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The Economic Integration of Mexican Mennonite Immigrants in Canada

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Introduction

With a rapidly shrinking proportion of Canadians that live in rural areas, there have been some attempts to settle immigrants in rural communities. With few exceptions, these attempts in Canada have been unsuccessful. Nevertheless, the Mennonite people are considered to be a population that maintains their retention in rural areas with some success. The literature regarding this specific immigrant group is limited and lacks context of the economic environment of Canada today. It is in the interest of government policy to have a working and current understanding of Mennonites' economic outcomes and retention in rural communities. The integration patterns of all immigrant groups are relevant to Canadian policy as well as for understanding the demographic changes in the growing population. As rural and remote areas experience depleting or stagnating populations, it is increasingly essential to have a working knowledge of the integration patterns of immigrant groups that live in these areas. In this study, I will focus on the economic outcomes of Mexican Mennonite immigrants in Canada to determine whether they integrate into Canadian society differently than immigrant groups that live in the same areas. The research question in this study will be which model of economic integration most appropriately fits the Canadian Mennonite experience? With a literature widely focused on the historical context of this diasporic immigrant group, little is known about their behaviour patterns in the current Canadian context.

I use the 2001 and 2016 Canadian Census to examine the economic outcomes of Canadian-Mexican Mennonites. Through an understanding of their income patterns, they can be assessed in the context of prominent migration literature and assimilation theory. As Mennonites are visibly white, yet are immigrating from generations of life in Mexico, there is reason to consider that they may integrate differently than other white immigrant groups. If their income

follows a pattern of increase throughout the years they spend in Canada, the government can have confidence that immigration policies are applicable to Mexican Mennonites similarly to other immigrant groups. If this is not the case, it may have policy implications regarding how the government responds to the immigration of this isolationist and diasporic group of people.

I anticipate finding that Mexican Mennonite immigrants integrate in a different way than other white immigrant groups. This leads to two hypotheses of Mexican Mennonite integration. The first hypothesis is that they will not integrate well into Canadian society. Their ability to assimilate into Canadian society will be hindered by low capital upon entrance to Canada which includes low economic capital, lack of knowledge of official languages, and limited educational attainment. These deficiencies may limit first generation Mexican Mennonites from integrating into the Canadian workforce. Furthermore, many Mexican Mennonites choose to homeschool their children or enroll them in private religious educational institutions operated by members of their own community. This will limit the economic outcomes of their own children due to having them be relatively unexposed to Canadian traditions and educational standards. This hypothesis would be supported by Mexican Mennonites making less than the Canadian born at a lower magnitude than other immigrants and no significant increase over time and is in alignment with ethnic enclave theory. The second hypothesis regarding Mexican Mennonite integration is that they integrate quite well into Canadian society. In this scenario, Mexican Mennonites' integration into the Canadian labour market would be bolstered by their work ethic that is tied to their religious beliefs and cultural values. Their dedication to hard work and rejection of social welfare systems would motivate them to do well economically. This hypothesis would be supported by Mexican Mennonites having a higher income than other immigrants compared to the Canadian born, and a significant increase over time that they spend in Canada and is in

alignment with straight-line assimilation theory. These two hypotheses are supported by different aspects of the literature and one will be supported by the results of the model. Straight-line assimilation theory may not be appropriate to describe the integration experiences of Mexican Mennonite immigrants in Canada due to issues of low capital and intergenerational exhibitions of isolationism.

Through studying Mexican Mennonites and their integration in Canada, the objective of this study is to answer the question of which model of economic integration most appropriately fits to the Canadian Mennonite experience. The models of economic integration that I examine are straight-line assimilation and ethnic enclave theory. The key dependent variable will be income. The main independent variable will be whether a person is a Mexican Mennonite immigrant or another type of immigrant compared to the Canadian born that live in untracked census agglomeration zones or further from a central metropolitan area. I will also include controls such as age, sex, marital status, education, first official language learned, occupation, disability status, and number of children. Their incomes over time will indicate whether they integrate economically through increases or decreases in income from the time they immigrate to Canada. By comparing them with other immigrant groups to the Canadian born population, I anticipate to provide evidence that Mexican Mennonites integrate differently than some other immigrant groups but nevertheless do not reach equilibrium with the local Canadian born population. Through developing an understanding of the history of Mennonites in Canada and their income patterns; it is possible to gauge the integration patterns of Mexican Mennonite immigrants.

Literature Review

The first relevant issue in the literature is the definition of the word 'Mennonite'. With narratives of the culture being abundant, it is important to be clear regarding exactly which immigrant group is being discussed. The Mennonites are a diasporic and isolationist group that occupy land across nation states (Bottos 2008). They speak Plautdietsch, a dialect of German which does not have a written form (Redekop 1989). In their education, they learn high German, which is close to what is written and spoken in Germany today (Loewen Reimer 2008). The Mennonites are split into various sects according to their migratory background and attention to traditional beliefs (Loewen Reimer 2008). In this way, Mennonites exist on a spectrum of traditional to liberal depending on the sect with which they identify. Aside from being an ethnic group, it is important to discuss their religious convictions. They practice a form of Christianity that mandates a patriarchal community structure and adherence to 'non-worldliness' (Loewen Reimer 2008). While some adhere strictly to principles against technology and modern dress, others are more accepting of modern life while maintaining practices of anti-consumerism and anti-materialism. The history of Mennonites in Canada is also relevant to understanding their current behaviours. The literature describing the Mennonite people is largely historical and spans over a century in Canada. The Mennonites that immigrated to Canada in the 1870's left Canada to Mexico in the 1920's due to a changing political landscape that made them feel that they could not freely practice their religious convictions and culture (See Appendix A). The Mexican Mennonites being analyzed in this study would have the same migratory history, culture, and belief system.

