

**Marginalization and exclusion as socio-economic factors of urban violence:
the case of Valle de Chalco Solidaridad, Estado de México**

**La marginación y exclusión como posibles factores
socioeconómicos de la violencia urbana: el caso
de Valle de Chalco Solidaridad, Estado de México**

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Abstract

This paper shows the results of research related to socio-economic factors that influence the emergence of violence in the municipality of Valle de Chalco Solidaridad, Estado de México. A mixed study method was used which included both quantitative and qualitative variables. Official databases, key informants interviews and focus groups discussions were used in this study. It was concluded that, along with other factors, socio-economic marginalization, unemployment, fall in wages and income provoke discontent and frustration among the population, resulting in diverse forms of violence in the municipality.

Key words: Socio-economic marginalization, unemployment, fall in wages, structural violence.

Resumen

En este artículo se muestran los resultados de la investigación relacionada con los factores socioeconómicos que influyen en la generación de las violencias en el municipio de Valle de Chalco Solidaridad, Estado de México. Se aplicó un método de estudio mixto que integró variables cuantitativas y cualitativas. Se usaron bases de datos oficiales, entrevistas a informantes clave, así como grupos focales de discusión. Se concluyó que junto con otros factores, la marginación socioeconómica, el desempleo, caída de los salarios e ingresos generan descontento y frustración en la población manifestándose en diversas formas de violencia al interior del municipio.

Palabras clave: Marginación socioeconómica, desempleo, caída de salarios, violencia estructural.

INTRODUCCIÓN

Estado de México is the most populous entity in the country with greater economic inequality. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) points to the entity as one of the major contributors to inequality in Mexico. Unlike the southern states like Chiapas and Oaxaca, poverty in Estado de México is mainly urban¹.

According to the Consejo Nacional de Población (CONAPO), Estado de México is divided into two metropolitan areas: the Metropolitan Area of Toluca (MAT, which includes 15 municipalities² and the Metropolitan Area of Valle de Mexico (MAVM), which includes 59 municipalities. Because of being urban municipalities, contiguous to Mexico City and socio-economic lag, Pérez (2014:19) proposes two sub-areas: Zona Noroeste³ (name assigned to the northwest side of Estado de México) and Zona Oriente (name assigned to the east side of Estado de México) (ZOVM). The latter includes the municipalities of Chalco, Valle de Chalco Solidaridad, Ixtapaluca, Chimalhuacán, La Paz and Chicoloapan.

In this context and comparing the sub-areas, there is a sharp asymmetry in the industrial development of the regions, since the main poles are located in Zona Noroeste and Valle de Toluca, excluding areas such as ZOVM, whose role is reduced to function as “bedroom suburb” (Pérez, 2014:47).

The eastern side of Estado de México has the highest level of overcrowding and marginalization in Valle de Chalco compared to the municipality of Chalco. Zona Oriente as a whole, contributes only 6.2 percent to the State Gross Domestic Product (GDP), almost similar to the contribution of the municipality of Cuautitlán Izcalli (6.4 percent). On the other hand, Valle de Chalco and Chicoloapan together contribute only 1 percent of the state’s

¹<http://expansion.mx/nacional/2011/04/12/estado-de-mexico-una-de-las-entidades-mas-desiguales-del-pais>

²Consist of the following municipalities: Acolman, Amecameca, Apaxco, Atenco, Atizapán de Zaragoza, Atlautla, Axapusco, Ayapango, Chalco, Chiautla, Chicoloapan, Chiconcuac, Chimalhuacán, Coacalco de Berriozábal, Cocotitlán, Coyotepec, Cuautitlán, Cuautitlán Izcalli, Ecatepec de Morelos, Ecatepec, Huehuetoca, Hueypoxtla, Huixquilucan, Isidro Fabela, Ixtapaluca, Jaltenco, Jilotzingo, Juchitepec, La Paz, Melchor Ocampo, Naucalpan de Juárez, Nextlalpan, Nezahualcóyotl, Nicolás Romero, Nopaltepec, Otumba, Ozumba, Papalotla, San Martín de las Pirámides, Tecámac, Temamatla, Temascalapa, Tenango del Aire, Teoloyucan, Teotihuacán, Tepetlaoxtoc, Tepetlixpa, Tepotzotlán, Tequixquiac, Texcoco, Tezoyuca, Tlalmanalco, Tlalnepantla de Baz, Tonanitla, Tultepec, Tultitlán, Valle de Chalco Solidaridad, Villa del Carbón y Zumpango

