in the poor neighborhoods have some, slim prospects for aid. They are not completely unreached and invisible, because they, unlike their more unfortunate neighbors, at least have the prospect that some agency such as INDECO may decide to help in the introduction of adequate housing and services. Their poorer neighbors must rely almost entirely on themselves or chance programs that use foreign money mandated specifically for their aid.

Let us turn now to an examination of the economic resources and living conditions of these households in the poor colonias.

#### Economic Conditions

Incomes have risen as one would hope from the way the neighborhoods were identified. Median incomes of household heads, second workers, and total households are all up M.N.\$500 to medians of M.N.\$2300, M.N.\$1500 and M.N.\$2500 respectively. But these households are still well below the poverty level of M.N.\$3240 per month, at which households may participate in the modern commercial economy of Oaxaca. Percentages of households in each of the four economic groups are given in Table 5.4. The poorest households now have only a 42% representation, while those in the upper two income groups have gained.

TABLE 5.4

MONTHLY PER-ADULT-EQUIVALENT INCOME RANGES OF HOUSEHOLDS  
IN LOW-INCOME COLONIAS POPULARES

INCOME RANGE	PERCENTAGE
M.N.\$ 0 - 599	42
600 - 1079	36
1080 - 2879	17
2880 +	6

N = 320

Inhabitants of these slightly better-off neighborhoods have better jobs. There are smaller proportions of household heads in the worst occupational categories. Now almost half of them (48%) are empleados, up 16% more than the very poor colonias. Second workers have gotten better jobs too: 38% are now empleados. More of them have been able to find jobs outside the home and given up the petty shops they have been keeping to so little profit.

Job stability for this group has gone up dramatically; now four-fifths of household heads are second workers have been employed in the same position for a year or longer. Fringe benefits are being received by over half (58%) of the household heads; and when benefits to second workers are included, 63% of the households are receiving some form of additional compensation.

Much of the increased income has gone into the purchase of food-- median monthly expenditures are up M.N.\$300 to M.N.\$1500. (As we will see when data from all colonia types are summarized, this is the minimum necessary to feed an average household on a staple diet.) Not only are they eating at some minimally acceptable standard, they are spending a slightly smaller proportion of their income on food. This additional money is going into their houses and into the education of their children.

#### Housing Conditions

Better living conditions can be immediately seen in the houses of the poor colonias (Figure 5.3). The percentage of shacks is down to 19%; floor area has increased another 20 square meters to 62 square meters. The number of rooms in the average home has increased another half room (to 2.4); walls are increasingly (54% here, compared to 28% for the previous group) made of concrete, and the number of houses constructed of scavenged materials has decreased 50%. Roof materials are still preponderantly (50%) corrugated metal sheeting, but good quality arched roofs (techos de bóveda--a type of masonry) are making



FIGURE 5.3

A LOW-INCOME COLONIA POPULAR

In the foreground can be seen a rare house type--a house of "treated wood." Half way up the hill can be seen the adobe and carrizo construction which is typical of the rural vil-lages. Note the carrizo ("bamboo") kitchen to the side of it, again typical of the village. Electricity is available even here, on the outskirts of the city.

their appearance for the first time (11%). Only 11% of the houses still have tar paper roofs. For the first time earthen floors (25%) are outnumbered by cement floors (65%), and the proportion of glass-windowed houses has doubled to 36% of the sample.

But the "services" picture has improved only very slightly, as compared to that of the very poor colonias. Sixty-one percent of the residents may now have electricity (compared to 57%), but only 9% have sewer connections. Water is scarce and inconvenient--72% lack it still--but the number of people having running water in the house has almost doubled from 8% to 14%.

Regularity in land tenure has increased to 56% who claim regular ownership of their house lots, compared with 28% of the households in the poorest neighborhoods. They have acquired tenure not so much as a result of length of occupancy (we know in fact that, if anything, these neighborhoods are somewhat younger), but because many of them had the money to obtain title upon acquiring their land.

In reviewing the data on very poor and poor colonias, it becomes apparent that households in the latter have greater potential for improving their standard of living. Despite the absence of basic services in the community, the typical household has been able to meet minimal standards of decent living. They have built a permanent house on land to which they have title, and there is enough food so that the household does not go hungry routinely, as do the poorer neighbors. Perhaps more importantly, those who work have stable employment, and many have benefits such as medical insurance and access to guaranteed loans which reduce the risk of making long-term investments in one's children. People of these colonias are already better-educated. Household heads have an average education beyond primary school, and the average educational attainment in the household has increased from a mean index of 2.1 in very poor neighborhoods to 2.6 in the poor ones.<sup>2</sup> More households are finding resources available for the education of their children--a commitment that will give their children a chance to rise beyond their parents' poverty.

#### 4. PUEBLOS CONURBADOS

The next neighborhood type is the village that the encroaching city has surrounded: the pueblos conurbado. Although a few villages

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<sup>2</sup>The measure for the educational level of the household is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Number years educational attainment summed for all household members} + \text{Number children in school}}{\text{Number people in the household over seven years of age}}$$

have retained some measure of political autonomy, most have passed under the administrative control of the city. Some urbanists, notably those of the rus-in-urbe persuasion in urban studies (see Uzzell and Provencher 1975), have seized upon the pueblo conurbado as a typical example of the final destruction of a traditional agrarian people by the twentieth century, and they have "noted with alarm" how these rural municipios, which seem to belong to another century, are being swallowed up by the city. They fail to note that this process has been going on for three hundred years without totally unsalutary effects on the land values of the rurally dispossessed (Kowalewski n.d.).

The pueblo conurbado does retain a flavor of the village in its traditionalism and in its persistence in maintaining some kind of an agricultural base; 19% of the households report that agriculture is their major source of income, as compared to 5% of the population of the city as a whole. There are 129 households from these pueblos in our sample.

People in the pueblos conurbados are older than people in the rest of the city (41 mean age for household heads versus 39 for the city as a whole). But more importantly, about 60% of the household heads were born in the pueblo or close by, as compared to 34% for the city as a whole. Looking at dates of land purchase, we find that the earliest quartile of the pueblo's population acquired their land before 1959 (compared to 1963 for the whole city). The pueblo has greater continuity of residence than most of the rest of the city--which gives it more of the stable, settled atmosphere of the traditional village than the city.

#### Economic and Social Conditions

Incomes are low; the median income of the household head is M.N.\$2000 per month, of second workers, M.N.\$1500, and the median household income stands at M.N.\$2400. Food expenditures remain at around M.N.\$1500, the practical minimum for survival in the city. Since incomes are low, the people of the urban villages spend 60% of their income on food. The size distribution of incomes for the pueblos can be seen in Table 5.5.

TABLE 5.5

#### MONTHLY PER-ADULT-EQUIVALENT INCOME RANGES OF HOUSEHOLDS IN THE PUEBLOS CONURBADOS

INCOME RANGE	PERCENTAGE
M.N.\$ 0 - 599	58
600 - 1079	28
1080 - 2879	13
2880 +	1

N = 119

The educational level of household heads is not much different from that in the poor colonias. Only one quarter of the household heads have managed to get more schooling than completed primary, and only a few have that.

Household size is 6.1 members--well above the city average of 5.3, suggesting that the rural pattern of high fertility has persisted in the pueblos. The number of dependents is highest in the city, but the portion of households reporting incomes from secondary workers is also highest, thus reducing the dependency ratio somewhat. One rural feature that might be expected is a high proportion of extended households, but they are not found here. Extended households are average in number only.

Compared to their opposite numbers in the poor colonias, household heads in the pueblos are not as well represented in the empleado job area, while at the same time more of them are employed in farming. Otherwise, the proportions of household heads in the different job categories are not much different in the pueblos and in the poor colonias. Second workers are widely spread throughout the job market, though fewer (only 8%) than the household heads are working in agriculture--an indication of the changing focus in the pueblos toward a more urban existence. The largest proportion (31%) are blue-collar workers (obreros). A quarter of the second workers are employed as service workers; another quarter, as empleados. The greater numbers both of household heads and of second workers in the less desirable job categories is accompanied by a predictable drop in the proportion of workers who have been steadily employed over the past year--only 64% and 67% respectively have been so fortunate. Similarly, people in pueblos conurbados have nearly the lowest percentage of households enjoying fringe benefits.

The well-being of the people in the pueblos does not stem from their barely adequate economic situation. On most economic measures they are lower than the people of the poor colonias. It stems at least in part, from their social situation. They are still integrated into their communities; their kinship integration index<sup>3</sup> is highest in the city. And their attitude towards their community is very positive, as are their feelings about their house. Seventy-nine percent want no changes in the former; sixty-seven percent are happy with the latter. One third report they would like to see changes in the work situation of the household--right at the city average. There is a greater than average interest in changes in the household itself, reflecting the greater dependence of these people on their social life.

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<sup>3</sup>This is the mean for the neighborhood type of the ratio of the number of compadres a household has in the neighborhood to the total number it has.

## Housing Conditions

Housing conditions in the pueblos conurbados are not dramatically different from those found in the poor popular colonias. The differences that do exist are a reflection of the longer settlement of households in the pueblos and the pueblos' rural antecedents. Their rural character can be seen in the physical appearance of the houses. Construction materials like adobe blocks and the traditional curved red Spanish roofing tiles are more common here than in the poor colonias. Likewise, one finds slightly more dirt floors and fewer glass windows. Houses in the pueblos are more spacious--median floor area is 48 square meters, as compared to 40 square meters in the poor colonias. Also in line with their village character, almost a third of the houses have no toilet facilities; a scanty 6% of the homes have them indoors.

Because households have been longer established on their lots, more of them can claim regular ownership of their land and house. Secure land tenure is up to 64% (compared to 57% in the poor colonias). Additionally, utilities are more common--83% have electricity, and 43% have water either on the lot or in the house. Sewer connections are still quite rare; only 12% of the households have them.

For the outsider, the pueblo conurbado may not seem markedly distinguishable from any other part of the city where poor people predominate. For the insider, the change is quite remarkable. There is a spirit in the pueblos, a corporate spirit of independence and self-reliance that is only faintly justified by the amount of political independence they enjoy. It is easier to get communal work parties organized, easier to find neighbors willing to help, compared to the rest of the city.

The trace of sentimentality in discussing the pueblo conurbado is not simply that of an anthropologist longing for the communal life of the village. It is shared by the interviewers, some of whom were from the poor colonias, and by the residents themselves. If one is poor, the best available life is to be found in the older established settlements. Of the households in the pueblos, 73% were formed in Oaxaca. Fifty-seven percent are still residing in their original location. People who were born in the pueblos have remained and established their own household where they grew up. They are the more fortunate of the migrants: the city moved to them.

## 5. SITE-AND-SERVICE PROJECTS

There is a special group of people, economically and socially similar to people in the poor colonias populares, who deserve some special mention. They are households who are residents of a government-sponsored "site-and-service" project, or SIDOSE. INDECO has developed several in Oaxaca, and data are available on 100 households from 2 of them. A brief description of one of the projects will provide a general idea of how they are formed and what they are like.

In 1971 INDECO bought 16 hectares of land in the municipio of Xoxocotlán, by the banks of the river Atoyac. It was flat corn-farming land, very suitable for building a colonia. After surveying the land and dividing it into 180-square-meter plots, INDECO held a lottery to assign the house sites to poor households in Oaxaca. Over one thousand signed up; there were lots for five hundred. INDECO arranged for the introduction of electricity, running water, and the construction of sewers, as well as for other amenities such as a primary school, roads, and street lights. The inhabitants pay for the utilities, and they are free to add other amenities if they organize the financing.

All INDECO provides are "urbanization" (basic utilities and services) and technical assistance. Other work necessary to make the colonia fit for human habitation is left up to the site owners. INDECO will help with advice on building and will sometimes supply building materials at cost, but the agency's role is advisory. Householders are at liberty to reject their advice and ignore their models for housing and living. This is officially sanctioned auto-construction, and as a result we find a degree of anarchy and individualism sufficient to keep the planners humble. A word of praise might be added for the development agency's officials, who must forego their predilections for tidiness and orderliness in favor of the participants' enthusiasms.

The people in the site-and-service projects are similar to other poor people in the city. On many variables the households in the site-and-service projects seem to fall between the very poor and poor colonias. For example, in their choice of house styles, SIDOSE residents exhibit a mix that is not at all dissimilar from that found in other poor neighborhoods in the city. Their houses, some of which are not finished, look like those poorest two types of colonias populares. One finds a great many temporary materials in use, as well as permanent concrete block and brick construction. As in the very poor and poor colonias, roughly one quarter of the household heads are from the city of Oaxaca. The remainder have come from elsewhere, mainly from the rural areas of the state. Educational levels are low; most household heads have not completed primary, and the household education index is below that in the poor (type three) colonias. As in the poor colonias, mean household size (5.4 members) is just above the city-wide average. The employment situation for household heads falls between that for households in very poor and poor colonias. There are fewer heads who are empleados, who have remained steadily employed, and who have fringe benefits in the SIDOSE's than in poor colonias, but more than in the poorest. Despite a low median contribution of M.N.\$800 monthly from the second worker, total household income, at M.N.\$2400, is only M.N.\$100 below the median monthly income in the poor colonias. SIDOSE household heads, with a median income of M.N.\$2400, are actually doing a little better than their colleagues in the poor colonias. The distribution of site-and-service households in the four economic groups can be seen in Table 5.6. On this measure, also, the projects rank between very poor and poor colonias.

TABLE 5.6

MONTHLY PER-ADULT-EQUIVALENT INCOME RANGES OF HOUSEHOLDS  
IN SITE-AND-SERVICE PROJECTS

INCOME RANGE		PERCENTAGE
M.N.\$	0 - 599	48
	600 - 1079	31
	1080 - 2879	19
	2880 +	2

N = 99

An important question which needs to be asked is the following: If the houses are not much different from those in the popular colonias, and if the people do not seem any different, or any better off than their cousins in the colonias populares, how does one justify the government investment in site-and-service projects? Why not let these people, like everyone else, fend for themselves in the private market? The answer lies in the one important way in which these people do differ from their brethren in the private sector. Before they were fortunate enough to subscribe to the project, they were homeless. Had they not been aided by the government, the majority of them would still be homeless, simply because it takes a lot of time to acquire housing and build up your economic situation in the city. There are no accurate figures on the degree of completion of the houses, nor on the rate of completion; but our very strong feeling from living in both kinds of places is that the site-and-service projects are being completed much more quickly. Certainly, utilities and some city services have been provided far more rapidly in the projects than elsewhere, though much remains to be done. Over half the households have sewer connections (compared to 9% in the poor colonias, which are older); 65% have water on the lot or in the house, and 67% have electricity.

Moreover, the households are still quite young, though few (only 6%) are households made up of couples at the earliest stage of development. With a mean age of 36, household heads are the youngest in the city, and well over half (57%) the households have young children in them.<sup>4</sup> Site-and-service households are heavily burdened economically, but with INDECO's assistance they have been able actively to pursue

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<sup>4</sup>Even for Oaxaca the marriage rate is high--91% of the household heads have a spouse living with them; only 3% are unmarried. There are few female-headed households and few extended ones. Evidence both from the invasions and the site-and-service projects seems to suggest that stable, married, male-headed households are the ones most capable of undertaking a major venture such as a move to a new location and the building of a house from the ground up.

the improvement of the conditions in which they live. They have achieved in two or three years what similar city dwellers in the private sector have taken years to accomplish (Stepick and Murphy 1977). Given the growth rate of the Mexican population, given the political pressure to assist in providing minimal housing for the poor, and given the moral urgency of assuring a decent, healthy environment for the coming generation of Mexicans, this evidence is as heartening as it is hard to come by in Oaxaca.

Though it cannot be proved, one might speculate that, having moved so early toward the creation of a decent home environment, these households might in future years have the resources available when they are most needed for the education of their children--this despite the fact that the education of the primary breadwinner is low, as is the income of the household. The potential of these households is in fact the reason for the high desirability of site-and-service projects among the colonia types, even though on more objective criteria, such as income level, they might not be ranked so high.

There is some evidence of the potential for development in these households beyond mere speculation. What they lack in training they make up in energy. They are among the city's real hustlers, first because they recognized and sought out the opportunity to advance themselves in a completely new community, despite the inherent difficulties involved. Having experienced dramatic change in their lives, they, like the invaders, are ready and willing to pursue more change. Only invaders more openly express their desires for change in their work, their house, and their neighborhood. And desiring change, they are inventive in pursuing the means to bring it about. Household heads are earning more than their educational levels suggest they should. Households have only an average number of second workers whose contribution to the household budget is small. But these are predominantly households with young children, i.e., the ones least likely to have second workers at all. Taking the youth of the households into account, they are doing better than comparable households. One-fifth of these second workers--the highest proportion in the sample--are listed as owners/professionals, but almost all are owners of little sundries stands, miscellany stores, and in-home restaurants. They are run by wives, grandmothers, and children, and are found all over the community. They make little profit but their proliferation shows how hard households are working at making money and getting ahead in any way they can.

There is a second difference between site-and-service project households and the poor elsewhere in the city that is of interest to government and to persons concerned with civil peace. Not only do they have more energy, but their morale is much higher. We do not care to suggest the precise reason for this--it may stem from an old friend in sociology, the Hawthorne effect--but the fact of the matter is that they view their situation differently and more positively than people in the colonias who are sociologically and economically similar to

them. They want change, yes, but they are at the same time more satisfied with their neighborhood and the services and utilities available to them.

The government, for its part, has made a wise investment. In a sense, it has co-opted the paracaidistas of tomorrow. Had they not been helped now, ten to fifteen years hence many of these same households might have been impelled to seize illegally what they could not obtain through regular means. In the interim their children would have suffered the consequences of chronically insufficient funds in the form of deficient diets, lost educational opportunities, and the cycle of poverty. As it is, these households, at relatively little cost to Mexico, have been provided a legitimate avenue of advancement; they have in effect been incorporated into the national system. The return to Mexico on this kind of investment will be incalculable.

#### 6. COLONIAS POPULARES WITH MODERATE INCOMES

There are clear differences between the poorer sections of the city which we have just been reviewing and the better-off ones, to which we now turn. The moderate-income colonias populares represent the best kind of life style to which most Oaxaqueños can aspire. The reason for these peoples' success is partly time: the people in the better-off colonias populares have been longer settled in their community. More of them were born in the city (39% of the household heads were--slightly higher than the city average), and they are older (mean age of household heads is 41, two years over the city mean). They were also earlier on the scene--years earlier in buying their house site, years earlier in building their home. Median year of settlement for these better-off colonias is 1960--ten years earlier than the city as a whole, and much earlier than the poor colonias populares. Similarly, house construction began much earlier.

The improvement of the economic and social circumstances of these households has come about as a result of a policy of benign neglect combined with hard work and endurance on the part of the inhabitants. In these better-off colonias we find more households with working children, and a smaller proportion with the very high dependency ratios characteristic of the second stage of the domestic cycle when the households are still reproducing (Table 5.7).

TABLE 5.7

DOMESTIC CYCLE STAGES OF HOUSEHOLDS IN  
LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME COLONIAS POPULARES

DOMESTIC CYCLE STAGE*	PERCENTAGE	
	LOWS	MODERATES
One	9	12
Two	50	42
Three	27	27
Four	9	16
Five	4	3
N	335	118

\*See chapter 3 for definitions of each stage.

### Housing and Services

Very few residents now have flimsy, improvised housing (only 5%). The vast majority have well-constructed houses (81%), with cement-block walls, concrete roofs, cement or tile floors, and windows, some 45% of which have framed glass (Figure 5.4). Time has also produced more spacious houses--median floor area is now 56 square meters, compared to 40 meters square in the poor colonias. Mean number of rooms is up to 2.7.

Since the colonias are older, they have had a longer time to fight for the services they require. As a result, all the indices of better service are up: 94% of the houses have electricity; 66% have some type of sewer connection; 44% of the houses have running water in the house, and only 7% report they do not have it on the lot. Twenty-nine percent have a toilet indoors. Land tenancy is regular in almost all cases; only 10% of the households report irregular ownership or rental.

The social workers view the housing here as O. K. to good, and the people themselves see it about the same way. They are more content with the urban services they are receiving than their poorer colleagues in other sections of the city. They are similarly more pleased (and rightly so) with the better police and health services they enjoy, as well as the conditions of the streets and sidewalks.

### Social and Economic Conditions

Clearly, the better living conditions found in the moderate-income colonias populares must be predicated upon higher incomes as well as upon length of residence. The real income difference between the two groups of households can be seen in Table 5.8, which presents the proportions of households in the four income classes.



FIGURE 5.4

A MIDDLE-INCOME COLONIA POPULAR

The completed house in the foreground has a techo de boveda, or arched roof. Electricity is provided, but no sewers. There is space, however, and some privacy for the inhabitants.

TABLE 5.8

MONTHLY PER-ADULT-EQUIVALENT INCOME RANGES OF HOUSEHOLDS  
IN LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME COLONIAS POPULARES

INCOME RANGE	PERCENTAGE	
	LOWS	MODERATES
M.N.\$ 0 - 599	42	31
600 - 1079	36	37
1080 - 2879	17	27
2880 +	6	5
N	320	102

The question, then, is: Can the higher income levels found in the better-off colonias be accounted for by the presence of the maturer-than-average households there?<sup>5</sup> The answer is yes and no. Certainly, since household heads in the moderate-income neighborhoods are older and have been working longer. They have had the opportunities to increase their earning power that come only with time. Additionally, the maturer households have had a longer time to educate their children (as is evidenced by their higher household education index) and have thus been able to place second workers more often in jobs with greater earning potential. Many households in the poorer colonias can look forward to enjoying these advantages some years hence. There is one significant advantage possessed by current moderate-income colonia households that will not accrue to their poorer counterparts with increasing age--the advantage of a better-educated household head. Sixty-two percent of the better-off colonia heads have finished primary school, compared to forty-eight percent in the poor colonias. Mean education level in the former is some secondary education.

Thus, the ability of younger households in other less-well-off sections of the city someday to achieve the level of comfort represented by the moderate-income colonias populares must remain problematical. Certainly, those whose heads have better-than-average educations should be able to do so. The others may not be so fortunate in the lifetime

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<sup>5</sup>"Maturer" means further along in the domestic cycle. One should not infer from the concordance between maturer households and better and higher levels of well being that the city of Oaxaca is age-graded in any fashion. It is not. Indeed, if one thinks that it is healthier for people to live in mixed age groups--newborns to grandparents--then the city of Oaxaca approximates this advantageous condition to a much greater degree than do most cities in other parts of North America. Or so it appears to us.

of the present household head. However, as we shall see in chapter 7, if the head can stay steadily employed so that the household is able to invest in the education of at least some of its children, they may be able to make it in the generation to come.

But whatever the differential rates of success of households in the poor living systems in future years, certainly unless one is rich or subsidized by the government, the level represented by the moderate-income colonias populares is the best one can hope for in one's lifetime.

For these household heads of modest education who early migrated to Oaxaca and built their lives and households here, life has been difficult, but now it is not too bad. Though they are far from well-off and miles from what the U.N. or Europeans might consider a middle-class existence, they are not completely impoverished. And in Oaxaca, Mexico, this condition of tolerable poverty is neither familiar nor widely found.

## 7. THE CENTER CITY

Oaxaca is not a "high-rise" city. There are no many-storied housing developments, nor are there any vast apartment complexes for the poor such as one finds in Lima, Rio de Janeiro, or Mexico City. There are vecindades, however--large houses of rented rooms with communal facilities--which have been made famous by Oscar Lewis (1966). These are old colonial buildings subdivided into one- and two-room apartments surrounding a central courtyard. The worst have a single water source in the yard, shared toilet facilities, and a distinctive odor and atmosphere. The best, although crowded, are high-ceilinged, quiet, and clean.

The people of Oaxaca think highly of these places in the center city--perhaps not as the most desirable places to live, for that would be the suburban colonias of the rich, but certainly as the second most desirable. The central zone covers 20% of the city's area. Because it has all the services and facilities of a modern city--paved streets and sidewalks, convenient public transportation, nearby shops and markets, police protection, and so forth--it is deemed to be attractive. In our sample there are 213 households from this zone.

The center city has, on the average, older households than any other living system. Household heads have a mean age of 43, the highest in the city except for heads of household in the invasions, and four years above the city-wide mean. In the centro one finds the smallest proportion of stage two households (those with young children) and the greatest proportion in stages four and five. Not only are the households older, but they have been settled in Oaxaca a long time. Almost half the household heads were born in Oaxaca (only the pueblos conurbados have more native Oaxaqueños), and over 60% of the households have lived in their present location since they were

formed. Mean year of land purchase is 1956, the earliest in the city. The households are an older, more stable group of people than are found even in the moderate-income colonias populares.

Household heads are better educated than their counterparts in the moderate-income colonias. They have, on the average, still not completed secondary, but they are not too far from it. The median education level is a little higher than completed primary. Education plays an important role in the lives of centro residents. Mean household education index, at 3.4, is second highest in the city.

### Housing and Services

Even in the central area Oaxaqueños prefer houses to apartments; 68% are living in them. Twenty-seven percent are living in apartments and rooms (mostly rooms), however--the highest proportion for all areas of the city. Somewhat surprisingly, one still finds a few jacalitos hidden away in the large courtyards and back alleys of the city. Our survey encountered 6% of the households living in such improvised housing.

Typically, the wall construction of the houses is concrete (75%) with some adobe appearing (15%), especially in the older edifices. Roofs are of permanent materials for the most part--tile, concrete, brick arching, or metal. Earthen floors persist in less than 10% of the dwellings (compared to one fifth in the moderate-income colonias); they have given way to cement (50%) or mosaico (39%). Now 52% of the dwellings have windows of glass. As one might expect in the heart of the city, most of the houses and apartments are not quite so spacious as may be found in the moderate-income colonias, but at a median of 50 meters square, they are somewhat roomier than houses in poorer sections of the city. Mean number of rooms has increased to 3.0.