The second relevant issue in the literature is the lack of research regarding the income and economic activity of Mexican Mennonites. Existing literature indicates that many have a substandard quality of living (Gingrich 2010). Some case workers indicate that despite what

would seem like a reasonable income, Mennonite families do not have a high quality of living (Gingrich 2016). It is unclear in the current literature what leads to this. Without straying into conjecture, there are several reasons that this could be the case. It may be due to a propensity to donate large sums of money to their religious institutions. It might also have to do with a desire to live a traditional lifestyle and make do with less. Another reason is that they have low capital due to moving frequently throughout history and selling their properties for low return each time. Starting new several times in new countries does not lead to accumulation of intergenerational capital. A final reason could be simply due to low financial literacy. Through the research proposed, the income of Mennonites will be clarified and understood in a way not previously addressed in the literature. The increase or stagnation of income within a Mexican Mennonite's lifetime as well as between generations will contribute new information to the existing literature and may clarify unaddressed issues. The economic outcomes of Mennonites have not been quantified and thus it is necessary to examine their income through the use of the Canadian census files.

Since 1980, the primary reason for Mennonites moving is poverty and secondarily cartel violence (Gingrich 2016). These Mennonites are from northern Mexico and all moved there from Canada for the same reason. Therefore, it can be argued that they all had similar experiences until the present day and move to Canada for similar reasons. The scope of this study focuses on Mennonites migrating to Canada from Mexico since 1988. This date is important as it encompasses a single migration cohort. It would not include cohorts that moved due to large scale wars. The Mexican Mennonite immigrant cohort is considered amongst Mennonite sects as a lower caste (Gingrich 2016). Mennonites that remained in Europe have higher levels of living in cities and higher educational attainments (Driedger 2000). The Mennonites that moved to

Canada and then Mexico are more likely to live in rural areas and have low educational

attainments (Driedger 2000) than Mennonites that are migrating from Europe or those that did

not leave Canada in the 1920's. The majority of Mennonites that immigrate from Mexico land in

rural or remote areas (Mueller 2005). They do this to be able to live within their own

communities and have support from families and friends. Scarce quantitative research has been

generated regarding this modern cohort of Mennonites aside from population figures, often

generated by religious institutions. With thousands of Mennonites moving from Mexico to

Canada each year, it is appropriate to study their economic outcomes once they enter Canada.

The migratory pattern of Mexican Mennonites sets them culturally distinct from other Mennonite

groups in Canada.

The educational attainment of Mennonites greatly affects their economic outcomes

through job prospects in Canada. As an adult moving to Canada without a high school diploma,

one is limited to certain types of labour. In contrast to Mennonites in Europe, most Mexican

Mennonites only have a grade 8 equivalent education, with girls often being pulled out of school

earlier than boys (Gingrich 2016). Many that migrate to Canada express discomfort with the

public-school system. Those that can afford private education have their children attend religious

schools that are flexible to Mennonite practices such as a nonstandard schedule to allow the

children to help their parents with farm work (Gingrich 2010). This is important to understand

because it indicates that when they enter Canada, they have the full intention of carrying on their

culture in the same way that they practiced it in Mexico. It may also be in the same way that they

practiced it before leaving Canada in the 1920's. By keeping their children out of the school

systems as much as possible, they actively resist integration of their children which make up the

second generation of Mexican Mennonites in Canada. The literature regarding limited

educational opportunities for the Mexican Mennonite population would support the first

hypothesis that Mexican Mennonites have low human capital, which will ultimately negatively

influence their economic outcomes.

The primary jobs that first generation Mennonite immigrants work in Canada are agrarian

and associated with low skill labour such as trucking or manufacturing (Redekop 1989, Thiessen

2016). A key characteristic is that despite these limited job options, Mennonites highly value

owning their own property and aspire to work for their own living (Redekop 1989). That is,

Mennonites prefer to work for themselves if possible (Hamm 1987). A strong tenet of their

community is self-reliance in the aspect that they choose to live and work for their own families

and communities rather than as individual citizens in a nation state (Hamm 1987). This self-

reliance influences how Mennonites participate in the labour force such as through how they

have resisted union membership. Their religious convictions require that labour should be for

God and not humans (Thiessen 2016). While in more recent years, union membership has been

more accepted, Mennonites maintain that they must work hard as though they were working for a

deity (Thiessen 2016). This change over time supports the hypothesis that Mexican Mennonites

do integrate into Canadian society throughout the time that they spend in Canada. Mennonites

have a highly elevated work ethic among immigrant groups and Canadians, which would

indicate that they have the potential do well financially despite their limited labour options. This

would support the second hypothesis that Mexican Mennonites integrate well into the Canadian

labour market.

How the Mexican Mennonite community itself is structured is an important aspect of the

literature that contributes to their integration behaviours. Mennonites live all over the world but

are not transnational. Bottos (2008) questions descriptions of Mennonites as transnational, due to

their propensity to move frequently and maintain ties to their ethnic heritage. Regardless of where Mennonites move from, they do not feel that they identify with or feel nationalistic towards a specific nation state. That is, Mexican Mennonites in Canada do not identify as Canadian any more than they do Mexican or their German roots. Mennonites are often described as a large village that simply occupies territory that belongs to different countries (Loewen 2013). In this way, it may be most appropriate to describe them as trans-statal. Mennonites in Canada, the United States, and Mexico all identify with each other more than they do with their respective countries (Bottos 2008). Additionally, this can be exemplified through a newspaper *Die Post* that involves Mennonites sending in letters from their respective countries. These letters inform a periodical that informs Mennonites internationally about what is occurring in different villages or colonies (Loewen 2013). Varied aspects of the Mennonites' experiences are reflected in this periodical to garner support from a larger international population (Loewen 2013). Because Mexican Mennonites are not truly transnational, existing migration theory may be inadequate in explaining their experiences. Existing migration theory focuses on an ethnic group leaving their country of origin with a specific level of capital and feeling less attached to that country over the time they spend in the host country until they reach equilibrium with the local population. With a trans-statal group that occupies territory, they do not ascribe to a specific nation-state but rather as their own ethnic group that should be able to operate in the same capacity regardless of where the land they occupy is located. Mexican Mennonites are not concerned with integrating, as they are part of an international community that does not integrate with their respective nation states. This supports the first hypothesis that they will not economically integrate and continue to have low incomes to preserve their lifestyle of anti-materialism. Existing theories of integration may not adequately encapsulate the integration

pattern of Mexican Mennonites in Canada because of their distinct conceptualization of community.

