

The Role of Culture and Resilience among Mexican Migrants and Refugees

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Binational study of mental health and sequelae in Mexican migrants in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua in Mexico and El Paso, Texas in the United States who experienced and/or witnessed violence in Cd. Juárez, nearby city areas or in other regions of Mexico, and the role of culture and resilience.

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A Report

Research Program on Migration and Health (PIMSA)

The Health Initiatives of the Americas

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Summary

This binational study investigated the mental health on Mexican migrants in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua in Mexico and El Paso, Texas in the United States who experienced and/or witnessed acts of violence, extortion, kidnapping, torture, arson, or other traumatic events in Cd. Juárez, nearby city areas or in other regions of Mexico, and the role of culture and resilience. An exploratory research was designed using mixed methods. Quantitative data was gathered using three tools: the Beck II Depression Inventory (Spanish version), the Harvard Trauma Questionnaire (Spanish version), and the O'Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (Spanish version). Not every tool could be applied in both cases studied. Such was the case for the Resilience Scale, which could not be applied to the subjects interviewed in Cd. Juárez because of the lack of conditions to use it by the time of the interview.

Qualitative data on migration was obtained through a deep interview to 63 adult migrants in both cities, an interview conducted by Dr. Sergio G. Sanchez and revised by Dr. Mark Lusk.

The sample consisted of thirty (n=30) people who escaped from violence in Mexico to El Paso, Texas, and thirty-three (n=33) people who migrated to Cd. Juárez and experienced and/or witnessed a similar violence.

Key words: migration, violence, culture, resilience, mental health.

Based on the general objectives, it was studied the mental health effects of Mexicans that migrated to the United States due to violence, as well as migrants who lived in Cd. Juárez and Mexico and experienced acts of violence; besides identifying the cultural components that eased adaptation and contributed to the resilience in both migrant groups.

The specific objectives were: 1) Describe the migration experiences of Mexicans who experienced violence in Mexico. 2) Determine the prevalence and severity of depression on migrant population (men and women over 18 years old) studied. 3) Determine the trauma symptoms prevalence and severity on migrant population (men and women over 18 years old). 4) Identify the cultural components that eased adaptation and contributed to resilience.

Background - Migration to the United States.

In 2006, shortly after being elected President of Mexico, Felipe Calderón declared war against the drug cartels responsible for the huge illegal drug trafficking in the United States, Mexico and other parts of the world. The president mobilized thousands of Federal Police officials throughout Mexico and in addition, he asked the Mexican Army and Navy to join the national campaign to suppress the drug cartels and gangs. The outcome was paradoxical. Instead of reducing crime and limiting drug trafficking, Mexico sank in a progressive spiral of chaos and crime, characterized by gang war, disturbing homicides rates, kidnapping, extortion, opportunistic crime, home and car robbery, rapes, social disturbance, civil society decline (Campbell, 2009), as well as loss of citizen rights.

The Mexican Research and National Security Center estimated that since the war against drugs started, around 28,000 people died in Mexico from 2006 to 2010; a violence that disrupted the country, particularly in the United States border region (Ramos, 2010). During the last four years, this number increased exponentially, reaching in 2014 to approximately 120,000 deaths caused by violence, plus the disappeared, which could go up to 20,000 people. It is also clear that the violence in Mexico is now spreading throughout the national territory.

This situation in Mexico caused general fear and dread. Major border cities' streets were virtually empty after sunset. Opportunistic crime emerged to fill the emptiness of security, since police officers were paralyzed before their incapability to enforce the law due to the daily killing of public agents. Businesses started to collapse and close in cities like Cd. Juárez as a result of extortion, due payments, death threats, kidnapping and fires to businessmen from the organized crime.

Before such reality and as a survival reflection, thousands of Mexicans living in the border, run-away to the United States seeking refuge, being a majority those who migrated to inner Mexico, many of which experienced trauma before their move. Since 2008, around 230,000 Mexican citizens have fled from violence in Cd. Juárez, and from those 124,000 stayed in El Paso (Lusk, McCallister & Villalobos 2013). Few are the ones who have a permanent residence in El Paso, Texas so it is expected that, due to the increase of violence and lack of employment in Juárez, they mostly live under low-income and irregular migratory status.

The psychological and social effects of war and armed conflicts are well documented and they are recognized for their contribution to human suffering, mental health problems, life quality decrease, increase of disease burden, and chronic disability (Eisenman, Gelberg, Liu and Shapiro, 2003; Fortuna, Porche, and Alegría, 2008; Pedersen, Tremblay, Errázuriz, & Gmarra, 2008; Walker and Barnett, 2007). However, only one study on violence, mental health and resilience on the US-Mexico border was found (Lusk, McCallister & Villalobos 2013).

Since the 70's, the worldwide growth of violence and social disturbance has exposed civilians to frequent traumatizing experiences associated with violence, political instability, armed fight, terrorism, drug trafficking, and civil society disintegration. These experiences include witnessing or experiencing a life or physical integrity threat, severe harm or injury, torture, exposure to grotesque situations, sudden and violent loss of a loved one, death or harm to others, forced disappearances, kidnapping threats, extortion and/or forced family separation (Eisenman et al., 2003; Acero, Silove, Bird, McGorry, and Mohan, 1999), as well as destruction or damage to property.

Literature reports that mental health effects on people fleeing from their country because of violence, are closely related to the pre, peri and post experience of

migration that may contribute to depression, anxiety, and a symptomatology of stress by trauma (Fortuna et al., 2008; Silove y Acero, 2000; Walker y Barnett, 2007). People living and experiencing violence and migration suffer trauma by multiple losses, being the death of a loved one the most recurrent (Steel et al., 1999). The degree of choice and ability to plan the transfer, mobilization or migration, along with the uncertainty of seeing their families again, also contribute to the anxiety and depression symptoms of migration (Fortuna et al., 2008).

Eisenman conducted a research with 281 immigrants that were exposed to violence before moving to the United States. He found out that people suffering from violence are more likely to meet the diagnosed criteria for depression, panic disorder, and stress caused by trauma than those not exposed. In his sample, 54% of participants were exposed to political violence. From these, 36% met the criteria for depression and 18% for stress caused by trauma. Only 41% of participants had migrated from Mexico and 14% reported being exposed to violence (Eisenman et al., 2003).

Situation in Ciudad Juárez

Now, let's set up a general perspective of the situation in Ciudad Juárez during the years of extreme violence, between 2008 and 2012. We are briefly referring to the processes currently experiencing by the city, such as the different kinds of violence, migration and its changes, and the "maquiladora model" crisis.