Utilities are not as universal as might be expected in the urban center. One actually encounters a larger proportion of households lacking basic urban services than in the moderate-income colonias, though the differences are not great. Two-thirds of the houses in both sections of the city has sewer connections, but electricity and the availability of water on the lot or in the house are less prevalent in the centro--about 87% of the households have them. Compared to the moderate-income colonias, fewer people have bathroom facilities inside the home (only one fifth do), and there are twice as many people sharing common facilities (36%). As in the moderate-income colonias, a mere 10% of the households report irregular ownership or rental of their house site.

### Social and Economic Conditions

Perhaps more than other sections of the city, the people of the central zone are of mixed economic positions. Being an older population, household heads are somewhat less concentrated in the newer, government bureaucracy-type positions of the empleado job category

(46%) and more are working in traditional service positions (22%). Some are surely employed by their well-to-do neighbors in the centro. As might be expected in the commercial section of the city, a high proportion are owners/professionals; 11% are so employed--mostly the shop-keepers and small businessmen of the city. The distribution of second workers across job categories is very similar to that of the household heads. Likewise, job stability for both primary and second workers in the centro is quite high at 80%. The percentage of households with access to fringe benefits and social security is comparable to several other living systems in the city--63% enjoy the security they bring.

Median income for the household heads is equal to that found in the moderate-income colonias--M.N.\$3000 per month. Second workers, with a median income of M.N.\$2000, are contributing substantially to the households that have them. Reflecting the economic heterogeneity of households in the city, median total household income is M.N.\$3000 per month--M.N.\$600 below that of the moderate-income colonias. Households in the centro, however, are better-off than this last figure indicates, as we can see in Table 5.9, which gives proportions of households in the different income groups for both the center city and the moderate-income colonias.

TABLE 5.9

MONTHLY PER-ADULT-EQUIVALENT INCOME RANGES FOR HOUSEHOLDS  
IN MODERATE-INCOME COLONIAS POPULARES AND THE CENTRO

INCOME RANGE	PERCENTAGE	
	MODERATES	CENTRO
M.N.\$ 0 - 599	31	26
600 - 1079	37	35
1080 - 2879	27	33
2880 +	5	7
N	102	196

The source of much of the well-being of households in the center city, apart from their long-established residence in what is considered a highly desirable area, is their much smaller-than-average size. The mean number of members in center-city households is 4.7, well below the city average of 5.3. In addition, the number of workers per household is slightly higher than average, so that the dependent-to-worker ratio is by far the lowest in the city. Workers here are supporting on the average one-half a person less than in any other section of the city. With their reduced size, households in the centro are getting along better than others elsewhere with higher gross incomes.

The people in the central area are older, more established, and more integrated into their community than people in the colonias populares. In this sense they are like the urban villagers--except for these latter, their kinship integration index is the highest in the sample. And except for the households in the middle-class housing development, which we turn to next, the people of the center city are the most contented residents in Oaxaca. True, better than a third would like to see changes in their house, but there is little expression of discontentment with work or with the household itself. A mere 12% say they would like to see changes in the neighborhood. These households have lived here a long time, are well anchored, and from all appearances, they are rather happy with things the way they are.

#### 8. MIDDLE-CLASS HOUSING

The last living system to be investigated belongs to those who have or are close to making it professionally and economically in modern Mexico. These people are more like the middle classes in other parts of North America. Their houses are new and have a full range of modern conveniences. The housing has been built partly by the private sector and partly by the government. Private contracts operate not dissimilarly from their colleagues in the rest of North America. They build units in quantity and sell them individually at a profit. The full range of problems from faulty titles to uncompleted contracts to half-filled developments are to be found in Oaxaca. The government-subsidized housing<sup>6</sup> is of two kinds, locally called INFONAVIT and ISSSTE. INFONAVIT, which in the acronym for the Instituto Para el Fomento Nacional de Vivienda, builds housing for salaried workers in the private sector, while ISSSTE builds housing for state and federal workers. Not all government workers can or do have this kind of home, but most aspire to it. From the middle-class living systems, both private and public, there are 143 households in the sample, or 10% of the whole.

This kind of house contrasts sharply with the usual Oaxacan dwelling. It is rationally planned, coherent in design, and efficient in its use of space and materials. The interior of the houses shows the kind of functional differentiation associated with well-ordered

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<sup>6</sup>Strictly speaking, the housing is not subsidized; rather, it is provided by non-profit government agencies. But the agencies do not build their costs into the costs of the units, thereby providing a subsidy. The financing terms are generous and the list of people waiting for new units very large. The value of these units is suggested by the fact that they can be (illegally) rented for a good profit by owners who retain their old house and rent the government house to someone who is either far down the list or off it entirely.

lives (bathrooms are used for bathing, kitchens for cooking, etc.). When these are built next to colonias populares, as they often must be because of the popularity of the latter, the contrast is stark.

Household heads in the middle-class developments are slightly older than average (mean age of 40), and their educational level is the highest in the city. The average development householder has completed secondary school; in addition, 40% have technical, preparatory, or professional degrees--half of them professional. Only 19% have not completed primary school.

Among the middle-class householders, only slightly more (38%) than the city-wide proportion were born in the metropolitan area of Oaxaca, but a high 15% came from urban areas in other states. Fewer than average were originally from rural Oaxaca. They are thus more urban in their orientation than householders in most other sections of the city (excepting the center city itself).

### Housing and Services

Housing is modern as was mentioned (Figure 5.5). Ninety percent live in houses and only three percent in jacalitos. The construction is overwhelmingly concrete (98%), with cement (39%) or tile (58%) floors. The roofs are almost all of permanent materials, either arched brickwork (15%) or concrete reinforced (80%). Routinely, they have glass windows (76%), the greatest amount of floor space (median 120 square meters), and a large (mean 4.2) number of rooms.

Almost everybody (93%) has electricity; 81% have sewer connections; and only 6% have no water available at all. Eighty percent have indoor bathrooms. Overwhelmingly (85%) they say they have regular title to their land or are legally renting, and the social workers and householders alike agree that their housing situation is far and away the best in the city.

### Economic and Social Conditions

The median income of the household heads is the highest in the city at M.N.\$4000 per month, and the household income is similarly highest at M.N.\$4900. Second workers are contributing substantially to households that have them; the median worker is bringing home M.N.\$3000 per month. Modally, these households belong to the third income class, those with barely adequate incomes (Table 5.10). They are the only living system in the city with a preponderance of households in the third income class. As is usual, expenditures on food rise with income, so that the proportion of household income spent for food has not decreased; it stands at 50%.

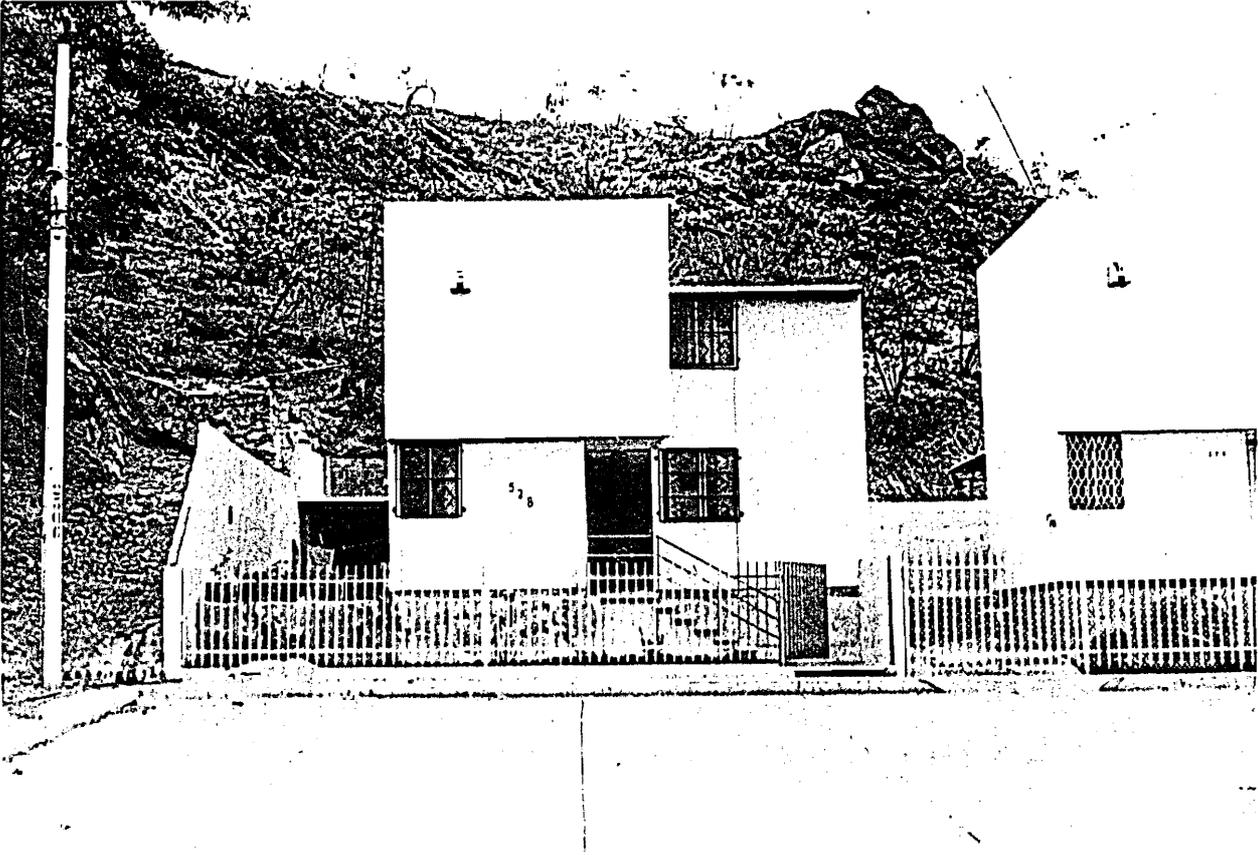


FIGURE 5.5

## GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED MIDDLE-CLASS HOUSING

Housing like this, built for government workers and employees in the private sector with social security benefits, is quite small but has a full range of urban services.

TABLE 5.10

MONTHLY PER-ADULT-EQUIVALENT INCOME RANGES OF HOUSEHOLDS  
IN MIDDLE-CLASS HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

INCOME RANGE	PERCENTAGE
M.N.\$ 0 - 599	23
600 - 1079	21
1080 - 2879	44
2880 +	12

N = 128

Their households are very large with a mean of 6.0 members. Less than an average proportion of households have extended members in them; dependents are primarily young children or children in school. Number of dependents is very high (mean 4.6), but these households have only an average number of workers. The mean dependent-to-worker ratio is therefore highest in the city at 3.7. This is indicative more than anything of the fact that children are staying in school much longer than elsewhere in the city.

The job distribution is easily summarized. Overwhelmingly primary and second workers are working in empleado, white-collar, middle-class positions. Sixty-four percent of the household heads are so employed; seventy-nine percent of the second workers are. Nineteen percent of the heads are classified as owners/professionals--very much in line with the educational levels of this population. Job stability is almost universal; 96% of the household heads have been steadily employed for at least a year; 92% of the second workers have. In addition, over 80% of the households have at least one worker who receives some form of fringe benefits with her or his employment.

Contentment is characteristic of this group. They have sufficient social and economic standing to set them apart from and above the great majority of their fellow Oaxaqueños; they have met and often exceeded basic standards for a comfortable and healthy home environment; and moreover, their children are being educated, as is evidenced by their high household education index. Approximately one fifth of the people we talked with expressed a desire for changes in the employment situation of working household members and in the house they lived in; only a few wanted to see changes in their neighborhood or their household.

They are the least neighborhood-bound of all the people in Oaxaca: their horizons include the whole city. Of all the neighborhood systems, these households are least well-integrated into their individual communities. This partly stems from the recency of the

middle-class housing developments--median year of purchase and settlement is 1973, just four years before this survey was taken. But it is also a reflection of the changing orientation of the rising Mexican middle class, from the rural and traditional pattern of identification with one's pueblo or colonia to identification with one's career and the larger urban environment.

#### THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF OAXACA: A SUMMARY

Before going on to study the economic situation of the people of Oaxaca more closely, some summary remarks about the neighborhoods will be useful. Perhaps the most important observation one can make is that most of the Oaxaca we have been talking about will not be visible to the visitor, just as it lacks visibility to the middle- and upper-class Oaxaqueños. The visitor will have noticed the colonias populares and the invasions as she or he enters the city, to be sure. But if visitors are asked what percentage of the people are poor, they usually answer, "About 25% or 30%." The figure is 75%. We underestimate the proportion of poor residents because the city which we visit and know, and the city that is known and used by the middle and upper-middle class of Oaxaqueños, is either the city of the tourists or the city of the bureaucracy and the government; and that is a very pleasant and charming city indeed. The city of the morning shape-up, the empty belly, the city of drunken desperation and the dying child is not at all visible, despite the fact that it is the city of the majority. The poor rarely make their presence felt. True, every year everyone is always surprised at the huge numbers of people who turn up for the summer dance festival on the hill (Lunes del Cerro) for which admission is free. And officials are always surprised at the speed, enthusiasm, and alacrity with which housing lot opportunities are snapped up by a seemingly limitless demand, or when an organized multitude erupts out of the city center to take over land at the city limits or on the hills in an invasion. Despite the smallness of the city of Oaxaca, it seems able to swallow people up--particularly the poor.

For most of these people, migrating to the city was the most important event of their lives. Studies such as Graedon (1976) which have examined the health conditions of rural villagers as well as the nutritional status and economic conditions of both villager and urbanite should be convincing to anyone--planner, architect, sociologist, economist--that the costs of living in the villages whence the Oaxacans came over the past two generations is very great (Malina and Himes 1977; Maline et al. 1972; Stepick and Stepick 1979). To be dramatic in citing a summary statistic, one might ask, Who would want to live in a community where public health levels are so low and nutrition so deficient that 50% of the live-born children fail to live to see their fifth birthday?

The second most important event in the lives of these householders was the acquisition of a secure home site. The degree of security is arguable, of course; home sites are political footballs.

But a regularized site and regularized ownership of one's home is the second step toward realization of a tolerable, if not decent, life.

Once that is secured one does not move again. There is no real estate market for the poor in Oaxaca. There is no speculation in properties by people in the colonias. The middle and upper-middle class citizens sometimes say that some very clever poor people are making a killing in real estate speculation in the invasions, since they are acquiring valuable city land for nothing. We found no evidence of this whatsoever. There are stable, comparatively depressed real estate prices for those urban lots that are "suitable" for the poor. The market is kept depressed by the knowledge that should prices rise too high, beyond the capacity of the poor to pay, and should the present colonial boundaries fail to accommodate the new households constantly being formed from the migratory flows and natural increase in the population, then another colonia will be formed by invasion. The availability of "free land" inhibits appreciation.

Real estate speculation is further inhibited by the absence of any real liquid market for properties. There is very little property offered for sale. As one inhabitant of a well-off colonia popular state it, "Where would the people go if they sold their property?" They could go to INFONAVIT if they were very lucky, or they might give up their house and go to live with their children. (But since house sites and conditions improve with age, it is much more likely that the children would come to live with them--or better, would never have left.) In some very rare cases people have been known to return to their village. Very few house sites and houses are ever offered for sale, and poor Oaxaqueños do not regard the house and site as a speculative asset.

When the colonia is young, the inhabitants are very energetic and politically active, for they must acquire regular title to their land and force the city to recognize them. The more recent the colonia, the more reticent the city. Recent colonias are high up on the hillsides around the city and therefore extremely difficult to service with water, electricity, roads, and sewers. The cheaper the land, the more easily it can be occupied, and (in general) the more difficult it is to provide with urban services. The more the colonia ages, the greater its political clout, and the more difficult it is for the city to withstand its demands. Similarly, the older the colonia, the older its inhabitants, the further advanced they are in the domestic cycle, the greater their ability to invest money in their housing, the better the condition of the houses in the colonia, and the better off the households. These general levels of improvement can be seen in the following sections.

### Economic Conditions

A gross measure of the economic well-being of households in the different living systems of the city of Oaxaca can be seen in the median monthly income levels for total households, especially as these

compare with median expenditures for food (Figure 5.6). The graph provides an interesting commentary on the amount of money, in general terms, which is considered essential to meet minimum dietary needs of the average Oaxacan household. Median food expenditures show an increase until the third neighborhood type (the poor colonias populares), where they level off at M.N.\$1500 per month. Only in the highest two ranked colonia types does the median exceed this amount. It is perhaps worth noting that there is no reason to believe the M.N.\$1500-per-month food figure will provide a household with a nutritionally balanced and adequate diet. There is far too much evidence to the contrary concerning the physical underdevelopment of the people of the city and region to conclude that even half the population are being adequately fed. With this amount per month for food, however, people will not go hungry; and having achieved this level of food intake, households are willing to divert money to other needs. That so many in the poorest two colonia types are unable to meet even these minimal requirements is a clear and poignant indication of their plight.

Household income rises as one moves from the invasions to the middle-class sections of the city, though not entirely consistently. A better measure is per-adult-equivalent income, which is presented in Figure 5.7 along with average number of adult equivalent units per household. Now income levels show a decided rise from the poorest to the most well-to-do colonias, with the exception of the pueblos conurbados and the site-and-service projects, where conditions are better than income levels would suggest. In the pueblos conurbados one finds long-established and tightly-knit communities of large households that provide mutual help and security for their members along the lines of the traditional Mexican village. If one is a poor resident of a city, the pueblo conurbado may be the best to live. The site-and-service projects are as desirable as they are because of their great potential for development. The rapidity with which these households have been able to set themselves up in relatively decent housing makes them more desirable than other neighborhoods for the poor. The center city households are better off than those in the moderate-income colonias on the per-adult measure of income. Their improved position is brought about by their ability to control household size.

### Household Composition

The incidence of female-headed households and extended households is clearly linked to the economic status of the family. A high rate of female headedness does not mean, as it would in North American data, that fathers are absent from the household. Rather, it means

FIGURE 5.6

MEDIAN MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOMES AND FOOD EXPENDITURES  
FOR EACH NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE AND FOR THE CITY AS A WHOLE

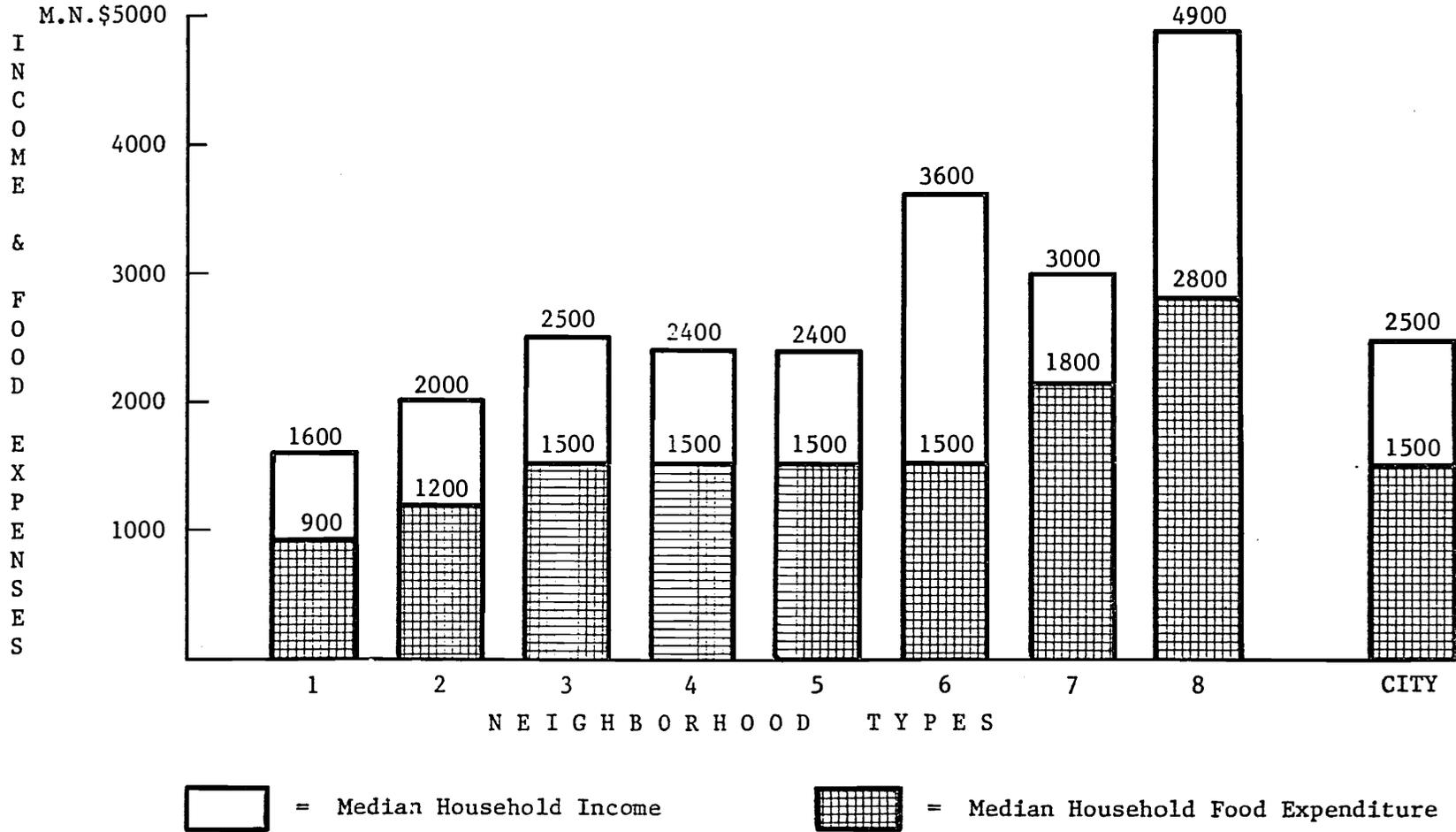
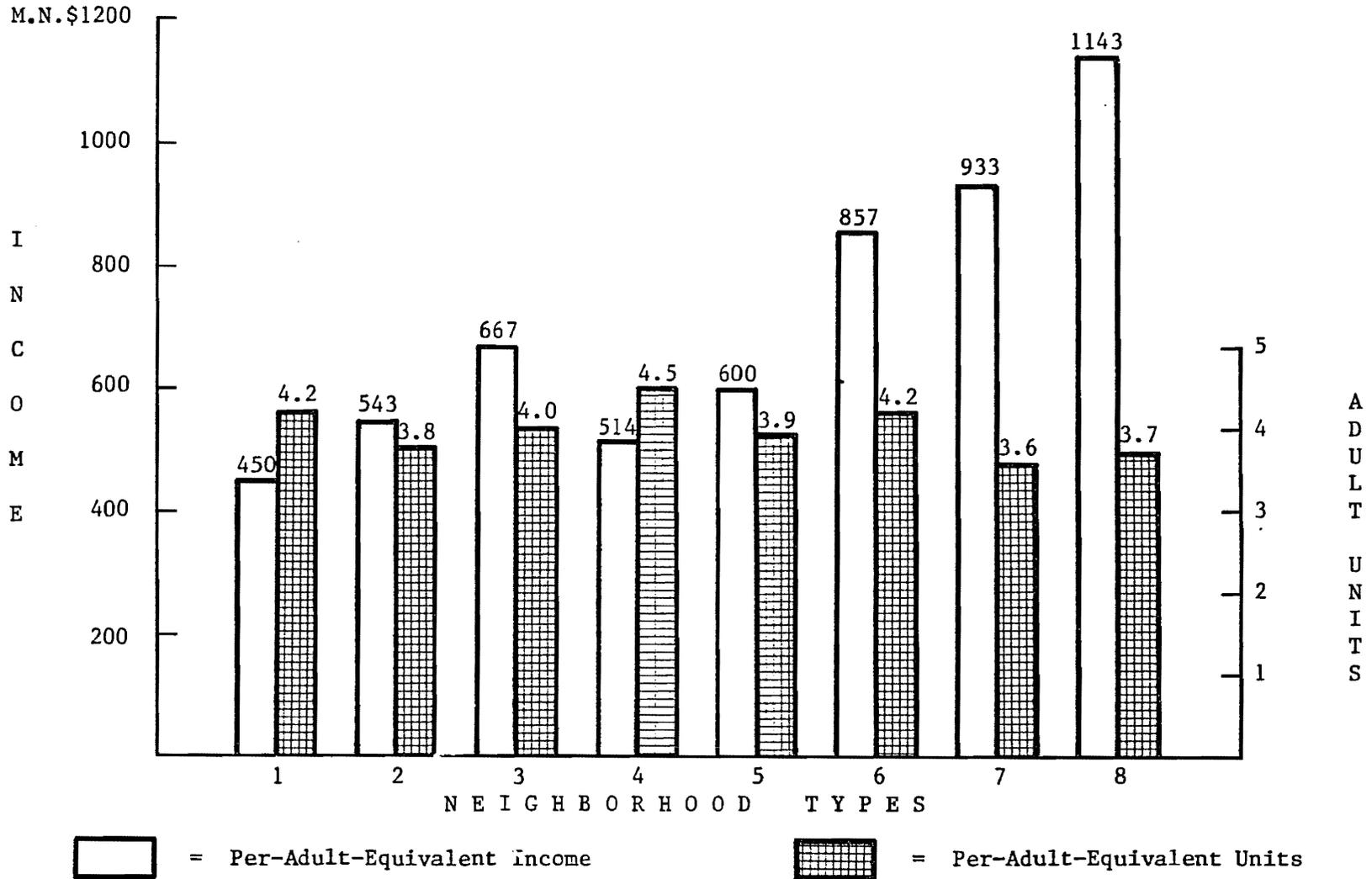


FIGURE 5.7

MEDIAN PER-ADULT-EQUIVALENT INCOME AND MEDIAN NUMBER OF PER-ADULT UNITS FOR HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE



that the women have managed to get sufficient education and job skills to land a high paying job: higher than the man in the house. So it is not surprising that the better-off colonias, by and large, have a higher incidence of femaleheadedness than the poorer ones. Of course the middle-class neighborhoods violate this correlation by keeping their wives at home to run a proper middle-class household. This middle- and upper-middle-class practice which results in a more male-centered household and a more traditional manner of living, is one of the rewards of middle-class status. Of course, even though it is the "traditional" household style and family configuration, only a small percentage of contemporary Mexicans can afford it (Figure 5.8).