³Consist of the following municipalities Atizapán, Ecatepec, Cuautitlán Izcalli, Huehuetoca, Huixquilucan, Naucalpan, Tlalnepantla and Tultitlán

GDP, which shows the huge gap in economic development between Zona Oriente and the other suburbs of Estado de México (Pérez, 2014:41-46).

Inequality and few opportunities to earn income in the municipalities of ZOVM, provoke the need to look for a job in areas of greater development. The fact that defines the economic role of belts of poverty in the eastern side of Estado de México is that its working population generates wealth in other municipalities of Estado de México and demarcations of Mexico City (Pérez, 2014:47).

In this context, Bunge (2008: 67) indicates that steep inequality is what causes unhappiness, low self-esteem, envy, greed, dishonesty, anomie, dissatisfaction with society and their social manifestations are non-cooperation, violence, eventually revolts and sanguinary consequences. The same author emphasizes that the more marginal the individual is, the less compelled he/she feels to follow the moral and legal codes in force in society. Bunge defines marginalization as the exclusion of individuals from at least one of the three aspects of the social subsystem: economic, political or cultural. In the same way, Saraví (2004:135), Rodríguez (2004:37) and the World Report on Violence and Health (2002) affirm that there is no correlation between poverty and violence; however, they admit the association of criminality with the levels of inequality in a society. Azaola (2012:25-26) says that great inequalities are a destroyer of social capital.

This study aims to study the precursor and risk factors of violence in an urban area. It should be emphasized that the hypothesis that poverty provokes violence is not being supported; instead, exclusion and socio-economic marginalization will be discussed as possible causes. This research choose as case of study the municipality of Valley of Chalco Solidarity, Estado de México. This is one of the municipalities with the highest urban marginalization and highest levels of violence at the state level.

This study a general approximation to the problem of violence; that is, the results aim to provide a socio-economic vision. However, many factors are involved and policies to reduce violence must be integral.

Background

This section breaks down the characterization and multiple manifestations of violence. Then some studies that approach violence with a direct or indirect socio-economic approach are summarized.

Domenach (1981:36) conceptualizes violence as “the use of an open or hidden force, in order to obtain from an individual, or a group, something that the individual does not want to consent freely”. The World Health

Organization (WHO) defines violence as “the deliberate use of physical force, either as a threat or effective force, against oneself, another person, a group or community, causing injuries or potential for injury, death, psychological damage, developmental disorders or deprivations.”⁴

Regarding the types of violence, Galtung (1969) was the first researcher to realize a systematic and multidimensional typology of violence, identifying violence as: international, unintended, manifest, latent, personal, structural, motivated violence and without reason.

In this regard, Khan (1981: 195) indicates the type of violence that exists depends on three factors: 1) economic system, 2) political system, and 3) conjunctural context.

Applying an integrated model of the causes of violence, Moser and Shrader (1999: 6) conclude that violence can be grouped into: structural, institutional, interpersonal and individual.

The World Report on Violence and Health (2002) classifies violence as self-inflicted, interpersonal and collective. Within the collective violence we found the economic violence that includes attacks by larger groups motivated by the desire for economic profit, such as those carried out with the purpose of disrupting economic activities, refuse access to essential services or create economic division and fragmentation (Krug *et al.*, 2003:5).