Let's remember that some decades ago Juárez symbolized a job promise for those migrants. A promise that was settled on the maquiladora industry which started on the last century, during the 70's, and hired up to 250,000 male and female workers throughout its highest growth by the end of last century. This was the time of the biggest population boom in Ciudad Juárez, tripling its population in 30 years with people coming from Chihuahua, nearby states (Durango, Zacatecas, Coahuila), and farther states of central and east Mexico.

But the situation has changed today. Along with the extreme violence in 2008 and 2012, thousands of citizens moved to other parts of the country and to the United States. That is, during these years, migration in Ciudad Juárez was the opposite of what

has been for the last decades; although, it is likely that after the extreme violence and employment recovery in maquiladoras, such south-north flow could eventually be reestablished. However, we can say that this migratory flow towards the city wasn't over during the "extreme violence" although, it indeed, significantly declined since the city's population growth stopped between 2005 and 2014.

To the aforementioned situation, another issue should be added: the maquiladora's crisis that caused a subsequent job fall in businesses, which for decades, had recruited thousands of male and female workers, offering them (poor) incomes on return of intensive and extensive working shifts with a combination of bonus (diverse compensations for attendance, punctuality, productivity, among other production demands) that made female and male workers' incomes less precarious.

Certainly, this scenario would not be complete without another unavoidable issue which refers to the last years' events in such place: By decades, Ciudad Juárez has been a privileged spot for south-north drug crossing toward the United States. Huge drug cartels interact around this large-scale business here. This business' peak led to the Juarez Cartel grow, which has fought for the last years with the Sinaloa Cartel, and led to the "war for the post" that largely explains the 2008-2012 violence.

What kind of "extreme violence" are we talking about? We try to answer this question. We overtake two issues that underline this complex situation: the already mentioned "war for the post" and the "war against organized crime" carried out by the federal government during the 2006 -2012 six-year president term, when Ciudad Juárez was defined by the presence of the army and federal police, between 2008 and 2010 basically. By 2012, such situation changed and resulted into a significant diminution of men and women killings.

Social and population standoff, violence, war for the post and exodus in Ciudad Juárez (2008-2012).

In 2003, we found that Ciudad Juárez and the municipality where it is located, had a population of 1,218,817, from a total of 3,052,907 inhabitants had by the state of Chihuahua on that time. Ciudad Juárez was and still is the state megaplex (INEGI and the State of Chihuahua Government, 2010 pg. 73). By 2005, the census showed a population of 1,313,338 residents (658,346 men and 654,992 women) for the Juarez

municipality, which means that in three years the city has grown 100,000 residents (INEGI and the State of Chihuahua Government, 2010 pg. 73).

By the end of the 21st Century first decade, the census data showed poor and basically no growth on the city population. In 2010, it shows 1,332,131 residents, and in 2012, 1,357,016 residents (Juárez Strategic Plan, Civil Association, 2013 pgs. 29-30). An additional report from the same C.A. showed: 1,331,131 residents. This means that the population has not only stopped growing but also declined (a little, but it has reduced: around 20,000 residents), in relation to the 2012 numbers. It was practically the same population as in 2010 (Juárez Strategic Plan, Civil Association, 2014 pg. 7).

It was precisely during the years of extreme violence when we noticed such population standoff. This shouldn't be a surprise. Let's remember that between 2008 and subsequent years (until 2012) the city experienced an exponential growth of violent deaths, reaching 10,638 violent deaths during those years, to which it should be added 2,015 murders in 2011, 740 in 2012, and 481 in 2013, for a total of 13,874 violent deaths between 2008 and 2013, according to the C.A. report (Juárez Strategic Plan, C.A., 2014 pg. 24).

We can't overlook the violence against women in Ciudad Juárez. It is clear that extreme violence against women (femicide) has continued throughout this decade and even increased during this period. Chihuahua's NGO "Justice for our Daughters", emphasizes that only in 2010 there were 299 cases of femicide in Ciudad Juárez, meaning that in one year, this number represented more than fifty percent of registered femicides from 1993 to 2005, approximately. But if we add to such rate around 200 femicides in 2011, in two years, 2010 and 2011, there were more femicides than in those twelve or thirteen cited years, since the femicides rate almost reached 429. Note that between 2008 and 2011 the femicides rate is high (this number should certainly be relativized in regard with the femicide rates in places like the State of Mexico) since it adds up to 734 in four years, twice of those occurred in about twelve or thirteen years (Juárez Strategic Plan, C.A., 2013 pg. 16).

As of 2008 there is an important rise on femicides in Ciudad Juárez: 111 in 2008; 125 in 2009; 401 in 2010; 220 in 2011; 108 in 2012 (*Así estamos Juárez* Report, 2014, pg. 24.). By counting the 2012 femicides (108), we have a total of 956 women murdered

during the years of extreme violence. We should point out the decrease of women and girls murders in 2012, however, the situation has not improved at all.

This is enough to conclude that such situation explains the runaway of residents towards different regions in Mexico, including a good number of exiles to El Paso, Texas region, which is hard to estimate although there are some approaches on this regard. Researchers from the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) have pointed out that during such period approximately 120,000 residents of Ciudad Juárez and nearby areas established there escaping from violence, and many looking for political asylum. This process has also been studied by a number of analysts, such as Master Querales, CIESAS, D.F. Unidad Doctoral Candidate (Lusk, McCallister, Villalobos, 2012; Querales 2013).

As we have mentioned, two of these organizations engaged in drug trafficking were confronted on recent years to gain the town control for their illegal business: Sinaloa Cartel and Juarez Cartel. Everything indicates that such war that lasted four years (2008-2012) contributed along with other factors, to the great violence of those years (Dávila, 20).

This violence caused the exit of thousands of Juarez residents. Many of them headed north and others towards different regions in the country. Data on this population movement varies based on the referred source. Mexican newspaper sources can be consulted on this regard: Milenio, February 16th, 2010; El Universal, November 26th, 2010, and November 30th, 2011).

Definitely, a social situation marked by violence, risk, insecurity, and fear, took place in Ciudad Juárez. Below, we can see the effects of this situation on the interviewed migrants.