Extendedness. In the earlier discussion about how to manipulate your family structure and household size so as to maximize your chances for a decent life, we noted that the best-off households were those that stuck together and grew. We suggested that the best-off household heads were those that persuaded their children to marry and raise the grandchildren within the family household. This enabled the household to raise their per capita income, and permitted economies of scale in the provision of common household services.

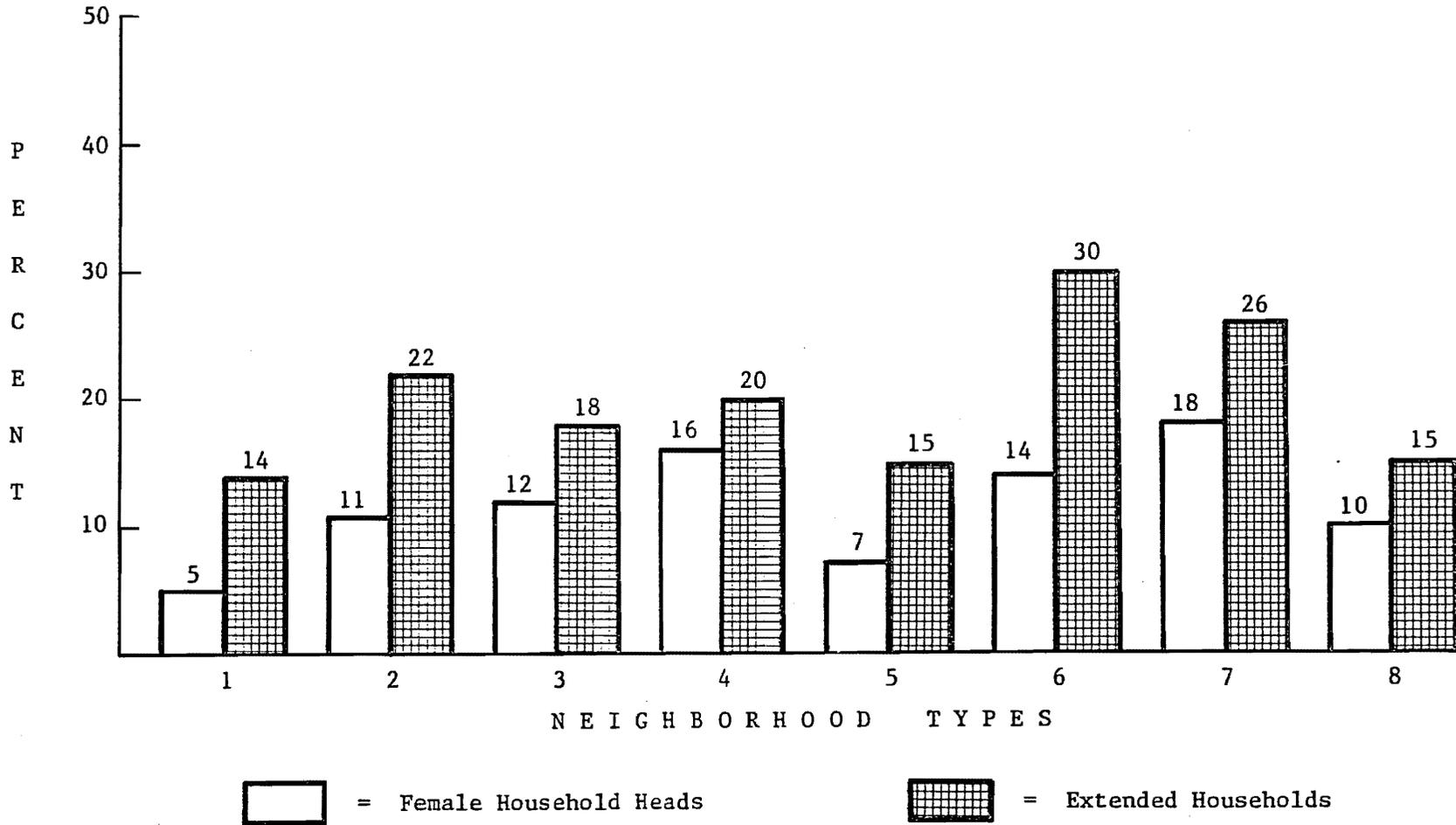
Not surprisingly extended households are found in greater number in the better-off communities which have been longer established (Figure 5.8). The households in these communities have been able to work in Oaxaca long enough to establish two generations of coresidents, and as a result of their efforts on the job and on the domestic front have kept the family together. In the moderate-income colonias populares, 30% of the households are extended, meaning that half the people in these colonias are presently living in an extended household. This figure is very close to what you would find in a traditional Zapotec village in the Oaxaca Valley.

Obviously, circular causation is working here. The household can be extended because they are "older" and have been around longer. The father, or paterfamilias, can induce his children to stay in the household because he had some inheritance to serve as an inducement and can provide working advantages and living conditions that the children could not get outside their parents' household. Thirdly, because they are working and living together, the whole group is able to achieve economies of scale, which raises their real income still further and makes the extended household even more attractive.

The frequency of extended households falls off in the middle-class colonias, just as the frequency of female-headed households does. And for the same reasons: the middle-class shun extended households because they can afford to do without the inconvenience and emotional difficulty which inevitably attends a large household with competing subgroups. (The competing subgroups are the nuclear families that make up the extended group. They compete with each other and with the grown but unmarried children for household resources.) The housing style militates against extended households as well. Because the middle-class houses have single-purpose rooms, the

FIGURE 5.8

PERCENT OF FEMALE HOUSEHOLD HEADS AND EXTENDED HOUSEHOLDS  
FOR EACH NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE



crowding is greater than in the more sprawling functionally ill-defined designs of the autoconstructed colonia popular, or the large, older houses of the central area.

Extended, flexible, large households are adaptive up to the point where the family attains a middle-class style of life. At that point the household pattern quickly reverts to nuclearity.

Dependency Ratios (Figure 5.9). The worker-to-dependent ratio is almost constant across all the poorer groups: from the invaded neighborhoods to the moderate income colonias. This near-flat distribution conceals trade-offs that are taking place that in turn permit the household to survive. The number of workers is large in the poorer families because they are sending their children into the work force as early as they can. So, despite the large number of children in these households, the dependency ratio is kept down. In the better-off households in the better neighborhoods, there are not as many children, but the children are being kept in school longer and therefore the number of dependents is raised. So, despite transparently improved conditions, the higher education levels of the households inflate the dependency rates. This struggle between fertility, education, household structure (and size), and household earnings is the theme of this report. There it turns up in understanding the dependency ratios.

#### Employment Conditions

The desirability of colonia types is an excellent predictor of both the job stability of the household head and his or her salaried status (Figure 5.10). The one exception is the type three colonias, which have a preponderance of household heads with steady jobs and a higher-than-average proportion receiving fringe benefits.

#### Educational Levels

Figure 5.11 provides data on proportions of household heads who have earned primary certificates together with the mean index of household education for each neighborhood type. There is a rise in these indicators as one moves from the least to the most desirable neighborhoods. More householders in the poor colonias (3) have completed primary school than one would expect, but the difference is not imposing.

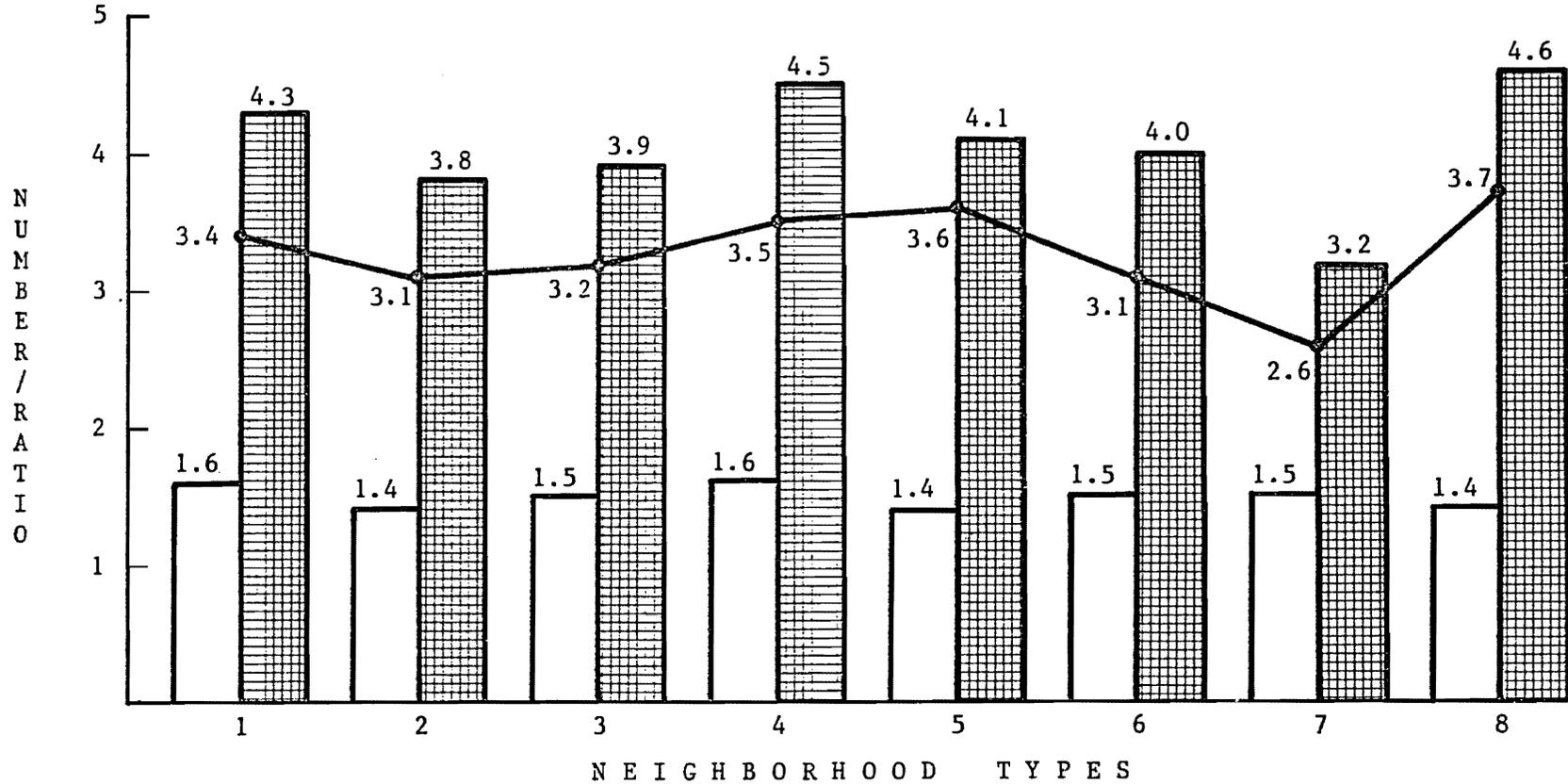
The graphs of employment and education show the highly positive correlation between them.

#### Housing Conditions

As we mentioned earlier, the life style afforded by the different living systems in the city of Oaxaca and reflected in the physical appearance of the housing in them can be seen as resulting primarily from the interplay of two major factors--time and money. Given

FIGURE 5.9

MEAN NUMBER OF WORKERS AND NON-WORKERS AND MEAN WORKER-DEPENDENCY RATIOS  
FOR HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE



 = Workers

 = Non-Workers

 = Number Non-Workers Per Worker

FIGURE 5.10

PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS IN EACH NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE  
WITH SALARIED AND WITH STABLE EMPLOYMENT

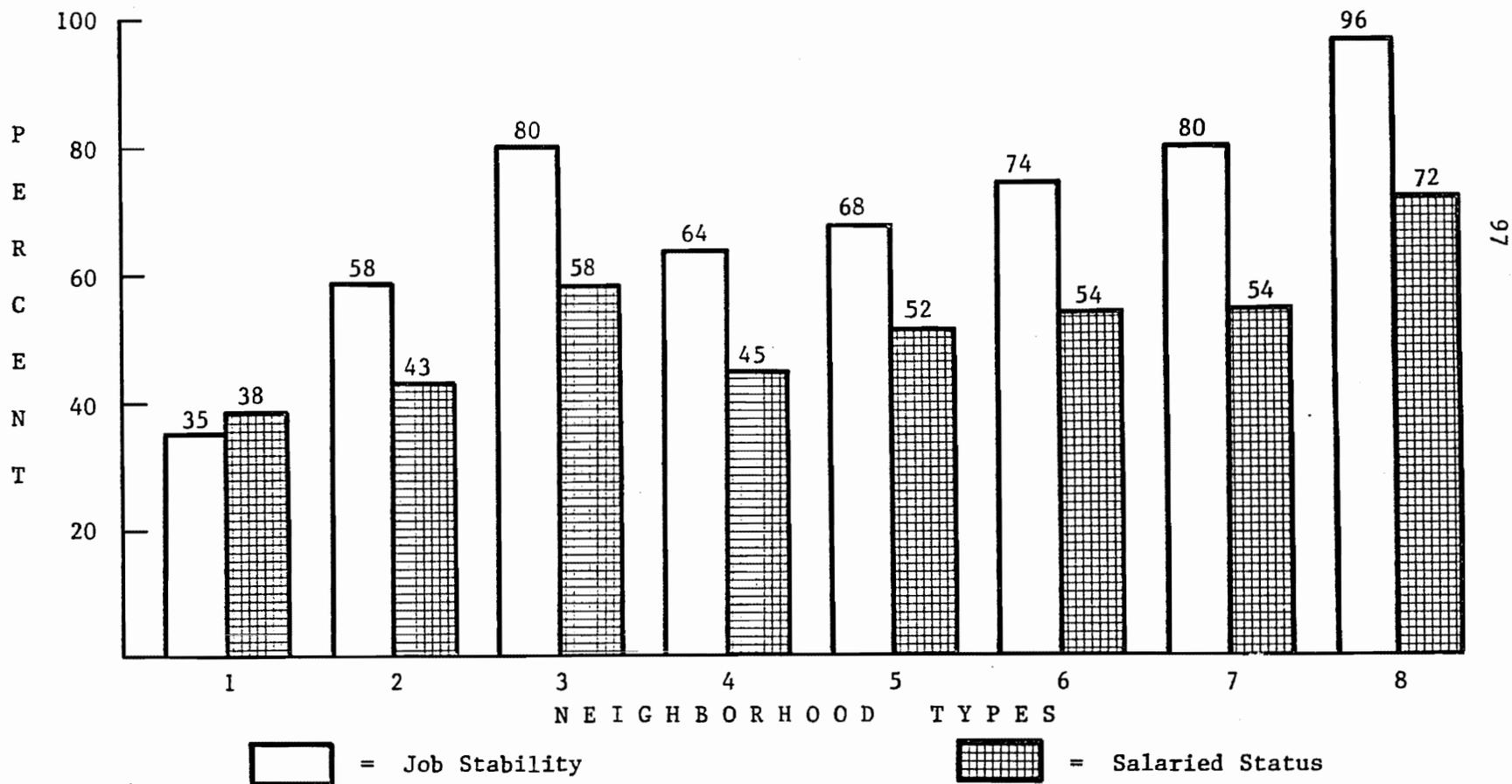
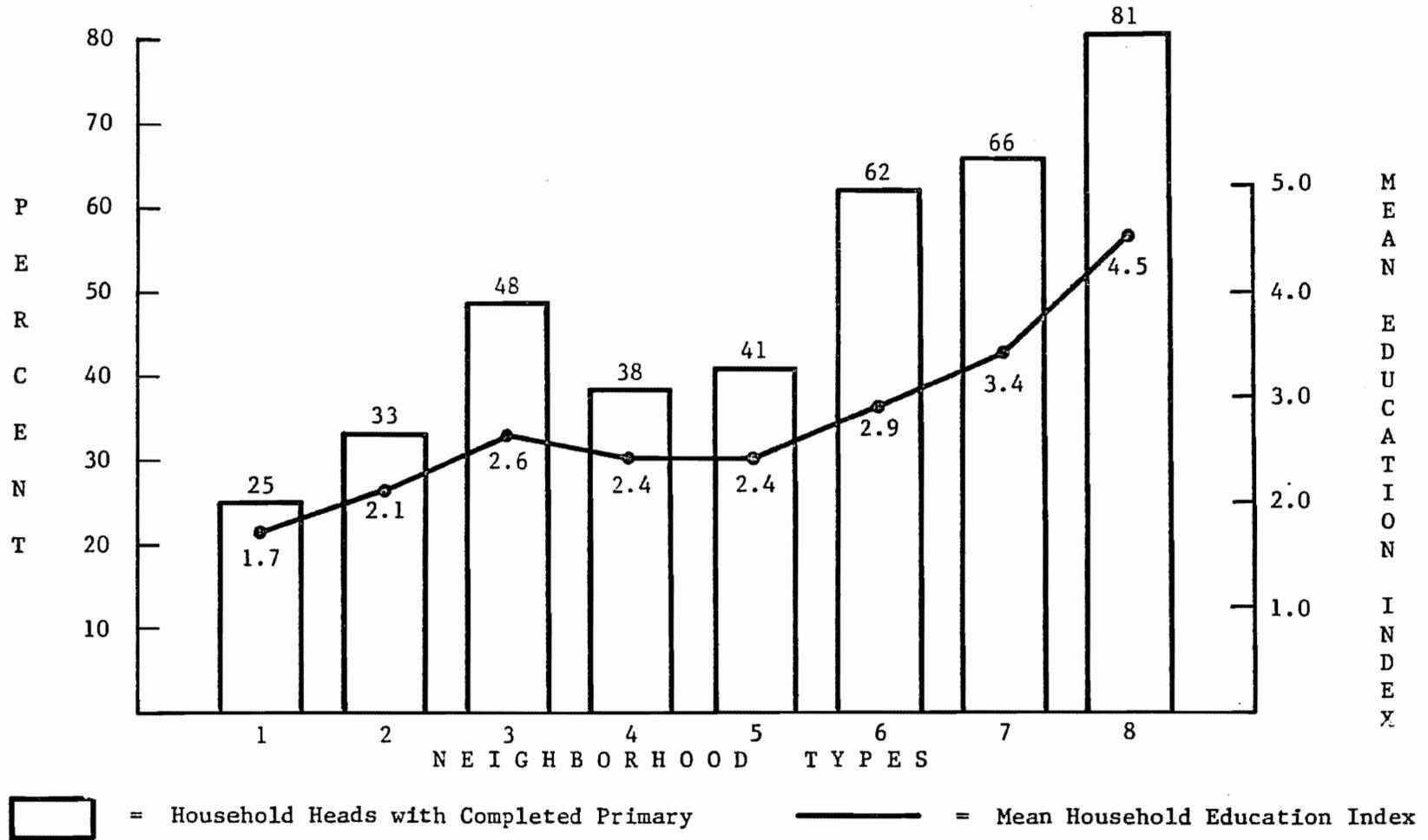


FIGURE 5.11

PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS WITH COMPLETED PRIMARY EDUCATION AND  
MEAN HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION INDEX FOR EACH NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE



sufficient time, all but the most desperately poor households are able to make some improvements in the living conditions of their homes. A comparison of the housing data from the invasions and the very poor colonias makes that point clearly. We know that many of the very poor colonias got their start in land seizures, where invaders set up housekeeping under much the same conditions that can be observed in present-day invaded areas. Within eight to ten years nearly half the make-shift housing has been converted into some sort of permanent dwelling. If it is no more than a cement block room with a dirt floor and a tin roof, at least the rain stays out. But the cost of this housing can be very high. We know that it is all too frequently obtained in the face of woefully inadequate expenditures for food. We also know, from numerous ethnographic studies which have come out of this area, that when food is in short supply, it is the children who first go hungry. The cost of housing is greatest for those who can least afford it, and the price is paid not only in hard-earned pesos, but in the lives of the children. Yet given time, all but the most desperately poor will improve their house in some way.

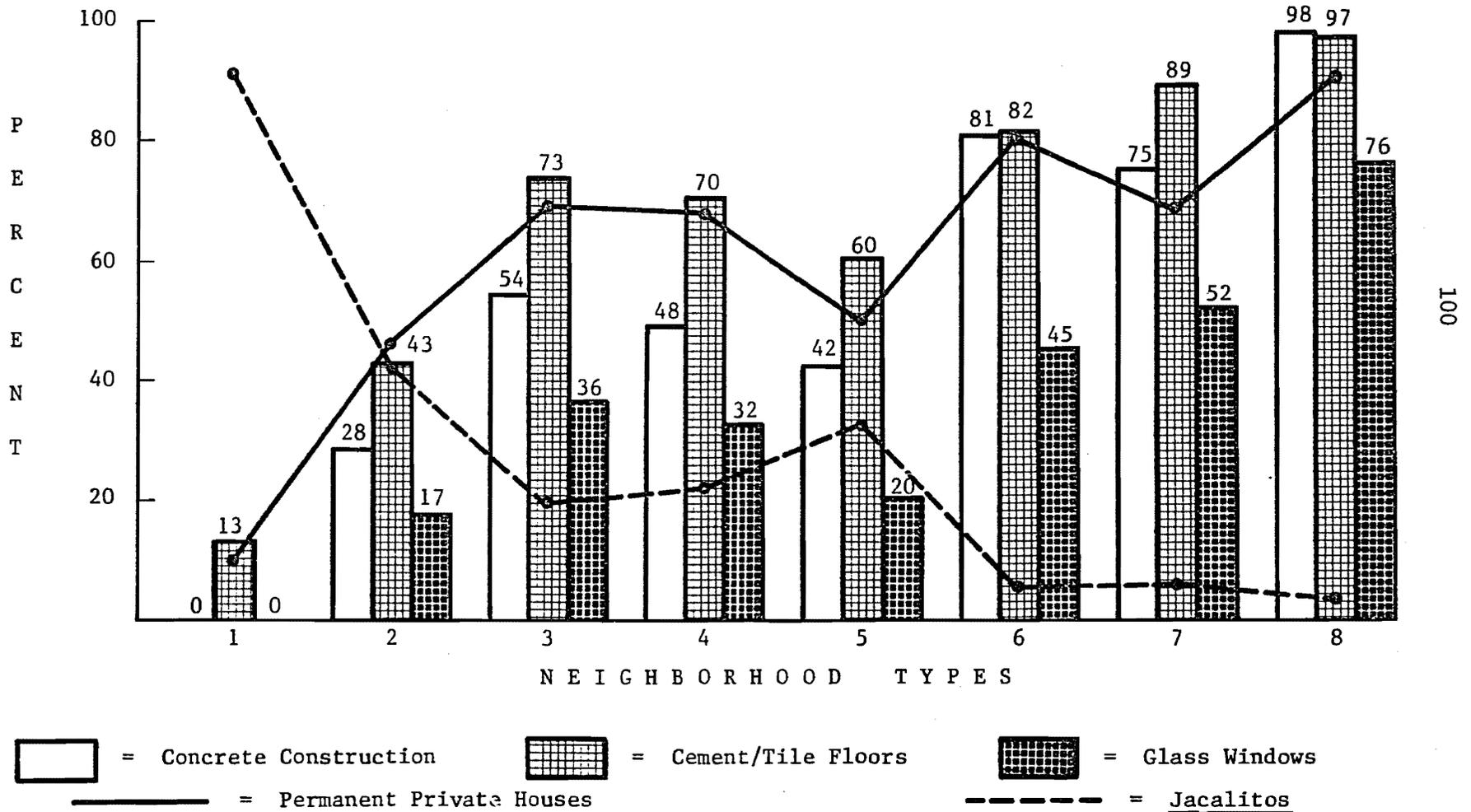
For those who have money--those whose place is in the high-ranked middle-class living system--decent housing can be obtained at not so great a cost and without the passage of time. The rich need only wait for the builders to complete the performance of their contract. Middle-level government or private-sector employees may have to wait a little longer until their name reaches the top of the list for a place in a government-subsidized housing development.

For the remainder of the population--those in the other living systems--the creation of a comfortable home and neighborhood environment comes about as an intricate interaction between the factors of time and money. The physical conditions of the living systems must be viewed in light of this consideration. For example, if we remember that type five colonias (the site-and-service projects) are among the newest sections of the city, then the differential in their state of "permanence" and "modernity" (represented in Figure 5.12) as compared to their companion living systems seem relatively insignificant. Given as much time as the pueblos and moderate-income colonias have had, site-and-service colonias will also develop into relatively well-established and not uncomfortable places. But even here in the neighborhoods that are not so very poor, the spectre of the hungry child cannot be entirely forgotten. The majority of the households of Oaxaca are poor--too poor--and the improvements which they make in their living conditions--indeed, which they must make for the general health of the household--will always be made at a price that most often the children will pay.

Once most Oaxacan households have found a place to settle, their own efforts and sacrifices alone permit advancement. They will not, by-and-large, be able to move into the already well-established neighborhoods such as the pueblos conurbados or the center city, and the site-and-service communities are rare. They must begin at the bottom, building their house and their community up over the years.

FIGURE 5.12

PERCENTS OF PERMANENT HOUSES, JACALITOS, AND SELECTED PERMANENT CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS USED IN EACH NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE



What basic city services and utilities they get from the government will come only reluctantly and after much time and haggling. The most the majority can hope for in a house will be about two rooms with a cement floor, concrete walls, a sturdy roof, a bamboo fence, and glass windows. But even for this small amount of comfort and security the household must set priorities and make difficult choices that will affect the education and health of the children, and the kinds of jobs its members will have.

