

Profiling the Mexican community leaders in the United States: networks for better public policy

Perfilando a los líderes de la comunidad mexicana
en Estados Unidos: Redes para una mejor política pública

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Abstract

This article makes an analysis profiling 12 key Mexican community leaders from Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York City. The interviews exhibit trends about the leaders in each of the cities included in the research. The results provide data about these leaders, what motivates their work as a leader, political participation and aspirations in Mexico and the United States, possible trends on foreign voting, and more. The research also aims at promoting the understanding between these leaders and those in government so that strategies can be formulated to protect and defend Mexicans abroad.

Key words: Leaders, migrants, communities, Mexico, United States.

Resumen

El artículo efectúa un análisis perfilando a 12 líderes de origen mexicano residentes en Los Ángeles, Chicago, y la ciudad de Nueva York. Las entrevistas muestran tendencias entre los líderes en cada ciudad y los resultados proporcionan datos sobresalientes como qué motiva su trabajo como líder, la participación y aspiraciones políticas en México y Estados Unidos, posibles tendencias en el voto desde el exterior, entre otros. También se plantea promover el entendimiento entre los líderes migrantes y aquellos en el gobierno de manera que se puedan formular estrategias para proteger y defender a los mexicanos en el extranjero.

Palabras clave: Líderes, migrantes, comunidades, México, Estados Unidos.

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Introduction

The main purpose of this article is to identify the profiles of the most important Mexican community leaders in cities that, according to the 2014 U.S. Census Bureau (IME 2014), have the highest concentration of migrants. Due to the complexity of this task, the project focuses on three cities known for high scale activism among Mexican migrant community leaders: Los Angeles, California; Chicago, Illinois; and New York City, New York. Interviews were carried out with 12 of the main community leaders of Mexican descent in these cities (Laborde Carranco, 2015). This article is a starting point that can be added to previous scholarly work on the topic, such as research carried out by Josefina Vázquez Mota (2013), to delve into the personal history and careers of those who fight to defend the economic, political, and human rights of the Mexican migrants living in the United States. A second goal is to promote a better understanding among the Mexican leaders that live in the United States, which will bring about new ways of collaborative engagement and hopefully contribute towards establishing global strategies to defend and protect the Mexican diaspora in both Mexico and the United States.

The Mexican government has a presence in the United States—with 51 consulates, assistance programs, and other organizations around the country— and can take advantage of these networks to lobby in the Mexican Federal Congress and in local governments. The binational relations between Mexico and the United States require and allow for an increased interest from the Mexican government in the affairs of Mexican nationals in order to design and launch more effective public policies. The Mexican entities with a presence in the United States can be the base for better social programs, but first it is important to identify the Mexican leaders in the United States and to discover if they have favorable ideas about their work.

The article presents the Mexican leaders in three U.S. metropolises: Chicago, Los Angeles and New York, which have a large concentration of Mexican population. Chicago is home to 669 000 residents of Mexican origin, representing 7 per cent of the total population in the metropolitan area; New York on the other hand has a total of

332 000 (1.7 per cent) of Mexican descendants; and Los Angeles is home to 1 735 million people of Mexican origin, representing 13.3 per cent of the demographical tally for the greater LA area (MPI 2016). With those numbers at hand, the paper explores their concerns and needs, and it sets the groundwork for a future design of public policies and social programs based on these needs.

Transnationalism's State of the Art

There is a growing trend in Western countries involving migrant networks that seek to place the diaspora of a certain country in two locations at the same time. Through the institution of hometown associations, Mexican nationals who moved their entire life across the border to the United States have been searching for an opportunity to be present simultaneously in their places of origin and in their current site of residence. The intention in the majority of the cases is to collaborate with local authorities in order to bring development projects to Mexico making the diaspora a transnational partner in this capital venture. Before going into the study at hand, it is pertinent to explore the conceptual context surrounding the participation and involvement of the Mexican diaspora through hometown associations, their leaders in particular, in transnational affairs collaborating with Mexican authorities, seeking to create public policies that benefit those living in Mexico as well as those Mexicans living abroad.

The term “transnational” is one that has recently generated substantial interest within the scientific community. Waldinger & Fitzgerald (2004) state that “social scientists are looking for new ways to think about the connections between *here* and *there*” hence, its study within the social sciences has developed several branches of review for this complicated subject. Migration brings forth a superfluity of relations that involve social structures in their places of origin and of residence considering a socio-economic and political manner. New generation migration studies seek to explore the roles being embraced by the migrant community.

