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INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN
SANTA MARÍA HUATULCO,
OAXACA

A Thesis

by

YASMÍN ANGELIE CORDERO

Submitted to the Graduate College of
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
In partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

May 2018

Major Subject: Sociology

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN
SANTA MARÍA HUATULCO,
OAXACA

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May 2018

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ABSTRACT

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Migration into rural areas has been of increasing interest in the last decades of research. Mexico has implemented development initiatives to reduce emigration and strengthen locally depressed communities resulting in immigration to the target areas. Santa María Huatulco is one of the areas of focus where the Mexican government created tourism development projects subsequently attracting foreign residents. This study focuses on international migrants who have chosen to relocate to the area of Huatulco, currently under development by the Mexican government. This was one of Mexico's poorer regions and has seen the slowest amount of growth since the development projects began. However, unlike the other projects, it focuses on the well-being and needs of the locals and the preservation of the natural surroundings. For this reason, although it may not be a large tourist hotspot, it attracts long-term residents and deters emigration.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Santa María Huatulco is located along the coast of Oaxaca, in the district of Pochutla (see Figure 1), and is 100 miles southeast of the state capital, Oaxaca City (see Figure 2).

Development initiatives started in the 1970's by the Mexican government agency, Fondo Nacional de Fomento al Turismo (FONATUR), included Oaxaca, one of the poorest states in the country. The goal of the development was to reduce regional poverty and emigration. The neighborhood of Crucecita is the most populated locality in the municipality of Santa María Huatulco. Santa Maria Huatulco had an estimated 43,811 residents in 2017, 13.1% of them being foreign born (INEGI, 2015). Crucecita's dynamically developing community is comprised of approximately 15,000 inhabitants living in a small beach town surrounded by a lush jungle.

When the development began, around 1,500 residents were removed along the coast, many of whom seized the opportunity to sell their real estate since profits from their cultivated land was meager. The tourism project continues in Santa María Huatulco, with the Huatulco Gobierno Municipal proposing continuing sustainable development involving ecological conservation, and the continued growth of tourism development meanwhile assuring a better quality of life for residents (Huatulco Gobierno Municipal, 2017).

Various patterns of growth have occurred in Huatulco consistent with previously documented urbanization patterns. There has been an increase in corporate investments, real estate construction to accommodate the increasing population, international tourism has grown

through partnerships with cruise lines and airlines, and there have been national and international migration to the area. Research on Huatulco's growth has examined economic and cultural flows, the development and economic growth outcomes resulting from FONATUR's initiatives, and the correlations between development and emigration (Gullete, 2007; Gullete, 2009). In this thesis, we explore the presence of foreign residents in the area. Specifically, the push and pull factors, their perspective on tourism and development in Huatulco, and the factors that influence them to remain in the area. A simplistic way to explain the different migration patterns is that "in terms of the movement of people, there are three different kinds of places in the world: those that people stay in, those that they move to, and those that they leave" (Lowenthal & Comitas, 1962). While most current research poses the question of why people leave Santa María Huatulco, this article's purpose is to juxtapose that by posing the question of why people move there.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Migration

The decision to migrate can be a two-dimensional process. First, it involves the decision of whether to relocate, second, the concerns of where to relocate. Age, education, and characteristics of the migrant significantly influence the first dimension of the decision making, involving whether to relocate or not to relocate (Lowenthal & Comitas, 1962). Labor market characteristics such as higher (relative) wage rates and employment rates are factors that influence the second dimension, where to migrate to (Navratil, 1977). Push and pull factors, or drivers, shape migration diversely in differing locations and destinations, and are influenced by epoch and timeframes, which operate at different scales of social structures (Hear, Bakewell, & Long, 2017). Migration research focuses on identifying the factors that contribute to people's decision to migrate and the impact their presence has on the area. Over fifty years ago, rural area population patterns have "turned around," where research has uncovered that people are more frequently moving into rural areas (Boyle, Halfacree, & Robinson, 1998; Herslund, 2011).

Researchers have predicted that low-income persons would be more inclined to migrate than high-income persons because migration reasons can be income driven, and low-income persons are more likely to seek income differential than the latter (Gallaway, 1969, Gilbert & Smith, 1967, Greenwood 1975). Long distance migration is expected to have a negative association between income and international migration; the lowest income will have the lowest

opportunity costs of living and therefore have the most substantial number of attractive job offers (Nivalainen, 2004). Research has also shown that moves are less likely to occur within families with children, as they there are locational ties to the children's schooling. (Krumm & Kelly, 1988). Family characteristic determinants also involve marital status. Unmarried individuals are more likely to migrate, and the likelihood of migration to occur decreases as the age of married couples increases (Nivalianen, 2004). A study by John et al. (1983) focused on how personal traits, perceptions of social norms about migrations, prior travel and migration experiences, contacts with family and friends, individual demographic and human capital characteristics (i.e. age, education, marital status), and household characteristics are factors in migration decisions. They found that prior migration exposure has a positive correlation with future migration decisions.