## Chapter Six

### OCCUPATIONS, INCOME, AND EXPENSES

In this chapter we will examine the income-producing strategies and economic conditions for the people of the city of Oaxaca as a whole. In Chapter 7 we partition the population by household income into four groups: the very poor, the marginally poor, those who are barely making it, and the middle and upper class. We will discuss the challenges, predicaments, and strategies of the three poorest groups. But first, let us look more closely at economic conditions for the city as a whole.

#### WORKERS, INCOME, AND OCCUPATIONS

We have emphasized throughout this report the importance of putting household members into the work force. And similarly, we have noted that the family that stays together does better than the family that splits up. It comes as a surprise, then, to note that over 60% of the urban households have only one worker, as Table 6.1 shows. The reason is the youth of the population (median age of 16), which mandates the formation of young, nuclear households with fertility incomplete--the very households that contribute the fewest workers to the work force, per capita.

TABLE 6.1

#### PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH A GIVEN NUMBER OF INCOME PRODUCERS

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
0	3.3%
1	63.6%
2	22.2%
3	6.8%
4	2.9%
5+	1.1%

Mean = 1.4; Median = 1.2; Mode = 1; N = 1,479

The median income of the household head (defined as the principal wage earner) is M.N.\$2,178, a figure somewhat greater than the minimum salary of M.N. \$1,800. The distribution of incomes can be seen in Table 6.2. Over 30% of the household heads do not earn the minimum wage.

TABLE 6.2  
HOUSEHOLD HEADS' MONTHLY INCOME

PERCENTILE	MONTHLY INCOME
10th	M.N.\$1000
30th	1700
50th	2200
70th	3000
90th	6300+

Mean = 8106; Mode = 3000; N = 1410

Second workers in the household do less well (in line with our definition of household head as the earner of the highest wage). Two-thirds of them (mainly wives and children) do not earn the minimum wage.

Since there has been a good deal of interest in the literature concerning the contribution of outside workers to the household--principally migrants to Mexico City (in our case) or to the United States--we should report that these modern-day remittance men are chimerical in nature (only 6.5% of the households report them).

#### Household Income: Minimum Standards

In this study we have decided to compromise between the banks and the government is setting minimum standards. Whereas the government might like to believe that a family can maintain itself on the minimum wage so carefully calculated for each region of the country (in Oaxaca at the time of the study (1977) it was M.N.\$1800 per month), the banks know better. The particular fund (Fondo de la Vivienda, or FOVI) mandated to lend money to the poor for house construction sets its minimal standard for loans at 1.8 minimum wage (M.N.3240 per month). We agree with FOVI that 1.8 minimum wage are required for a minimal degree of economic security, but rather than insist that the income be that of the household head and spouse, we feel that income from all sources is ethnographically a more justifiable measure, since budgets are calculated on this basis. And as was argued at length and amply justified in Chapter 3 of this report, the natural unit of analysis is the household.

The distribution of household income can be seen in Table 6.3. Median household income is MN.\$2500, well below the minimum standard of 1.8 minimum wage, although around 40% of the inhabitants of the city do have household incomes above the minimal standard. Most of the population, in other words, are dealing with the economics of survival. In the next chapter we shall detail their strategies.

TABLE 6.3

## TOTAL MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

PERCENTILE	INCOME
10th	M.N.\$1,200
30th	1,800
50th	2,500
70th	3,800
90th	7,000+

Mean = 3,763; Mode = 3,000; N = 1,390

Occupations

The occupations of heads of household are concentrated in four areas of the economy: government workers, empleados in the private sector, service workers, and workers in the construction industry.

Second workers in the household are somewhat more diversified in their job choice and are more fully represented in the less preferable job categories, such as industrial worker (obrero) and vendor. There are three major sources of second workers, given the household structure and dynamics of the domestic cycle in Oaxaca: parents of children who are household heads; wives who have been freed from, or have freed themselves from the burdens of child care; and grown children who are entering the work force at age 15 or 16. In the first case, the children are empleados and their parents empleados or obreros. In the second case, the wives tend to hold service or sales ("vendors" is more descriptive) jobs. The grown children who are entering the work force are rarely empleados--if they are from the household of poor parents; more commonly, they are construction workers, service workers, or industrial workers. The occupational categories of household heads and secondary workers may be seen in Table 6.4

TABLE 6.4  
 PERCENTAGES OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS AND SECONDARY  
 WORKERS IN OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES

OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS	PERCENTAGE OF SECONDARY WORKERS
Government Employees	23.7%	16.4%
Private Employees	20.5%	14.8%
Service Workers	17.4%	18.8%
Construction Workers	15.8%	8.3%
Merchants	8.9%	12.5%
Artisans	5.3%	4.6%
Agricultural Workers	4.9%	7.9%
Industrial Workers	2.4%	16.2%
Professionals	.9%	.3%
Entrepreneurs	.3%	.1%
	N = 1,387	N = 745

Thus the types of jobs held by the secondary work force tend to be of a lower status than those of the primary workers. While secondary workers are important in increasing household income, their incomes are decidedly lower than those of the household head.

Interestingly, a concentration in the lower sector of the economy on the part of secondary workers has not affected their job stability. Seventy-one percent of the heads of household said they had held their current job for a year or longer. The comparable figure for secondary workers is 13%. Thus, secondary workers are by-and-large not a flexible, floating work force reacting to the whims of some lurch in the Mexican economy, but rather a stable part of the work force integral to the survival and coping strategies of the Oaxacan household.

#### CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

Some part of the urban strategy begins to make itself clear in the distribution of income and expenses for the household. The following figures are for the whole city and therefore confound opposing

trends generated by different class strategies.<sup>1</sup> But despite this, some clear trends can be seen.

First, Oaxaqueños spend practically no money on housing. Housing is their best and usually only investment and as such has done very well for them.<sup>2</sup> Fifty percent of the population spend less than 7% of their income on rent or mortgage, taxes, electricity, water, and fuel.

Oaxaqueños spend almost no money on "diversions," or entertainment. In Spanish, diversiones connotes specific types of entertainment for which one pays money--seeing a picture show, attending a public dance for which an entrance fee is charged, going to the carnival or circus when it comes to town. For this type of entertainment 80% report no expenditures at all. Cities are places where serious economic problems are solved and where economic opportunities are earned and taken advantage of. There may be bright lights in the city, but the vast majority of the inhabitants ignore them. The old song about keeping them down on the farm once they have visited Paris has no meaning here.<sup>3</sup> So much is clear to the inhabitants.

But their life is not one of unremitting toil. Much of what we would regard as "entertainment" is coded somewhat differently by the people of Oaxaca. A Sunday afternoon spent lazily and enjoyably

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<sup>1</sup>A note on the interpretation of figures for household expenditures: The question the social workers asked was, "What did you spend last month on food (housing, medical expenses, etc.)? Expenses such as food, housing, and transportation will not vary much from month to month, but others--medical expenses, savings, entertainment, payments--will occur sporadically. Figures on households reporting these expenditures thus give us a good idea of what portion of the population as a whole might be spending money in these areas at any given time, and how much those expenditures would be. They do not reflect some vague notion the people have as to a monthly average. In this sense, they are probably a more real reflection of the actual economic situation of the people.

<sup>2</sup>The "average" house lot was purchased in 1970, in the sense that 50% of the people reported buying their house lot since that date. The "average" house was begun around 1973. Over the past ten years land values have risen from M.N.\$14,725 to M.N.\$25,017, again on the average, and house values have increased around 8% a year. Some of the house sites were acquired free, by invasion. The return on this investment has been most gratifying to those who enjoy it.

<sup>3</sup>We have done a great deal of research on this topic over the past seven years, and our finding is solid. People say and believe things like "there is much more movement in the city, much more joy, many more things to do" only in Spanish-language novelas.

drinking mescal with one's neighbors is not a "diversion" strictly speaking. It is merely the traditional end of the communal work party (tequio or faena) which began in the early morning hours to carry out some communal project and which waned as the sun climbed higher in the sky and as the mescal began to get the better of civic virtue. Visiting one's mistress, buying her presents, or entertaining one's lover is not a "diversion"--it is a necessary release from everyday domesticity, an expression of the freedom that all people need. Chatting pleasantly in the market is not "entertainment;" one has to find out where the best prices are and the good produce, as well. As with all people, pleasures that cost nothing tend to be built into daily routine for Oaxaqueños; so it is not surprising they report they spend little on them. By their definition, it is certainly true.

Oaxaqueños spend virtually nothing for formal medical services. Eighty-eight percent of the population report no professional medical expenditures. With only half the city's population having access to pre-paid medical insurance--of dubious quality in any case--the rest are left to deal with the private doctors, whom they simply cannot afford. Regardless of the need, which is often great, the inhabitants self-diagnose their illnesses or seek advice from folk practitioners. They will purchase drugs (available without prescription) on this basis.

We should hasten to add that their failure to spend money on recognized ("official") medical resources does not mean that illness is not a financial burden to them. It is, particularly because of their lack of access to regular, modern medical care. Illnesses persist for longer among the Oaxaca poor and lower-middle class, despite the clement climate they enjoy, because they are malnourished, afflicted by upper respiratory infections during the dry season, and weakened by enteritic infections and dehydration during the wet. Colds linger on, and serious conditions (pneumonias, cardiac conditions) are treated with folk remedies or injections with little efficacy. Money is being poured out all the time for drugs from the pharmacy, infections from paramedical practitioners, potions and more injections from curanderos, and hot tips from friends and relatives, most of whom have no lack of opinions about illness and implicit theories of the therapeutic process. But householders do not tell social workers about these expenditures, and we can only guess at their magnitude. It is best to state clearly that medical expenses are a heavy burden on the poor of Oaxaca--perhaps the heaviest because of their unpredictability--without attempting to quantify them.

Oaxaqueños save almost no money either. Over 91% reported making no regular savings at all. They do not have bank accounts or post office accounts. They do regard their consumer durables as a form of savings, much in the way that villagers regard pigs as ambulatory savings accounts. A stove or a television set can be sold and does not lose its value nearly as quickly as it might on the other side of the border. The Oaxacans do not regard their houses and house sites as forms of savings, however. As we mentioned, there is good reason for this. There is no market for the houses and properties

of the majority of Oaxaqueños. People rarely have enough money to purchase a second house lot so that they could both harbor the prospect of selling a house while retaining a place to live.

There is no liquid pool of cash, either, that can be tapped at any time to pay for emergencies--nor are there insurance policies that can be cashed, or their like. In that sense, the vast majority of Oaxacans have no savings.

Lastly, most Oaxaqueños buy nothing on installment. Three-quarters of the population reported having no payments whatsoever.

### The Food Budget

The dimensions of poverty evidence themselves when one examines the proportion of household income spent on food. Half the households are spending over 50% of their income on food. In fact, one third are spending over two-thirds of the total household income on food. There is a general belief in Mexico that food is cheaper in cities like Oaxaca which are surrounded by farm lands and serve as distribution centers, and that therefore the minimum wage need not be as high as in the central capital and industrial cities of the north. In fact, for many commodities such as corn, eggs, and fish, the city is a net importer from outside the region; prices are often higher for these products in Oaxaca than they are in the capital city. This is also true for many vegetable products, which out-of-state wholesalers purchase before they ripen from local truck farmers. The produce is then sent out of Oaxaca without going through the central market (Waterbury 1977). Such items as tomatoes, cucumbers, and the like are often more expensive in the Oaxaca market, 60 kilometers from where they are grown, than they are in Mexico City or Puebla, 500 kilometers from the source.

Our figures show that the median family spends around M.N.\$1500 per month for food (Table 6.5. People do not have more to spend on food, and the result for the poorer people of the colonias populares is a chronic state of malnutrition which can readily be demonstrated in the health conditions of the children in elementary school (Malina et al. 1976; Malina et al. 1977).

TABLE 6.5

## MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURES FOR FOOD

PERCENTILE GROUP	EXPENDITURE
10th	M.N.\$ 600
30th	1000
50th	1500
70th	2000
90th	3000+

Mean = 1666; Mode = 1500; N = 1449

### Transportation

The only other expense of significance to the Oaxaqueños is transportation; 75% of the population record transportation expenses, the median being M.N.\$1.08 per month. Because Oaxaca is still a small city and because schools and markets are generally within walking distance, transportation expenses are low. In bigger cities, or in areas where a large proportion of the poor are not within easy walking distance of major services, we will expect to find transport expenses bulking very large in the family budget. So far, not here.

### Conclusion

The average household budget for Oaxaca is a very tight one, as the distribution of expenditures shows (Table 6.6).

TABLE 6.6

## DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENSES IN THE OAXACAN BUDGET

EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	MEDIAN EXPENDITURE
Housing*	12%
Food and Beverages	60%
Transportation	3%
Medical Treatment	0%
Entertainment	0%
Other**	25%

\*Includes mortgage or rent, taxes, water, electricity, and fuel.

\*\*The median Oaxacan family has M.N.\$600 (U.S.\$30) per month to pay all other expenses: clothing, school fees, folk-medical care, books, newspapers, and the like.

The average Oaxaqueño is poor, and the household budget contains little leeway. With no savings, except in the furnishings they own, the house they are building, and the lot they have either purchased or invaded, the average Oaxacan household is in frail economic health. In times of distress or illness they will retrench. Food will be cut back. In particular, it will be cut back from non-producers in the family. Women will go hungry, children will suffer, and some will sicken and die. The household will survive--that is critical--but the cost is very high. Money will be borrowed, from close relatives without interest, from more distant relatives at 10% interest a month. The kin network will be activated to provide support, and some will respond. But most people have their own problems of finding employment and curing illness and have none too much to share.

But still and all, it is better in the city than it was in the village. The fact is that people are happy with their situation. They remember only too well the dead end of the villages which have been laid waste by the twentieth century. They remember clearly the village as a rural storage area for the migrant workers that toil for the landowners because they cannot support themselves on such meagre resources as they have. In the city they are at the mercy of circumstances beyond their control, but at least sometimes they can see their way out--if not for themselves, then for their children.

## Chapter Seven

### ECONOMIC GROUPS AND THEIR STRATEGIES

#### FOR SURVIVAL AND ADAPTATION

In this chapter we are going to present three simple models of the interrelationships between what we regard as the important variables that describe the problems of coping and making it for the citizens of Oaxaca. We focus our attention on three modes of adaptation and struggle which characterize the problems and constraints faced by 95% of the population. We do not study the top 5% of the population--the middle- and upper-class members of the city population whose mode of adaptation is somewhat more familiar to us.

#### MAKING IT ECONOMICALLY

##### Per-Adult Income: The Dependent Variable

We are going to define "making it" by the success of the household at generating income to sustain each household member. Despite our anthropological predilections for cultural and social variables, the perspectives of the local people and our own practicality suggest that the single simplest source of problems and concerns lies in the area of getting enough money and mobilizing a sufficiency of social and political resources (read "money" again) to cope with urban life.

Since we have demographic data on each household in the sample, we are able to construct a measure of the economic success of the household that takes its size into account. We do not use per-capita income as a measure because it over-emphasizes the cost of children, exaggerating their importance in the domestic budget. Instead, we use a per-adult-equivalent scale in order to sensitize the measure to the consumption needs of the household (see Kleiman 1966 for a discussion).

Our adult equivalency scale is not the most sensitive possible with our data. We have found that a cruder scale is both more realistic, in the sense that it does not require that we accept the accuracy of the reported age for every child, and just as robust as the finer-tuned scales favored by some economists. We agree with Kuznets (1976), who has examined data from several countries where the finer-grained measures of per-adult equivalencies are used and found that if, instead of giving a separate weight to each different age, one assigned half an adult-equivalency to each child under 18, the results are just as satisfactory. Even data from the U.S. did as well when the crude equivalency was used (Kuznets 1976:32).

Simpler is better is our view as well. However, we modified the Kuznets equivalency by making the cutoff point for "entering adulthood" 15 years instead of eighteen. We are not suggesting that Mexican children mature faster (quite the contrary is the case, as it happens), but rather that the point in the life cycle where the child either enters the job market or becomes an expensive, dependent student is at 15 when secondary education begins.

### Three Levels of "Making It"

We use the per-adult-equivalency measure for household incomes to determine three levels of "making it" (or not making it, as the case may be). We recognize that all cutoff points are arbitrary, but feel ours are somewhat better motivated than usual. We are fortunate, in Mexico, in being able to adapt the work of the National Commission on Minimum Salaries which has set the minimum wage for 132 different regions of the country. We are especially more fortunate than the citizens of Mexico in that we do not have to try to live on the minimum salary, which is a near impossibility. As we suggested earlier, we think that the government lending institutions who are chartered to make housing loans to households have it about right when they suggest that the minimum income required to support any kind of a loan (i.e., any kind of participation in the commercial economy) is 1.8 minimum wage. This is what is called in Mexico the "FOVI standard"--i.e., it is the cutoff point set by the Fondo de Vivienda for house improvement loans.

FOVI insists that the 1.8 minimum wage be earned by the household head and his or her spouse alone. Household head is defined both in our study and by FOVI as the person with the highest income in the family. We are somewhat more generous than FOVI and use total household income rather than the head's and spouse's incomes alone as the basis of calculation, since it is the household head alone, and since households have been taken as the unit of analysis throughout this study. Since the minimum wage for the city of Oaxaca is M.N.\$1800, we set the minimum household income at 1.8 times this amount, or M.N.\$3240. FOVI supplies us with the upper limit of income for those whom the government recognizes need help to enter the commercial loan market. Household incomes in excess of 4.8 minimum wage are deemed sufficient to permit one to negotiate with the commercial banks--to enter the middle class roughly--and so we set this as the upper bound of the group of households that are "just making it." We do not study the coping style and adaptive strategies of those who are above this level--the 5% who are really making it. We reserve them for future study. In order to compare our results with those done in the U.S. and Europe, we take the North American standard of a household of three adult-equivalent units (two adults and two children), as used by the U.N., the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank, in order to establish the line of our classes. This gives us three groups of people, then: the poor (i.e., those whose per-adult household incomes are below the FOVI standard divided by three), those who are barely making it (those above the FOVI standard divided by three

but whose incomes are not so large as to be able to enter the commercial market), and the well-to-do (the top 5%). We create a fourth class of the very poor by subdividing the poor into two classes: those whose per-adult-equivalent incomes are less than the minimum wage divided by three, and the marginally poor, who fall between 1.0 and 1.8 minimum wage divided by three. The marginals are the general concern of most of the governmental aid programs in Mexico, while the very poor have been left to themselves on the grounds that the government cannot provide services to those who will not eventually repay the cost of their introduction or maintenance.

Summarizing, then, here are the four classes and their distribution in the urban population (Table 7.1):

TABLE 7.1  
HOUSEHOLDS IN FOUR ECONOMIC GROUPS

ECONOMIC GROUP	INCOME RANGE*	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
The Very Poor (I)**	M.N.\$ 0 - 599	571	41.2
The Marginally Poor (II)	600 - 1079	455	32.8
The Barely Adequate (III)	1080 - 2879	288	20.8
The Middle and Upper Class (IV)	2880 +	73	5.3

N = 1,387

\*That is to say, monthly income range per adult-equivalent unit.

\*\*Roman numerals are used throughout Appendix B in referring to the economic classes.

One can immediately see the implications of the FOVI standard and the adult-equivalence scale. Seventy-four percent of the households do not earn what we consider to be the minimum necessary for participation in the modern Mexican economy. Of them, fewer than half are in a position to take advantage of the few direct government aid programs, which are generally limited to individuals who are unsalaried and earn more than the minimum wage set by the minimum wage commission.

#### THE SOCIAL, OCCUPATIONAL, AND ECONOMIC VARIABLES

##### IN THE MODEL

A causal model in the Simon-Blalock tradition has been constructed of the adaptive modes of the three classes of people: the very poor, the marginally poor, and those who are barely making it.

Each model contains the same seven variables:

1. Educational level of the household head

2. Educational level attained by the whole household
3. Kind of job held by the household head
4. Kind of job held by the other major wage earner in the household
5. "Salaried" status of working household members
6. Ratio of dependents to workers in the household
7. Stability of employment held by the head of household.

The performance of the three groups on the independent variables can be briefly sketched.

#### 1. Educational Level of the Household Head

As one would expect, the educational level of the household head rises with increased income. Or better stated, household heads with higher educational levels head households with higher per-adult incomes. The percentage of household heads that have completed primary education and the typical educational level for household heads is given in Table 7.2.

TABLE 7.2  
EDUCATIONAL LEVELS FOR HOUSEHOLD HEADS  
IN THREE ECONOMIC CLASSES AND IN THE CITY AS A WHOLE

	ECONOMIC CLASS*			CITY
	1	2	3	
Proportion With Completed Primary Education	34%	50%	76%	50%
Median Educational Level Completed	Some Primary	Primary	Some Secondary	Primary
N = 1450				

\*1 = the very poor; 2 = the marginally poor; 3 = the barely adequate

In all the models the education of the household head will be regarded as a given in the formulation of an adaptive strategy for the household. The near illiteracy of the very poor, compared with the functional literacy of the marginals mandates quite different strategies

in the process of "making it." The educational levels of those who are making it obviously permit them access to training and skills necessary for functioning in the modern commercial economy.

## 2. Household Educational Level

The measure for the educational level of the household is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Number years educational attainment summed for all household members} + \text{Number children in school}}{\text{Number people in the household over seven years of age}}$$

The measure is quite cumbersome, although conceptually very simple. We are trying to distinguish between households that keep their children in school and those who do not. If a household has a large number of children in school, or better, a large proportion in school, or best of all, a large proportion of students in advanced stages of schooling—secondary or technical—they will show high levels on this index. Households with many children minimally educated will score in the middle range. Households consisting of an ill-educated couple or households with a lot of children over seven years of age who are not attending school will score lowest of all.

It is widely (and uncritically) believed in Mexico that education is the key to success—and our figures for the three economic classes bear this out. The very poor households have lower scores on the household education index, but not substantially lower than the marginally poor. The gradient is as expected: up with income (Table 7.3).

TABLE 7.3

MEAN HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION LEVELS  
FOR THREE ECONOMIC CLASSES AND THE CITY

	POOR	MARGINAL	ADEQUATE	CITY
Household Education Level	2.29	2.48	3.89	3.00

As we shall see shortly, the role played by the household head's educational level and by the educational level of the household is quite different for the three groups, and the enthusiastic endorsement (by the rich) of sacrifice and investment in education (by the poor) is only partly justified.

### 3. The "Salaried Status" of Household Workers

The third variable that we include in the model of "making it" is the salaried status of the domestic work force. Workers can either be "salaried" (asalariado) or "unsalaried" (no asalariado). If they are salaried, they have access to all kinds of fringe benefits: subsidized loans for housing or subsidized housing itself, government guaranteed loans for emergencies, pensions, subsidized and sometimes free health care, and many of the fringe benefits like paid vacations that workers in developed countries rightly take for granted. Many anthropologists and economists have argued that it is the salaried status of the worker in Latin America that counts--much more than the actual salary paid (Leeds 1964; Victoria 1970). Ekstein (1976) has argued that the best indicator of membership in the modern sector of the economy in Latin America is whether the employee has social security or not:

In Latin America, access to social security... as well as income and prestige tend to be occupationally linked, with jobs in the modern sector offering the most social and economic benefits. (p. 109)

We distinguish three kinds of households with respect to the salaried status of workers:

1. Households in which no worker has social security. All (or the sole worker) are employed in the informal sector of the economy.
2. Households in which there is at least one worker in the formal and at least one other in the informal sector; the first has social security and the second does not.
3. Households in which all workers (or the sole worker) have social security.

As one might expect, there is a steady rise in the percentage of households with one or more workers in the formal sector, along with a steady decline of households who are excluded from salaried positions with fringe benefits. The distributions can be seen in Table 7.4.

TABLE 7.4

SALARIED STATUS OF HOUSEHOLD WORKERS  
IN THREE ECONOMIC CLASSES AND IN THE CITY

SALARIED STATUS	ECONOMIC CLASS			CITY
	POOR	MARGINAL	ADEQUATE	
No Social Security	51%	38%	23%	40%
One Worker in Household Has Social Security, One Does Not	17%	15%	17%	17%
All Workers Have Social Security	33%	47%	60%	44%

We needlessly note in passing that we do not think that attaining salaried status is sufficiently general and important a goal so as to make it our dependent variable. Too few of the very poor and marginally poor have the credentials required for most salaried jobs.

We are not sure, however, that it should not be a goal for the government to continue expanding the social security system at the rate it was being extended under Luís Echeverría, so long as a creeping credencialismo is not used to permanently mire the poorest members of the society in the informal sector as the forgotten people in Mexican development.

#### 4. The Job Type of the Household Head

An important ingredient in the strategy of making it is the kind of job a person has. There are clear differences between the generations in this respect: younger people are more likely to hold empleado jobs than older people, just as they are more likely to have the higher education levels demanded by such jobs. The type of job is correlated with income, security, and education. We have reclassified the census categories into seven types of jobs:

1. Agriculture: Here, very small-scale horticulture around the city. Found to a large degree in the older rural cantonments.
2. Vending: Small-scale traders who are not producers, but regatones.
3. Artisans: Petty commodity producers who do not own the means of production. Weavers, potters, brick makers, and the like.

4. Service Workers: Domestics, in the main.
5. Blue-Collar Workers: Casual labor, construction workers, blue-collar factory workers.
6. Empleados: People working for the government or in private business establishments.
7. Owners and Professionals: Owners of stores and factories (few enough of them). Lawyers and doctors (many of them). Owners of small tiendas (tiny general stores) who are full-time workers. Petty capitalists.

The following table shows the distribution of household heads over these job categories for all three economic classes, as well as for the city as a whole (Table 7.5).

TABLE 7.5

## JOBS HELD BY HOUSEHOLD HEADS IN THREE INCOME CLASSES

JOB TYPE AND RANK	INCOME CLASS			CITY
	POOR	MARGINAL	ADEQUATE	
1. Agriculture	7%	5%	2%	5%
2. Vending	4%	4%	3%	4%
3. Artisanry	7%	5%	4%	6%
4. Services	25%	12%	10%	17%
5. Blue Collar	22%	22%	8%	18%
6. Empleado	32%	46%	62%	44%
7. Owners/Professionals	3%	6%	11%	7%
Mean Job Class	4.6	5.0	5.5	4.9
OCI*	.10	.17	.32	.14
Number	553	441	274	1,418

\*Occupational Concentration Index.