Despite the literature's absence of discussion of Mennonites' economic behaviours, there are some things that can be inferred from descriptions of their culture and religious beliefs. The first being that they make sparing use of Canada's social welfare system, if they make use of it at all. Their work ethic of self-reliance would prevent them from pursuing many social services. This is supported by court cases in Canada regarding Mennonites' refusal to pay into the Canadian retirement savings plan. These occurred because they do not wish to access social services and therefore do not want to pay fees associated with them (Janzen 1990). This coupled with their refusal to join unions, it can be inferred that their dedication to self-reliance and work for a deity prevents them from being reliant on the country that they live in to supplement their income. They are not likely to rely on unemployment insurance or frequently access the Canadian healthcare system because they choose to rely on their own communities and families for their needs. They choose to take care of their own elderly rather than pay into what they consider a governmental insurance system. Their sparing use of these systems requires them to have an income and lifestyle that they can live on. Because they left Mexico due to poverty, they would be anticipating a better life in Canada, and would aspire to have the income to sustain themselves.

Another aspect of Mexican Mennonites' income that can be inferred from the literature is low amount of wealth that they bring in upon entry. Having higher levels of wealth upon entry gives an immigrant a better start in their life in Canada. Being already established financially allows for better job mobility. Wealth allows for childcare, a house, and a reliable vehicle to potentially travel further for a job. The literature notes that Mennonites coming from Mexico do

not have high levels of wealth because poverty is a core reason for their migration (Gingrich 2016). Furthermore, they have large families with many children to care for (Gingrich 2016). With low wealth upon entry, this makes it essential for someone to stay home to care for the children, reducing the income to what can be earned from the breadwinner. While Mexican Mennonites live in a highly patriarchal community, the need for the wife to stay home in Canada can easily be out of necessity rather than religious choice. The women have lower education and skills than their husbands and would have more difficulty obtaining a job (Gingrich 2016). The low wealth of Mennonites in Canada upon entry will lead to lower economic outcomes over the time they live in Canada than white immigrants usually experience. Their life in Mexico is starkly different from the experiences of immigrants that arrive from western Europe as their families have not lived in Europe for over a century and have not been in Canada for generations. Poverty motivates their move to Canada.

Mexican Mennonites also lack means to garner social capital which will adversely affect their income. This is an issue that occurs from Mennonites living in communities made up of solely other Mennonites. Bridging social capital is formed through social networks formed in jobs, education, and amongst the greater community (Nakhaie and Kazemipur 2012). These connections lead to upward social mobility as they give immigrants access to people in better positions that also help them get better jobs (Logan, Zhang, and Alba 2002). When a Mennonite enters Canada, they move to rural areas not just to farm, but often to connect with their own community. They choose to speak their own language amongst their family and friends and put their children into private schools for religious education (Redekop 1989). This indicates that Mexican Mennonites in Canada are prone to forming bonding networks. They do not actively network with non-Mennonites due to their isolationist way of life. It would be very difficult for a

Mennonite to form bridging social capital due to the way their communities are strongly self reliant and those within it rely on each other for survival. A Mennonite would have to actively seek out employment or education independently from a non-Mennonite in order to form new connections. This is further evidence that Mexican Mennonites in Canada do not behave like other white immigrant groups and may have experiences more similar to visible minorities that live in ethnic enclave communities. With low education, low skill employment, low wealth, and limited social connections; a Mexican Mennonite is not likely to reach equilibrium with the Canadian population living in rural and small town Canada.

Mexican Mennonite will be assessed with two prominent theories of integration, the first being straight-line assimilation. Straight-line assimilation is frequently cited in migration literature as a way to analyze the convergence of an immigrant group with the total population. This theory is a traditional understanding of integration with its roots in the Chicago School (Alba and Nee 2003). It asserts that the longer an immigrant lives in the host country, as well as the more generations an immigrant group progresses through, the more similar to residents of the host country they become (Alba and Nee 2003). Scholars note that the straight-line theory is most applicable for white immigrants (Alba and Nee 2003) and while Mennonites are white in the sense of having light skin colour, their migratory history is one that includes non-white cultures (Loewen 2013). Furthermore, I argue that because Mennonites have not been in Europe for well over a century, Mexican Mennonites have a unique place in society as their culture encompasses threads of various minorities. The reason white immigrants do well in Canada goes beyond skin colour and individual prejudices. They do better than many other immigrant groups because of differences in social, economic, and human capital upon entry. Immigrants that have high levels of these types of capital before coming to Canada often integrate quickly. Mennonites

are different because they do not have high levels of these types of capital before immigrating. Furthermore, most do not have access to English or French before entering Canada (Gingrich 2016) which limits employment options and interaction with members of Canadian society that are not in their immediate community. Another issue is a lack of familiarity with Canadian institutions such as healthcare, banking, and the school system which immigrants from western and central Europe would be more familiar with (Gingrich 2016). Even though Mexican Mennonites were once in Canada, this knowledge would not have been passed along intergenerationally. It would not have been passed on because the original reason for leaving was a dispute with the Canadian government; the previous generational group would not have anticipated returning. These differences between Mennonites and 'white immigrants' indicate that the Mennonites may experience a method of integration that is different than what is outlined in straight-line theory. Mennonites may not experience straight-line assimilation due to their experiences in Mexico and lack of capital upon entering Canada.