Who moves for what reasons? International migration flow research has concentrated on a number of theories. One theory is the neoclassical theory of migration which is often used when analyzing migration from Mexico to the United States. The neoclassical theory of migration suggests that migrants would prefer to stay in their country of origin and thus only migrate temporarily due to income opportunities they lack access to at home (Berg, 1961).

Although significant amounts of research have focused on migration from Mexico to the United States in terms of neoclassical theory, migration flows in that direction are expected a decline as predictions are that employment and wages will increase (Hinojosa & Robinson, 1992). Other migration studies disagree with the neoclassical focuses for its singular focus on employment and wages (Stark, 1991). Stark argues that remittances are important for households when deciding to migrate. These remittances allow the migrants to advance and modernize the rural areas where the family remains. Specifically, U.S. migration is significantly higher where the

host communities allow for small-scale investments (Lindstrom & Lauster, 2001). While rural to urban migration, such as Mexico to U.S. migration, explores low income, low educated families seeking better employment opportunities, urban to rural migration has shown to be prevalent with business-related migration among well-educated persons (Yang, 1994).

Rural business reflects the rural area and the local business structure. Herslund, et al. 2011 researched how educated urbanites relocate to rural areas and the implications of their in-migration for rural development. The study suggested that the reason for migration were for a more flexible everyday life surrounded by attractive dwellings and rural amenities such natural beauty and quiet in nature (Herslund, 2011). Rural living can be seen as a commodity and is often marketed as the 'rural idyll.' An analysis done on home magazines, the representation of the rural idyll is marketing rural as a "beautiful, safe, clean, harmonious, peaceful and healthy place where everyone knows each other and takes care of each other" (Baylina & Berg, 2010). Contrasting the rural idyll is the perception on rurality as the rural dullness, when residents perceive the country side as only able to provide limited entertainment, educational opportunities, and a limited job range (Rye, 2006).

Development and Tourism

The "selling of place" is a marketing tactic commonly used to sell and grow tourism in an area. The selling of rural, virgin land along with deserted beaches, a natural setting, friendly locals, and a collectivistic society are successful advertisement themes (Canan & Hennessey, 1989). Canan and Hennessey (1989), argued that using such a tactic is contradictory, and any success of that commodity will be short-lived. The development resulting from the conditions of

the place marketed as a commodity will destroy the attractive location through the selling of land and control. Canan and Hennesey (1989) also argued that the selling of culture will reduce the locals to purely symbolic cartoons (i.e., plastic leis and cellophane grass skirts in Moloka'i Hawaii). Tourism in these areas commercializes indigenous culture, which takes control of cultural changes away from the affected group (Dyer, 2003).

Effects like this can be seen in Cancun, Mexico, where undeveloped land quickly evolved into a global capitalist space with the only purpose of tourism production and consumption (Torres Maldonado, E. J., 1997). The construction of Cancun into the tourism space has been described as Gringolandia by locals, a Disneyesque quality spectacle, and has been criticized as an expropriation of the space by an American space (Torres & Momsen, 2005).

Cancun transformed from peasant subsistence farmers into a transnational consumption space where visitors remain stationary in the resort and oblivious to the extreme poverty surrounding the tourist bubble (Torres & Momsen, 2005). This inequality is the result of uneven development, the dominance over space by the rich and powerful, which has been noted as succeeding events regarding nature, capital and the production of space; "uneven development is social inequality blazoned into geographical landscape, and it is simultaneously the exploitation of that unevenness for certain socially determined ends" (Smith, 2008. p.206). Environmental impacts of tourism include protection of natural areas and replacement of extractive industries and commercial agriculture as well as air and water pollution, erosion, damage to ecosystems, litter, reduced standards of maintenance, disturbance of wildlife and their habitat and deforestation (McGehee & Andereck, 2005; Kavallinis and Pizam, 1994).

The social division present in Cancun was deliberate, as FONATUR designed the tourism space with segregated areas in order to avoid low-income locals from being alongside the tourist

resorts. Contrasting FONATUR's design of Cancun, FONATUR's plan for Huatulco conceptualized a nonsegregated space where tourists and locals are housed along the same locations. Huatulco was one of the areas FONATUR selected for tourism development in an effort to strengthen the local economies. Tourism in Mexico represents 8.5% of the gross domestic product, and its value is above the economy's average (OECD, 2017). Issues with tourism growth include sustainability and competitiveness for land that leads to the exploitation regardless of the planning including sustainable growth (OECD, 2017). In an attempt to reduce the disruptive impacts of development, the Mexican government has promised to combat local agricultural loss and other market changes, such as relying heavily on imports, by signing an agreement between SECTUR (Tourism Secretariat) and SAGARPA (Secretariat of agriculture, cattle, rural development, and food) (Sanchez, Cigarroa, & Castellanos, 2017). Since Huatulco's development initiated, there have been concerns of rising land prices as well as restrictions and resources as they are allocated to the foreign-dominated neighborhoods (Gullette, 2007).

