

Association for Borderlands Studies

Journal of Borderlands Studies

Volume XIII, Number 2, Fall 1998

Contents

Russell Hillberry

Regional Trade and "the Medicine Line" The National Border Effect in U.S. Commodity Flow Data

The role of national borders in the international economy has been a topic of widespread public discussion in recent years. The conventional wisdom on the topic is that in an increasingly integrated global economy with relatively low formal trade barriers, national borders are no longer important inhibitors of trade. McCallum (1995) cast some doubt on this belief when he found that, after adjusting for economic size and geographic distance, trade among Canadian provinces was more than twenty times greater than trade between those same provinces and U.S. states.

The 1993 Commodity Flow Survey (CFS) provides an unprecedented opportunity to verify these surprising results, as well as to investigate subsequent questions, such as why the border matters, and how it affects economic welfare. This paper reviews the existing literature on the geography of trade flows, describes the CFS, and attempts to verify the McCallum result at the aggregate level. Despite a number of a priori reasons to believe otherwise, the author finds that CFS estimates of the "border effect" are almost exactly equivalent to those estimated by McCallum.

Stephen Jenner, Wim Douw, and Boudewijn Koops

Sourcing Strategies of Asian Manufacturers and the Development of Local Linkages in San Diego and Tijuana

The Asian manufacturers in Tijuana have a considerable impact on the regional transboundary economy of Baja California and Southern California. The respondent firms in the survey conducted as part of this study sourced an average of 30 percent of all inputs regionally. This is of fundamental importance since linkages promote regional sustainable economic growth and the transfer of technology to local suppliers. However, in the case of Asian manufactures in Tijuana, these beneficial local linkages were primarily restricted to Japanese and Korean suppliers: indigenous Mexican suppliers were rarely used.

Local linkages developed by Asian companies in San Diego and Tijuana are in large part generic inputs, although some core inputs have also been purchased. This may be due to greater local decision-making authority for generic inputs sourcing compared to more meaningful core inputs.

The four most important reasons given by respondent companies for using local suppliers in San Diego and Tijuana are, in order of importance: quality, cost competitiveness, consistent availability, and local content regulations (NAFTA Rules of Origin). These results sharply contrast with those of earlier research on local inputs from Mexico. This contradiction is

primarily due to confusion regarding the term "local suppliers". The results of this study support the statement made earlier that Asian respondents mainly use Asian-owned local suppliers. Survey respondents did not use local Mexican suppliers for the same reasons, in order of importance: required inputs were simply not available, there were quality deficiencies, local suppliers were non cost-competitive, and capacity was not available.

Nearly 85 percent of all plant managers from the respondent companies stated that there was no company policy against sourcing locally. In combination with the large amount of local decision-making authority in choosing local suppliers, this appears to create a huge opportunity for the supporting industries in Mexico. Furthermore, nearly 70 percent of the respondents stated that the cost of locating and cultivating local suppliers would not be an obstacle.

There was been more local linkage formation in the service sector. The Asian respondents purchased most of their services externally from service providers in both San Diego and Tijuana. There was no difference in the importance of the cities in providing services. Transport and distribution, customs brokerage, and packing materials were found to be the most important service categories. Local linkage formation is also very dependent on each company's strategy and the number of years that the firm has been in Tijuana.

Jai Ghorpade, Keith Hattrup, and James R. Lackritz

Personality Differences across Borders: A Comparison of Student Samples from Mexico and the United States

Since personality plays such a vital role in shaping the quality of interpersonal relations and achievements of individuals, a vast body of research has accumulated on the subject. Unfortunately, much of this research deals with intracultural issues and samples. This study reports the findings of a crosscultural study of personality differences among student samples in two cities with a common international border: Tijuana, Mexico, and San Diego, United States. The samples consist of undergraduate students from a variety of academic disciplines enrolled in colleges within a radius of about fifty miles from the U.S. -Mexican border. Four personality dimensions were investigated by use of established personality scales through a questionnaire: need for autonomy, altruism, self - esteem, and locus of control. Comparisons were made of the Mexican sample with three ethnic groups in the United States: African - American, Mexican - American, and Euro - Americans. The results showed that Mexican subjects exhibited a significantly higher need for autonomy than the other groups. However, the Mexican sample exhibited a significantly lower mean of self-esteem than the African-American and Mexican-American sample. An additional finding of this study, which was not part of the original research concern, showed a negative correlation between overall grade point average (GPA) and number of years spent in the United States by the immigrant students within the United States sample. Implications of these differences for human resource management that transcends borders were discussed.

Tamar Diana Wilson

Micro-, Meso-, and Macropatterns of Women's Migration to Colonia Popular, Mexicali, Baja California

This study of women's migration to Colonia Popular in Mexicali, when compared to women's migration to the city and state as a whole, shows that the proportions of internal migrants from various states of origin may differ in a specific colonia is located (microlevel analysis) as compared to the city in which that city is located (mesolevel analysis).

Network-mediated migration thus leads to the concentration of women and men from the same state of origin in specific cities and in specific neighborhoods within those cities. Female migrants to Colonia Popular migrated with parents, husbands, or as a female heads of households accompanied only by their children. Women from specific states may outnumber men from the same states, whether in the micro-, meso-, or macrolevel, due to the fact that they use female-based migration networks to aid them in the migration process.

Alicia Re Cruz

Migrant Women Crossing Borders: The Role of Gender and Religion in Internal and External Mexican Migration

This article examines the migration experience of women crossing two different borders, international-national and rural-urban. Two ethnographic examples are provided to document women's transformations through migration. The first case deals with Mexican women crossing Mexico's northern border into Texas. The second case focuses on Maya women crossing the rural border of a Maya community to urban Cancun. The core of this study is the analysis of the parallelisms between these two cases, mainly expressed in the connections between religious conversion and socioeconomic transformations resulting from these women's migration experiences. The ethnographic method allows the comparison of the two cases of female migration and facilitates the understanding of the ideological transformation, expressed through the religious conversion, interwoven with changes in their migrant socioeconomic dynamics.