Thomas Faist (2004) states that although most transnational studies have focused on migrant practices, there is still much work to be developed on the institutional role. This relies on a functional engagement of both ends, and needs extended diplomatic activity from the Mexican government as well as a reaching out proposal from the diaspora. What Faist sees is a flourishing panorama in which transnationa-

lism has exceeded the nationalistic view of obstinate borderlines and ideologies towards a framework that sees past them, and demands a conceptualization in which immigration studies go beyond the study of networks, South-North or East-West displacements and financial-based relations. Transnationalism then looks to focus on transnational social spaces, transnational social fields and transnational social formations, networks and organizations across the borders, ranging from low to highly institutionalized forms (Bauböck & Faist 2010).

Michael Smith and Luis Guarnizo in *Transnationalism from Below* (1998) consider transnationalism “from below” and “from above” analyzing the new role of the nation-state and citizenship which can be complemented with the inquiry of whether or not there is a need to highlight the existence of political boundaries and legal limitations to the Mexican citizens living abroad, as well as contemplating how the Constitutional rights can extend. The authors speak of translocal relations as a binding pact established inside geographically and historically plugs of origin and migration honored by transmigrants. The existing relation between the migrant leaders and the authorities in the place of origin bind those translocal relations and allow the presence of both subjects in spaces and time lapses that surpass their physical surroundings.

Such relations are active, adjustable and cyclical, in that they create a triadic linkage associating transmigrants, the areas to which they transfer, and their locality of origin (Smith & Guarnizo 1998). The location of immigration offers an explicit structure of potentialities and restrictions (e.g., labor market preconditions and the presence or absence of other co-nationals) into which migrants enter. Settling and adapting to their new surroundings becomes the top priority for the migrant. Several groups search for the comfort that comes from neighboring those with similar backgrounds and history. Once established the immigrant individually seeks for others with whom it may relate, be it through sharing the place of origin, a particular affinity towards a sporting, social or cultural activity that keeps them attached to the country or community left behind.

At first glance, this represents a step towards the networking building process. Today, it is a common practice to have migration, mobility and the social groups they produce on the research agenda of social scientists around the globe. From the another perspective, the change being produced is in part the result of the gaps being bridged by con-

tinuous advances in communication and transportation technologies that are releasing people from the geographical and temporal constraints, permeating the simplification of interaction across borders. Marissa King (2004) adjudicates this process to the proliferation of international organizations that have increased their alliances between global and local actors and new types of social movements. These social movements have focused on defending the position of transboundary activities which generate conditions conducive to the creation of hybrid practices and spaces that can be interpreted as opposition and resistance of the hegemonic logic. These practices are multi-faceted as well as multilayered and cross-bordered. That is, the intricacies and the tensions between these different paths of integration become evident in Suarez Orozco and Suarez Orozco's (2002) comparison of recent Mexican immigrants with U.S.-born Mexican Americans (second generation) in transformations. According to Suarez Orozco and Suarez Orozco, first-generation immigrants often possess a "dual frame of reference," an alignment of their previous life before migration to their current life. Such a frame of reference enables recent Mexican immigrants to feel that their life in the United States is markedly better than the life they left behind. Children of immigrants, not having access to a dual frame of reference, do not see their current status as one of being "better off"; rather, they see themselves as the marginalized group compared to the dominant culture.

Allison Shertzer looks into the mobilization of European community to the US at the beginning of the 20th Century and her work finds that "ethnic electorate share influences an immigrant's decision to participate in the political process" (2016). Regardless of their national ascension, that political commitment can be transformed into social capital as it "underscores the importance of considering social structures in models of voter turnout and provides new evidence for the validity of group-based approaches" (2016).