The Occupational Concentration Index, here as elsewhere, measures the degree to which the group or income class is spreading its workers over the whole spectrum of jobs, or concentrating workers in one or few job categories. It is a measure in this case of the degree to which income classes are managing to feed their workers into the better jobs, and as we expected, the upper income class is managing to do that to a greater degree than any other. The marginals are more like the very poor than they are like those who are just making it.

### 5. Job Type of Second Worker in Household

The second workers in the 33% of the households that have them are crucial to the domestic strategy for development. And the households that are making it are different from the other two household types in two ways: they are more successful in placing members in the work force, and they place them in better jobs. Thirty-two percent and 28% of the very poor and marginally poor households respectively have two wage earners, while the households that are making it have 34%. The Occupation Concentration Index is the same (.08) for the very poor and marginally poor households, while the concentration is quite high for those households that are making it at .30. The higher index is a result of these households placing workers in the middle-class salaried jobs.

The distribution of job types for the households' second workers in the various income classes can be seen in the following table (Table 7.6).

TABLE .6

#### JOB HELD BY SECOND WORKERS IN THREE INCOME CLASSES

JOB TYPE AND RANK	INCOME CLASS			CITY
	POOR	MARGINAL	ADEQUATE	
1. Agriculture	5%	4%	2%	3%
2. Vending	7%	7%	3%	5%
3. Artisanry	8%	6%	2%	5%
4. Services	33%	21%	8%	21%
5. Blue Collar	10%	16%	8%	13%
6. <u>Empleado</u>	25%	35%	60%	40%
7. Owners/Professionals	11%	12%	17%	13%
Mean Job Class	4.5	4.9	5.6	5.0
Percentage Households Having Second Worker	32%	28%	34%	33%

### 6. Job Stability

One of the characteristics of life for the poor in the city of Oaxaca is the constant search for jobs. A fluctuating economy, weak or nonexistent unions, the lack of social security or unemployment compensation--all these converge to ensure that the life of the poor is one of periodic desperate job searching. The poor are very

articulate on this score, and can detail their strategies: their construction and use of information networks and of conocidos ("friends," "acquaintances") to keep them informed of available jobs and to give them the inside line on such jobs. Their lives are insecure, and there is no safety net to catch them when they fall ill or lose their job.

Keeping one's job, as much as getting a salaried job with social security, is an important goal for the urban poor. In the survey, we categorized them as having enjoyed job stability if they reported that they had held the same job for a year. And the results are as expected for the city: the higher the income class, the greater the degree of stability. And the trend actually underestimates the amount of stability in the upper income class, since many of those who report they have changed their jobs are really only transferred government workers who have come to Oaxaca in the past year and have never missed a pay check. The fact that 41% of the very poor have changed jobs in the last year is very important. It means that we should be discounting the value of their meagre income stream since the amount of psychological security it provides is lowered by the degree of risk associated with the instability of the job market.

Table 7.7 gives the figures for the three income classes and the city as a whole.

TABLE 7.7  
JOB STABILITY REPORTED BY HOUSEHOLD HEADS  
IN THREE INCOME CLASSES

JOB STABILITY	INCOME CLASS			CITY
	POOR	MARGINAL	ADEQUATE	
Stable	59%	74%	87%	71%
Unstable	41%	26%	13%	29%
N	559	446	285	1446

### 7. Dependent-to-Worker Ratio

In the theoretical tussles in demography we are inclined to side with those who regard the reproductive behavior of the poor in the same way as that of the middle class: a rational calculation of a social, psychological, and economic kind. In our view, the rich get richer and the poor get children, because children are a costly item for the rich and they are a "profitable" item for the poor. Rural villages are baby factories, and for good reason. Children perform important tasks that only they can do (by cultural definition):

herding goats, tending animals, running the innumerable errands required by households who live from hand to mouth from day to day, and helping the cause of social reproduction by tending their numerous siblings. These more rural habits persist in some parts of the city--the pueblos conurbados, in particular.

For the poor in the city the cost of children is quite low as well. Food and clothing are not negligible burdens for them, to be sure. But education costs are low, since few of them carry on into the secondary and technical grades where the expenses quickly mount. By the age of fourteen or fifteen a child can enter the work force, with or without a primary education certificate, and earn between half and three-quarters of a minimum salary in the construction trades. This money will remain part of the household budget until the child marries and moves away, but that will not be until he is between 24 and 28, as we saw in the discussion of the domestic cycle. The parental household, then, will have the advantage of between 10 and 15 years of earnings from the child, whom they have raised from infancy to fourteen or fifteen. It is a good bargain. More children mean higher incomes and more flexibility in the household budget.

It is only when the household tries to raise its social status that this strategy comes unstuck. If they wish to put their children in a position to take middle-class jobs, then they will have to make many sacrifices. Their children will not only be costing them money for costly educations, but the opportunity costs of their lost incomes must be calculated. Children are supposed to pay back their parents for their educations, but how many do, and how many can? Not many. They cannot stay the 10 to 15 years in the household before establishing an independent household. No spouse would tolerate such long-term dependency on the parents. But in any case, the death of their aged parents would render the matter moot as a matter of nature's course.

So the poor are presented with a dilemma: they can adopt the prevailing village strategy and live a slightly better life in the present in the sure knowledge that their children will do not much better than they themselves have done. This mandates having large numbers of children. Or, they can try to advance their children's lots in a very altruistic way, knowing that the likelihood of their being recompensed is slim. And in this case, they had better reduce the number of children.

Our data suggest that the very poor do get poorer and children, the marginal poor stay poor with fewer children, and those who are making it reduce the number of children significantly as part of their strategy for advancement. The predictions from these data are clear: the children of the very poor will stay that way, the children of the marginals will make it in the next generation, and the children of those who are making it now will be able to compete with the 5% for a place in the Mexican economy commensurate with what the rest of the middle class takes entirely for granted.

The figures for dependents, workers, and ratios for the different economic classes follow in Table 7.8.

TABLE 7.8  
WORKERS, DEPENDENTS, AND DEPENDENCY RATIOS FOR HOUSEHOLDS  
IN THREE ECONOMIC CLASSES\*

	INCOME CLASS			CITY
	POOR	MARGINAL	ADEQUATE	
Dependents	4.6	3.7	3.1	3.9
N =	592	455	288	1468
Workers	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4
N =	573	455	288	1479
Ratio	3.8	3.1	2.4	3.2
N =	562	449	291	1433

\*The figures given are means for each category.

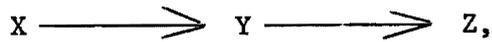
#### THE CAUSAL STRUCTURE

Causal models in the Simon-Blalock tradition were constructed to demonstrate the relationship between the seven independent variables and the dependent variable of per adult-equivalent income (Simon 1957; Blalock 1964, 1970). The basic premise of the modeling technique is that: "If X is a cause of Y, we have in mind that a change in X produces a change in Y and not merely that a change in X is followed by or associated with a change in Y." That is to say, we wish to find not simply a predictive relationship between the variables, but a structure of relationships which cause changes in the dependent variable.

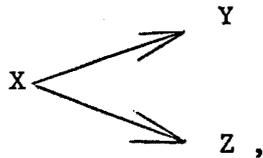
Provisional models are first formed which most plausibly model the relationships according to the intuitions of the analyst. This is usually done on the basis of ethnographic experience. There are two types of relationships modelled. The first is the "direct causal relationship." This is a relationship of the type where a change in the value of X produces a change in the mean value of Y. The second is the "indirect relationship," which results when there is another variable, U, V, that mediates the relationship between X and Y--i.e.,  

$$X \longrightarrow U \longrightarrow V \longrightarrow Y.$$

Every relationship which is neither indirect nor direct implies a prediction of some kind. In the case that there is no relationship of any kind (first or second order, or nth order), then the prediction is simple: the coefficient will be zero. In the case that there is an indirect relation via a mediating variable of the kind,



the prediction takes the form:  $r_{xz.y} = 0$ . And in the case that the relationship has the form:



the prediction is:  $r_{yz} = r_{xz} \cdot r_{yz}$ .

There is no need in this report to give a full account of all the possible predictions that can be made; for this the reader is referred to Blalock (1964) or Blalock and Blalock (1968), or any of the current texts on the subject.

After the provisional model is formulated, the predictions are listed and compared with the observed figures in the correlation matrix. The causal relationships are then successively refined until the relationships between the variables generate the predictions which best fit the observed coefficients in the correlation matrix. Such a model is the optimal model.

The Simon/Blalock model is recursive. All of the causal relationships are uni-directional. If X produces a change in Y, Y may not produce a change in X. The limitation of the model to recursive systems enables us to take advantage of two important properties. First, with recursive systems we can make use of ordinary least squares procedures to estimate the various nonzero coefficients (Blalock 1964:59). This means that the relationship between the variables may be estimated from sample data through ordinary procedures such as correlation matrices or regression equations. This is not generally the case in non-recursive models. Second, with a recursive model we may experimentally manipulate a single variable in the model and view its effects on the values of the variables which appear at that point in the model and below. With a non-recursive model the effects of a change may be so generalized as to make experimentation with the model unproductive.

In sum, by assuming weak causality among variables causal closure, and recursiveness in our model, we are able to reduce the set of relationships between all the variables within a correlation matrix to that subset of recursive relationships which best predicts a dependent variable while still preserving ethnographic reality. The remainder of the chapter will deal with the interpretation and comparison of the models developed for the three populations under consideration.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The predictions for the three models are presented in Appendix B. They are very close to the observed coefficients.

THE VERY POOR

A convenient way of interpreting the models is to see them as implicit sets of instructions to household heads who are trying to make it in the city of Oaxaca at the present time--just as in game and decision-theory examples. The present economic position of the household of the very poor can be briefly sketched. The median salary for the household head is well under the minimum, at M.N.\$1600, and the household income is equally low at M.N.\$1700. Eighty percent of the household income is spent on food and housing: 70% on food alone. The earnings of the second worker in the household are small. Though the household heads are slightly older than in the other economic classes, their households are in an earlier stage of the domestic cycle--modally in the second stage. And this reflects their demographic strategy as well as age. They are still having babies--fertility is incomplete, despite the fact that median age of household head is highest of the three economic groups.

What can a household of this type do? What are our instructions? There are there sets of instructions which the very poor household head can choose (see Figure 7.1).

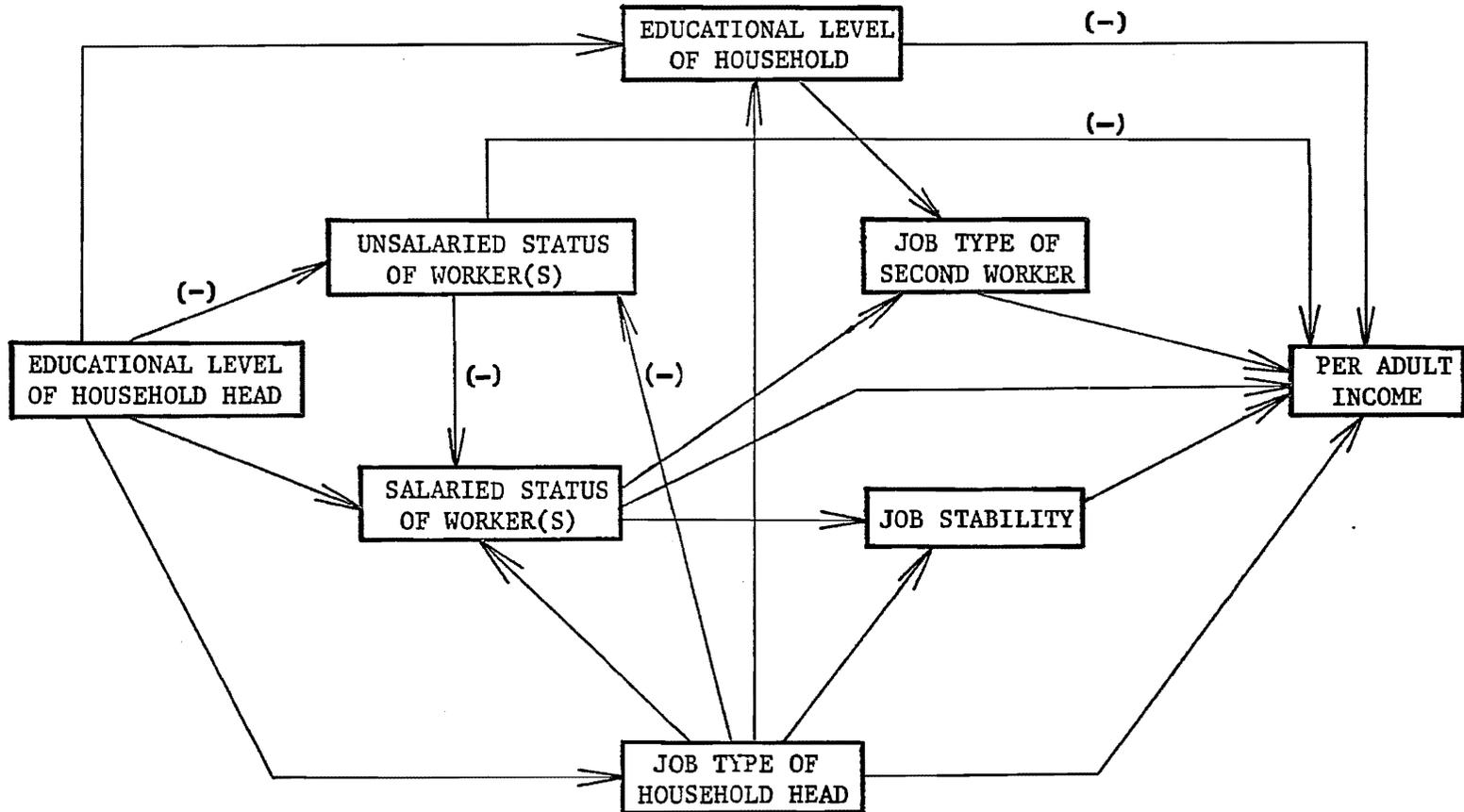
1. Get older. This may enable you to reach into the marginal class. Send your children out to work. Do not bother to educate them past primary, as the chances of their getting a good salaried job are slim at best, unless they or you use political connections to get a job as a sweeper or janitorial hand. Keep on having babies, and use your influence to keep as many of them contributing to the household budget as possible. Arrange their and your life so that they marry late, if possible, or if they marry early, insure that a village-type patrilocal contract be arranged.

In this way you will be able to scrape by in good times, and by going hungry in bad, survive by the concerted efforts of all the people in your household. Above all, do not get sick until you have a number of children who can support the household. If you get sick, you will lose your job and incur expenses for curers and drugs which you simply cannot afford. Stay well and breed! But this is not the only solution, fortunately.

2. Let us say that you categorically reject this solution. There are two other roads for you to take. First you must do everything in your power to get a salaried job. This is extremely difficult because your educational levels are so low (66% of you failed to finish primary school), but you must attempt it. Next, exercise every ruse and ploy in your armamentarium to get a salaried job for another adult in the household. This will mean that you must either change your household arrangements so as to have another adult living with you in an extended family arrangement (21% do), or you must stop the babies (45% have done that, and are in the last three stages of the domestic cycle). There is not any point in trying to raise your children's education level so that they can get a

FIGURE 7.1

MODEL I: THE VERY POOR



salaried job. You will only decrease your per-adult income level. (This is one of the more shocking results of the regression analysis we carried out: there is a negative relationship between household education levels and per-adult income for the very poor, and only for them.) There will be no payoff for you. So, only if you are a very generous and loving parent with hopes for your children when you are gone will you provide education for them.

3. But let us assume that you are an average member of this economic class, with average levels of altruism--what then can you do, other than get older? You can try to raise your job level, but we are afraid that will not do much good. You most likely will remain in the blue-collar or service job you have. You can induce your wife to take a job, but all she can probably get is domestic service where the wages are so low you must not expect to make much household profit from it. Whatever happens, you must keep your job. Job stability is the key to hanging on, and improving yourself. This means of course that you are at the mercy of events; you must not become ill, nor can you "afford" an economic downturn. You must, to use a word favored by the poor in Mexico, aguantar, or "endure to the end" in an almost Biblical sense.

#### THE MARGINALLY POOR

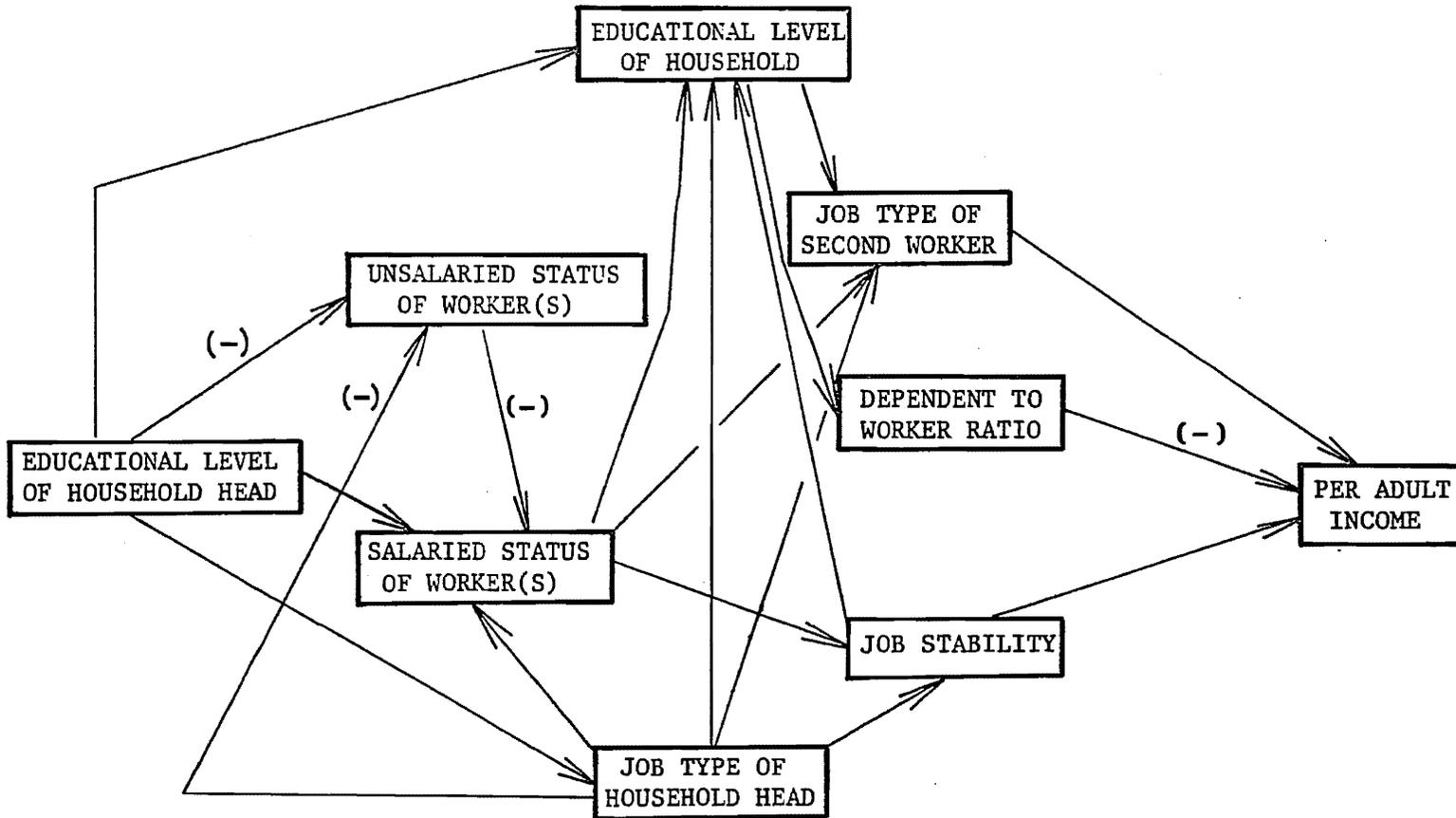
Obviously the marginally poor are better off economically than the very poor. It is not just that the median income of the household head has jumped M.N.\$900 to M.N.\$2500, but the contribution of the second worker in the household is now substantial at about M.N.\$1500, even though only one in four households boasts one. The proportion of their incomes spent on food has declined 11% to 54%, giving them some breathing room. Family size is down to a median of 4.8 persons, and the dependency ratios have declined. Since the number of workers does not change across all income classes (a steady 1.4 workers per household), the change represents a decided decline in the number of children. There is almost a majority of empleado workers (46%) in this group. The model mandates a slightly different set of instructions to the typical household head in the economic class of the marginally poor (Figure 7.2).

1. Our first piece of advice to the poorest group was to get older and have babies. Our advice to the marginal poor people in Oaxaca is quite different. We say: take a chance and get an education. We know that your educational levels are low, that half the members of your income class failed to complete primary school, but do not let this be a drag on your educational aspirations for your household. Investment in your household's education may pay off, although not directly.

At the same time as you are raising the education of your household, reduce the number of children. It is precisely the smaller number of children in the household that is going to permit you to raise your per adult income production. Children are not a net

FIGURE 7.2

MODEL II: THE MARGINALLY POOR



profit in your situation. Your children are going to want to continue their educations to the point where their costs and lost incomes can never be repaid. But this will not matter if you reduce your fertility levels.

Get a stable job. Even though your education levels will not permit you to get a salaried job as a government clerk, try for one of the few blue-collar stable, salaried jobs. Failing salaried status, try to keep your job. If you can keep your job (and reduce the number of children) your wife will be able to go out to work, or failing her, a grown child, and this will raise your income levels substantially. A stable job will also encourage higher levels of household education, and this will in turn reduce even further the number of children you have.

In a word, the smartest strategy you can play in the city of Oaxaca right now--if you are on the verge of attaining the FOVI minimum standard of living is a "family planning and education" strategy.

Planners from the U.N. and from the Mexican and U.S. governments would approve this strategy. They, of course, would like to induce the very poor to adopt the strategy as well. But they are too poor and too smart for that. They are going to continue to have babies.

But we should point out that this strategy is extremely risky for the marginal income group! Its success depends on the ability of the household head to keep his or her job and to keep on earning, at the same time that it mandates fertility reduction and the entry of the second household worker into the upper reaches of the job classification (such as empleado or owner/professional). Failure in any of these, or a failure on the part of one's children to contribute to the maintenance of the household will defeat the strategy and leave the more unfortunate households back in the poorest class without the resources that its older members now have.

Therein lies the irony: the strategy of benign reproduction and inattention to education will give the very poor a chance to enter the marginally poor group. A failed attempt at raising the educational levels of the household by a marginally poor household head will deposit the household back into the poorer class. The one breeds, the other reads, and all that results is that they switch places. And we should never forget that these two classes account for over 74% of the population of the city.

#### THOSE WITH BARELY ADEQUATE INCOMES

Five percent of the population are well off by any standards. Twenty percent are making it--barely, to be sure, but they are making it. They are households that qualify for government assistance in securing loans, who cannot secure real estate loans on their own. They are 21% of the sample of Oaxaca.

Their economic situation is improved: the median income of the household head is M.N.\$4000, and the median household income, M.N.\$5000 --three times that of the poorest economic class. They either enjoy the urban amenities and services, or will shortly do so (with the exception of sewer service, over which so much complaint has been heard in this report.) Only 24% of the household heads have failed to complete primary school. Seventy-three percent of the household heads and 77% of the second workers are in the top job categories (empleado, owner/professional). More than three-quarters of them have the fringe benefits that come with a salaried status.

Family size is lower again--down to 4.5 members, and the decrease is entirely accounted for by a decrease in the number of dependents.

The reported proportion of income devoted to food is down to 38%, nearly half what it was for the poorest class.

The configuration of relationships in the model (Figure 7.3) does indeed suggest a familiar middle-class pattern. All efforts that we "normally" regard as efficacious do converge to bring about an improvement in the per-adult income levels. Higher levels of education for the household head bring about sizable increases in the level of education for the household, and a disproportionate increase in the numbers of students in these households. It is true that the opportunity costs of the children's withdrawal from the labor market are high, but they are directly offset by the entry of second workers (mainly spouses) into the higher levels of the work force. Just over 34% of the households do have second workers, the highest proportion of all the three economic classes.

A salaried job is well within the grasp of people in this economic class, as are means for family planning and fertility control. Higher levels of education give them access to secure and stable jobs.