Although land was inevitably expropriated for the construction of resort areas, workers in Huatulco experienced less unemployment, earned higher wages, and considered their standards of living to be higher than in other parts of Oaxaca (Gullete, 2007b). Huatulco, therefore, provides a standard of livability that is attractive to residents and migrants. Livability refers to the degree to which the provisions and requirements of an environment match those of the individual. For example, adequate food, shelter, and significantly above subsistence living wages that allow for social mobility in the community are considered livable. Regarding the factors that theoretically moderate residents' perceptions of tourism impacts, McGehee & Andereck et al. (2004) found that local business owners and those employed by tourism businesses were more positive about future tourism development. Gullete et al. (2007b) states that as of now, the

economy in Huatulco is increasingly reliant on tourism and suggest that the government should take a more active role in Huatulco's development regarding economics and land access. The Huatulco Municipal Government is working for the conservation and the incorporation of sustainable development with the preservation of Huatulco's natural characteristics and integrates the municipal government alongside its citizens to decide on the initiatives (Plan Municipal de Desarrollo de Santa María Huatulco 2017-2018, 2017).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

Methodology

The qualitative data was collected on the underlying factors that influenced the decision-making process regarding participants' migration to Huatulco. The exploratory study examined general topics on the participants' perceptions on the local economy, the availability of commodities, the development in the area, their perceptions of FONATUR, the culture of tourism, and how their nation of origin affected their attitudes towards migration. Ethnographic fieldwork was conducted over a four-month period beginning in May 2017 to July 2017 and resumed in September 2017 to October 2017.

Preceding my arrival to the beach mountain town, I compiled a list of businesses owned by international migrants via a Huatulco native. Additional participants were identified via snowball sample technique. I had the opportunity to stay in the area for weeks at a time and build rapport with locals. Being a speaker of the local language allowed for more natural conversations. From the identified gatekeepers, possible participants were narrowed down to fitting the criteria. Thirty participants were formally identified as fitting the sample criteria and contact was made (a number of possible actors were unreachable or unlocatable). Although the sample is not representative of the foreign resident population in the area, attempts were made to reach international migrants from Canada, Germany, and Argentina, as well as in different professions including non-restaurant business owners, realtors, and corporate workers.

Regardless, ten actors fitting the sample criteria agreed to take part in the study. A substantial amount of the research involved observations through an exploratory method to understand the culture in the area, the ideologies, the socio-structural organization of the area, and how the international migrants interacted with the area. Only individuals who were international migrants to Mexico were interviewed for the study. The sample that was formally interviewed consisted of 10 foreign residents identified through chain referral sampling and were located in the neighborhoods of Crucecita and Bahia Santa Cruz (see Figure 2). The interview was semi-structured, with open-ended questions. The demographic part consisted of information on the participant's ethnic origins and nationality, and a detailed history of their education and work history. The respondents comprised of eight females and two males. The respondents' age ranges were five between 18 and 25 years of age, meanwhile the other five were over 35 years of age.

Out of the ten respondents, six were from the United States of America, two were from Italy, and one was from France. Four of the respondents were business owners, three owned restaurants, and one had a proprietorship. Three of the respondents were married, and two of the married participants were cohabitating.

Findings

The study yielded some contrasting findings through two different groups. First, all respondents who had migrated over three years ago to the area (which in this thesis will be referred to as the respective “established migrants”) had established a form of local income. These established migrants were more likely to consider their current dwelling as the place they

will live out the rest of their life. The migration practices of the new migrants were guided by journeys to self-exploration and the search for life experiences. These new migrants had migrated less than three years prior to being interviewed and were receiving their income from overseas via virtual jobs. Although the sample size was small and is not generalizable, the ten respondents of this research can be divided into two groups according to their age, how long ago they migrated to the area, and social situation (see Table 1: The characteristics of the two groups of migrants; new migrants and established migrants). Further, characteristics and respondents of each group appear to be unique to that group. Participants' perceptions of FONATUR are negative, or they were unfamiliar with the government agency. All respondents expressed their admiration for the beauty of the ecological area and considered it a reason for them staying.

Motivation

Motivations for relocating and remaining in the area were similar to the reasons relocation to the area occurred originally; the everyday pace of life. The larger portion of participants, the new migrants, had no intention of staying in the area when they first visited. They initially arrived at the area for a vacation with friends who were staying nearby. Either during or after their few weeks' vacations the respondents indicated that they were planning their return to Huatulco, but not for vacation purposes. These new migrants mentioned how they fell in love with Huatulco during their visit; "I just kind of fell in love with it. At first, I was just coming back to visit again, but I thought, I am older now, I can move here" said one participant. Another participant said, "I bought my ticket to come back to live here before my vacation was even over."