This type of mentality has been a constant detonator of altruistic actions carried out by hometown associations especially their leaders who encourage others with a similar background and history to get involved and help those who have stayed behind in their homeland. Hometown associations are groups that represent the people of a particular town or state established within the United States with welfare purposes for the community they left. Zabin and Escala Rabadan (1998) reason that the degree to which migrants set up civic organi-

zations or decide to join present ones are set about around specific needs and topics of interest, such as citizenship or altruism for example. The interchanges implied between the Mexican government and its diaspora has broadened the study of transnational relations in the form of hometown associations. Gonzalez Gutierrez (2014) states that,

...the Mexican government, through the consular network, sponsors visits by Mexican American delegations to Mexico; arranges meetings between leaders of immigrant clubs and organizations and authorities in their states and regions of origin, both in Mexico and in the United States; organizes soccer tournaments at local, regional, and national levels in the United States in order to help establish the identity of communities and leaders; and sets up youth encounters in Mexico for Mexican American young people who were born in the United States.

These groups serve as lines of connection between the diaspora and the Mexican agencies tailored to assist the Mexican population living abroad. Their participation can be questioned from an allegiance perspective, nevertheless, their desire to integrate the Mexican diaspora into the American way of life is persistent (Gonzalez Gutierrez 2003).

Withal, hometown associations, as an object of study, remain an issue that is immersed in a cloud of fog due to the unclearness within the migration conceptualization. Gonzalez Gutierrez goes on to explicate that although Mexican American leaders and their organizations do not have the economic or political presence of other ethnic minorities living in the United States, the Mexican government has a clear idea that the diaspora are willing to take an advantage of the populous dimension and their inclination of the American political system to encourage political participation across border lines (Gonzalez Gutierrez 2014).

The extension and formation of networks, social and business, between the societies living in the place of origin and of settlement, the development of interest groups looking to be determinative when generating policy in both countries "and the need to face binational social problems at both ends of the migratory circuits constitute additional reasons for the government's actions toward the communities abroad" (González Gutiérrez, 2014).

The level of engagement acquired by a migrant associations' leadership is comparable to that of a businessman. They are required to take actions and make decisions that will affect the entire group, at the

same time creating business plans that will attract funds in order to launch their projects. The lack of strong leadership is also a determinant to the existence and survival of the HTA. When there is a strong and capable leader at the helm, it will result more attractive to those who attend the groups' events generating interest for new membership.

Montero-Sieburth (2012), conducted a study considering the Mexican transnational community focusing on the association leaders of New England, focusing on how the subject population perceived the mere concept of leadership, how their organizations worked, adapting their own styles of leadership, their networking capabilities and support with the Mexican Consulate, the Mexican and the U. S. governments, and how their groups have evolved as a result of their leadership skills. The main findings within the study shows that the majority of those who took part in the study were first generation migrants who have established themselves in the New England area, are economically solvent, computer savvy, are aware of what happens in Mexico and in their local region as well.

Parameters, Hypothesis, and Objectives

To provide the parameters for this article, on-site interviews were carried out from September 13, 2014 to January 21, 2015. The time frame is to address the question of temporality that is usually a problem in any study of this magnitude. In other words, the exogenous and endogenous factors that might have influenced the responses of the interviewees who agreed to have their respective interviews published in this study. Any logical line of thinking behind their ideas might change when affected or influenced by some aspect in another context or specific time frame. Therefore, the baseline of this research study is founded on the premise that: "A better understanding of the lives and careers of migrant leaders in a specific context and circumstance will lead to enhanced bi-national cooperation in social, economic, and political aspects." The proposals were similar to the ideas discovered when linked and correlated to the data given by the 36 leaders interviewed, which will be addressed in the conclusions.

This article demonstrates the personal narratives of the main Mexican Community Leaders living in the cities of Los Angeles, California; Chicago, Illinois; and New York, New York. As a result, an atlas of charts was created of the main Mexican migrant community leaders living

in these cities, and this atlas will grow as others who were left out for methodology purposes are later included. Finally, it shows that this type of work strengthens bridges for understanding between all areas of government, Mexican society and its migrant community in the United States, which will help to bring about better modes of bi-national social, economic, and political cooperation.

Taking into account the goals of this article, we offer the following research assumption:

There is a profound dynamic relationship between the migrants and their communities of origin, but it is limited to this area. A lack of knowledge about the work and careers of the Mexican migrant leaders living in the United States, especially in the cities of Los Angeles, California; Chicago, Illinois; and New York City, New York, has led to a lack of understanding among some Mexican authorities at all levels of government that translates into a lack of knowledge about the leaders' work, and thus, about the impact of their community work on both sides of the border. A better understanding of these points would bring about deeper social, economic, and political cooperation.