This research project started in 2011. Dr. Mark Lusk and Dr. Griselda Villalobos, researchers of The University of Texas at El Paso in the United States, conducted a study that resulted in 24 qualitative interviews to Mexican citizens who ran away to the United States, escaping from violence in Mexico. Among the main issues emerged from the interviews are: participants identified cultural components like family support (familismo), ability to talk about their own experiences to others (personal reference), feeling of losing control over their situation (fatalism), and placing everything in God's

hands (spiritualism) (Lusk, McCallister & Villalobos 2013), which seems to have mediated the effects of violence experienced by refugees. The authors also observed that survivors of trauma associated with migration were surprisingly resilient. Even though the refugees showed signs of depression and anxiety, most of them also expressed hope in the future and ability to adapt in a new country, as evidenced by their job search, incorporation to a social network in the community, and by assuring an appropriate housing.

This research was aimed to analyze this phenomenon in the United States, and then be expanded to the Ciudad Juárez, Mexico border, where not much literacy about the psychological and social effects of more than four years of violence in the population, can be found. Dr. Sergio G. Sánchez, Researcher Professor from the Center of Research and Higher Education in Social Anthropology, was invited to this study in Ciudad Juárez. In the United States, the mentioned researchers keep studying the mental health and effects on Mexican migrants seeking refuge in El Paso. Dr. Silvia Chávez Baray, from the same University of Texas, was part of this research effort in recent years.

In Mexico, Dr. Sergio G. Sánchez and his coordinated team, paid special attention to migrants that arrived to Ciudad Juárez coming from other regions of Mexico, and who have suffered from violence. In both populations, the role of culture in the resilience structure was studied particularly not only as survival strategies in families but also in processes that imply a self-reconstruction above incredible situations of suffering, loss, and grief, a process that has not totally been understood or addressed in Ciudad Juárez' culture (Sánchez 2011, Manciaux 2007).

The methodology of this exploratory study consisted of using mixed methods designed to determine subjective experiences, the nature and range of traumatic expositions. Also, the effects in mental health of migrants escaping from violence and civil disturbances in Mexico, and on Mexican migrants who migrated to Ciudad Juárez and other parts of Mexico, and have experienced violence and trauma, as well as their adaptation ability. The criteria of inclusion were the voluntary male and female participation, 18 years of age or older, and be Mexican migrants and being under a

regular or irregular migratory status, English or Spanish language, and capacity to participate in the informed consent process.

An intentional convenient sampling method was used to recruit the sample on people receiving services from non-profit organizations in El Paso, Texas and Cd. Juárez, Mexico, as well as in the Mexican General Consulate in El Paso. A reasonable fee of 30 dollars or its equivalent in Mexican pesos was given to each participant for their voluntary participation, and for answering the in-depth interview (qualitative method) and three surveys about depression, trauma, and resilience (quantitative method). Thirty (n=30) interviews were conducted in the United States and thirty-three (n=33) in Mexico.

The study design, data collection, and informed consent form were approved by the Institutional Review Committee of the University of Texas at El Paso (IRB, by its Spanish acronym) and the Research and Higher Education in Social Anthropology Center (CIESAS, by its Spanish acronym), located in Mexico City. The forms were used to obtain the informed consent from each.

The data collection method consisted in the participant's answer of the Harvard Trauma Questionnaire (Spanish version), the Beck-II Depression Inventory (Spanish version), and the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (Spanish version) to determine the nature and scope of traumatic exposure and mental health effects. Additionally, the participants conducted an in-depth semi-structured interview to determine subjective experiences and cultural factors related to traumatic exposure, migration, and resilience. A tool previously mentioned. The participants' involvement ranged from 1:30 to 2 hours. The interviews were transcribed, coded, and outcomes included as part of data sets.

The Harvard Trauma Questionnaire (HTQ) was developed by Richard Mollica and his colleagues from the Harvard Program of Refugees and Trauma (HPRC) in 1992. The HPRC has designed and tested a range of instruments throughout the last two decades, which assess the degree of trauma on populations that have suffered mass violence, displacement, and torture. Such tools have been used and validated

with a global base on civil issues in countries that have suffered violent conflicts, and have been translated into more than twenty languages (Mollica, McDonald, Massagli & Silove, 2004). This questionnaire closely aligns with the criteria for the post-traumatic stress disorder diagnose included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association (Fawzi, Pham, Lin, Nguyen, Ngo, Murphy & Mollica, 1997). The original sample was used in Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees, showing great reliability. The symptomatology section has a 0.96 alpha and a test-retest correlation of 0.92 (Norris & Hamblin, 2004, p. 92). The tool has been culturally adapted to more than a dozen other languages and cultural groups (Mollica, McDonald, Massagli & Silove, 2004). The Spanish version developed by the HPRC – Harvard Trauma Questionnaire- was used in this study.

The Beck II Depression Inventory (BDI-II) is a 21 question self-evaluation. An instrument designed to measure the importance of depression in teenagers and adults (Esparza, et. al., 2002). The administration time for the BDI-II varies from 5 to 10 minutes. The participant is asked to select scores from 0 to 3 for each element in the tool, rating the highest numbers for the most severe symptoms. The BDI-II scores range from 0-63 (Chang, 2005). A score of 10-19 shows mild depression, 20-25 indicates moderate depression, and higher than 25 means severe depression (Benedetto, Lindner, la liebre, and Kent, 2006). The BDI-II was translated by a group of psychologists from the United States, Mexico, South and North America, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, using the Back Translation Technique (Penley, Wiebe Y Nwosu, 2003). In a clinical sample of patients under hemodialysis, they found that the total BDI-II scores were similar in English and Spanish. In a sample of 937 college students, Wiebe & Penley (2005) it was found that the BDI-II Alpha Coefficient was .91 and the internal consistency was .86. The scale's internal consistency was .76 among the English and the Spanish BDI-II (Wiebe & Penley, 2005). This study offered reliable evidence for both instrument versions showing that both have a similar underlying factor structure (Wiebe & Penley, 2005).

The Connor-Davidson Scale Resilience Scale (Spanish version) is used to measure the ability of recovery to life adversities. This has strong psychometric

properties of validity and reliability in the English version (Connor and Davidson, 2003). It has also shown to be a reliable and valid measure in the Spanish version (Notario-Pacheco, 2011). The scale is composed by 25 items and each item has a 5 point scale. The highest scores show higher recovery ability. This has been assessed with outpatients, community samples, psychiatric patients, refugees, and other populations exposed to trauma (Connor y Davidson, 2003; Karairmak, 2010).