The sense of community and collectivism in Huatulco was a factor that nine out of ten respondents mentioned and considered to be highly important. The migrants formed friendships with locals as well as other migrants and felt that the people in the area are trustworthy and caring. Regarding the residents of Huatulco, one participant stated "They are such good people. In small places, you get to form so many friendships". Residents also noted how peaceful and safe they felt in the community, stating "there's no paranoia or fear like you'd have in a city" and "you can say there is no danger here." They strongly valued the sense of collectivism where your neighbor offers help when they see something is wrong.

Income

The sources of income for the participants were binary; participants obtained income from either an owned business or an online job from an overseas company. All participants suggested that they are not relatively wealthy in forms of income; participants needed an external source of income to sustain themselves. Out of the participants that owned businesses, some of their businesses were a continuation of previous career ventures, and others started their business as an outlet to profit from their interests and hobbies. The business owners were in a variety of trades before starting their businesses, but most were inclined to start their businesses to profit from their hobbies. One of the restaurant owners began their path to owning a restaurant at an early age in their home country. They came from a generation of home cooks with some owning restaurants. As they explained, they loved to cook due to their upbringing and considered it their favorite hobby. Opening a restaurant was their way to turn their hobby into a lucrative venture, and it was easy to do since they had worked in the industry and learned the ropes throughout their life.

Contrastingly, the new migrants were digital nomads. This group of respondents sought income through telecommuting rather than traditional, local sources. The net-based work was not a continuation of previous work for most participants, neither an outlet for their hobbies. One of the telecommuters was previously a freelancer and has since continued their freelance work after migrating. The other digital nomads are employed with various English-as-a-Second-Language companies based out of China, and one participant is employed as a graphic designer for a company in San Francisco. The online ESL teachers mentioned the flexible hours of the position was attractive to their current lifestyle, and it was not particularly a job they were passionate about, but it was accessible and lucrative enough for their standard of living in Huatulco.

Housing

The respondents living arrangements differed in the two groups; the established migrants owned residential property, while the new migrants were renting. The group of respondents who owned residential property were the established business owners. In regard to the business owners, although living above your place of business is legal and common in the area, the respondents differed in residence locale selection. One respondent lived alone above their restaurant in a one-bedroom apartment. They indicated they chose this living arrangement to have easy access to their full kitchen at their restaurant downstairs, which is where they partake in their baking hobby. The other participants indicated that they don't live at their place of business, rather they have property elsewhere and nearby for differing reasons. One business owner had a large family living with them. Therefore, the upstairs space was not enough room to house everyone. They resided nearby, however, within walking distance of their workplace. Another business owner had moved locations within the last few years, and their current business

locale was a new development with single-use buildings. They resided in the same neighborhood, but they did not consider the commute to be a walking distance.

The other group of participants, the new migrants, were renting their residence. All but one of this group of respondents lived alone and had no children. The rental residences were studio units, one room units that share the same space for the kitchen, living room, and bedroom, but had a separate space as a bathroom. The respondent that did not live in a studio lived in a two bedroom with their child. Those who rented were aware of the relatively low land and property prices in the area [compared to the real estate prices in their country of origin], as well as how you can gain a profit from purchasing and selling a housing unit. One participant stated "A Canadian friend of mine built a house and got 100% return on their investment. They did again and got a 200% investment on that one". However, the cost to purchase a modern home with western amenities is around \$200,000 USD for a two-bedroom apartment. According to a respondent, a two-bedroom unit in their building is on the market for \$200,000. Although the unit came with a view of the beach, they mentioned: "the view is ok, but it's not that good" and not worth the price they were requesting.

Tourism

The topic most participants agreed on was the effects of tourism on the area. The respondents recognized that Huatulco is growing in popularity as an ecologically based tourism destination. Most participants were aware that the organization responsible for promoting the growth of tourism in the area is FONATUR, others recognized the growth but were not aware that the government was promoting tourism. When participants spoke about tourism, it was mostly negative. The reasons for their perception ranged from peddlers on the street to the rise of

prices, big companies taking patrons away from locally owned businesses, and the community itself being unable to sustain heavy tourism.