Because the article involves research and story gathering for the conclusions of the atlas, the research assumptions are based on Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink's (1999) theory of transnational advocacy and influence networks (1998). They conclude that "theorizing about transnational relations must grapple with the multiple interactions of domestic and international politics as a source of change in the international system".

Similarly, Keck and Sikkink developed the concept of transnational networks of advocacy and influence to describe a new and important set of actors of international relations, whose distinctive feature in its basic shape from convictions and values.

This article focuses on work previously completed in the *Atlas básico de líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York* (Laborde, 2015); and although the topic of networks in migration has been covered, such as in the work of Cecilia Imaz Bayona (2006), David Ayón (2006), Gustavo Cano (2006), Patricia Escamilla Hamm (2009), Miguel Moctezuma (2011), Rodolfo García Zamora (2010) and Xochitl Bada (2014), the profiles of Mexican migrant leaders are not studied in depth, even if their work entails different effects on the development of the communities affected—the communities where they come from, those that they go through, and

those where they end up. We shall not go into detail (transnationalism) on this matter, because it is a reference point in the academic research projects of the authors mentioned.

The diaspora plays a fundamental role due to its effects on development. Community leaders thus face a basic challenge. As their level of organization and the depth of their relationship with communities of origin increase, the leaders and migrant groups they represent might jointly have a positive influence on any particular problem related to the phenomenon of migration.

Methodology

To prepare this work, the basic atlas of Mexican migrant leaders in the cities of Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York was consulted (Laborde Carranco 2015), which offers one-on-one interviews with the 12 most-representative community leaders in each city (see Table 1). They were chosen based on their careers and the individual impact on their communities both in Mexico and the United States, as well as by checking with the Institute of Mexicans Abroad (IME, in Spanish) of the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the community consulates set up in each of the cities.

The results of the questionnaire led to categories and measurements that allow us to understand profiles, demographic data, nationality, gender, the year they immigrated, where they are from (countryside or city), political party membership, political aspirations, and the concept of leadership, among other aspects of each community leader, as well as their relationship with Mexico. The categories and metrics are listed at the end of this article and were compiled according to correlation of factors.

Table 1. Questionnaire for Migrant Leaders Used to Make the Atlas

1. Could you please tell me your full name and age?
2. What town and state in Mexico are you from?
3. Which country are you a citizen of?
4. What is your highest level of schooling?
5. What is your profession?
6. Why did you immigrate to the United States?
7. When did you arrive to the United States? Date and place.
8. What was your experience like when you arrived to the United States?
9. How did you become involved in community activism?
10. Was it in Mexico or the United States?
11. Did something push you toward it?
12. When did you become a social-community leader?
13. Tell us about your experience as a community activist.
14. Why do you live in [city]?
15. In your opinion, what does one need in order to be a community leader?
16. What do you think of Mexico, from the United States?
17. If you had the opportunity, what would you suggest the Mexican government do to have better connections with the migrants and their leaders?
18. What political aspirations do you have on both sides of the border?
19. Are you a member of a political party in Mexico, the United States, or both? Which one?
20. Do you have any party affiliations in Mexico, the United States, or both? Do you think that if Mexicans got voting cards abroad, there would be more participation in the 2018 presidential elections on the part of Mexicans living in the United States?
21. Hoping for a better performance as a community leader, through training, would you be willing to let the Mexican government or a Mexican educational institution measure your level of leadership, your teamwork, your innovation, your global outlook, humane values, or your integrity?
22. Would you like to share anything else with us?

Source. Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Results of the study¹

In Chicago, in relation to the metrics studied, the statistics showed the following results:

Chicago Results: Specific Trends²

Table 2. Gender

Male	9 = 74.97%
Female	3 = 24.99%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 3. Education

Elementary	4 = 33.3%
Professional or College	4 = 33.3%
Masters or PhD	4 = 33.3%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 4. Origin

From a town in Mexico	10 = 83.34%
From a city in Mexico	2 = 16.66%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 5. Is a Community Leader as

A Profession	6 = 50%
<i>Pro bono</i>	6 = 50%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

¹ Source: Authors' Interviews

² The specific trends were found by giving a value of 8.33 per cent to each person interviewed. The equation to obtain the averages is the sum of each value assigned to a community leader, in other words, $8.33 = 1$, as $8.33 \times 12 = 100$ per cent. There is a margin of error of 0.4 per cent, but it does not affect the trends or the final result of each measurement when per centages are obtained or the result is graphed.