The semi-structured interview guide developed by Dr. Sergio G. Sánchez and revised by Dr. Mark Lusk, consisted of 90 questions that identify the cultural and social structures associated with violence and migration, cultural structures represent personal identities (Courtois, 2008; Dana, 1998; Pedersen, 2002). Questions to identify values and experience meanings were used. Let's remember that social relationships give meanings and contribute to personal identity (Dana, 1998), therefore, the migrant experiences were examined focusing on their social values, world perspectives, subjectivity, as well as interviewee conflicts and their influences.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed through the Statistic Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 17.0 version. The semi-structured interviews' qualitative data analysis was based on Miles and Huberman (1994) and Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014). Likewise, data codification was included to protect the confidentiality and every interview was transcribed.

Results

A table with demographic information found by the research team in each state is shown below.

Information	Cd. Juárez, Chihuahua, Mex.	El Paso, Texas, EU.
Age	20 to 56	18 to 68
Gender	23 M 10 F	10 M 20 F
Occupation	6 Research Professors 4 homemakers (2 of them are also businesswomen) (1 of them, peddler and factory worker) 4 factory workers 6 wage earners (company driver, gardener, waiter, security, religious organization employees) 5 storekeeper (craftsman, food peddler, natural products, and seamstress) 1 public employee (young offenders system judge) 2 business owners (electric appliances repair, maintenance) 4 volunteers in a religious organization shelter 1 unemployed woman (occasional works with family members as domestic worker and sitter)	5 students 1 homemaker 20 (cleaning employees, labor, sales, assistants) 5 business owners
Academic degree	None: 1 Elementary school: 4 Junior High School: 12 High School: 7 Technical Career: 1 Bachelor's degree: 1 Master's degree: 1 Doctorate's degree: 6	Students: 5 2 High school 2 UTEP: (1 bachelor's degree, 1 master's degree) 1 Western University: (Master's) Professionals: 27 1 Physician 1 Doctorate's graduate (PhD) 2 Master's graduates 22 Bachelor's graduates Engineering, Business Management, Business, Psychology, Education, Law School High School: 1

Marital Status	18 single 10 married 5 living together	25 married 5 single
Years living at the new place	From 3 to 32 years	From 6 months to 5 years
Migration place of origin	State of Chihuahua Sonora Coahuila Durango Jalisco Nayarit Aguascalientes Puebla México City Morelos Oaxaca Michoacán Veracruz Honduras El Salvador Nicaragua Chile Italia	State of Chihuahua
Reasons for migration	Get to the border and cross to the U.S.A. Look for a job, income (tentative, exploratory, not sure about destination) New opportunities Work (some shifts at the factory) and study Due to unemployment in the place of origin Husband's unemployment Meet with family (husband) For nomadism (wandering without a clear destination) Deported from the U.S. to Mexico Legendary Juárez: "Land of opportunities" Looking after a sick family member Work at a religious group shelter Get medication for HIV	Extortion Kidnapping Family member or fellows kidnapped and murdered Threats Assault and threats Torture stories

	For adventure	
	Nostalgia Desire to go back Discomfort (“not feeling well”) Difficulty to adapt to weather Feeling stigmatized, seen as “weird” by natives Sense of solidarity to natives and other migrants Crying Feeling out of place Grief for being away from family members Fear for being at risk in streets Feeling of happiness since the place of origin was unpleasant Joy for life change Risk on the journey through Mexico (violence in La Bestia) No feelings Traumatic experiences in Juárez (witnesses of murders, massacres, infringements, police arbitrary detentions, police attack injuries; extortion experience, threats to known people, fear, concern; seclusion due to danger; all kind of impacts: nightmares, nervousness).	Nostalgia Sadness

The findings in the Harvard Questionnaire for Trauma are:

Traumatic events of the interviewed subjects in Cd. Juárez

Describe some situation that caused you a lot of fear:

- 1 Have experienced an assault by criminals

2 Have experienced arbitrary detention and mugged by police

1 Have heard of threats to known people and family members

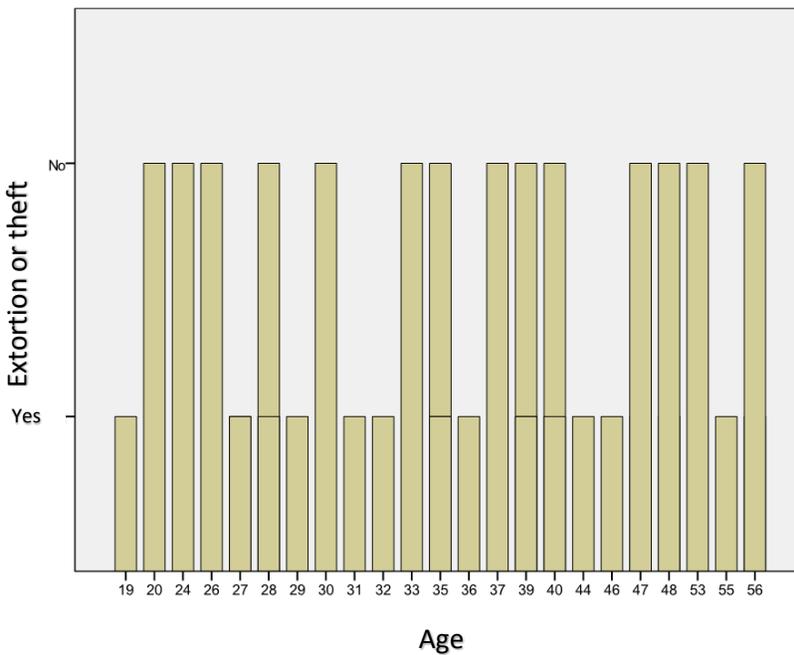
5 Have witnessed a murder on the streets (of someone known, family member)