The established migrants perceived the tourism development as disruptive to the native culture and customs. These respondents were concerned that the area of Crucecita is not set up to handle the natural resources required for a substantial increase in tourism and that it would have a negative impact on the areas' residents. The established business owners were surprisingly opposed to growth and further tourism development but welcomed the tourists to their business. Their counteractive views stemmed from the main idea that tourism is generally good, but that excess tourism hurts the community. Two business owners explicitly mentioned that they did not intend their restaurant to be for tourists, but for the locals. The participants' businesses run year-round but the tourist season provides the profits for the off-season. The business owners indicated that they had to adjust their lifestyle to live comfortably in the off-season without their savings from the heavy traffic months. Contrastingly, the respondents are aware that heavier tourism would attract more all-inclusive resorts which do not help the locally owned business. They mentioned these resorts keep the tourists at isolated beaches, restaurants, and provide all the amenities the tourists may need. For these reasons, they do not view FONATUR positively. The government agency has signed over land to the companies such as the Secrets Resorts to build all-inclusive resorts but, according to respondents, FONATUR has not delivered on the renovations and expansions they have promised. The beach access point "La Bocana" was mentioned as an example as it was under construction for over a year.

A concern mentioned of excessive tourism was social deviance that tourism brings to an area. Notably, these concerns were not regarding alcohol or drugs. Rather, the respondents specified that as tourism brings growth and business, attracting violence in the area. There is an

awareness that the cartel business is omnipresent, but it is described as quiet and not alarming with violence kept at a minimum and only between the individuals involved in that life.

Also mentioned was the impact on the environment and resources. Previously mentioned were how the beautiful beaches and nature were factors that influenced their decision to migrate. Not all participants were aware that prior to the beachfront property being built, the real estate was housing for locals. The three that were aware felt the gentrification had unjustly priced out locals from the beachfront property residential locales. Respondents also mentioned the environmental degradation as the area becomes congested and littering becomes a larger issue. A respondent mentioned how the aftermath of holidays during the tourist season involves the streets filled with trash. They perceived tourists to disregard their manners and not be respectful of the area. Surprisingly, the concern of the tourism development initiating the destruction of natural areas was not present due to the Mexican government emphasizing that Huatulco's development growth is through ecologically sustainable tourism.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The participant's perception of the quality of life was a significant factor in deciding to migrate to Huatulco. For most respondents, the initial perception of the area as merely a vacation locale was altered once they arrived and experienced what Huatulco is. Contrasting to research on the feeling of deprivation when exposed to higher living standards (Lockwood, 2002), the participants' reference on standards of living are higher from their country of origin than where they migrated to in Huatulco. Access to luxuries and amenities (i.e., central A/C, chain retail stores) were significantly reduced after they relocated, yet their perceived deprivation holds little to no negative value in the relocating process. Meaning, participants experienced their environment as a rural idyll, commenting on the peacefulness and natural surroundings instead of focusing on any relative deprivations. Similarly, they perceived it as a positive that the area is socially dense where everyone knows each other, a place of solidarity and collectivism. Rye et Al. (2007) found similar results where informants viewed the spirit of cooperation and neighborliness positive aspects of living in rural Norway. In contrast to Rye et al. (2007) findings were the participants' perceptions of Huatulco as a rural dullsville. One reason for their absence of rural dull perceptions may be because the participants were not actively seeking employment in the area, making a limited job range irrelevant to their personal quality of life. Similarly, no participants were currently seeking further educational opportunities thus were not concerned

with the availability of higher education. However, another reason may be that Huatulco has higher education opportunities within reach, La Universidad del Mar, making educational accessible and attainable.

The occupations of some participants are rather under researched as previous studies have not focused on digital nomads in small tourist areas. Although Thailand has recently been in the spotlight as the “ultimate digital nomad destination” (Lambert, 2016), the topic has only been scarcely explored. In regards to the digital nomads in Huatulco, most of the economic hardships residents may experience in an economically disadvantaged area are not perceived to be experienced by these participants. Their earned wages are reported to be above minimum wage, over USD 7.25 per hour, in the United States, which is significantly higher than the Mexican minimum wage, USD 4.90 per day. This suggests that participants might only feel financially affected by community development or lack of if they are either priced out of the area or resources become scarce. In the year prior to this investigation, a teacher blockade in other parts of Oaxaca and other states halted the transport of goods to Huatulco for months at a time.

There was a shortage of imported foods, water, natural gas. and oil. The respondents were affected by the events, but they did not report feelings of discontent with their living locale. In the month prior and during the study, Huatulco was also affected by strong earthquakes that damaged structures. Reasons for most of the respondent's calmness surrounding both events might be due to their perception of financial stability or the safety net that comes with the solidarity and collectivistic community. A study on the resilience of tourist areas in Dominica brought attention to how strong social networks positively affect the reactivity of the community (Holladay & Powell, 2016). Similar to the proposed development plans in Huatulco, Holladay & Powell et al. (2016) found that the community had strong beliefs in maintaining ecological

security and economic diversity. This preference towards ecologically sustainable living promotes post- disaster economic resilience. It is important to note that although not directly part of the study, there are also temporary migrants in the area who vacated during the natural disaster and the shortage caused by the blockade. These temporary migrants are both nationals and internationals who have a second home in Huatulco and reside there for months a time, multiple times a year. Further, quantitative and qualitative research on this population could shed light on whether they are better classified as tourists as well as the effect their presence has on the area. Additionally, studies could determine if their presence creates pressure on Huatulco to conform and commoditize to secure future profits from the population. Some temporary migrants seek assistance from a tourist-style realty management company to render the secondary homes into rental accommodations during the months they are away. Using these homes as investments, as participants mentioned some temporary migrants do, takes away the community feeling from the area and prices out the locals due to transient occupants (Visser, 2004).