Over the course of time, various studies on violence have come to the conclusion about their multifaceted character, ubiquity at various scales (micro, meso, macro or mega), matters (individuals, families, groups, institutions, and civilizations) and origins and causes (social, economic, cultural and environmental). Indeed, in today’s world, violence is evident in wars and in all the institutions that support wars: army, inside economy (lack of resources, exploitation, discrimination, marginalization), politics (domination of one or more parties, totalitarianism, exclusion of citizens in decision-making, armed conflict to win power), ideology (subordination of information to interests outside the truth, manipulation of public opinion, dissemination of concepts with violent and discriminating background), inside families (authoritarianism, discrimination against women, subordination of children), at school (non-liberating pedagogies, pedagogical authoritarianism, corporal punishment, intransigence, unjustified disobedience) and even inside a culture (ethnocentrism, racism, xenophobia, gender discrimination, androcentrism, consumerism) (Jiménez, 2012:18).

As highlighted above, violence is a problem that has multiple causes and cannot be addressed under the approach of keeping everything else

⁴http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/67411/1/a77102_spa.pdf

constant. In this vein, Rodríguez (2004:37) expresses that it is a heterogeneous phenomenon, crossed by multiple and complex edges, that does not admit simplifications of any kind, so it is no longer possible to sustain the simplistic and exclusive relationship between violence and poverty. Saraví (2004: 135) agrees with Rodríguez noting that there is indeed an accepted knowledge in the social sciences with respect to that there is no such correlation and even less statistical causality between poverty and violence. Nevertheless, he admits that there is greater agreement regarding the association of criminality with the levels of inequality that exist in a society and (although more discussed) with the prevailing unemployment rates.

The World Report on Violence and Health also shows a correlation between violence and inequality and not between violence and poverty. More equal countries have lower rates of violence. The tension generated inside societies is very high and produces the sensation that there is no “fair game”, which has an impact on the trust that is deposited in institutions. The great inequalities are a destroyer of social capital: creating mistrust, cynicism, lack of interest in associativity and apathy. The exclusion of wide parts of society, particularly to attend school or have a job, is another factor that leads to manifestations of violence (Azaola, 2012:25-26).

Rodríguez (2004:41) indicates that it is necessary to overcome the simplistic approaches prevailing so far; which are limited to the deployment of “repressive” responses or the development of “moralistic” campaigns or even the mechanical assimilation between “poverty” and “crime”, which postulates the fight against poverty as an almost “magic” answer. Violence for this author is a falsification of human relations as a product of social institutions (family, school, groups to which individual belong, jails, police, institutions offering services) that allow, generate, or recreate violence when they break down. Many among those who engage in violent acts have been encouraged, seduced or forced to commit those acts.

On the other hand and through the social distance approach, Arteaga and Lara (2004: 184-185) mention that the mechanisms of differentiation are deepened not only in the sphere of social identity; they argument that the increase of exclusion of large sectors of the population from the benefits traditionally provided by the capitalist market is recognized. They also mention that the presence of a disorganized capitalism, fundamentally financial, characterized by its constant crisis in the international market has generated this dynamic of disastrous consequences for millions of people. They indicate that the effect of this transformation is expressed in the constant fragility of work and the fracture of traditional social relations of those

who are located in the fringes of vulnerability. Poverty and violence are again as in previous centuries, related by political power, bypassing the fact that the heart of the problem is not found in violence, but in that which leads individuals to distance themselves from each other in the sphere of socioeconomic structure; aloofness that must also be understood as a disconnection in relation to the objectives and means that structure the existence of individuals through social life.

In an extensive research, Azaola (2012) argues that one of the roots of violence is related to the insufficiency of social and economic policies to reduce inequalities, and unjustifiable distances to promote the inclusion of broad sectors that every day see how their expectations of development diminish. Greater and better articulation and integration of social and economic policies has been necessary with security policies around common goals capable of generating a social consensus (Azaola, 2012:24).

In terms of the particular situation of Valle de Chalco Solidaridad, Hiernaux *et al.* (2000), cited by Herrera and Molinar (2010: 216), says that structural and social violence is a fundamental feature of this settlement, insofar as it was conceived as a territory that concentrates poverty. It houses displaced and excluded population from other areas of Mexico City as well as thousands of salaried workers that, after facing the crisis of 1982 and the impact of structural adjustment policies, migrated to the informal sector.