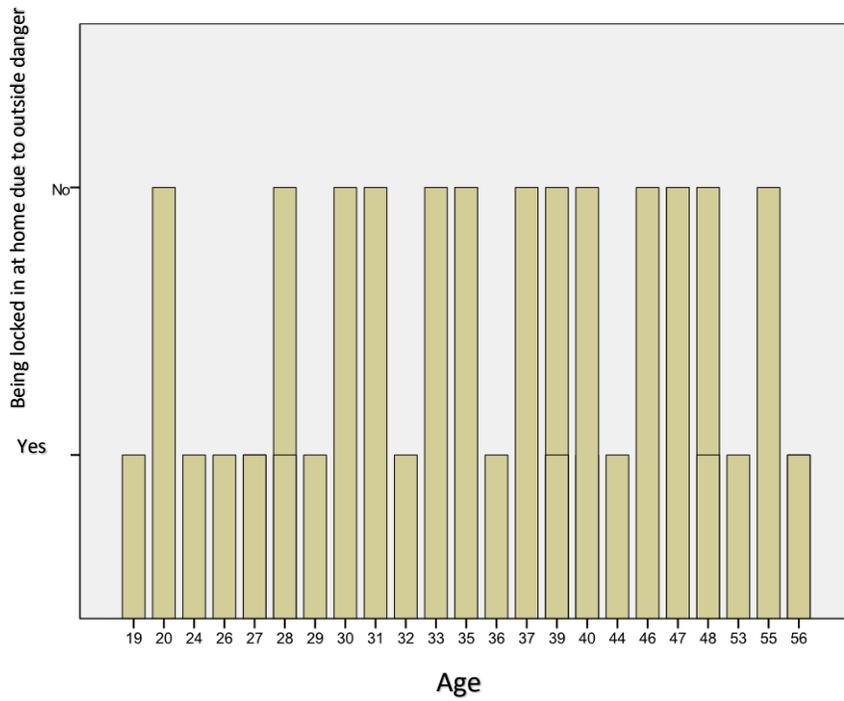
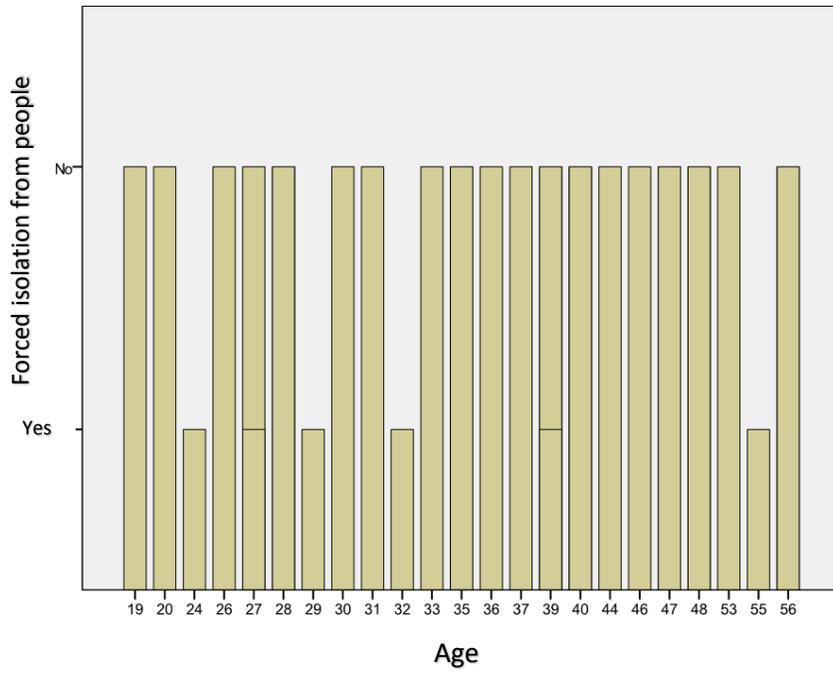
1 Have witnessed a massacre on the streets

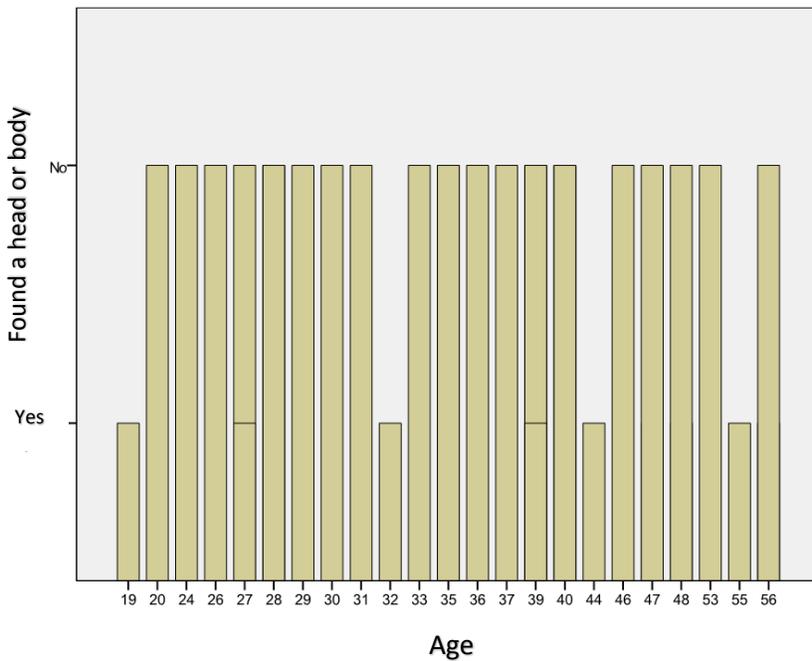
1 Have been beaten by police

1 Have witnessed the rape and murder of a young woman

Traumatic events with cross-age





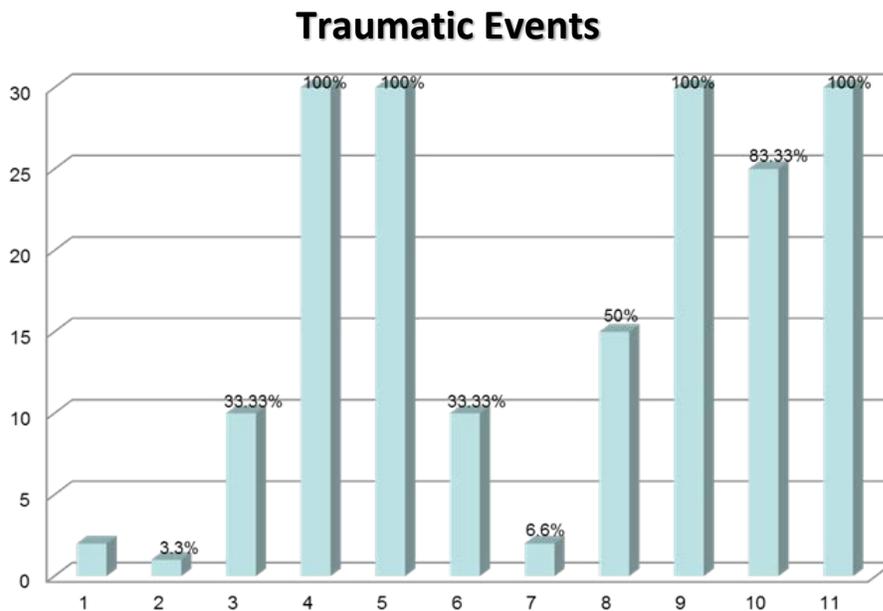


Traumatic events of the interviewed subjects in El Paso, Tx.