The second theory of economic integration that Mexican Mennonites will be assessed with is ethnic enclave theory. This stipulates that immigrants that live in close communities with other immigrants, do poorer economically and do not integrate well into Canadian society due to proximity with members of their ethnic community (Logan, Zhang, and Alba 2002). This has to do with bonding ties which is a type of social capital that allows for lateral movement in the occupational system (Nakhaie and Kazemipur 2012). This is in contrast with bridging ties that would be connections made with Canadian born people, those in higher forms of management, or educators (Nakhaie and Kazemipur 2012). Because Mexican Mennonites do not pursue further education in Canada and live in close proximity with members of their own community, it is not likely that they access the type of social capital that would motivate them to reach equilibrium

with the local Canadian population. It is important to note that the literature surrounding ethnic

enclave theory is predominantly focused on immigrants living in urban cores. The literature

regarding ethnic enclave effects of immigrants in rural communities is sparse. The traditional

comparison in this literature is between immigrants living close together in urban cores

compared to those living in suburbs surrounding a city (Logan, Zhang, and Alba 2002).

Nevertheless, the way that Mexican Mennonite communities operate ought to be considered as a

factor that influences their ability to integrate. With towns like Winkler and Steinbach being

entire municipalities populated with Mennonite people in Manitoba, framing the Mexican

Mennonite experience in Canada in ethnic enclave theory may prove to be a valid alternative to

straight-line assimilation.

The existing literature regarding Mennonites is largely historical and does not sufficiently

discuss current Mexican Mennonite integration in Canada. I aim to resolve these issues by

analyzing integration in a quantitative manner while acknowledging Mennonites' deficiencies in

capital as well as their propensity to identify as trans-statal. While the belief systems of Mexican

Mennonites require them to live an isolationist lifestyle, it is important to assess whether this

actually occurs and at what rate. If Mexican Mennonites greatly increase their economic capital

in Canada over the time that they live in their host country, it will be evident that their religious

and cultural convictions are not strong enough to resist integrating into Canadian society.

Methodology

I will use data from the 2001 and 2016 Canadian Censuses accessed through the Statistics

Canada Research Data Centre (RDC). The Canadian Census is used to provide a current

snapshot of Mexican Mennonite immigrant life in Canada. This file includes over a sixth of the

Canadian population. This is the most appropriate database to use because it will allow for

studying demographic characteristics and economic behaviours of a specific immigrant group over time. The Canadian census is held every year ending in a 1 or 6, which captures a reliable set of characteristics of the Canadian population. Mexican Mennonites' economic behaviours are key in understanding whether they are reaching an equilibrium with the Canadian population that lives in the same areas and often work in the same sectors. Through an analysis of income, their economic position in Canadian society is clear. The census files will also provide key demographic information about the population that support arguments made in the literature regarding educational attainments, number of children, and main sources of employment. Having many children and low levels of education would be indicative of a more traditional lifestyle that is not similar to their host communities. If they are more integrated, it might be the case that they have fewer children and better education. With approximately 150 000 Mennonites in all of Canada and a greater population still remaining in Mexico (Mennonite World Conference 2018), a suitable population size in the Canadian census is anticipated when examining those emigrating from Mexico since 1988.

Identifying the population of Mexican Mennonites in the census requires a specific methodology. The variable regarding country of birth indicates the country where an immigrant is born. For Mennonites, it is the best gauge of country of origin due to their trans-statal status. With the history of Canadian Mennonites moving to Mexico and then migrating to other Latin American countries, there are cases of families briefly moving between countries in an attempt to establish a higher quality of life (Bottos 2008). Furthermore, it comes into question whether these families update their citizenship each time this occurs. Due to this, I identify Mexican Mennonites as those that prior to migrating to Canada, were born in Mexico. The Mexican Mennonite population will be specifically characterized by those whose mother tongue is

identified as German. By identifying the number of immigrants that come to Canada from Mexico that speak German as their mother tongue, this strategy will effectively capture the Mexican Mennonite population with a low margin of error. While there may be non-Mennonite Germans that fall into this category, their number should be considerably small compared to the number of Mennonites migrating and thus not introduce a strong bias in the results (See Appendix B). Through looking at German speaking Mexicans in the 2001 and 2016 Census, the population of Mexican Mennonite immigrants will be effectively isolated.

In determining integration, it is important to identify an appropriate comparison group for Mexican Mennonite immigrants. In the scope of this study it is appropriate to compare Mexican Mennonites' economic outcomes to Canadians who live in similar regions. These economic outcomes will be compared to the general population that reside in the same Statistics Canada statistical area classifications as Mennonites. Most Mennonites live in rural Canada at varying levels of metropolitan influence zone, therefore the sample will be limited to residents of statistical area classifications of untracked census agglomerations and further from the census metropolitan area. Including untracked census agglomerations will encompass agricultural communities that exist outside larger communities. To compare the economic outcomes of Mennonites to those who live in these areas will indicate if Mexican Mennonites in those areas meet the outcomes of the general population. These Canadian-born would have access to the same resources regarding employment, education, and quality of life when living in the same area. They would have the same experiences with their communities and needs. Using this reference groups brings clarity to whether Mexican Mennonites experience assimilation through meeting the income levels of the host population similar to other white immigrant groups.

When determining the model of economic integration that most appropriately fits the Canadian Mennonite experience, it is important to look at the dependent variable of income. Income will be measured using the natural log of income. Furthermore, the income variable in the 2001 Census is adjusted for inflation and is measured in 2016 basic prices. The income variable that will be used is income listed as total income. This type of income encompasses various sources of income and tax benefits received. Income is an important marker for economic integration as it indicates progression to a societal ideal such as the perceived middle class. Using the natural log is standard for analyzing a linear relationship between income and the independent variables. Looking at Mexican Mennonite immigrant's income over number of years that they live in Canada is an effective way to assess whether their income as a population increases the longer they live in Canada. Using income gives a broad picture of the experience of Mexican Mennonites in Canada. This measure is the most appropriate measure to use for economic integration because for a Mexican Mennonite to be integrated into Canadian society, it is less an issue of their job occupation and more to do with their economic prospects while working at it.