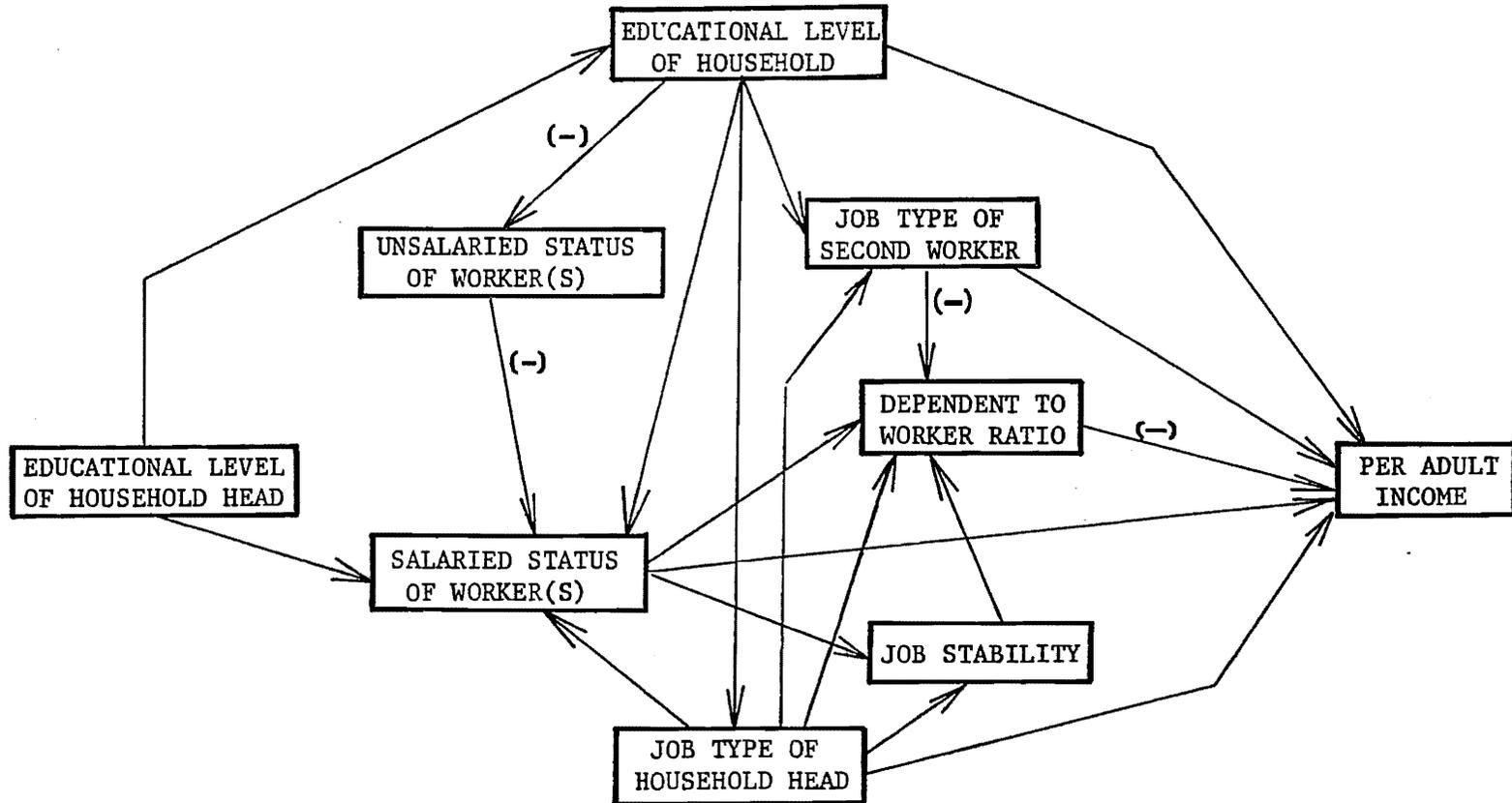
They can play the middle-class study-and-strive strategy at practically no risk to themselves or their families. Mexican development is working for them.

## CONCLUSIONS

The models presented here represent three distinct structures for achieving a measure of success in the socio-economic system of the city of Oaxaca. To a great degree these structures have been influenced by governmental strategies utilized over the past decade in the development of the country. That is to say, the adaptive mechanisms are a response to such things as the government's decision to decentralize the federal bureaucratic structure by placing and building up federal agencies in the secondary cities of Mexico. They are also a response to government minimum wage and loan policies and to the availability of all sorts of direct and indirect aid, either

FIGURE 7.3

MODEL III: THE BARELY ADEQUATES



through social security and fringe benefits or through government programs designed for specific classes of people.

In the case of the poorest households it would be better to say that they are responding to the absence of any sort of aid. As was mentioned earlier, the present federal policy is to invest in aid or loan programs only for those who have some potential for later repayment. In addition, minimum wage standards are seldom enforced in the job sectors occupied by poor workers. Thus, uneducated as they are and on bare subsistence incomes, the poor have few structural roads to advancement. The one most calculated to improve their condition somewhat is the one that Mexico as a nation can least afford for them to follow--the demographic strategy of high fertility and minimal social investment in the children. With respect to this phenomenon, the most significant thing the model for the marginally poor can tell us is that households can and do control reproduction if and when there is an economic reason for doing so. Mexico would do well to reconsider its policy of neglect towards its most destitute citizens. Without direct intervention to make incomes more stable and illness less catastrophic, and without a means of household advancement that positively benefits from the control of family size, the poor will continue to reproduce at a high rate. They are, after all, no less rational--nor less self-centered--economic beings than their more affluent compatriots.

If the rationale of economic advancement is no different for the poor and those who are relatively well off, their situations are very much so. The most affluent of the three economic groups have moved into what might be termed the modern, middle-class advancement system. With sufficient resources in terms of stability and income to make it work, they are able to pursue the strategy of the hour in Oaxaca--education and more education. In a city where educational levels are generally on the low side, economic expansion is occurring in government and commercial activities--areas demanding more advanced training and white-collar-type workers. Households that have the resources to educate their members benefit directly from this expansion. For them, the development program of Mexico offers a substantial payoff now and in the next generation; and the return for Mexico is that this 20% of the city's population has good reason, for now, to strive to hold the present government-industrial-commercial structure in its place. How long current policies will continue to remain viable, however, is yet to be seen. With very little industrial development taking place in the valley of Oaxaca, the uneducated poor are faced with an ever tightening squeeze as their numbers increase all out of proportion to the increases in job opportunities for them. Sooner or later Mexico will have no alternative but to deal with a problem it has already too long ignored.

## Chapter Eight

### POVERTY IN A SECONDARY MEXICAN CITY

#### THE DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY

In this report we are concerned with poverty in Mexico: its shape, its consequences and the strategies that it dictates and molds. We are not as directly concerned with the forces that bring it about--not for their lack of importance--but because we do not have new, original data and analysis to contribute to that topic. Our contribution lies in examining and understanding the human consequences of poverty, and in the depiction and explanation of what it forces on Mexican households in the city of Oaxaca, and what efforts it elicits to climb out of it, when that is possible.

#### Many Ways of Being Poor

Even restricting ourselves to the small (pop. 16,000) provincial city of Oaxaca Mexico, it is still clear that there are a great number of ways of being poor. One can be poor because one is old, lacking social security, and almost completely dependent upon one's children and kinfolk for survival. One can be poor because of low education and because of one's inability to place oneself or one's children in the formal sector of the economy, or because one has been unable to provide one's family with a secure place to live. One can be poor because one has many children and they are all young. Many households are like this. The children are small, the mother cannot work, and the children cannot earn money. Or one can be poor because one is investing so much money in the post-primary education of one's children that one's diet is suffering, and any surplus that might be used for medical care, for entertainment, or for savings has to be invested in the clothing, books, transportation or school fees of the children.

How one is poor dictates how one tries to get out of poverty, and this we shall study in a moment. Being poor dictates certain realities of life for the Oaxaqueños, and these should be understood if we are to understand their situation and help the Mexican government improve it, or ourselves design policies for its improvement.

#### Being Poor Means Being Conservative

Being poor means being conservative. The poor are overwhelmingly concerned that no one rock the boat. In the seventh chapter of the report we present some simple recursive models in order to show the higher order relationships between social and economic variables that affect the household's economic well being. We find that job stability is the most important cause of household well being for the poorest 41% of the households. The poor people realize that when incomes are low, employment must be steady. Losing a job, or changing a job is a disaster. Conditions that lead to social and economic

change, then, are the most threatening possible.

Job stability is not as important for the better off people in the urban sample, though it is never unimportant. But the conservatism about job stability that is found in the attitudes of the bottom 41% is found in a more generalized form among all the poor peoples of Oaxaca (90-95% of the population) in their general attitude of don't rock the boat." They feel that what success they have achieved is too fragile to encourage change. Change is dangerous: no one is to be so suspected as he who is wanting to do one a favor. "Everything is fine" is the response to questions about one's city government, neighborhood government, neighborhood living conditions, and police and health services in the neighborhood. Our preliminary interviews located a great deal of enthusiastic support for neighborhood clubs, and self-improvement associations whose beneficial effects were recognized. Our survey turned up less than 10% participation. One might think that when people talk about their own households and families, their own fortunes and difficulties, they would speak out for change. Not a chance. The only change they would endorse for themselves or their families was directed at improving the quality of family life. But in fact, even here they were endorsing the well-advertised aims of the Institution for the Protection of Children, whose slogans can hardly be regarded as radical.

This conservatism which has been noted among the poorer barrios of Mexico City (Cornelius 1973) and the pueblos juvenes of Lima-Callao (Dietz 1978) is not as stable as its wide distribution might indicate. In our view, it stems from four causes.

First, it represents response bias. Getting rid of a pestering interviewer is easier if one makes one's answers as short as possible. This kind of data is not best gathered by survey instrument. If we wish to know how people really feel about their situation, we are going to have to fund social scientists to go and live in the poor areas to find out. Second, this apparent endorsement of the status quo reflects the feeling that it is dangerous to endorse radical change. Oaxaca was under military rule for two and a half years, and people all know that the military is a no-nonsense, oppressive force in politics. They saw how the soldiers aborted one of the largest and best organized invasions in the city's history, for example. They were spectators themselves as the poor and homeless were turned out of their new, prospective home sites with bayonets. However much change might be desirable, then, it is dangerous. Third, we might be reminded of the crucial role of economic stability in the minimal planning of the very poor and the poor. It too breeds a conservative attitude. Fourth, a large portion of the urbanites are better off now than they ever were before, despite their apparent condition of urban misery. If, for example, they are rural immigrants, and nearly half the working adults in the city are, the contrast with conditions in the village makes them feel good about their present situation. On the farm, public health conditions, nutritional status, disease morbidity and mortality rates were so bad that the city is a definite improvement. Similarly city jobs, even when they pay less than a minimum salary with the whole household working, do pay.

Landless laborers in the countryside enjoy so little stability in their work from day to day that the relative security of the city, and potential for advancement is very attractive.

But already the population of the city of Oaxaca is "on the turn" from being predominantly rurally born-and-raised, to city. A third of the household heads are already city-born, 45% of the working-age population is city-born, and 60% of all the residents (including young children) are. The debt of gratitude to the city owned by the rural immigrant is fast being paid and the new urban generation will be less content, more demanding, and less tolerant of the status quo. Within seven to eight years the point will be reached when the majority of household heads will be city born. Whether this will make a "tipping point" we cannot say.

#### THE FAMILY AND THE HOUSEHOLD

The majority of household heads may have been born in the rural areas of the state, but the households that we interviewed were formed in Oaxaca. In this report we defined the household as the unit of analysis, for ethnographic reasons. The household, in Oaxaca, is where decisions are made by and for all its members. Decisions about migration, for example, are made by the whole household, with spouses and adult children participating. Decisions about the educational levels of the children are made in the household and affect it economically both for good and for ill. Decisions to leave the household engage all its members, particularly if it is felt that the person leaving has not fully repaid the household's investment. What members of the household consume engages all the adult members as well. Even what they eat; some members eat better than others, and during times of want, the children, particularly the adolescent, are compelled to give up food that they might otherwise have for the sake of the members who have jobs.

Oaxaca is a family town. There are few single member families, nor households formed of unrelated men. In Oaxaca one does not find wage-earning, efficient cooperatives in which men get together to pool their expenses and remit their wages so their rural family can survive. They are found in Peru, according to Hammel (1961) and in parts of Brazil, according to Schmink (1979). In Oaxaca there are few singles- only 8% of the economically active population, and only 3% are divorced. There are very few families made up of older couples living alone, apart from their children - only 5% of the sample. A larger number are found living with children who have taken over the role of chief provider.

From these data, and others that we present in the report, it is clear that Oaxaca is a family town. Oaxaqueños manage to keep the family together, working and cooperating, under very trying conditions, thereby sustaining the whole process of social reproduction at very little cost to the state or to the employers who need them. Oaxaqueños naturally think of the family first and evaluate decision in the light of

how they will affect the family. Planners must, of course, do the same.

### The Household in Oaxaca

The family is a kinship unit -- it is the primary domestic unit defined by kinship in a society. The household is a grouping of people who share food, or a budget, or a living space. They are usually a family, but often not all of it, and often with extra members. In the report we give a lot of descriptive data about the household: its composition, its living space, its place in the domestic cycle of development, its pattern of expenditure, its earning capacity and the like. In this summary, we give some facts about the household, and subsequently we discuss the domestic cycle of the household as it changes and develops through time.

First some facts about the household in Oaxaca:

- o Households are large: an average of 5.3 members compared to 4.9 for all of Mexico.
- o Households are young: 55% either have no children yet, or are still in child years.
- o Households stay put, once they immigrate into Oaxaca. They are stable in that sense.
- o Households are also stable in the sense of showing very low divorce rates (3% of sample is currently divorced), very low rates of female headedness (13% of the households only).
- o Households are overwhelmingly (79%) made up of nuclear families consisting of husband, wife and children only. Most of the 21% extended families are ones in which a young couple lives with a parent who helps with the household and the baby.
- o Median household head's income is M.N. \$2200 (or U.S. \$110.) per month, which is above the minimum salary, but well below the figure that permits a household access to economic opportunity. (This latter figure is called the FOVI-standard, and is pegged for Oaxaca, at 1.8 minimum salaries, or M.N. \$3240).
- o The income of a second worker in the household is crucial to the survival of the household. Median incomes for second workers is M.N. \$1500. But only 34% of the households have second workers.
- o Two summary statistics give some idea of the poverty of the households of Oaxaca: less than 30% of the household heads earn enough to support their household in a minimum style.

Secondly, one quarter of the households do not earn the minimum wage even after the inclusion of all sources of income, thus forcing them to feed, house and clothe their members for less than U.S. \$80. per month in a city with limited employment prospects.

### THE DOMESTIC CYCLE

There is a major section of the report devoted to the domestic cycle. It concerns the study of the household as it grows, changes and diminishes through time. It studies the processes of fission, accretion and fusion of the household over time. We partitioned all the households into five stages of the domestic cycle. The first and last stage were childless couples at the beginning and at the end of their lives. Stage two, three and four were households with children: Stage Two households were still actively reproducing; Stage Three were raising children, but not bearing them, while Stage Four households were enjoying the years when their children were grown up and living in the house.

In the report we detail the characteristics of these five types: their age, their composition, their living space, their expenditures and their ways of making a living. This material is difficult to highlight or précis, and the reader is referred to the body of the report for the descriptions.

The most important result of our study of the domestic cycle concerns the role of different household structures in improving or impoverishing their members.

The economic situation of the household depends to a very large degree on its structure. We can see how different household types do economically, by examining each stage of the domestic cycle in turn.

In Stage 1, before there are any children to care for, while a couple's only responsibility might be an aging parent or parents, the household is comparatively well off. As well off, on the average (for all Oaxaca) as it will ever be. If the couple both work, they are at the least able to join the upper 30% of the best off in Oaxaca.

Getting the second worker into the labor market is the necessary step for the households in the other stages of the domestic cycle as well. And we note that as the stages progress from stage two to stage four, the number of second workers progressively increases. This is to be expected. As the household matures, the junior members are able to get more schooling, and thereby have a better chance at a salaried job. Being older, and better educated (if they are better educated), they are not inevitably and naturally assigned to work in the least glamorous work, "other services" -- shining shoes, running errands, and providing servant-like help at very low rates of pay.

Stage 2 is defined as those households who are reproducing. They make up 46% of the population of Oaxaca. Second workers in these households add very little to the income. There are few employable children, and few extended households in which an older adult can care for the home and young children while another adult goes out to work. And there are few women who find the strength to work all day as maids in well-to-do houses and come home to wash clothes and tend children at night. But most mothers' child-tending duties keep them at home. Men do not like their women, when young, going out to work. They become jealous and they feel that their womenfolk belong in the house where they are safe from temptation and harm. The children are too young to work except as the quasi-servants we mentioned above. Because there is no second income, these households have the lowest per capita incomes in Oaxaca.<sup>1</sup> It is through these crucial formative years of childhood, when proper nutrition and care is so desired for normal growth and development, that the household is at its lowest economic ebb. It is in these households, to be dramatic, that there seems to be an almost endless stream of children's illnesses and funerals: endless to us, and terribly disheartening for them.

Stage 3 is defined to occur when childbearing has ceased and the children are all five or more years of age. Things are not looking up at all for these households, who are 29% of the city. Per capita income drops marginally from M.N. \$640 to M.N. \$600 and the number of consumption units in the family jumps from 3.8 (in Stage 2) to 4.6 in this stage three. This is to say that household income has increased somewhat but not sufficiently to offset the rise in the number of dependents, and the concomitant increase in consumption requirements. The contribution of the second worker to the household income has increased markedly: it is now M.N. \$1,600 at the median. Households who have completed fertility and are raising the children are in a state not dissimilar to those in their reproductive years. Their dependency ratios are as high as they will ever be. Their capacity for earning income is only slightly higher than the younger households, and their overall situation is still as parlous. Shortly they will have to decide about the further education of the children. This decision is part of a bundle which concerns whether to postpone the rewards of having children, or to enjoy the immediate financial rewards they can bring in. The outcome will determine the shape of the family or orientation (this household and the family of procreation (the child's),

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<sup>1</sup>We use the expression "per capita income" here, for the more clumsily accurate "per adult-equivalent income." They are the same in this report. They are arrived at by dividing the statistic of interest by the number of consumption units in the household. The number of consumption units is determined by the very simple formula developed and espoused by Kuznets (1976), which makes every child (here persons under the age of 14) equal to one half of a unit, and everyone else worth one.

which brings us to stage four where all the children are 15 years of age, or older.

Stage four households are made up of younger and older adults. Any small children in the household would be grandchildren of the head. The households are smaller -- one member fewer on the average -- and a majority (53%) of them have second workers. (This is 20% more than the proportion of households with second workers in Stage three). The number of dependents is halved, compared to stage three. Perhaps most importantly, the quality of the employment that second workers have is as high as that of the head of the household. Their incomes, on the average, when they have jobs, is only slightly less than that of the household head. As a result household income is just over M.N. \$3000, as high as it will ever be.

The clever household head will keep his family in Stage four as long as he can. Were he able to mimic some medieval squire's household, and keep around him his married sons and his grandchildren and whatever retainers were available, he would be in happy straits. His household would be better off, and the many services that a fully staffed and variegated household could perform would be at his command. Of course, this is the rural pattern, the rural solution to poverty. In the rural areas it requires a gifted hand at the arrangement of marriages, and a subtle diplomacy in dealing with one's inlaws, as well as a genuine, articulate love for one's sons in order to negotiate an extended household. Patriarchs who set up such households, and who maintain them with all their potential for quarreling and conflict are usually very impressive human beings. It certainly can be done, and is done with greater frequency in the rural areas than in the city.

In the city many of the rural, or institutional props necessary to the success of such a strategy are stripped away. In the city there is no long, accepted tradition of extended family living. The vast majority of families are nuclear. In the city there is no elaborate set of marriage customs that explicitly allocates the labor of the spouses to one or another of the intermarrying households, the way there is in the rural areas. And lastly, there is no complex web of kinship to provide an ideological justification for good conduct, punishment for transgressions against the morality of blood and affinal relations. It is not surprising that the cooperative solution to poverty, the domestic answer to deprivation, is not as frequently found in the city as it is in the countryside.

The fifth stage of the domestic cycle occurs when one begins to live alone without one's children. Some households in this stage of development are in misery, just as some older couples and singles in the United States, Canada and Europe are in misery in their old age. The household head continues to work but household income has dropped to around M.N. \$1,700 a month - or U.S. \$84.

The more fortunate poor stage five households are still living in a stage four world. Their children have moved out, to be sure, but they have moved a few hundred meters away. They see their children

every day, and the house is full of grandchildren who drop by to eat, sleep, play, talk, complain and, most importantly, run errands. They know that they can count on their children to lend them money for emergencies, and so they are living the cooperative, communal life, with the advantage of having their own place.

But the less fortunate do not live like this. Some are among the worst off in the city. They are nearly illiterate; they have worked all their lives for a pittance at backbreaking menial jobs, and they have never had help from any source to improve their lot in any way. But what is worse for them, they are alone and forgotten. The poorest of the old folk have lost out in every way.

Fortunately, they are few in number. The poorly-old are probably only about 2.5% of the population of the city, for only 5.1% of the households are in this fifth stage of development.

Oaxaca is a family town, as we say, even if it is not a giant kinship network in the fashion of a village. Every member of the family recognizes his or her responsibility to the family, and the need to contribute to the common good. People simply do not, and we think will not, live in wage earning collectives, or abandon their families to work outside Oaxaca on a long term basis. Or conversely: families who choose to live in Oaxaca are choosing a family way of life. It is one of the advantages living in this poor, provincial city which has so few jobs and so little prospect for development. Hustling, loner-Oaxaqueños who want the freedom to find the best job they can, are not here. They are in Mexico City, or in Tuxtepec, the major center of the timber and wood products development in the state.

We would not expect to find the kind of labor mobility here that is found in Mexico City, or to be found in the migrating people from the countryside. We would not expect development strategies that threatened family integrity to be successful. And, lastly, we would expect that elementary strategies designed to help families or integrated, sharing households would have a far greater impact and outreach here than in most cities in Mexico.

#### CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

The report has a full account of the consumption patterns of the Oaxaqueños as a whole, as well as for each stage of the domestic cycle. The highlights of that discussion can be given.

- o Compared to what one would expect, the differences in consumption patterns in different economic groups

are miniscule.<sup>2</sup> The pattern of living-like-a-poor-person stretches across Oaxaca like a rigid, imposed cultural pattern. In this sense the majority of Oaxaca lives like villagers whose economic situation and prestige differentials are homogenized in a single cultural pattern. From the outside, differences which are important to the urban Oaxaqueño, seem nugatory and unimportant because of the distance of all the urban majority from middle class standards.

- o Oaxacans spend next to nothing on housing -- 7% of their income, that's all.
- o Food is the major budget item. Half the households are spending more than 50% of their total household income on food, while one third are spending more than two thirds.
- o Practically no money is spent on formal health care, if we define it as medically supervised health care. An undisclosed amount is spent on curers, and on therapeutic counselling dispensed by the local druggists along with the drugs they sell.

We conclude in the report: "The average Oaxaqueños is poor, and...the household budget has little leeway. With no assets except the house it is building and lot it has either purchased or invaded; with no savings except in the furnishings it owns, and with a median income of less than M.N. \$700. (around U.S. \$30.) per month to spend on each adult in the household, the average Oaxacan household is in frail economic health. In times of distress or illness it will retrench. Children will be withdrawn from school, and food will be cut back. In particular, it will be cut back from the nonproducers in the household -- women and children. If a catastrophic expense occurs, the household will attempt to borrow money from relatives, but many of them are in a similar situation and will have little to lend. If someone dies as a result, the household will at least survive. And this is the important thing."

#### THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF OAXACA

The city of Oaxaca can be divided into eight different kinds of "living systems" based on (1) the income of the householders, and (2)

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<sup>2</sup>In the last part of this summary, and the last part of the report, we divide Oaxaca into four economic groupings, according to how their household per capita income compares with the standards set by the Minimum Salary Commission, and the Housing Fund (FOVI). They are: (1) the very poor, (2) the poor, (3) the barely adequate, and (4) middle and upper class.

the type of land house tenancy they enjoyed (regular, or irregular). The neighborhood types so distinguished can be defined over a gradient made up of two correlated dimensions: income and length of stay in the city. In general, the longer one and one's neighbors have been in the city, and the higher one's income, the more desirable one's neighborhood is. The following table contains the neighborhood types along with their relative desirability (from least to most) and the percentage of the cities households in them.

TABLE 8.1

NEIGHBORHOODS, THEIR DESIRABILITY AND THE NUMBERS  
WHO LIVE IN THEM

Neighborhood Types	Desirability of Type (Low to High)	Proportion of City Household in Neighborhood
Recently Invaded Areas	1	1%
Very Poor Colonias Populares	2	27%
Poor Colonias Populares	3	23%
Urban Villages	4	9%
Site-and-Service Projects	5	7%
Moderate Income Colonias Populares	6	8%
Central City Area	7	15%
Middle & Upper Class	8	10%

N = 1,475

Where the neighborhoods fit in the scale of desirability is intuitively obvious to people who know the city. But in addition, all respondents were asked to answer questions about four of the neighborhood types. The first was a very poor colonia, the second, the biggest urban village, the third, a lower to lower middle class housing development, and the fourth, the middle to upper class colonia. There was near-unanimity on the increasing desirability of the neighborhoods in the order just presented. Rich and poor, recent arrival or long time resident, former invader and middle class alike gave the same preferences.

In the report each neighborhood type is described, and an analysis of its economic situation and physical condition is given. Here we need only summarize.

### Colnias Populares

Three fifths of the households in the city live in colonias

populares. The colonias consist, for the most part, of owner-occupied and owner-built houses in various stages of development and disrepair. The extremes one encounters takes one from one-room wooden hovels with sheet steel billboards for roofing, contrasting with a four-room stone house in an ample site with a walled patio for the children. The majority of housing, it is safe to say, lies about the poorer end of the scale.

Oaxaca is a city of colonias populares. Some of the colonias lack practically all services, some lack few, only sewer in some fortunate cases. The newer and higher in elevation the colonia, the more likely it is to lack the basic services of water and electricity.

It surprises us that the typical Oaxaqueños lives in a colonia popular, despite the suggestion of the name itself that they might be the locus of the majority. Oaxaca, that beautiful colonial city, so beloved of tourists for its fine colonial buildings, magnificent cathedrals and restored churches, and center of a rich and ancient archeological zone is the refuge of the poor who are nearly invisible in their jerry-built housing so generously and profusely spread around the city.

#### Heterogeneity of Residential Zones

The city is not zoned, or not effectively zoned. All zoning ordinances can be overturned by a well organized invasion. The poor, sometimes, live cheek-by-jowl with the rich. One finds many a jacalito (shack) jostling a comparatively imposing well constructed house (casa definitiva) not just in the colonias populares but also in the middle and upper class suburbs. The poor may be invisible to the tourist who is used to seeing his poor and indigent restricted to high density, homogeneous neighborhoods (read "slums") but they are not visible to the Oaxaqueños, since they are their neighbors. We, as analysts, regard this as a healthy sign of a pluralism recognized by the people of the city, and would not ourselves exchange it for a zoned regularity.