Part 1. Description of traumatic events

Homeless	2
Lack of food	1
Poor health, disease with no access to medical care	10
Exposure to frequent shootings	30
Forced evacuation for danger situation	30
Physically beaten	10
Rape	2
Murder or death of a family member	15
Family member or friend missing or kidnapped due to violence	30
Physical harm to family member	25
Death/murder witness	30
Other situation that caused you a lot of fear or that you felt your life was in danger: 3 assault, 4 extortion, 2 negotiate with kidnapers	8

1. Homeless
2. Lack of food
3. Poor health, disease with no access to medical care
4. Exposure to frequent shootings
5. Forced evacuation for danger situation
6. Physically beaten
7. Rape
8. Murder or death of a family member
9. Family member or friend was missing or kidnaped due to violence
10. Physical harm to family member
11. Death/murder witness



Part 2. Personal Description

From your experienced events, please indicate which one you consider more harmful or frightening. Please specify where and when these events happened.

“After negotiating my brother’s rescue, they accepted to reduce the amount of two million dollars they were asking for, we sold things, borrowed money, looked here and there, and managed to complete the new amount. We left the money where they told us, and we were waiting for my brother, but the kidnappers just sent one of my brother’s fingers to my mom’s house with a note, saying that if we were going to pay the two millions in installments, they were going to give us our brother back in pieces. We didn’t have more money and a few days later, they left him dead in front of my business. This was three years ago” (Male, 38 years old).

“A year ago, we were getting home for lunch and while we were waiting for the garage door to open, two trucks arrived, one on each side of my car. Two armed men got out and started beating my parents; I opened my door and ran to hide behind some bushes but they found me. They locked us, me and my brother in the bathroom. I was afraid since I saw my dad full of blood in the ground; my brother and I got into the

bathtub and hugged each other. After a while any noise could be heard and my parents opened the door. Thanks God they were alive, the men made my dad open the safety box and they took the TV's, video games, and computers" (Female, 18 years old).

"My dad was working and my mom went grocery shopping, and left me and my brother at home. We didn't go out to the street anymore, only from house to school; my neighbor went out to wash his car and my younger brother wanted to help him, I didn't want him to do it but he said it was just across the house, that it was okay; I sat close to the window to watch him. A convoy of four trucks turned on the block shooting everyone on the street, my brother and neighbor died along with other people there. There were three blocks with people laying everywhere. My mom almost went crazy; it's been six months since we moved here, just with the Laser Visa, I can't get into school and my parents can't get a good job" (Male, 20 years old).

Some outstanding issues were found on the next section of the Harvard Trauma Questionnaire when exploring their current life situation:

On your current life situation (i.e. displaced, arrived to a new place after exile, etc.) What is the worst thing that has happened to you? If it was different from the previous one, please specify where and when it happened.

"Have to walk two and a half miles every day, back and forth to bring water into the mobile home where we lived, we didn't have tap water and we were far away from everything" (Male, 68 years old).

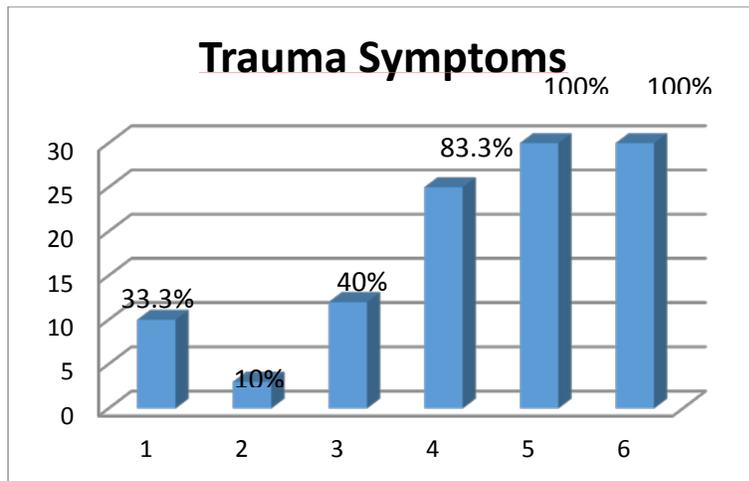
"I'm an engineer and I only found job as dishwasher, getting paid below the minimum wage. My studies are worthless here, but I'm already working on my GED" (Male, 42 years old).

Part 4. Trauma Symptoms

The next list shows symptoms that people may have after experiencing harmful or awful events. Please read each symptom carefully and tell how much they have affected you for the last week.

Feeling or behavior	Number of People
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27. Feeling guilty or regret because of things that happened	10
28. Feeling guilty of have survived	3
30. Feeling ashamed by a harmful event that happened to you	12
31. Feeling that people don't understand what you have been through	25
36. Feeling distrust to others	30
37. Feeling helpless to help others	30



1. Feeling guilty or regret because of things that happened
2. Feeling guilty of have survived
3. Feeling ashamed by a harmful event that happened to you
4. Feeling that people don't understand what you have been through
5. Feeling distrust to others
6. Feeling helpless to help others

Part 4 of this questionnaire is designed to establish the diagnosis for post-traumatic stress disorder based on the DSM-IV. An important outcome to be highlighted is that the higher score of 1.5 was found in three people. A score higher than 2.5 is required to determine the diagnosis.

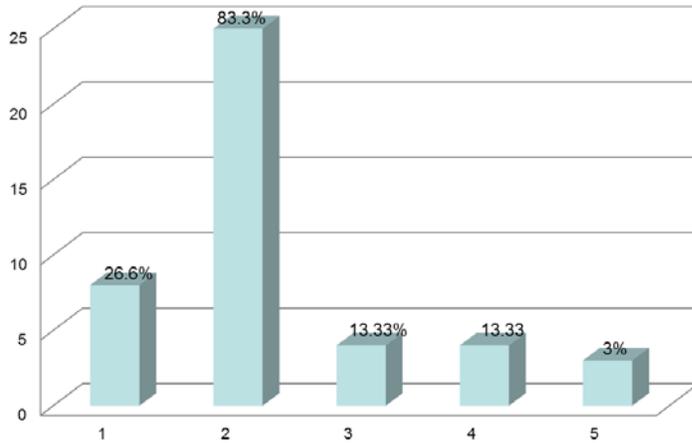
Part 5: Background on Torture

Now, I would like to ask you about events considered by many of us, as torture. I will read a list of events and ask you if you experienced any of them. Please answer yes or no.