I employ two main independent variables in the model. The first is a dummy variable with Canadian born as the reference group. The first dummy is Mexican Mennonites and the second is other immigrants. Using a variable coded this way allows for comparison between Mexican Mennonites and the Canadian born as well as puts it in the context of how they fare compared to other immigrants in the same area. The second is time where 2001 is the reference group. A difference in difference model will be used to understand whether Mexican Mennonite income increases or decreases over time. The 2001 and 2016 census provide a 15-year gap for the cohort of Mexican Mennonites that are in Canada in 2001 to increase their occupational

opportunities and adjust to life in Canada. There is no literature that suggests a significant difference in the composition of the cohort of Mennonites in Canada in 2001 and 2016. This can be verified by viewing demographic compositions of the groups in both years. Similar educational attainment, employment statuses, and other characteristics can indicate that even if the same Mennonite individuals do not exist in both cohorts, the sample is still comprised of similar types of individuals. In this way, even though we cannot follow a single Mennonite in a longitudinal study, the average experiences of the Mennonite communities over time can be inferred through a difference in difference model using two different census years. This model requires and interaction effect between the variable that indicates whether a person is a Mennonite or not and a variable for census year. If this interaction is significant and positive with the dependent variable of income, it determines that income increases over time for Mexican Mennonites compared to the Canadian born in the same geographic areas.

Key control variables include age, gender, educational attainment, disability status, years since immigration, number of children, national occupational category that they work in, and if they were proficient in English or French upon entry to Canada. These controls are available in the data and effectively reduce the confounding and omitted variable bias. The age variable is coded in specific way with the age categories in 2016 being 15 years ahead of those in 2001 to reduce multicollinearity in the data. This means that that the model accounts for aging of the population that was already measured in 2001. Age is an incredibly important variable as income increases throughout a person's lifespan and decreases as they enter retirement ages and will be reflected in the results. The age variable in this study also begins at age 15 because economic integration can only be measured for people who can legally work. The gender is also important because Mennonite women are less likely to be employed, but if they are integrating more likely

to take up a paid occupation during the time they live in Canada. Educational attainment is generally low upon entry to Canada but has the potential to increase over time and between generations. Disability status is key because those with a disability are less likely to work. Years since immigration are important because immigrants that spend more time accumulating social and cultural capital that allow them to access better jobs. Number of children is important in the Mennonite context as the literature suggests that they have higher numbers of children than the Canadian born. More children have an impact on income after tax due to child tax benefits and other expenses. National occupational status is also important because it indicates what industrial sector a person works in. People in different areas of work have different types of income opportunities. Finally, language proficiency is an important variable to control for because proficiency in an official language of Canada is vital for career prospects. These controls are essential for reducing omitted variable bias in this study.

Due to the application of the theories of assimilation, this research would be best suited for a study of intergenerational accumulation of wealth through income. Because it is not possible to effectively identify the children of Mennonites within the census without bias, I must limit this study to the income a Mennonite makes throughout their life in Canada since they immigrate from Mexico. While this approach has caveats in theory, it would be evident as to how much money first generation Mexican Mennonites make. As this study is the first to understand the income of this immigrant group in Canada, it will be beneficial to explore the current economic behaviors of this immigrant group to begin understanding the economic behaviors and integration in Canada.

Any missing data in either year for the population of interest will result in that case being removed from the sample. The variable that has the most significant bias if missing is income,

but because it is census data and not a smaller survey that is being assessed, it is less likely that missing or biased income data will be an issue. A limitation that ought to be addressed is the likelihood of relying on census records. Because the sample being assessed is Mexican Mennonite immigrants that have landed and received citizenship in Canada, it should be assumed that they respond to censuses in an orderly manner. Due to the literature's clarity on Mennonites working alongside local governments without discord, there is no reason to believe that there is a substantial issue with the integrity of their participation in the census. Furthermore, Mexican Mennonite migrants that do not fill out the Census will not be a part of this study and may behave in a different manner altogether. Through using the aforementioned methodology and appropriate variables, the economic outcomes of Mexican Mennonites will be analyzed.

All descriptive tables and regressions are run after omitting missing cases in all variables. Combined cases between 2001 and 2016 include 1,328,515 Canadian born, 1,760 Mexican Mennonites, and 32,025 other immigrants that live in rural Canada. Because the census files in the RDC represent one fifth of the total population, these observations represent 6,642,525 Canadian born, 8,800 Mexican Mennonites, and 160,125 other immigrants. This is a suitable sample size for the population of interest because it encapsulates all Mexican born Canadians that speak German and answered all the census questions relevant to the model.

Results

The first aspect of the results that need to be discussed are how Mexican Mennonites compare to both the Canadian born and other immigrants that live in the same rural areas. Through descriptive cross tabulations, it is clear that Mennonites have different characteristics than both populations, which influence how they integrate. Table 1 shows the specific observations of the Mexican Mennonite, Canadian born, and immigrant populations in rural

Canada. These descriptive tables use the 2001 and 2016 Census files to provide insight into the

characteristics of the Mexican Mennonite population that has immigrated to Canada since 1988.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Canadian Born, Mexican Mennonite, and Other Immigrant Populations in the 2001 and 2016 Canadian Census