In regard to tourism, the perception that tourism has a negative influence on the area is not absent in literature. The participants felt that tourism threatens the areas resources, community life, and economy, similar to results found by Usher & Kerstetter et al. (2014). In contrast, it was recognized that tourism contributed heavily to the local economy, manifesting dissonance around the topic. FONATUR's development project succeeded in lowering unemployment rates and improving the standards of living but also in creating a dependency. As Gulleto et al. (2007) found, as a household's finances improve they adopt a new reference lifestyle, later creating the perception of deprivation. The business owners admitted that they were not entirely reliant on tourism, but that it provided them with comfortable living during the offseason. Another explanation for the positivity regarding tourism can be that the development of the area has only passed Exploration and Development but has yet to see further phases tied to

the possible decline in local quality of life, as described by Butler et al. (2008) (see Figure 3). Further, the benefits of tourism (e.g. job opportunities, income) might currently outweigh the costs enough that the government agencies will continue to suggest that the development projects will not involve the negatives of further phases such as Consolidation, Stagnation, and Decline. The continued plans presented in 2017 account for the concerns of isolated resort districts, environmental and social negatives that could arise as they have with tourism development initiatives elsewhere.

Conclusions

The results of this study suggest that Huatulco offers a way of life that is attractive to the migrants such as the ones in this study. Specifically, it is attractive to the generally well off, economically stable migrants in search of the rural idyll. The international migrants did not explicitly state any issues or discontent with the area currently (e.g. financial hardships, violence, drugs, crime, or lack of resources). Perhaps if the government continues to develop Huatulco as they have been, with the locals in mind, negative development and tourism impacts can be controlled. Specifically, the Plan Municipal de Desarrollo Santa Maria Huatulco, 2017-2018 is the most recent development initiative with the residents in mind. If the mission statement of taking into account cultural, ecological, and economic factors holds true, their investment in human capital will not go without benefiting the area.

Additionally, this study shows an importance in further research on digital nomads, their migration patterns, and their impacts in those areas. Previous analyses have regarded digital nomadism as a never-ending vacation (30,32), associated with individuals who seek a world travel adventure (Sutherland, Jarrahi, 2017). Taking into account that Huatulco seeks to be an

international vacation destination, a more in-depth analysis of the concentration of this population in the area could be beneficial to integrate in future development projects.

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APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