Background on Torture

Beating, kicking, hitting with objects	8
Threats, humiliation	25
Chained or tied to others	4
Isolation, imprisonment	4
Forced to witness other's torture	3

Background on Torture



1. Beating, kicking, hitting with objects
2. Threats, humiliation
3. Chained or tied to others
4. Isolation, imprisonment
5. Forced to witness other's torture

100%
Negative to
the
depression
diagnosis

These are the findings on the O'Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale in El Paso, Texas:

100%
Resilient

Story of experiences in Cd. Juárez, Chihuahua.

Migration

“We bought a nice house, not too big, 200 sq. meters, in a residential neighborhood located two blocks from here [the university]. The kids are in the *Colegio Americano* located across the block [from the residential neighborhood]... As a family, this is our scenario... a very comfortable, quiet scenario, even in times of extreme violence this area was quiet. It was unusual to hear or see a murder or that something happened around here”. (SS testimony, 36 years old, Social Science PhD, Research Professor at the UACJ, he arrived to Ciudad Juárez in 2008).

“I encouraged myself [under the city’s situation], I had no choice than get used to it. First, we watched the news saying “the number of deaths that week, this month”, but it was something very... well yes, I was very nervous, until we decided to stop watching the news”. (MG, 35 years old, Technical Career, housewife, married to ER, PhD in Anthropology, Research Professor at the UACJ, she arrived to Ciudad Juárez in 2010).

“Well, the truth? I didn’t think how it would feel like to be here [in Ciudad Juárez], but well, being here, now it seems like a very violent place, with many awful things, we are here only because of work, because many unpleasant things happen in this place... I came with the experience of Mexico City, but no way, once you are here, not anymore, here is nothing compared with Mexico, nothing to do with Mexico [referring to Mexico City] (AAP, maquiladora worker, operator, 31 years old, native of Oaxaca, most of her life lived in Tlaxcala, she lives with her partner).

Experiences after migration

“I live with my sister, she works in the maquiladora industry; she buys food and pays bills, like water and electricity; I basically just work to pay *Infonavit*, afford baby’s diapers and milk, and once in a while a 10 pesos hamburger that we can buy at “*las segundas*” [trading markets with all kinds of used products]. Also, by selling *bolis* [I get income], I make coconut *bolis* [a *boli* is flavored ice packed in plastic bags as a treat for the heat]”. (MCJ, 29 years old, Social Worker, factory worker, mother of a 1 1/2 year old boy, single; she arrived to Ciudad Juárez in 2007. June 28, 2013 interview).

“Well, [nostalgia] for everything, weather, that when going out to the streets I might not come back home in one piece, everything, I mean, I can’t get used to this, the crime here; work, well I’m kind okay there, because I wasn’t used to being locked up in a factory... to this day I still miss my place from over there [Españita, in Tlaxcala], I tell my husband, maybe I could go over there any time later, I could go over there any time (AAP, maquiladora worker, 31 years old, native of Oaxaca, most of her life spent in Tlaxcala; lives with her partner, and she arrived to Ciudad Juárez seven years ago).

“It was when we arrived here to work for a while, right? A few days, a month, two months maybe, and we ended up staying here. It’s true, right? It was worse here than in other places, but there was work, and we had to deal with it, weigh one thing or the other in the balance, right? So this one was heavier, right? And that’s it, we are still here”. (MGNH, 37 years old, native of Chihuahua, from the city of Delicias; he arrived to Ciudad Juárez in August 2010 with his family, wife and two little kids).

Narrative of experiences in El Paso, Texas

Migration

“We basically had to run away, we left everything, house, car, work, family; it was very painful”. (Female, 30 years old)

“One day I got home and my husband told me, “hurry up, take a suitcase because we are leaving to El Paso, they say that if I don’t pay the fee, they are going to kill our children”, I cried all the way; I only brought one suitcase with clothes for the four of us, everything was left in Juárez”. (Female, 43 years old)

“We had to leave at midnight, as if we had done something bad, we wrapped our children in blankets and a friend took us to the bridge, there we gave ourselves as refugees, we didn’t think that they would arrest us; we were detained for almost three months, it was very tough, difficult, and painful”. (Male, 45 years old)

Experiences after migration

“Here, we live in a small place, our economy was affected, we don’t have too much, and we move by bus, but it doesn’t matter because my family and I are safe, we can safely take the kids to the park”. (Male, 38 years old)

“We struggle a lot in here, everything is different; language, economy, but we are calm and safe”. (Female, 40 years old)

“We live in a rent house, we only have one car, we have to be very organized to do everything we want; the house is small and we don’t go out as we were used, my parents work much more and I see them stressed, but not as when we lived in Juárez. Now, they smile and we go out with more freedom without looking after ourselves”. (Female, 18 years old)

Next, we include some sayings mentioned and used by interviewees in times of adversity:

“Dios aprieta pero no ahorca” / “God squeezes but doesn’t choke”

“Al mal tiempo buena cara” / “To the bad time, a good face”

“No hay mal que dure 100 años ni cuerpo que lo resista” / “Nothing lasts forever”

“No te dejes porque el viento va en contra tuya, mejor aprende a volar” / “Don’t give up

against the headwind, learn to fly instead”

“Todo pasa para algo” / “Everything happens for a reason”

“Que no me den, que me pongan donde hay” / “Don’t give me money put me where I can make it”

Once more cultural components identified by participants can be found in the interviews, such as family support (the *“familismo”*), ability to talk with others about their own experiences (personal reference), feeling out of control over their situation (fatalism), and placing everything in God’s hands (spiritualism), such as in the previous research project; in addition to the following values: dignity, respect, community, family, religion or faith, friendship, courtesy, pride, personal reference, solidarity, that seem to mediate the impact of violence they had experienced, and benefit resilience.

Some resilience characteristics of the interviewed subjects in Cd. Juárez

In terms of their “occupational affiliation” we find doctoral university professors, which we can define as “stationary migrations”, they are college salary staff of the UACJ or some research institution, like the COLEF. They are privileged employees, with “permanent” or “lifetime” jobs. This group earns an income that compared with the average wage in our country, it indeed represents “high” income, enough to live and obtain assets like a house, car, twice a year vacations, private schools, and important work development perspectives: work publishing, teaching, thesis mentoring. They have access to development scholarships, to the Researchers’ National System, travel allowances to attend national or international conferences, research funding, scholarships, possibility to manage, coordinate, and conduct research projects and programs at the university.