	Canadian Born	Mexican Mennonite	Other Immigrant
Frequency	1328515	1760	32025
Sex			
Male	51%	68%	49%
Female	49%	32%	51%
Age in 2001			
15-19	10%	23%	16%
20-29	21%	41%	34%
30-39	25%	21%	30%
40-49	24%	11%	15%
50-59	11%	3%	4%
60-79	10%	1%	2%
First Official Language Learned			
English	70%	93%	86%
French	30%	0%	10%
Other	0%	7%	5%
Education			
Less than High School	26%	89%	12%
High School Diploma	27%	5%	23%
College Diploma or Higher	47%	6%	65%
Marital Status			
Never Married	29%	9%	16%
Married	53%	87%	72%
No Longer Married	18%	4%	12%
Number of Children			
0	32%	12%	23%
1-2	41%	27%	48%
3-4	9%	30%	14%
5-6	1%	19%	1%
7+	18%	11%	13%
National Occupational Category			
Unemployed	12%	5%	4%
0-Managerial Occupations	10%	7%	12%
1-Business, Finance, and Administration Occupations	11%	1%	14%

2-Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occupations	6%	1%	7%
3-Health Occupations	8%	4%	8%
4-Occupations in Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion	6%	2%	6%
5-Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport	9%	9%	19%
6-Sales and Service Occupations	15%	16%	11%
7-Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations	11%	20%	6%
8-Occupations Unique to Primary Industry	4%	21%	4%
9-Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities	6%	13%	8%
Disability Status			
Able Bodied	75%	76%	80%
Disabled	25%	24%	20%
Visible Minority Status			
Visible Minority	7%		47%
Non-Visible Minority	93%		53%

The first observation of interest is the sex variable. Mexican Mennonites are much more likely than other groups to be male, with 68% of their labour force population being male. This would be because of the practice of sending males over to earn money for their family that remains in Mexico. In a highly patriarchal society, men would have more responsibility to establish a life in Canada and provide an income. In the historical context of Mexican Mennonites' experiences in Canada, they may be hesitant to bring their children to Canada without assurance that the quality of life is significantly better than that in Mexico. The literature

supports the idea of the male being the sole breadwinner, so to see the overwhelming majority of Mexican Mennonites living in rural Canada to be males is not unusual.

Another demographic characteristic to consider is the age distribution of Mexican Mennonites. Similarly to other immigrant groups, they are most likely to be in the working ages of 20-29 as well as 30-39. In comparison. The Canadian born population exhibits higher proportions in later age brackets. The Canadian born population has the highest age proportions in ages 30-39 and 40-49. This is indicative of the aging population that is present in much of rural Canada. Observing Mexican Mennonites and other immigrants as higher proportions in lower age brackets would be due to immigration policy that favours working age immigrants. In the Manitoba provincial nominee program, preference is given to younger immigrants as well as those that intend to start farms. This policy is appealing for working age Mexican Mennonites in those regions and would encourage a younger immigrant population than the Canadian born. Mexican Mennonites are younger than the Canadian born population and may be able to establish themselves in rural Canada as they get older.

Regarding language, they are most likely to speak English compared to French, both English and French, and neither English nor French. The literature indicates that they are most likely to speak their mother tongue of Plautdietsch within their homes and communities. Their close knit communities do not seem to drastically reduce the proportion of the Mexican Mennonite population that speaks English. The other immigrant category reports 5% that speak either English and French or English nor French, in comparison with the 7% of Mexican Mennonites in this category. This finding is furthered by indicating that no Mexican Mennonites reported speaking French, which limits their employment opportunities to those in English speaking regions. Mexican Mennonites do not experience a drastic difference in language

acquisition compared to other immigrants, but the language that they do learn upon entry in Canada is English.

In educational attainment, Mexican Mennonites are the least likely to have a high school diploma, with 89% of the community not having a high school diploma. This is a key finding because it significantly limits the jobs that they can access in Canada. Compared to other immigrant groups and the Canadian born that have high proportions of being in high school and a college diploma or higher education. Mexican Mennonites are at a disadvantage due to their education. This supports the literature's description of limited educational opportunities in their communities. This will restrict the majority of Mennonites to labour and low skill jobs in Canada. It is an indication of low human capital as they are not versatile in the job market.

The demographics of family characteristics support the description of the traditional lifestyles that Mexican Mennonites have. Compared to the Canadian born and other immigrants, Mexican Mennonites are the most likely to be married. Eighty-seven percent of Mexican Mennonites are married compared to 53% of the Canadian born and 72% of other immigrants. This also supports the narrative in the literature of the traditional family centred lives in Mennonite communities. Furthermore, literature widely supports that across populations, married people are more integrated into society and report higher levels of wellbeing. (De Neve and Oswald, 2012) Having the support of a husband or wife is a positive characteristic of the Mexican Mennonite population and would improve their likelihood of integration compared to other immigrant groups. Furthering the traditional lifestyle narrative of Mexican Mennonites, they are the most likely to have 3-4 children with 30% of Mexican Mennonite families having this number of children compared to 9% of the Canadian born and 14% of other immigrants. The Canadian born and other immigrants have the highest proportions reporting 1-2 children in their

families. This would be motivation for Mexican Mennonites to have a stable source of income. Larger family sizes require more resources to provide the necessities of life for all in the household.

In occupations, Mexican Mennonites work most commonly in national occupational categories 6 to 9. These are sale and service occupations, trades, transport and equipment operations occupations, natural resources and agricultural related occupations, and occupations in manufacturing and utilities. This is in alignment with the types of trades that the literature suggests that Mennonites are most likely to work in. With limited education, the type of jobs they are restricted to would be in the service, agriculture, transport, and manufacturing occupations. It is evident that the Canadian born and other immigrants in the same areas have a more even distribution across the national occupational categories. This difference would restrict Mexican Mennonite's opportunities in the Canadian job market, and ultimately their income.

One more characteristic that is important to note is the proportion of visible minorities in the Canadian born and other immigrant groups. Forty-seven percent of other immigrants report being a member of a visible minority group. The details of proportions of Mexican Mennonites being in a visible minority category were so low that Research Data Centre restrictions would not approve the figure for release. Because Mexican Mennonites are overwhelmingly white, straight-line assimilation theory would assert that they follow an increase in income over the time that they spend in Canada to reach equilibrium with the Canadian born population. It is evident that the other immigrant group has a multitude of visible minorities that make up a significant portion of its population. Visible minorities living in white enclaves that are characteristic of rural Canada might face barriers to integration. Furthermore, being a member of a visible minority coupled with lower forms of social and cultural capital will reduce integration

rates. While Mexican Mennonites are reported to be white immigrants, their low forms of capital across descriptive characteristics may impede their economic success in Canada. The other immigrant category surpasses Mexican Mennonites in forms of capital which provides versatility in the labour market.