#### Urban Villages

The urban villagers, who live in former villages that have been overtaken and incorporated into the city were distinctively rural when the city first touched them and still retain a distinctive flavor. They are more like villages than the rest of the city, despite the fact that they have been under the influence of the city for centuries. The highest proportion of full time farmers is in the urban village -- though it might be more accurate to call them part-time horticulturalists, like the small scale Japanese rice farmers who work small plots near the city. The distinctive character of the urban village lies in its corporate spirit of independence and self-reliance. Here it is easier to get communal work parties organized, and to call upon people to make sacrifices on behalf of the group. There is a greater sense of

neighborliness here than in other parts of the city. People are proud and happy to be in the urban village. And, for the money (or income level) it does provide the best living conditions, and perhaps the best life for the poor in the city.

### Site-and-Service Projects

We find that the investments that the government is making, through INDECO, into the site-and-service projects must be about the smartest money invested in urban development. First, the investment is short term, and then recouped. Secondly, the INDECO enterprise is self-funding, and if the level of efficiency of the loans is maintained, and overhead reduced to a minimum, there is no reason in principle why this program cannot be expanded to provide housing opportunities for all the poor. The people who are served by the site-and-service projects are the poor who ordinarily would be living either in the poorest or in the next-to-poorest colonias in the city. They are much better off here than in the colonias. They have such services as light, water, and most important of all sewer, laid on! They may not be all that keen to hook up to the sewers, but they can be induced, or even compelled to without excessive grumbling. They have improved their living situation in three years to the point that requires 8-10 years for similarly off city dwellers. They are hustlers. They want to improve themselves, and they intend to, much more so than other groups with their means. Their morale is higher than the colonial groups. They feel that they have landed a good deal and they want to use their good fortune to get ahead. And they feel they can.

### Moderate Income Colonias

The moderate income colonias represent the highest level of living to which an average Oaxacan can aspire. Houses in these colonias are better built -- the owners have been living in Oaxaca longer than any other group. The inhabitants are older, and their household incomes at M.N. \$3000 are M.N. \$700 higher than the other colonias. They are conservative in the sense that their aspirations for change are very low indeed. They are explicit about this: change means new expenses, new services do not come free, and whatever economic independence we have gained we intend to enjoy.

### Middle and Upper-Class Housing

But perhaps we exaggerate. There is one other route to a more prosperous, middle class life for the Oaxaqueños. If he is very lucky, he will win rights to a government-built house in a project. INFONAVIT, the acronym for the Instituto para el Fomento Nacional de Vivienda, builds houses for the salaried workers in private enterprises while ISSTE does the same for state and federal workers. Enough variance and implicit preference is built into the waiting queues that the selection of families for housing units has the feeling of a lottery. Of course strictly speaking, there is no chance involved. As soon as one becomes eligible, one can put one's self on a waiting list. As units become available, they are allotted to the persons at the head of the list. The people who are on

the waiting list do not know where they are, or the rate at which units will become available. They do not have a likely date to enable them to plan on moving. In this sense the housing grants have the feeling of a lottery.

When a family wins, they will do very well financially. They may move out of their old house, perhaps sell the lot, or, more likely, retain title and rent it to relatives, or, they may (illegally) continue living in their old house and rent out the government-built unit. In either case the new house is a windfall. Either one's living space improves dramatically (all services provided, all conveniences in house), or one's income improves.

Whoever devised this system of providing high class housing to the poor did so with a canny eye towards providing an escape for the working class of salaried workers. Like the national lottery, one can win when one least expects it. There is always a possibility of winning, as far as the people on the waiting list are concerned. This means that an escape from the misery of the poor colonia popular does exist.

This opportunity is reserved for the salaried members of the work force. The workers in the 'informal' sector, in what has recently been called the invisible, and unrecognized economy of Mexico are ignored in this distribution of wealth, as well as all the others. For them the site-and-service project is the only way up and out.

#### The Central Area of the City

All the inhabitants of Oaxaca report that the center of the city is a highly desirable place to live, second only to the middle and upper class areas. It is desirable because it has every conceivable service. There are shops nearby, plenty of things to watch and do, and even the apartments are not too small, dark and crowded. Not as attractive as one's own house, which 68% of the households have, but not as bad as the picture of the urban Mexico which has been painted by Oscar Lewis (1959) and others. Not surprisingly, the inhabitants of the central area are the most contented residents in the city (except for the middle and upper class.)

#### Concluding Remarks on the Neighborhoods

A more broad ranging and exhaustive handling of the data on housing and neighborhoods require the advice and input of architects, planners, and engineers as well as new interview data on the meaning and importance of housing for the poor. Clearly, housing plays a different part in the lives of the poor than it does in the middle class lives of the researchers. We incorporate housing into an overall plan of household financial management: for us, housing is an investment or a speculation designed to make money or provide security in our dotage. The poor of Oaxaca do not speculate in housing to get rich. Once they have moved onto a site that is satisfactory by a minimum standard,

they stay put. They do not regard their houses and lots as capital, or as sources of appreciation or profit. There is no liquid market in urban properties for the poor, although we know so little about whatever market there is that we should be very careful about generalizations. For the poor of Oaxaca, upward social mobility does not mean moving to a higher class neighborhood, (unless the neighborhood is part of a government sponsored housing scheme). It does involve upgrading one's own neighborhood by assiduous lobbying and cooperative endeavor. As the whole neighborhood improves, the social and economic status of its inhabitants do likewise.

Once most Oaxacan households have found a place to settle, the well being that they derive from their physical surroundings will come almost exclusively from their own efforts and sacrifices. Most often they will not be able to move into the well-established neighborhoods such as the urban villages or the center city area and the site-and-service developments are few in number. They must begin with nothing but an unimproved lot and build their house and their community up year after year. What assistance they get from the government in the form of basic city services will come only reluctantly and after time. For the majority of Oaxacans their house will never be much more than two rooms with a cement floor, concrete walls, a secure roof, a bamboo fence and glass windows. But even for this small amount of comfort and security the household must set priorities and make difficult choices that will affect the education of the children, investment in the time it takes to secure good jobs, as well as food and consumer goods foregone.

#### MAKING IT IN OAXACA

The last section of the report deals with the strategies of the three poorest groups in "making it" in the city, who, together makeup over 90% of the population. The groups are: 1) the very poor (with per capita income less than M.N. \$600), 2) the marginal poor (with per capita household income between M.N. \$600 and M.N. \$1040), and 3) those with barely adequate per capita household incomes between M.N. \$1040 and M.N. \$2880. The question we addressed to the data concerned the household's best strategy for raising income within each group. If you are very poor, we asked, how do you arrange your life and make important decisions so as to raise your income to the highest level within your economic class -- i.e., to M.N. \$600? Similarly for the other groups. We are not so much interested in deriving policy statements about how best to maximize income stream in general, but rather, we are concerned about the mode of adjustment, and costs of adaptation to the economic situation of three economic groups.

Recursive models, in the Simon-Blalock (see Blalock, 1971) tradition were constructed to guide our interpretation of the data. The following seven variables were incorporated into the model:

1. Educational level of household head
2. Educational level of whole household

3. Economic sector in which household members work:  
formal or informal sector
4. Job type of household head
5. Job type of second worker
6. Job stability of household head, and
7. Dependent to worker ratio for household.

Formulating a maximally likely causal structure for all three groups in the "canonical" Blalock (1968) pencil-and-paper fashion yielded the following conclusions for each group.

### The Very Poor

The very poor household with per capita incomes of less than M.N. \$600 make up 41% of the city. If you are one of them and you wish to cope as best you can with your circumstances, there are two things you can do. You can have more children, or you can somehow land a job in the formal sector of the economy thereby acquire salaried status. Both strategies are well designed to take you to the top of this income class.

If you have more children you must be careful not to educate them. Looking at your whole situation, you should note that there is an overall negative association between the level of education in your household and your per capita income level. The reason is simple. Education beyond primary school costs money. And the opportunity costs of post-primary education are even higher. You cannot afford these costs if you are to cope. You must send your children into the labor market as soon as they are physically capable of working (14 to 15 years of age), and you must retain them as contributing members of your household until they are about 28 years of age. If you can, each child will be a profit-generating working unit for the household, and you will be able to keep your family from starving.<sup>3</sup> It will be difficult, to induce them to stay

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<sup>3</sup>The very poor cannot spend much to raise their children. The results of their enforced economy are to be seen in the elevated mortality and morbidity rates, which mark the population as a highly stressed one. Food costs of the children are not high with the result that nutritional stress is pandemic among this poor majority, and nutrition related deaths are apparently on the rise again in 1979. (This last statement is based on casual observations, and data are not yet available from this part of Mexico to verify this possible rising trend which has been noted and reported in the press for Mexico and Brazil.) A child that leaves school after the primary years and goes to work at a salary rate two thirds that of the minimum

with their spouse, because you have so little at home to make it economically attractive. But on the other hand, they have little enough qualification to enable them to leave. Setting up an independent household is an expensive business and waiting could be profitable.

If someone (your wife, your child) is lucky and lands a salaried job, then the measure of security you acquire may permit you to invest a little money in education and raise the economic level of your children. This added security will permit, in turn, that minimal upward mobility from the depth of poverty which will raise you to the top of your group. But the education levels of the very poor household heads are so low that the strategy of going after a salaried job is much less frequently successful than one of having many children and sending them out to work.

Early in the report we note that our data show that the restraint in fertility that we call the second half of the demographic transition may be evidenced in the visibly and significantly shrunken size of the youngest five-year cohort. It is not the poorest citizens who are or should be restraining their fertility. They would be mad to do so. Their children are their only route to a minimal level of security and well-being.

#### The Marginally Poor

The marginally poor who have per capita incomes between M.N. \$600 to M.N. \$1040 and then make up 33% of the city. Their best strategy contrasts with the more numerous very poor. Based on the model, our advice to them is to educate their children to the limit of their ability. That way, they will have a much better opportunity at a formal sector (salaried) job, and thereby add a measure of security to the household that will permit further risky investment in education and, where fortunate, a step up the ladder into the next income class. (Education is a risky investment because the

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would be able to repay his parents' costs in four years or less, by our informal estimates. If the parents' debt is repaid by age 20, then there are eight years earning that the household can regard as pure "profit," since the median age at which children leave the household is 28 years.

We are, of course, not suggesting the Oaxacan poor think of their children in purely monetary terms. Conversations about the cost/benefits of earning versus further education in Oaxaca are no different from discussions about what college which child will attend elsewhere.

children in whom it is invested may not repay the "debt" incurred by staying in their household of orientation.<sup>4</sup> They may establish an independent household and withhold contributions to their previous one. In this case the investment is lost, and so regarded by the families who make it.

In order to offset the expense and risk in educating the children, it is necessary to reduce dependency ratios in the household. Since keeping the children in school will increase them, the only way they can be depressed is by controlling fertility. Fertility reduction is a precondition of the "education strategy," and it is found among the marginally poor of Oaxaca.

Our advice for the marginally poor, then, contrasts with our advice to the very poor: reduce fertility, educate your children, get your self a job in the formal sector of the economy, and keep it.

We should emphasize that this is a high risk strategy. Deteriorating economic conditions can leave the household worse off than the very poor. If the household head loses his or her job then the children will have to come out of secondary or technical school without their diplomas. Probably they will never complete school, and all the investment will go to waste. The family will then be in the position of having fewer children to send into the labor market, with fewer years for the children to contribute to the household before they move away with their spouses to set up independent households. They will have lost ground and will continue to do so while those very poor families who maintained higher fertility rates will pass them in their move up the economic ladder.

It is perfectly clear that the strategy of the marginals is to the advantage of the Republic. It would appear important to encourage it by reducing the risk of failure for people who invest in education. One could either make secondary education free, or subsidize the families of children into secondary education, or develop some kind of social insurance to make sure that families are not penalized for controlling fertility and investing in the education of the coming generation.

#### The People With Barely Adequate Incomes

The last group whose mode of adaptation we studied were those who are making it (barely). They had per capita incomes above the FOVI standard which we judge to be minimum for entering into the daily commercial life of the city. They could get loans at private banks, for example, even though they rarely apply. Median household income stands at around M.N. \$5000 per month, or U.S. \$240. Not

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<sup>4</sup>This nasty bit of anthropological jargon contrasts the family into which one was born (orientation), with the family one establishes one's self (family of procreation).

a princely sum, but one barely adequate to survive in Oaxaca. They make up 21% of the city's households, meaning that the three economic groups make up successively and approximately 40:30:20 percent of the population.

The strategy that was indicated for the marginal poor in the last section is not dissimilar to that which best serves these as well. First household size is once again reduced. Job stability is way up -- to 87%. This proportion have held their current jobs for a year or longer. Only 23% of the households lack the security of a salaried position, and some of these are professionals with what we would consider middle class status.

Education is important in this strategy: one cannot obtain good salaried jobs without post-primary education. Education cannot be obtained unless there is a comparatively high degree of security in the household. These households have attained that security, and, as a result, show education levels strikingly higher than the other two groups. For these households the direct negative effects of an increase in the dependent to worker ratio are changed to positive by strong indirect efforts on per capita household income. Those who are barely making it should adopt a strategy which is the precise converse of the lowest economic group in order to do well as they can in their economic class. And, unlike the middle group for whom the adoption of these strategies is a very risky business, the highest group can envisage reliable, tangible payoffs from their sacrifices and hard work.

#### CONCLUSION

This is a depressing report, because the situation that is described is depressing. Carrying out a study of this kind cannot help but impress one with the pervasive, all-powerful impact of poverty. In the lingo of social science, poverty wipes out all the variance; it explains everything. And in so providing a universal explanation, it explains nothing at the same time that it turns reports like this into a hermeneutic exercise on impoverished texts which consist of one line: we are poor.

This report is diagnostic in tone and purpose. We do not here recommend major structural changes in the political economy of Mexico, though radical change is needed. Rather, we seek to explore the consequences of current political, social and economic arrangements and only from time to time do we permit ourselves the luxury of signalling possible reforms. This will not always be so.

This report is the first of a series on the cities of Mexico. This summary is our way of keeping tabs on a very large study of every city in Mexico, and upon the state of the urbanized state as a whole. In that sense this report and summary is the beginning of a long dialogue.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: DATA TABLES FOR THE CITY OF OAXACA

APPENDIX B: CORRELATIONS AND PREDICTIONS FOR  
THREE CAUSAL MODELS

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APPENDIX A

DATA TABLES FOR THE CITY OF OAXACA

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.1  
ORIGIN OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

ORIGIN	PERCENTAGE
City of Oaxaca	33.8
Oaxaca State, Rural	56.1
Oaxaca State, Other City	1.3
Other State, Rural	3.0
Other State, Urban	5.6
Foreign	.3
N	1,453

TABLE A.2  
AGE OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

PERCENTILE	AGE
10th	24
30th	30
50th	38
70th	45
90th	58
Mean	39.2
Mode	30
N	1,472

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.3

## EDUCATION COMPLETED BY HOUSEHOLD HEADS

EDUCATION	PERCENTAGE
Illiterate (0)	12.6
Primary Incomplete (1)	37.4
Primary Complete (2)	20.3
Secondary Incomplete (3)	4.0
Secondary Complete (4)	8.0
Technical Incomplete (5)	1.2
Technical Complete (6)	5.7
Preparatory Incomplete (7)	.9
Preparatory Complete (8)	1.4
Professional Incomplete (9)	1.9
Professional Complete (10)	6.6
Mean	2.6
Median	1.5
N	1,450

TABLE A.4

## MARITAL STATUS OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

MARITAL STATUS	PERCENTAGE
Married/Common-Law Union	82.2
Divorced/Separated	3.0
Widowed	6.3
Single	8.4
N	1,468

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.5  
SEX OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

SEX	PERCENTAGE
Female	13.1
Male	86.9
N	1,454

TABLE A.6  
HOUSEHOLD TYPES

TYPE	PERCENTAGE
Non-Extended	78.9
Extended	21.1
N	1,479

TABLE A.7  
HOUSEHOLDS WITH SPECIFIC TYPES OF MEMBERS

RELATION OF MEMBER TO HOUSEHOLD HEAD OR SPOUSE	PERCENTAGE
Spouse	81.5
Child	85.3
Parent	8.9
Sibling	6.0
Grandparent	1.4
Grandchild	4.1
Other	7.6
N	1,478

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.8  
HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION INDEX\*

INDEX	PERCENTAGE
0	3.3
1	21.9
2	28.9
3	19.2
4	10.3
5	6.1
6	4.7
7	2.6
8	1.2
9+	1.8
Mean	3.0
Median	2.4
N	1,479

\*This index is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{No. years educational attainment summed for all household members} + \text{No. children in school}}{\text{No. people in household over 7 years}}$$

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.9

## HOUSEHOLD SIZE

MEMBERS	PERCENTAGE
1	3.0
2	7.7
3	13.4
4	15.8
5	17.2
6	12.8
7	12.9
8	6.6
9	4.5
10	2.9
11	1.3
12	.8
13+	1.0
Mean	5.3
Median	5.1
N	1,466

TABLE A.10

## NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLDS

NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
0	14.7
1	14.2
2	18.3
3	17.1
4	13.0
5	9.7
6	6.4
7	3.4
8	1.8
9	1.0
10+	.3
Mean	2.9
Median	2.7
N	1,478

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.11

## NUMBER OF ADULT-EQUIVALENT UNITS IN HOUSEHOLDS

NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
.5	.1
1.0	2.8
1.5	.8
2.0	7.8
2.5	9.2
3.0	14.5
3.5	11.6
4.0	12.0
4.5	10.6
5.0	8.1
5.5	4.9
6.0	5.3
6.5	3.9
7.0	3.5
7.5	1.4
8.0	1.4
8.5	1.3
9.0+	.9
Mean	4.1
Median	3.9
N	1,478

TABLE A.12

## NUMBER OF WORKERS IN HOUSEHOLDS

NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
0	3.3
1	63.6
2	22.2
3	6.8
4	2.9
5+	1.1
Mean	1.4
Median	1.2
N	1,479

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.13

## NUMBER OF NON-WORKERS IN HOUSEHOLDS

NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
0	4.4
1	10.0
2	14.9
3	18.1
4	17.0
5	12.4
6	10.5
7	5.3
8	3.6
9	1.9
10+	1.9
Mean	3.9
Median	3.6
N	1,468

TABLE A.14

## WORKER-DEPENDENCY RATIOS\*

PERCENTILE	RATIO
10th	.50
30th	1.75
50th	3.00
70th	4.00
90th	6.00
Mean	3.15
Mode	2
N	1,433

\*This ratio represents the number of non-workers each worker supports in the household:

$$\frac{\text{number of non-workers}}{\text{number workers}}$$

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.15

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS IN ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE AGE GROUP\*

NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
0	2.4
1	8.8
2	45.5
3	18.4
4	11.7
5	7.9
6	3.3
7	1.4
8+	.7
Mean	2.8
Median	2.4
N	1,475

\*Ages 15 to 60.

TABLE A.16

AGE-DEPENDENCY RATIOS\*

PERCENTILE	RATIO
10th	0.00
30th	.50
50th	1.00
70th	1.50
90th	2.00
Mean	1.07
Mode	1
N	1,475

\*This ratio represents for each household:

$$\frac{\text{number persons in non-economically active age group}}{\text{number persons in economically active age group (ages 15 to 60)}}$$

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.17

## TYPES OF JOBS HELD BY HOUSEHOLD HEADS

JOB TYPE*	PERCENTAGE
Agricultural Worker (1)	4.8
Roving Vendor (2)	3.7
Artisan (3)	5.6
Service Worker (4)	17.2
Obrero (5)	18.3
Empleado (6)	43.8
Owner/Professional (7)	6.5
Mean	4.9
Median	5.5
N	1,418

\*These may be defined as follows:

Agricultural Workers: All individuals whose primary income is from agricultural activity. In Oaxaca this includes everyone from the owner of a coffee finca to the laborer on a local rancho.

Roving Vendors: The vendors who spend their time moving about the city selling their wares. These include the men and women, called peseros, who sell razor blades or spices for a peso a package, as well as the sarape salespersons who carry several thousand pesos of merchandise on their backs.

Artisans: The producers of petty commodities. In Oaxaca this ranges from the maker of pelota Mixteca gloves to the weavers of blankets and table clothes.

Service Workers: These are the individuals in the service sector who do not work for major commercial establishments such as the larger hotels and restaurants. The category includes domestic help and service workers employed by very small-scale commercial operations.

Obreros: These are the individuals working in the construction, manufacturing, and extractive industries of the city.

Empleados: This category includes both government workers at all levels and all employees of private business establishments, except the following: manufacturing and industrial workers, and service workers in very small business enterprises.

Owners/Professionals: The owners of commercial establishments and the professionals of the city. A commercial establishment would be anything from a stall in the market to large-scale business ventures such as the Goodyear outlet or the Sears store.

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.18

## TYPES OF JOBS HELD BY SECOND WORKERS

<u>JOB TYPE*</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Agricultural Worker (1)	3.3
Roving Vendor (2)	5.3
Artisan (3)	5.0
Service Worker (4)	20.7
<u>Obrero</u> (5)	12.8
<u>Empleado</u> (6)	40.1
Owner/Professional (7)	12.8
Mean	5.1
Median	5.6
N	397

\*For explanatory definitions of each job category, see Table A.17.

TABLE A.19

## JOB STABILITY OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

<u>JOB STABILITY*</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Stable	71.3
Unstable	28.7
N	1,446

\*A job was considered stable if the worker had held it for a year or longer.

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.20

## JOB STABILITY OF SECOND WORKERS

STABILITY*	PERCENTAGE
Stable	73.1
Unstable	26.9
N	375

\*A job was considered stable if the worker had held it for a year or longer.

TABLE A.21

## WORK STATUS OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

WORK STATUS	PERCENTAGE
Unemployed	3.4
Employed with no Fringe Benefits	43.5
Employed with Fringe Benefits	53.0
N	1,464

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.22

## HOUSEHOLD INCOME STRATEGY

STRATEGY	PERCENTAGE
Informal	38.9
Mixed*	17.0
Formal	44.1
N	1,464

\*Households with at least one worker in the informal sector of the economy and one in the formal sector were placed in this category. The basis of the distinction between formal and informal sectors was whether the worker received some type of social security or fringe benefits.

TABLE A.23

## HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAMS OF SOCIAL WELFARE

PROGRAM	PERCENT*
None	52.3
<u>Seguro Social</u> **	29.7
ISSSTE§	14.3
Other	5.4
N	1,465

\*Columns do not add to 100% because some households participate in more than one program.

\*\* Seguro Social is the social welfare agency that covers salaried workers in the private sector of the economy.

§ISSSTE provides coverage for salaried employees in the public sector.

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.24

## HOUSEHOLD HEADS' MONTHLY INCOME

PERCENTILE	MONTHLY INCOME
10th	1000
30th	1700
50th	2200
70th	3000
90th	6300
Mean	8106
Mode	3000
N	1410

TABLE A.25

## SECOND WORKERS' MONTHLY INCOME

PERCENTILE	MONTHLY INCOME
10th	400
30th	800
50th	1500
70th	2400
90th	5000
Mean	3150
Mode	2000
N	350

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.26

## TOTAL MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

PERCENTILE	MONTHLY INCOME
10th	1200
30th	1800
50th	2500
70th	3800
90th	7000
Mean	3763
Mode	3000
N	1390

TABLE A.27

## MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD PER-ADULT-EQUIVALENT INCOME\*

PERCENTILE	MONTHLY INCOME
10th	300
30th	486
50th	667
70th	1000
90th	2000
Mean	1818
Mode	1000
N	1391

\*All individuals under age 15 were counted as one-half an adult; all individuals 15 and over, as one adult. The number of adult-equivalent units in a household was then divided into that household's total monthly income to arrive at the figures given here.

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.28

## PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME SPENT ON FOOD

PERCENTILE	PERCENT SPENT ON FOOD
10th	23.7
30th	40.0
50th	52.9
70th	66.7
90th	83.3
Mean	53.3
Mode	75.0
N	1,290

TABLE A.29

## PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME SPENT ON HOUSING\*

PERCENTILE	PERCENT SPENT ON HOUSING
10th	1.5
30th	3.9
50th	7.3
70th	12.5
90th	26.5
Mean	12.5
Mode	0.0
N	1,025

\*Included under housing are rent, taxes, electricity, water, and fuel.

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.30

## MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURES FOR FOOD

PERCENTILE	EXPENDITURES
10th	600
30th	1000
50th	1500
70th	2000
90th	3000
Mean	1666
Mode	1500
N	1449

TABLE A.31

## MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURES FOR HOUSING\*

PERCENTILE	EXPENDITURES
10th	48
30th	111
50th	183
70th	300
90th	698
Mean	342
Mode	48
N	1068

\*Included in housing are rent, taxes, electricity, water, and fuel.

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TABLE A.32

MONTHLY TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES FOR  
HOUSEHOLDS REPORTING EXPENDITURES

PERCENTILE	EXPENSES
10th	20
30th	60
50th	108
70th	240
90th	960
Mean	283
Mode	100
N	989
Percent Reporting	75.0

TABLE A.33

MONTHLY MEDICAL EXPENSES FOR  
HOUSEHOLDS REPORTING EXPENDITURES

PERCENTILE	EXPENSES
10th	50
30th	100
50th	150
70th	300
90th	1000
Mean	507
Mode	100
N	156
Percent Reporting	11.7



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TABLE A.34

MONTHLY ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSES FOR  
HOUSEHOLDS REPORTING EXPENDITURES

PERCENTILE	EXPENSES
10th	40
30th	100
50th	200
70th	300
90th	500
Mean	309
Mode	100
N	273
Percent Reporting	19.5

TABLE A.35

MONTHLY INSTALLMENT PAYMENTS FOR  
HOUSEHOLDS REPORTING EXPENDITURES

PERCENTILE	PAYMENTS
10th	40
30th	100
50th	200
70th	330
90th	800
Mean	392
Mode	200
N	359
Percent Reporting	25.3

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TABLE A.36

## MONTHLY SAVINGS FOR HOUSEHOLDS REPORTING EXPENDITURES

PERCENTILE	SAVINGS
10th	50
30th	200
50th	300
70th	500
90th	1030
Mean	556
Mode	1000
N	118
Percent Reporting	8.4

TABLE A.37

## TYPES OF DWELLINGS

TYPE	PERCENTAGE
Shack	22.2
Room	12.6
Apartment	2.4
House	62.8
N	1,475

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TABLE A.38

## FLOOR AREA IN DWELLINGS

PERCENTILE	FLOOR AREA*
10th	15
30th	28
50th	40
70th	64
90th	150
Mean	77
Mode	20
N	1,179

\*In square meters.