Table 6. Political Party Affiliation in Mexico

PRD	6 = 49.98%
PRI	3 = 24.99%
PAN	2 = 16.66%
None	1 = 8.33%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 7. Political Party Affiliation in the U.S.A.

Democrat	3 = 24%
Republican	1 = 8.33%
Independent	2 = 16.66%
None	6 = 49.98%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 8. Political Aspirations in Mexico

Yes	7 = 58.31%
No	5 = 41.65%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 9. Political Aspirations in the U.S.A.

Yes	4 = 33.32%
No	8 = 66.64%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 10. Nationality

Mexican	1 = 8.33%
Mexican and American	11 = 91.63%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 11. Willing to Receive Training

Yes	11 = 91.63%
No	1 = 8.33%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 12. Decade in which He/She Immigrated to the U.S.A.

Before 1970	1 = 8.33%
In the 1970's	4 = 33.32%
In the 1980's	6 = 49%
In the 1990's	1 = 8.33%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 13. Age Range of the Leaders

70+	0
60-69	3 = 24.99%
50-59	7 = 58.31%
40-49	1 = 8.33%
No answer	1 = 8.33%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 14. Mexican States where the Leaders are from

Jalisco	2 = 16.66%
Guerrero	1 = 8.33%
Michoacan	2 = 16.66%
San Luis Potosi	1 = 8.33%
Chihuahua	1 = 8.33%
Coahuila	1 = 8.33%
Veracruz	1 = 8.33%
Mexico City	2 = 16.66%
Guanajuato	1 = 8.33%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

- Interpretation of the specific trends resulting from the analysis of the information gathered in the interviews with the 12 Mexican leaders in Chicago, Illinois, United States.
- There is a predominance of males (Table 2).
- There is a balance in the levels of education and academic training (elementary, college, and graduate school) (Table 3).
- More than 80 per cent come from a town in some state in Mexico (Table 4).
- Half of them do community work for free and the other half makes a living from it.
- 50 per cent are members of a left-wing party, mainly the Democratic Revolutionary Party, fewer are of the National Action, and the Institutional Revolutionary Party is in the middle of political preferences.
- Regarding U.S. domestic politics, 50 per cent of those interviewed have no political preference, and of those that do, 24 per cent align with the democrats.
- Approximately 60 per cent of them have an agenda or specific goal in Mexico, mostly to be elected as representative (*diputado*), and 40 per cent showed no interest.
- Almost 70 per cent have no interest in politics in the United States and have no political aspirations.
- Most of them are citizens of both countries.
- Most of them immigrated to the United States in the 1908s.
- Their average age is between 50 and 59.
- The highest number of leaders are from the states of Jalisco and Mexico City.

Los Angeles Results: Specific Trends

Table 15. Gender

Male	9 = 74.97%
Female	3 = 24.99%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 16. Education

Elementary	8 = 66.64%
Professional or College	3 = 24.99 %
Masters or PhD	1 = 8.33%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 17. Origin

From a town in Mexico	12 = 100%
From a city in Mexico	0

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 18. Is a Community Leader as

A Profession	0
<i>Pro bono</i>	12 = 100

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 19. Political Party Affiliation in Mexico

PRD	0 = 0%
PRI	2 = 16.66%
PAN	1 = 8.33 %
None	9 = 74.97%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 20. Political Party Affiliation in the U.S.A.

Democrat	2 = 16.66%
Republican	2 = 16.66%
Independent	0
None	8 = 66.64%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 21. Political Aspirations in Mexico

Yes	0
No	12 = 100%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 22. Political Aspirations in the U.S.A.

Yes	0
No	12 = 100%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 23. Nationality

Mexican	3 = 24.99%
Mexican and American	7 = 58.31%
American	2 = 16.66%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 24. Willing to Receive Training

Yes	12: 100%
No	0

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 25. Decade in which He/She Immigrated to the U.S.A.