These descriptive results support the narrative of Mennonites as likely to have low capital in Canada and limited opportunities associated with it. It also supports the literature describing the religious societies that Mennonites live in through the likelihood of being married and having more children than the average Canadian born or other type of immigrant. Mexican Mennonites are more likely to be male, with low education, married, with children, and working in low skill labour occupations than other comparison groups in this study. This suggests a lower income than the Canadian born or other immigrants upon entry with low prospects throughout their life in Canada despite Mexican Mennonites being white immigrants.

Table 2: Difference in Difference Model between 2001 and 2016 Canadian Census of Mexican Mennonites' and Other Immigrants' Income in Rural Canada Compared to the Canadian Born

	Model 1: Without Controls	Model 2: With Controls
Main Independent: Reference Group is Canadian Born		
Mexican Mennonite	-0.2487**	-0.0937**
Other Immigrant	-0.2044**	-0.4186**
Period: Reference is 2001		
2016	0.7012**	0.4735**
Sex: Reference is Male		
Female		-0.4276**
Age in 2001: Reference is 20-29		
15-19		-0.4323**
30-39		0.1102**
40-49		0.1038**
50-59		0.1801**
60-69		0.6228**
70-79		1.1607**
First Official Language Learned: Reference is English		

French	0.0064**
Both	-0.0549*
Neither	-0.2251**
Education: Reference is High School	
No Diploma	-0.2203**
College or Equivalent	0.1879**
Bachelor's Degree or Equivalent	0.4319**
Master's or Doctorate	0.5914**
Marital Status: Reference is Single	
Married	0.3422**
No Longer Married	0.3249**
Disability: Reference is Able Bodied	
Disabled	-0.1112**
National Occupational Category: Reference is Unemployed	
0-Managerial Occupations	1.1791**
1-Business, Finance, and Administration Occupations	1.2424**
2-Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occupations	1.1826**
3-Health Occupations	1.1822**
4-Occupations in Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion	0.9976**
5-Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport	0.7957**
6-Sales and Service Occupations	0.8487**
7-Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations	1.1157**
8-Occupations Unique to Primary Industry	0.9615**
9-Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities	1.2184**
Number of Children: Reference is None	
1-2	0.0706**
3-4	0.0806**
5-6	0.0621**
7+	0.1016**
Years Since Immigration	0.0086**

Years Since Immigration Squared		-0.0001
Interaction	0.0337**	0.0365**
Intercept	9.9055**	8.8558**

*p<0.05, **p<0.01

Table 2 includes a simple multivariate OLS regression of a difference in difference between 2001 and 2016 without controls. It includes the main independent variable, time, and the interaction between them. This model suggests that both Mexican Mennonites and other immigrants make less than the Canadian born to a similar magnitude with an increase in income over time. Mexican Mennonites make less with a significant coefficient of -0.2487 and other immigrants make less with a significant coefficient of -0.2044. The interaction term reports an increase of 0.0337. This model does not take into account differences between the populations that are evident in Table 1. It does provide insight into what would be observed in the populations if there was no adjustment for the differences in gender, family size, occupational categories, and other controls.

Table 2 also includes a multivariate OLS regression of a difference in difference between 2001 and 2016 with all controls. This provides evidence that when comparing people of the same gender, education, language, occupational status, and family characteristics, Mexican Mennonites are much closer to achieving equilibrium with the Canadian born population at a coefficient of -0.0937. In comparison, other immigrants make twice as less than when they did without controls at -0.4186. Mexican Mennonites exhibit significantly higher rates of economic integration through increasing income over time than other immigrants do in the same demographic categories. With the interaction term being positive at 0.0365, it is indicative of an increase in the income of the Mennonites and other immigrants between the two periods. The interaction term is not much different than that in the model without controls, which indicates

that demographic differences in the populations do not greatly contribute to the trajectory of an immigrant's income over time.

Table 2 has significant results across all variables except years since immigration squared. This single coefficient that exhibits insignificance indicates that although the results are strong, they cannot be extrapolated beyond 2016 with the data used in this study. Highly significant results find that women make significantly lower income than men. Income is higher for all age groups older than the reference group of 20-29. For a person to be without a high school diploma greatly decreases their income, while having anything above a high school diploma correlates with an increase in income. Speaking French is positive for income but speaking both English and French or neither English nor French is negative for income. Specifically, speaking neither English nor French greatly reduces a person's income. Being disabled reduces a person's income as it is associated with reduced employment opportunities. As discussed in the descriptive results, being married and having children are both highly correlated with having a higher income than those that are not married and do not have children. All national occupational categories have higher incomes than not having a job, with categories 6-9 having similar increases as other categories. Years since immigration from 1988 is positive coefficient but very small, indicating a very slow increase through an immigrant's years spent in Canada.

Discussion

The demographic characteristics of Mexican Mennonites revealed through this study are the first quantitative figures produced to examine the population using a nation-wide survey such as the Canadian Census. Other figures regarding this population are often gross population figures estimated by religious institutions that Mennonites interact with. These institutions count

Mennonite as those that attend or use their services, while this paper focuses on Mexican Mennonites as a distinct ethnic group that resides predominantly in rural Canada. Mexican Mennonites live in Canada with low levels of education but exhibit overwhelming proportions of living in large family units. In the context of the literature specifying that Mennonites have historically been at odds with education systems, this finding affirms the historical narrative of the Mexican Mennonite experience. Mexican Mennonites did not want to be educated in the 1920's and they still do not choose to pursue education today.