There are the “other salary employees”: employees in maquiladoras or diverse subcontracted activities for an employer, in public services like gardening errands in city parks. They have regular income with a weekly paycheck; however, in some cases they are low income because they can’t even get the “minimum daily wage” due to the many deductions like mortgage. There are also the “self-employees”, peddlers, low income people, some rent their houses or own a car. They work on a daily basis for an income. If they don’t go out to the streets every day, they won’t have income. They are self-employed. Most of them have elementary and junior-high school, although there are some with no elementary school. We have situations of unemployment, like the one of a young woman without access to a formal job. She, as other interviewees, has faced huge unemployment periods, although she is eventually hired for domestic duties.

Juárez is no longer the 20th end of century “full employment” city, nowadays it is hard to be hired in maquiladoras, although in 2014, maquiladora employment seemed to recover, returning to its historical levels, 250,000 employees, but even in worse conditions than during those historical periods.

There are also the retailers, “small middle-class”: they have their own mean of life, and even hire workers.

In the so called “middle age” population, it prevails those who are “married”. There are also many just living together; those who decided to live by themselves, without a partner, at least when they were interviewed in 2013.

In the single people group, there were graduate professionals and international migrants (Central Americans: Honduras and El Salvador), “stationary migrants”, living in a very different situation to the UACJ graduates, and placed in opposite poles of the social scale. These migrants live in a religious shelter for migrants and drug addicts, the only place where they can stay because of their irregular migrant status, voluntarily locked up there to avoid being deported by the Mexican migration authorities. The interviewees shared their political approaches, their perceptions on the numerous governmental agencies they visit every day, particularly, in the case of Ciudad Juárez, the law enforcement agents, the army and the so called “federal” police. By these citizens contact with the “law enforcement”, there is a perception of significant distrust towards the State and its repressive sources, a mistrust spreading to almost everyone around them. This tendency seems to talk about a traumatic situation for this people: it is hard to find much trust in these individuals, in the possibilities of a shared life, of joining, talking, discussing, and planning coordinated actions with others. “The Collective” is not an alternative to face daily tasks, it is “something” that create distrust. Trust can only be found in “their own strength”, family union, and support network.

Some migrants have noticed several kinds of reject, they are oppressed citizens in many ways, and they are “the others”, the newcomers, the ones that will dispute job positions. Besides of being oppressed by “law enforcement” agencies, gangs, and hired assassins crawling in the city. In spite of it, they don’t try to get organized, don’t resist oppression in an organized way, and the NGO’s are not an alternative. They have their own individual strength, sometimes from their family, to face the challenges and demands of everyday life.

Despite of adversities, these migrant workers have aspirations that allow them to face difficulties and that, perhaps one day, they will accomplish. These are personal hopes, which are focused in looking for a decent today and better future for their children. This people desire a better life, as stated by many of the interviewees with

those same words: they “look for a better life”, like the title of a recent movie about undocumented Mexicans in the U.S.

Some of these individuals said they suffered hunger for a while: they arrived to Ciudad Juárez looking for a job and obtain a “better life” or “not so bad”, which is a paradox: this people live the situation in Juárez as an improvement to their lives, despite the ongoing situation. A paradox that in the mid of violence and social breakdown, these men and women, migrants manage to preserve this kind of hope. Maybe this is the cement that keeps them active, united, and that allows them to function every day. Maybe we can say that we are before people with the ability of resilience, of recovering from difficulties and suffering, and considering to live and run every day looking for a better future.

Ciudad Juárez Conclusion.

The city is stuck in population growth and economy. During the great violence period (2008-2010), more than 200,000 people left the city, an extreme violence due to two drug cartels fighting for the post. Simultaneously, there was a big crisis in the maquiladora model or basically, a huge lay off of workers by the maquiladora companies. Around 100,000 workers were fired in those years, today (2014) these job positions have been recovered, but in poorer conditions than before, without the many benefits the workers used to have, since today many of them are outsource hired.

We acknowledged that in spite of such situation, migration to Ciudad Juárez still continues. We have witnessed the arrival of migrants from the same state of Chihuahua and all of Mexico. We also found international migration from Central and South America. Migration continues to a great extent, since the economic conditions on their native places are broken, being the crisis even worse than in Ciudad Juárez. Juárez still symbolizes an almost mythical influence on migrants: “the place of opportunities”. In general, the migration experience is painful, with after effects of lots of sadness and nostalgia in migrants (Ulises Syndrome).

The foregoing is evidenced on the 33 interviews made to migrants, which have recently arrived to Ciudad Juárez, mainly. In the Depression (BDI) test, it is noticeably that these migrants are depressed: feelings of sadness, pessimism, failure, guilt, lack of

enjoyment, desire of being punished, self-criticism, suicidal thoughts, and loss of sexual desire, are recurrent on both male and female. What draws attention is that such feelings are more acute in men, except by insecurity, which is higher on women.

That depression condition follows different factors, one of them, definitely, deals with the migration conditions. Some interviewees lived the migration journey throughout the national territory, and witnessed assaults, rapes and murders in their south to north trip. Others were escaping from catastrophic situations in their native regions of Mexico and Central America. In addition to the violent events, already mentioned, that many of the interviewees lived in Ciudad Juárez: they have experienced robbery and beating from police and criminals, are afraid of soldiers and the federal police, know about extortions, have witnessed murders and even massacres on the streets, murder of family members and friends, and “settlings of scores” between rival gangs.

In the trauma test applied, traumatic elements can be observed: men and women interviewed talked about their lack of housing, and suffering from hunger. Testimonies of being used as human shields, exposed to sniper shootings; women that were raped, and had to evacuate their homes; men that experienced torture. They have had to hide, and witnessed forceful entries to their houses. Being forced to lock themselves up in their homes for protection. These individuals show a deep mistrust towards their neighbors and they don't trust any residential, neighborhood or citizen organization.

We also found resilience elements in these individuals, their ability to recover from the migratory process and bear the city violence and violent events directly experienced. They keep hope in their lives, despite the overall feelings of loss. They find refuge in their families and expect to see their children grow. That is how life goes on, in the middle of an acute social breakdown.

El Paso, Texas Conclusion

In spite of the adversities experienced by migrants in their native country, the feeling of security in their new country of arrival is what protects them from falling into depression or post-traumatic stress. Culture and values are also elements of protection and resilience.

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