Before 1970	3 = 24.99%
In the 1970's	2 = 16.66%
In the 1980's	1 = 8.33%
In the 1990's	5 = 41.65%
After 1990's	1 = 8.33%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 26. Age Range of the Leaders

70+	4 = 33.32%
60-69	3 = 24.99%
50-59	2 = 16.66%
40-49	2 = 16.66%
30-39	1 = 8.33%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 27. Mexican States where the Leaders are from

Oaxaca	2 = 16.66%
Jalisco	1 = 8.33%
Michoacan	1 = 8.33%
Chihuahua	1 = 8.33%
Veracruz	1 = 8.33%
Guanajuato	1 = 8.33%
Nayarit	1 = 8.33%
Yucatan	1 = 8.33%
Aguascalientes	1 = 8.33%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Interpretation of the specific trends analyzed from the information gathered in the interviews with the 12 Mexican leaders in the city of Los Angeles, California, United States:

- Most of them are male (Table 15).
- More than 6 per cent of the leaders have elementary education, and the rest are divided between college and graduate education.
- 100 per cent come from a town in Mexico.
- 100 per cent work in community activism for free, which means they also have a paying job.
- 80 per cent considered themselves non-partisan; 16.6 per cent are members of the PRI, and only 8.33 per cent are members of PAN. Nobody is a member of the PRD.
- Regarding U.S. domestic politics, 60 per cent of those interviewed have no political preference, and those who do agree with Democrats and Republicans evenly, at 16 per cent for each party.

- Neither of them has a specific agenda or goal in Mexico nor do they hope to be elected as representatives (*diputados*).
- They also do not have any political aspirations in the United States.
- Most of them immigrated to the United States in the 1990s.
- Most of them have dual citizenship.
- The highest number of leaders is from the state of Oaxaca, with 2.
- More than 50 per cent of the leaders are between 60 and 70.

New York Results: Specific Trends

For New York, the numbers analyzed give us the following results:

Table 28. Gender

Male	8 = 66%
Female	4 = 33.32%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 29. Education

Elementary	3 = 24.99 %
Professional or College	6 = 49.99 %
Masters or PhD	3 = 24.99%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 30. Origin

From a town in Mexico	9 = 74.97%
From a city in Mexico	3 = 24.99%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 31. Is a Community Leader as

A Profession	4 = 33.32%
<i>Pro bono</i>	8 = 66.64%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 32. Political Party Affiliation in Mexico

PRD	0
PRI	0
PAN	0
None	12 = 100%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 33. Political Party Affiliation in the U.S.A.

Democrat	2 = 16.66%
Republican	2 = 16.66%
Independent	0
None	8 = 66.64%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 34. Political Aspirations in Mexico

Yes	0
No	12 = 100%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 35. Political Aspirations in the U.S.A.

Yes	2 = 16.66%
No	10 = 83.33%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 36. Nationality

Mexican	4 = 33.32%
Mexican and American	5 = 41.65%
American	3 = 24.99%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 37. Willing to Receive Training

Yes	12: 100%
No	0

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 38. Decade in which He/She Immigrated to the U.S.A.

Before 1970	1 = 8.33%
In the 1970's	3 = 24.99%
In the 1980's	3 = 24.99 %
In the 1990's	4 = 33.32%
After 1990's	1 = 8.33%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 39. Age Range of the Leaders

70+	1 = 8.33%
60-69	2 = 16.66%
50-59	3 = 24.99%
40-49	5 = 41.65%
30-39	1 = 8.33%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Table 40. Mexican States where the Leaders are from

Puebla	4 = 33.32%
Oaxaca	4 = 33.32%
Nuevo Leon	1 = 8.33%
Hidalgo	1 = 8.33%
Mexico City	1 = 8.33%
United States	1 = 8.33%

Source. Self-elaboration with tabulation of data from Adolfo Laborde's *Atlas Básico de Líderes comunitarios mexicanos en los Estados Unidos: los casos de Chicago, Los Ángeles y Nueva York*, 2015.

Interpretation of the specific trends shown in the information gathered in the interviews with the 12 Mexican leaders in New York City:

- Most are male.
- Half of the leaders have a college education and the rest are divided between graduate and elementary education.
- More than 70 per cent are from a town in Mexico; the rest are from a city.
- More than 60 per cent work in community activism for free and the other 40 per cent make a living out of it.
- 100 per cent consider themselves non-affiliated, with no political preference in Mexico.

- 60 per cent of those interviewed have no political preference in the United States, and those who do support the Democrats and the Republicans in equal numbers, approximately 16 per cent for each.
- None of them has a specific agenda or goal in Mexico or wants to be elected as a representative.
- 70 per cent are not interested in participating in nor do they have political aspirations in the United States.
- Most of them immigrated to the United States in the 1990s.
- Their nationality or citizenship is divided almost equally.
- Most of them come from the states of Puebla and Oaxaca, 4 each; and
- The average age of most of them is 40 to 49.