FIGURE 1

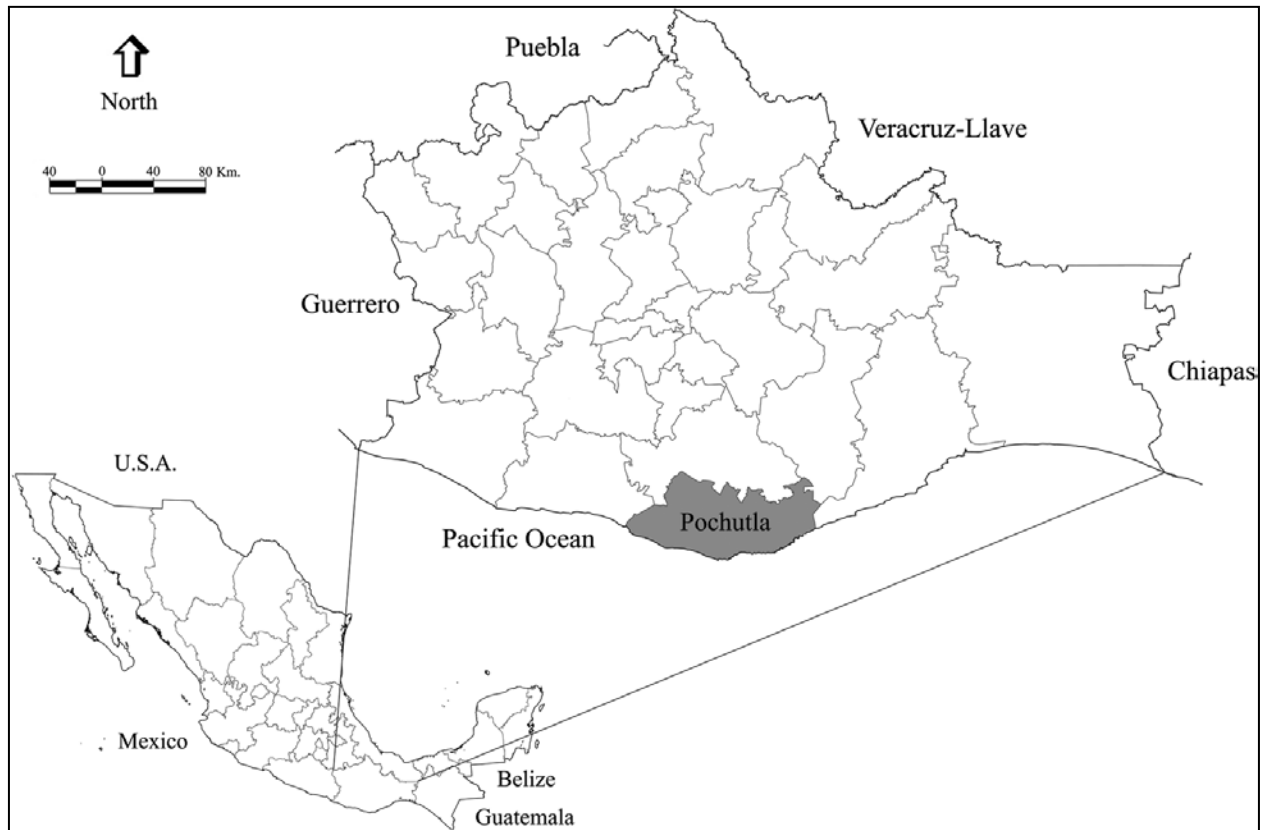


Figure 1: The district of Pochutla in relation to the State of Oaxaca. Reproduced from “Migration and Tourism Development in Santa Maria Huatulco, Oaxaca”, by G. S. Gullete, 2007, *Current Anthropology*, 48(4), 603-611. Copyright 2007 by the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. Reproduced with permission of UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS in the format Thesis/Dissertation via Copyright Clearance Center.