The results in the model are highly significant. The models used in this study are difference in difference models that are characterized by their interaction term which is between the main independent variable and time. Through using two different census years, we can infer causality that over the time that Mexican Mennonites spend in Canada, they do increase in income to come close to equilibrium with the Canadian population at a higher success rate than other immigrant groups. These results imply that Mexican Mennonites do economically integrate into Canadian society. The aspect of the literature that would support this is the work ethic that Mexican Mennonites exhibit. A white, English speaking, immigrant group that puts the effort into their work as if they are doing it for a deity and rejects union membership could have a specific advantage in rural Canada.

The results of this study support my second hypothesis that Mexican Mennonites will economically integrate well. In the context of immigration theories, Mexican Mennonites most closely exemplify straight line assimilation. They experience an increase in their income over time and have an income that is less than but would be close to the Canadian born population in rural Canada. While they live in what could be perceived as ethnic enclaves, this theory might fall short due to a strong religious conviction to self sustenance and hard work. It might also not

be applicable due to the geographic differences between where Mexican Mennonites live and where this literature was written to describe. The composition of communities and employment in rural Canada are vastly different than that which would be in urban centres, and this could reduce the dampening effect that ethnic enclaves have on economic integration.

In the context of Canadian immigration policy, this study would support the settlement of Mexican Mennonites in rural Canada. They do much better than other immigrant groups with the same demographic characteristics, live in close communities, and reject social insurance in preference to being self sustaining. In areas of the country with a rapidly aging and decreasing proportion of the overall population living in it, Mexican Mennonites are a positive contribution to local economies. Further research will be done on this population to ascertain the movement patterns of Mexican Mennonites to see whether they continue living in rural areas their entire lives. This will be relevant to policy makers to determine whether Mexican Mennonites integrate into the Canadian population in other ways through movement as well as intergenerationally.

Limitations of this study include the lack of intergenerational data which would be useful to see long term integration patterns of Mexican Mennonites. Another limitation is the lack of information in the Canadian census regarding subsistence agriculture. It cannot be determined in the scope of this study, to what extent a Mexican Mennonite's needs are met through growing their own food and through trading or bartering systems for items they need within their own communities. This limitation would cause the current results to be more drastic because if their needs are already being met through agriculture and community supports, then their income could be more disposable than out of necessity.

Conclusion

Mennonite immigrants in Canada are a grossly under-researched population. Much of the literature regarding this immigrant group is historical in nature. Through exploring their economic outcomes, an understanding of their role in rural Canadian societies is clarified. This study has policy implications regarding the outcomes of immigrants in rural areas. Mexican Mennonite immigrants are a unique immigrant group and through using the Canadian census in 2001 and 2016 as well as difference in difference models, this study is the first to paint a coherent quantitative portrait of their place in Canadian society. Mexican Mennonites have a significantly higher degree of economic integration in rural Canada compared to other immigrants and experience an increase in income over time. This closely follows the theory of straight-line assimilation despite their historical migration and low education. The religious convictions and work ethics of Mexican Mennonites bolster their opportunities in the Canadian job market and lead to relative economic success for a population dedicated to a humble lifestyle.

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Appendix A: History of Mexican Mennonites in Canada

Mennonites arrived in Canada from Russia in the 1870's with the intent to live

communally on reserve land set aside for them by the province of Manitoba (Werner 2013).

They existed apart from the predominant homestead culture of individual living and chose to live

in communities (Janzen 1990). After living in Manitoba, they extended their communities into

Saskatchewan and Alberta (Werner 2013). In the 1920's, those that lived in Manitoba and

Saskatchewan faced conflict with their respective provincial governments (Janzen 1990). These

conflicts centered around schools and the desire for the communities to integrate into the local

cultures (Boyd and Vickers 2000). Through the establishment of Canada as a nation on the world

stage, the homestead lifestyle was changing towards one that mandated individualism,

integration, and majoritarianism (Janzen 1990). Rather than resist the local governments outright,

6000 Mennonites left Canada for Latin American countries such as Mexico, Paraguay, and

Bolivia (Loewen 2013). It is important to highlight that despite Mennonites' isolationist leanings,

they are not anarchistic. If they cannot cooperate with the local government in a manner that

would suit both parties, they choose to relocate (Janzen 1990). Therefore, a significant portion of

the Canadian Mennonite population came to reside in Mexico and South America. This historical

narrative is essential for the research study because it indicates the unique situation of a large

Canadian immigrant group. Many of those that moved to Mexico were once Canadians and the

population may integrate differently than other immigrant groups because of their history. The

literature is largely historical and due to this, it places a particular emphasis on the issue of

Mennonites' integration. A long history of diasporic migration will influence Mexican

Mennonite integration, potentially making their integration different from other immigrant

groups. With largely historical literature, there is much information regarding the patterns of

their migration and their behaviours in the past. There is little information regarding whether the Mennonites leaving 1920's Canada have the same worldviews as Mennonites immigrating in the modern context of globalization. It is probable that different generations of Mennonites act through different historical contexts and experiences. This furthers the need for research on economic behaviours and migratory patterns of Mexican Mennonites today.

Appendix B: Identifying Mexican Mennonites in the Census

An additional way to ascertain that the population numbers are accurate is to use a method of assessing population distribution numbers developed by Mueller (2005). By comparing the distribution of Mexican immigrants in Canada to other immigrant groups, he found that it is apparent that Mexicans are significantly more likely to settle in rural areas (Mueller 2005). He determined that the difference between Mexicans and other immigrants that settle in rural areas must be made up of Mennonites among the Mexican cohort, as there is no reason in the literature to believe that permanent resident Mexicans are significantly more likely to land in rural areas (Mueller 2005). My sample of 8,800 across Canada in the 2001 and 2016 censuses after dropping all missing variables is comparable of his figure of 14,012 in 2001 without dropping any observations.