TABLE A.39

## NUMBER OF ROOMS IN DWELLINGS

NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
1	25.9
2	31.0
3	18.4
4	10.4
5+	14.3
Mean	2.6
Median	2.3
N	1,250

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TABLE A.40

## CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS USED IN DWELLINGS

<u>MATERIALS</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
<u>ROOF:</u> N =	1,250
Thatch	1.4
Tar Paper	17.4
Tin	39.3
Masonry	36.1
Tile	4.9
Other	.9
<u>WALLS:</u> N =	1,251
Scavenged Materials	22.9
Wattle and Daub	2.6
Adobe	15.5
Wood	4.2
Masonry	54.2
Other	.6
<u>WINDOWS:</u> N =	1,244
None	17.0
Open	21.5
Other	25.8
Glass	35.7
<u>DOORS:</u> N =	1,242
None	4.1
Insubstantial	4.0
Wood	49.6
Metal	37.8
Other	4.5
<u>FLOORS:</u> N =	1,242
Dirt	31.3
Wood	.6
Masonry	48.4
Glazed Tile	19.3
Other	.4

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TABLE A.41

## UTILITIES AVAILABLE TO HOUSEHOLDS

UTILITY	PERCENT
Electricity	71.6
Sewer*	32.2
Water on Lot	22.7
Water in Dwelling	29.1
N	1,242

\*Having a sewer means there is some connection on the lot to a central waste disposal system. It does not necessarily imply the presence of a toilet.

TABLE A.42

## TYPES OF TOILET FACILITIES

TOILET FACILITIES	PERCENTAGE
None*	23.3
Communal Facilities	
Outside Home	17.1
Individual Facilities	
Outside Home**	35.2
Facilities in Home	24.5
N	1,242

\*The Spanish expression is aire libre.

\*\*This would be at least an outhouse.

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TABLE A.43

## TYPES OF LAND TENURE

TENURE	PERCENTAGE
Regular Ownership	49.6
Irregular Ownership	26.1
Regular Rental	13.6
Irregular Rental	4.1
Borrowed	6.6
N	1,431

TABLE A.44

## TYPES OF HOUSE TENURE

TENURE	PERCENTAGE
Regular Ownership	61.4
Irregular Ownership	15.6
Regular Rental	13.0
Irregular Rental	4.5
Borrowed	5.5
N	1,435

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TABLE A.45

## YEAR OF LAND PURCHASE\*

YEAR	PERCENTAGE
Prior to 1963	24.5
1963 - 1967	11,7
1968 - 1972	25,4
1973 - 1977	38.4
Mean	1966
Median	1970
Mode	1975
N	929

\*"Land purchase" is somewhat of a misnomer, because lots are not always purchased, but are rather "acquired," the organized invasion being the classic case in point.

TABLE A.46

## YEAR OF HOUSE CONSTRUCTION

YEAR*	PERCENTAGE
Prior to 1963	13.5
1963 - 1967	9.4
1968 - 1972	22.8
1973 - 1977	54.3
Mean	1970
Median	1973
Mode	1976
N	921

\*This is the year in which house construction was begun. The usual method is for a little building to be done as savings permit over a number of years.

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TABLE A.47

NUMBER OF EXTERNAL MICRATIONS HOUSEHOLDS HAVE MADE\*

NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
0	55.9
1	34.7
2	4.8
3	1.9
4+	2.7
Mean	1.1
Median	.4
N	1,468

\*That is, how many times has the household made a major change in location--e.g., from one city to another, from the country to the city, away from Oaxaca and back again (two moves). Moves within the metropolitan area of Oaxaca are covered in Table A.50.

TABLE A.48

LOCATION FROM WHICH HOUSEHOLDS' MIGRATION  
TO THE CITY OF OAXACA WAS MADE

LOCATION	PERCENTAGE
Oaxaca State, Rural	68.3
Oaxaca State, Other City	7.9
Other State, Rural	4.9
Other State, Urban	11.4
Foreign	7.5
N	630

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.49

## REASONS FOR HOUSEHOLDS' MIGRATION TO THE CITY

REASON	PERCENTAGE
Work	63.3
Purchase of Land or House	3.3
Education	8.5
Family	13.0
Other	11.8
N	600

TABLE A.50

NUMBER OF MOVES HOUSEHOLDS HAVE MADE WITHIN  
THE METROPOLITAN AREA OF OAXACA

NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
0	41.6
1	40.3
2	10.3
3	5.4
4+	2.4
N	1,462

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.51

## REASONS FOR HOUSEHOLDS' LAST MOVE WITHIN THE CITY

REASON	PERCENTAGE
Purchase of Home*	59.4
Rent Increase	15.4
Family	2.7
Services	2.5
Work	2.1
Education	.8
Others	17.0
N	845

\*Again, the word "purchase" is used loosely. "Acquisition" would be a more generally applicable term.

TABLE A.52

## HOUSEHOLD HEADS' METHOD OF TRAVEL TO WORK

METHOD	PERCENTAGE
Home or Don't Go	10.8
Bus	49.1
Foot	19.2
Auto	11.4
Bicycle	6.6
Motorcycle	2.2
Taxi	.7
N	1,433

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.53

DISTANCES HOUSEHOLD HEADS TRAVEL TO AND FROM WORK

PERCENTILE	DISTANCE*
10th	<1
30th	2
50th	3
70th	4
90th	10
Mean	18.6
Mode	3
N	1,308

\*In kilometers.

TABLE A.54

HOUSEHOLD HEADS' MONTHLY TRAVEL TIME TO AND FROM WORK

PERCENTILE	TIME*
10th	<1
30th	7
50th	12
70th	20
90th	30
Mean	16.1
Mode	<1
N	1,357

\*In hours.

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.55

## HOMEMAKERS' METHOD OF TRAVEL TO MARKET

METHOD	PERCENTAGE
Don't Go	4.1
Bus	59.0
Foot	31.2
Auto	5.2
Bicycle	.3
Motorcycle	.1
Taxi	.2
N	1,451

TABLE A.56

## DISTANCES HOMEMAKERS TRAVEL TO AND FROM MARKET

PERCENTILE	DISTANCE*
10th	<1
30th	1
50th	2
70th	3
90th	5
Mean	3.0
Mode	2
N	1,446

\*In kilometers.

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.57

## HOMEMAKERS' MONTHLY TRAVEL TIME TO AND FROM MARKET

PERCENTILE	TIME*
10th	2
30th	5
50th	8
70th	15
90th	30
Mean	12,0
Mode	15
N	1,446

\*In hours.

TABLE A.58

## STUDENTS' METHOD OF TRAVEL TO SCHOOL

METHOD	PERCENTAGE
Bus	41.1
Foot	52.5
Auto	4.6
Bicycle	.9
Motorcycle	.2
Taxi	.7
N	914

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.59

## DISTANCES STUDENTS TRAVEL TO AND FROM SCHOOL

PERCENTILE	DISTANCE*
10th	<1
30th	1
50th	1
70th	2
90th	5
Mean	2.5
Mode	<1
N	910

\*In kilometers.

TABLE A.60

## STUDENTS' MONTHLY TRAVEL TIME TO AND FROM SCHOOL

PERCENTILE	TIME*
10th	3
30th	5
50th	8
70th	12
90th	24
Mean	11.2
Mode	10
N	905

\*In hours.

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TABLE A.61

## EVALUATION OF HOUSING CONDITIONS BY SOCIAL WORKERS

EVALUATION*	PERCENTAGE
Good (1)	29.5
O. K. (2)	50.9
Bad (3)	18.1
Terrible (4)	1.1
Dangerous (5)	.5
Mean	1.9
Median	1.9
N	1,235

\*The Spanish terms used were bueno, regular, malo, ruinoso, and peligroso.

TABLE A.62

## RESPONDENTS' EVALUATION OF THEIR DWELLING

EVALUATION	PERCENTAGE
Very Good (1)	5.4
Good (2)	33.7
O. K. (3)	48.1
Bad (4)	11.3
Very Bad (5)	1.5
Mean	2.7
Median	2.7
N	1,456

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TABLE A.63

RESPONDENTS' EVALUATION OF UTILITIES  
AVAILABLE IN NEIGHBORHOOD\*

EVALUATION	PERCENTAGE
Very Good (1)	2.1
Good (2)	28.0
O. K. (3)	32.0
Bad (4)	31.0
Very Bad (5)	6.8
Mean	3.1
Median	3.1
N	1,447

\*Utilities include electricity, water, and sewers.

TABLE A.64

RESPONDENTS' EVALUATION OF CITY SERVICES  
AVAILABLE IN NEIGHBORHOOD\*

EVALUATION	PERCENTAGE
Very Good (1)	2.3
Good (2)	21.3
O. K. (3)	28.2
Bad (4)	37.7
Very Bad (5)	10.5
Mean	3.3
Median	3.4
N	1,424

\*The Spanish work equipamiento, which has been translated "city services," implies such services as paved streets, police, health services, telephone, garbage pickup, sidewalks, and the like.

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.65

PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS DESIRING CHANGES  
IN THEIR LIVING SITUATION

CHANGE DESIRED	PERCENT
In Household N =	21.4 1,464
In Work N =	33.9 1,468
In Dwelling N =	42.9 1,467
In Neighborhood N =	36.4 1,212

TABLE A.66

CHANGES IN HOUSEHOLD DESIRED BY RESPONDENT

DESIRED CHANGE	PERCENTAGE
None	78.6
More Solidarity	10.2
More Education	4.5
Higher Standard of Living	2.0
More Recreation	.5
Other	4.2
N	1,464

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.67

## CHANGES IN WORK SITUATION DESIRED BY RESPONDENT

DESIRED CHANGE	PERCENTAGE
None	66.1
Salary Increase	17.0
Stability	7.8
Higher Post	3.3
Fringe Benefits	1.3
Better Conditions	.6
Other	3.8
N	1,468

TABLE A.68

## CHANGES IN DWELLING DESIRED BY RESPONDENT

DESIRED CHANGE	PERCENTAGE
None	57.1
Larger	13.6
Modifications	9.6
Ownership	8.5
Security System	4.8
Services	2.9
Other	3.6
N	1,467

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.69

CHANGES IN NEIGHBORHOOD DESIRED BY RESPONDENT

DESIRED CHANGE	PERCENTAGE
None	63.4
More Utilities and Services	33.4
Better Organization	2.4
Other	.8
N	1,212

TABLE A.70

PERCENTAGE RANGES OF FICTIVE KINFOLK LIVING IN  
THE SAME NEIGHBORHOOD AS THE HOUSEHOLD

PERCENTAGE RANGE OF CO- RESIDENT FICTIVE KINFOLK	PERCENTAGE
0%	51.0
1% - 25%	18.5
26% - 50%	17.1
51% - 75%	5.1
76% - 100%	8.1
Mean	.23
Median	.00
N	1,070

The City of Oaxaca

TABLE A.71

RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS AND PARTICIPATION IN  
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

<u>QUESTIONS &amp; ANSWERS</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Is Community Solidarity a Useful Tool for Meeting Specified Objectives?	
YES	69.2
NO	30.8
N	1,467
Have You Ever Organized With Your Neighbors for a Specific Purpose?	
YES	39.8
NO	60.2
N	1,459
Are There Community Organizations in Your Neighborhood?	
YES	48.6
NO	51.4
N	1,433
Do You Participate in One of These Organizations?	
YES	8.2
NO	91.8
N	1,455

APPENDIX B

CORRELATIONS AND PREDICTIONS FOR THREE CAUSAL MODELS

Appendix B

## A NOTE ON ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations and shortened expressions have been used in the presentation of correlation matrices and predictions for the three causal models discussed in chapter 7. They are defined here in terms of the expressions appearing in the models themselves:

ABBREVIATIONSMODEL TERMINOLOGY

Worker I Education, <u>or</u> Ed I	Educational Level of Household Head
Household Education, <u>or</u> Household Ed	Educational Level of Household
Job I Type	Job Type of Household Head
Job II Type	Job Type of Second Worker
Job I Stability	Job Stability (of Household Head)
Unsalaries Worker(s), <u>or</u> No Salary	Unsalaries Status of Worker(s)
Salaries Worker(s), <u>or</u> Salary	Salaries Status of Worker(s)
Dependency Ratio, <u>or</u> D/W Ratio	Dependent-to-Worker Ratio
Income	Per-Adult Income (or more properly, Per-Adult-Equivalent Income)

MODEL I: THE VERY POOR

CORRELATION MATRIX

WORKER I EDUCATION	HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION	JOB I TYPE	JOB I STABILITY	JOB II TYPE	UNSALARIED WORKER(S)	SALARIED WORKER(S)	PER ADULT INCOME
WORKER I EDUCATION	.61	.21	(.25)	(.24)	-.24	.26	(.06)
HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION		.16	(.19)	.36	(-.17)	(.14)	-.12
JOB I TYPE			.26	(.27)	-.36	.34	.19
JOB I STABILITY				(.11)	(-.60)	.54	.12
JOB II TYPE					(-.22)	.18	.09
UNSALARIED WORKER(S)						-.71	-.12
SALARIED WORKER(S)							.14
PER ADULT INCOME							

MODEL I: THE VERY POOR

PREDICTIONS

	<u>PREDICTED</u>	<u>OBSERVED</u>
1. WORKER I EDUCATION —————> PER-ADULT INCOME	.01	.06
a. Ed I → → (.61) → → Household Ed → → (-.12) → → Income		
b. Ed I → → (.21) → → Job I Type → → (.19) → → Income		
c. Ed I → → (.26) → → Salary → → (.14) → → Income		
2. HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION —————> UNSALARIED WORKER(S)	.00*	-.03
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Ed I		
3. HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION —————> JOB STABILITY	.00*	.16
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Job I Type		195
4. JOB STABILITY —————> JOB II TYPE	.00*	.01
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Salary		
5. SALARIED WORKER(S) —————> HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION	.00*	-.07
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Ed I		
b. <i>Partialing out</i> Job I Type		
6. JOB I TYPE —————> JOB II TYPE	.00*	-.08
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Ed I (.03)		
b. <i>Partialing out</i> Job I Type		

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\*A zero value indicates a predicted partial. The observed value is that determined from the partial.

MODEL I PREDICTIONS (Cont.)

	<u>PREDICTED</u>	<u>OBSERVED</u>
7. WORKER I EDUCATION —————> JOB II TYPE	.27	.24
a. Ed I → → (.61) → → Household Ed → → (.26) → → Job II Type		
b. Ed I → → (.26) → → Salary → → (.18) → → Job II Type		
8. UNSALARIED WORKER(S) —————> JOB II TYPE	-.13	-.18
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Ed I		
b. No Salary → → (-.71) → → Salary → → (.18) → → Job II Type		
9. JOB STABILITY —————> JOB II TYPE	.00*	.01
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Salary		
10. WORKER I EDUCATION —————> JOB STABILITY	.19	.25
a. Ed I → → (.21) → → Job I Type → → (.26) → → Job Stability		
b. Ed I → → (.26) → → Salary → → (.54) → → Job Stability		
11. UNSALARIED WORKER(S) —————> JOB STABILITY	-.39	-.51
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Ed I (-.55)		
b. <i>Partialing out</i> Job I Type		
c. No Salary → → (-.71) → → Salary → → (.54) → → Job Stability		
12. UNSALARIED WORKER(S) —————> PER-ADULT INCOME	-.10	-.12
a. No Salary → → (-.71) → → Salary → → (.14) → → Income		

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\*A zero value indicates a predicted partial. The observed value is that determined from the partial.

MODEL II: THE MARGINALS

CORRELATION MATRIX

WORKER I EDUCATION	HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION	JOB I TYPE	JOB I STABILITY	JOB II TYPE	UNSALARIED WORKER(S)	SALARIED WORKER(S)	DEPENDENCY RATIO	PER ADULT INCOME
WORKER I EDUCATION	.69	.25	(.22)	(.05)	-.17	.21	(.12)	(.11)
HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION		.20	.24	.31	(-.24)	.22	.18	(.08)
JOB I TYPE			.35	.23	-.36	.35	(.13)	(.11)
JOB I STABILITY				(.09)	(-.56)	.49	(.19)	.06
JOB II TYPE					(-.21)	.27	(.09)	.21
UNSALARIED WORKER(S)						-.73	(-.04)	(-.06)
SALARIED WORKER(S)							(.24)	(.09)
DEPENDENCY RATIO								-.09
PER ADULT INCOME								

MODEL II: THE MARGINALS

PREDICTIONS

	<u>PREDICTED</u>	<u>OBSERVED</u>
1. WORKER I EDUCATION $\longrightarrow$ JOB STABILITY	.19	.22
a. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.21) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.49) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job Stability		
b. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.25) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job I Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.35) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job Stability		
2. WORKER I EDUCATION $\longrightarrow$ JOB II TYPE	.28	.05
a. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.70) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.31) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job II Type		
3. WORKER I EDUCATION $\longrightarrow$ DEPENDENCY RATIO	.13	.12
a. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.70) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.18) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ D/W Ratio		
4. WORKER I EDUCATION $\longrightarrow$ PER-ADULT INCOME	.08	.11
a. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.25) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job I Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.35) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job Stability $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.06) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Income		
b. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.70) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.18) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ D/W Ratio $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (-.09) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Income		
c. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.25) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job I Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.23) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job II Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.21) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Income		
d. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.70) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.31) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job II Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.21) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Income		
e. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.21) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.27) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job II Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.21) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Income		
f. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.21) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.22) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.31) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job II Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.21) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Income		
g. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.25) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job I Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.35) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.27) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job II Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.21) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Income		
h. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.25) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job I Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.35) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.22) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.31) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job II Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.21) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Income		

MODEL II PREDICTIONS (Cont.)

	<u>PREDICTED</u>	<u>OBSERVED</u>
5. JOB I TYPE —————> DEPENDENCY RATIO	.04	.13
a. Job I Type → → (.20) → → Household Ed → → (.18) → → D/W Ratio		
6. JOB I TYPE —————> PER-ADULT INCOME	.07	.11
a. Job I Type → → (.23) → → Job II Type → → (.21) → → Income		
b. Job I Type → → (.20) → → Household Ed → → (.18) → → D/W Ratio → → (-.09) → → Income		
c. Job I Type → → (.35) → → Job Stability → → (.06) → → Income		
7. SALARIED WORKER(S) —————> DEPENDENCY RATIO	.04	.24
a. Salary → → (.22) → → Household Ed → → (.18) → → D/W Ratio		
8. SALARIED WORKER(S) —————> PER-ADULT INCOME	.09	.09
a. Salary → → (.27) → → Job II Type → → (.21) → → Income		
b. Salary → → (.22) → → Household Ed → → (.18) → → D/W Ratio → → (-.09) → → Income		
c. Salary → → (.49) → → Job Stability → → (.06) → → Income		
9. HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION —————> PER-ADULT INCOME	.05	.08
a. Household Ed → → (.18) → → D/W Ratio → → (-.09) → → Income		
b. Household Ed → → (.31) → → Job II Type → → (.21) → → Income		
10. JOB STABILITY —————> JOB II TYPE	.00*	-.15
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Job I Type		
b. <i>Partialing out</i> Salary		

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\*A zero value indicates a predicted partial. The observed value is that determined from the partial.

MODEL II PREDICTIONS (Cont.)

	<u>PREDICTED</u>	<u>OBSERVED</u>
11. JOB STABILITY $\longrightarrow$ $\Rightarrow$ DEPENDENCY RATIO	.04	.19
a. Job Stability $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.24) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.18) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ D/W Ratio		
12. UNSALARIED WORKER(S) $\longrightarrow$ $\Rightarrow$ JOB II TYPE	-.20	-.21
a. No Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (-.74) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.27) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job II Type		
13. UNSALARIED WORKER(S) $\longrightarrow$ $\Rightarrow$ DEPENDENCY RATIO	-.03	-.04
a. No Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (-.74) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.22) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.18) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ D/W Ratio		
14. UNSALARIED WORKER(S) $\longrightarrow$ $\Rightarrow$ JOB STABILITY	-.36	-.49
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Job I Type		
b. No Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (-.74) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.49) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job Stability		
15. UNSALARIED WORKER(S) $\longrightarrow$ $\Rightarrow$ HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION	-.16	-.24
a. No Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (-.74) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.22) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed		
16. UNSALARIED WORKER(S) $\longrightarrow$ $\Rightarrow$ PER-ADULT INCOME	-.04	-.06
a. No Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (-.74) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.27) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job II Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.21) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Income		
b. No Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (-.74) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.22) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.31) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job II Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.21) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Income		
c. No Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (-.74) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.22) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.18) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ D/W Ratio $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (-.09) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Income		

MODEL II PREDICTIONS (Cont.)

	<u>PREDICTED</u>	<u>OBSERVED</u>
17. JOB II TYPE —————> DEPENDENCY RATIO	.00*	.03
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Household Ed		

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\*A zero value indicates a predicted partial. The observed value is that determined from the partial.

MODEL III: THE BARELY ADEQUATES

CORRELATION MATRIX

WORKER I EDUCATION	HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION	JOB I TYPE	JOB I STABILITY	JOB II TYPE	UNSALARIED WORKER(S)	SALARIED WORKER(S)	DEPENDENCY RATIO	PER ADULT INCOME
WORKER I EDUCATION	.80	(.37)	(.25)	(.14)	(-.15)	.27	(.15)	(.31)
HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION		.31	(.20)	.17	-.14	.16	(.11)	.28
JOB I TYPE			.38	.21	(-.21)	.29	.20	.15
JOB I STABILITY				(.15)	(-.37)	.47	.24	(.12)
JOB II TYPE					(.08)	(.16)	-.01	.12
UNSALARIED WORKER(S)						-.66	(-.10)	(-.08)
SALARIED WORKER(S)							.29	.13
DEPENDENCY RATIO								-.11
PER ADULT INCOME								

MODEL III: THE BARELY ADEQUATES

PREDICTIONS

	<u>PREDICTED</u>	<u>OBSERVED</u>
1. WORKER I EDUCATION $\longrightarrow$ JOB II TYPE	.14	.14
a. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.80) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.17) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job II Type		
2. WORKER I EDUCATION $\longrightarrow$ JOB I TYPE	.25	.37
a. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.80) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.31) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job I Type		
3. WORKER I EDUCATION $\longrightarrow$ UNSALARIED WORKER(S)	-.11	-.15
a. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.80) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (-.14) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ No Salary		
4. WORKER I EDUCATION $\longrightarrow$ JOB STABILITY	.22	.25
a. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.80) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.31) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job I Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.38) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job Stability		
b. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.27) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.47) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job Stability		
5. WORKER I EDUCATION $\longrightarrow$ DEPENDENCY RATIO	.17	.15
a. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.80) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.31) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Job I Type $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.20) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ D/W Ratio		
b. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.80) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.16) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.29) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ D/W Ratio		
c. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.27) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.29) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ D/W Ratio		
6. WORKER I EDUCATION $\longrightarrow$ PER-ADULT INCOME	.26	.31
a. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.80) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Household Ed $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.28) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Income		
b. Ed I $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.27) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Salary $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ (.13) $\rightarrow \rightarrow$ Income		

MODEL III PREDICTIONS (Cont.)

	<u>PREDICTED</u>	<u>OBSERVED</u>
7. HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION —————> JOB STABILITY	.20	.20
a. Household Ed → → (.31) → → Job I Type → → (.38) → → Job Stability		
b. Household Ed → → (.16) → → Salary → → (.47) → → Job Stability		
8. HOUSEHOLD EDUCATION —————> DEPENDENCY RATIO	.11	.11
a. Household Ed → → (.17) → → Job II Type → → (-.01) → → D/W Ratio		
b. Household Ed → → (.31) → → Job I Type → → (.20) → → D/W Ratio		
c. Household Ed → → (.16) → → Salary → → (.29) → → D/W Ratio		
9. JOB II TYPE —————> SALARIED WORKER(S)	.00*	.08
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Household Ed (.13)		
b. <i>Partialing out</i> Job I Type		
10. JOB II TYPE —————> UNSALARIED WORKER(S)	.00*	.10
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Household Ed		
11. JOB II TYPE —————> JOB STABILITY	.00*	.08
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Job I Type		
12. JOB I TYPE —————> UNSALARIED WORKER(S)	.00*	-.18
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Household Ed		

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\*A zero value indicates a predicted partial. The observed value is that determined from the partial.

MODEL III PREDICTIONS (Cont.)

	<u>PREDICTED</u>	<u>OBSERVED</u>
13. UNSALARIED WORKER(S) —————> JOB STABILITY	-.31	-.21
a. No Salary → → (-.66) → → Salary → → (.47) → → Job Stability		
14. UNSALARIED WORKER(S) —————> DEPENDENCY RATIO	-.26	-.10
a. No Salary → → (-.66) → → Salary → → (.29) → → D/W Ratio		
b. No Salary → → (-.66) → → Salary → → (.47) → → Job Stability → → (.24) → → D/W Ratio		
15. UNSALARIED WORKER(S) —————> PER-ADULT INCOME	-.09	-.04
a. No Salary → → (-.66) → → Salary → → (.13) → → Income		
16. JOB STABILITY —————> PER-ADULT INCOME	-.03	.07
a. <i>Partialing out</i> Salary		
b. Job Stability → → (.24) → → D/W Ratio → → (-.11) → → Income		

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