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

FIGURE 2

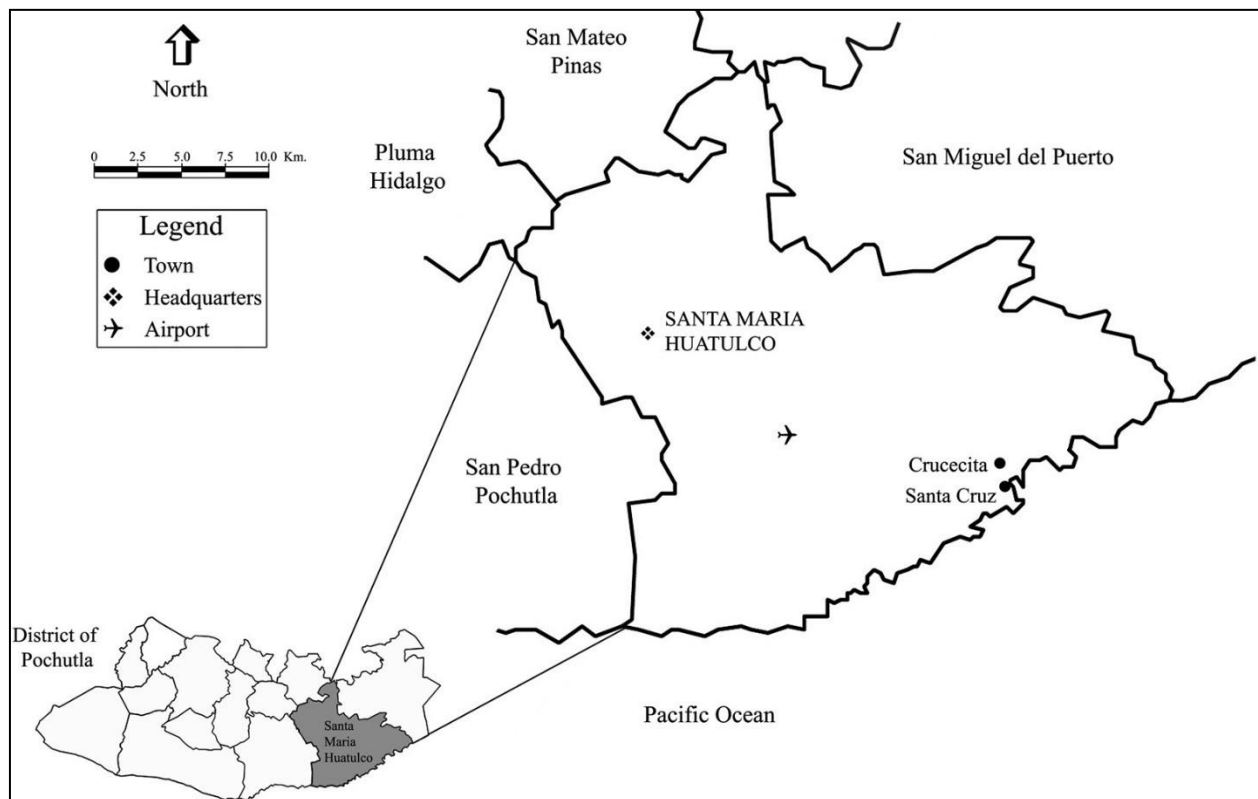


Figure 2. Santa Maria Huatulco, Crucecita, and Bahia Santa Cruz. Reproduced from “Migration and Tourism Development in Santa Maria Huatulco, Oaxaca”, by G. S. Gullete, 2007, *Current Anthropology*, 48(4), 603-611. Copyright 2007 by the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. Reproduced with permission of UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS in the format Thesis/Dissertation via Copyright Clearance Center.

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX C

TABLE 1

	New Migrants (Migrated less than 3 years prior)	Established Migrants (Migrated over 3 years prior)
Age	18-25	35+
Form of Income	Held online jobs from overseas companies	Owned businesses or were retired after earning income from jobs in Huatulco
Social Situation	Unmarried, no children, renting their dwelling	Married or previously married (divorced), had children, owned residential property
Perceptions of FONATUR & area development	Were unaware of FONATUR's development projects and previous socioeconomic changes to the area but were concerned about future tourism developments	Were familiar with FONATUR's development projects and previous socioeconomic changes and were concerned about future tourism developments

Table 1: The characteristics of the two groups of migrants; new and established migrants.

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX D

FIGURE 3

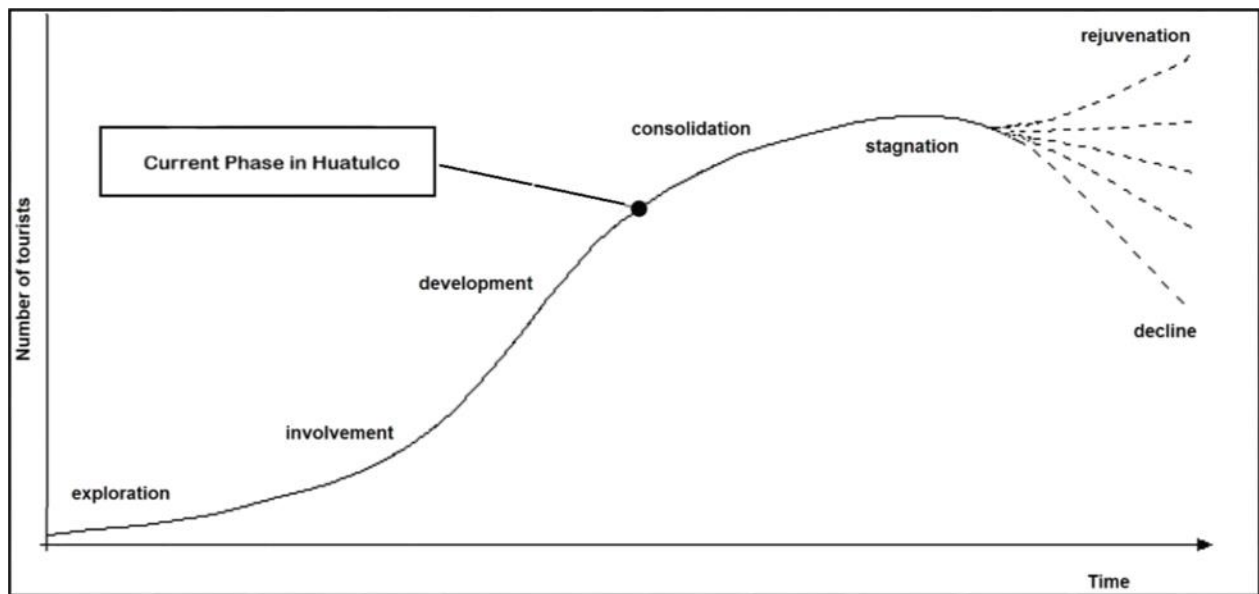


Figure 3: Illustration of Huatulco's current estimated development phase from phases in the Butler Cycle (Butler, 2008).

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The author, Yasmín Angelie Cordero Sánchez, was born in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico on December 26th, 1991. The student accomplished the primary school at Southwestern Educational Society (SESO) in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico in 2002, the secondary school at Southwest Middle School in Orlando, Florida, United States of America in 2005, and high school at James Pace High School in Brownsville, Texas, United States of America in 2009. The student obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a second major in Sociology from The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in 2015. During the student's undergraduate studies, their areas of concentration were statistics and research in both Psychology and Sociology studies. The student worked as a student instructor and graduate assistant at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley from 2015 through 2017. The student is a member of the Golden Key International Honor Society. The student obtained a Master of Science degree in Sociology from University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Texas, United States of America in 2018, and graduated with a 4.0 graduate GPA.

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