Specific Global Trends in the Three Cities of Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York³

The following interpretation of the specific trends obtained from the analysis of the information gathered in the interviews with 36 Mexican leaders in the U.S. cities of Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York express the following:

- Most are male.
- 40 per cent of the leaders have elementary education and the rest are divided between college education and graduate degrees.
- More than 80 per cent come from a town in Mexico; the rest come from a city.
- More than 70 per cent work in community activism for no pay and the rest, 30 per cent, make a living from it.
- 60 per cent consider themselves non-partisan and have no preference for any political party in Mexico, but if we had to determine the trend or party preference of the Mexican leaders interviewed in these cities, we could say that there is a preference for the PRD, followed by the PRI and the PAN.

3 The specific trends were obtained by giving each person interviewed a value of 2.7777 per cent. The equation to obtain the per centages is the sum of each value assigned to a community leader, or $2.7777 = 1$, as $2.7777 \times 36 = 100$ per cent. The margin of error is 0.0028 per cent, but it does not affect the trends or the final result of each metric when the per centages are extrapolated or the results are charted.

- Regarding U.S. politics, 60 per cent of those interviewed have no political preference, and those that do support the Democrats, followed by the Republicans.
- 80 per cent do not have a specific agenda or political goal in Mexico, nor do they want to be elected to as a representative (*diputado*).
- Regarding their political aspirations in the United States, 80 per cent are not interested.
- Half of them immigrated to the United States in the 1980s and 1990s.
- 60 per cent have dual citizenship, and the rest are divided between Mexican and U.S. citizenship.
- More leaders come from the states of Oaxaca, Puebla, Jalisco, and Michoacán and from Mexico City than from other states; and
- 33 per cent of them are between 50 and 60, which determines that the leadership batons will need to be passed on before long.

Conclusions

The information gathered in this research places the reality of the Mexican Community Leaders in the United States in a certain context regarding their educational level, their roots, their participation and their political culture. Leaders can review this material to help them form a better idea about community leaders in the United States as they will continue to have a greater incidence and participation in Mexico's political, economic, and social life. This idea can be seen in the affirmative answer of each of them when they were asked about the participation of Mexicans in the 2018 presidential elections in Mexico, as long as an effective identification program is implemented abroad; these results validate the research supposition which notes that: "There is a profound dynamic relationship between the migrants and their communities of origin, but it is limited to this area."

The lack of knowledge about the work and careers of the Mexican migrant leaders living in the United States, especially in Los Angeles, California; Chicago, Illinois; and New York City, New York has led to a lack of understanding from some Mexican authorities at all levels of government, which means that there is a lack of knowledge about the leaders' work and, therefore, about the effects of their community work, on both sides of the border. The words of Jose Luis Gutierrez, a

member of the Federation of Michoacanos' in Chicago, express the feelings of the migrant community and its leaders on this matter:

I think that it has to do with more than the sign of remittances; I think that it has to recognize that this binational perspective that many of the leaders have can help to change creatively the way that things have been done so far. One of the main concerns I see in this last administration is a centralization of decision making by the federal government. I see an unmitigated drive to have control over everything. And I think that here in this aspect it is very necessary for civil society to organize better. We must have more places for civil society, we need more dialogue, we need more transparency mechanisms in public office, we need improvements in holding accountable those who use the resources, and I'm talking about at every level, towns, states, and the federal government. We cannot keep creating new rich people every administration.

This study demonstrates how urgent it is to improve knowledge about the migration phenomenon which would foment a deeper awareness of the tools for cooperation in the social, economic, and political arenas. The 36 interviews carried out and the results of the correlated variables allow us to validate what Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink (1999) established the importance of migrant networks in the transnational setting; however, there is still room to analyze and to study how the leaders operate through public relations or particular lobbying, which has specific traits in each case. In other words, the community leaders in Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York follow different paths to achieve their goals in community activism, which shows different levels of sophistication on how they operate and thus in their political culture. As a sample, we can read the stories of these 36 "Mexican heroes" who, with no gain for themselves, work day in and day out to defend and honor their cross-border Mexican community.

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