In this way, given its conformation process as a municipality from the 80's, this municipality has generally gone through several controversial stages: 1) division of the ejidos for housing, 2) altercations between ejido members and new settlers for rights of ownership, (3) demonstrations for public services, and (4) demonstrations due to floods, as well as economic and socio-political conflicts (Molinar, 2003:110-111).

According to Herrera and Molinar (2010: 219), the economic shortage of families living in Valle de Chalco generates lifestyles linked to survival, where it is essential to ensure the daily subsistence under variant job and low pay conditions. This depends on "the luck of the day" and demands the silent incorporation of women to activities with a salary add to their already heavy endless day of domestic work.

Location of the municipality

Valle de Chalco Solidaridad is a newly created municipality in Estado de Mexico; it is the municipality 122 (of 125 that Estado de México has) in 1994 by Decree 50 published in the Official Gazette on November 9,

1994. It is located to the east side of Estado de México, in the coordinates 19 degrees 16 minutes of north latitude and 98 degrees 56 minutes of west longitude, at a height of 1,250 meters above sea level. It limits to the north with the municipalities of Ixtapaluca, San Vicente Chicoloapan and La Paz, to the east with Chalco and to the south with Delegación de Tlahuac belonging to Mexico City. The total area of the municipality is 46.36 km² and represents 0.22% of the surface of the state (Estado de México). It is composed of the following suburbs: Del Carmen, Alfredo del Mazo, Avándaro, Independencia, Santiago, Concepción, María Isabel, Niños Héroe I, Niños Héroe II, Providencia, El Triunfo, Alfredo Baranda, Jardín, Guadalupana I, Guadalupana II, Xico I, Xico II, Xico III, Xico IV, Ampliación Emiliano Zapata, Xico La Laguna, Cerro del Marqués, Santa Cruz, San Isidro, Darío Martínez I, Darío Martínez II, San Juan Tlalpizahuac, Ampliación Santa Catarina, Américas I, Américas II, Santa Catarina II y La Asunción⁵.

Materials and methods

To detect the perception of violence and its factors among the inhabitants of the municipality, interviews to key informants and focus groups were applied. Interviews were structured and semi-structured. The structured interviews were applied in particular to focus groups of students. A total of 32 key social actors were identified and interviewed. These social actors were municipal authorities, school authorities, civil associations, religious leaders, ex-prisoners, police officers and students. There were also 10 focus groups on issues such as gender discrimination, communication, domestic violence and bullying. These interviews were conducted between September and December 2011. In citations of the results those individuals appear as key informants for reasons of anonymity. It should also be clarified that the information from the social actors and focus groups deals with different issues related to violence, however this paper only reports information related to marginalization and exclusion.

The economic census data provided by the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), and information given by the Instituto de Información e Investigación Geográfica, Estadística y Catastral del Estado de México (IGCEM) were used to analyze the aspects of income, employment, salaries and economic units.

To determine the marginalization or exclusion in Estado de México, the following areas proposed by Pérez (2014) were compared: Zona Oriente

⁵Taken from http://www.e-local.gob.mx/wb2/ELOCAL/EMM_mexico (seen on 12 July 2012)

del Valle de México (ZO) consisting of the municipalities of Chalco, Valle de Chalco Solidaridad, Ixtapaluca, Chimalhuacán, La Paz and Chicoloapan versus Zona Noroeste (ZN) composed of the municipalities of Atizapán, Ecatepec, Cuautitlán Izcalli, Huehuetoca, Huixquilucan, Naucalpan, Tlalnepantla and Tultitlán.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Economic units

According to the economic census of 2014, there are detailed records of economic units for 47 municipalities in Estado de México. To the remaining localities, INEGI groups them under the concept of rest of the municipalities for having less than 2,000 economic units.

In this sense, in Estado de México there were 534,838 economic units in 2014. The largest concentration of economic entities occurs in the following three municipalities: Ecatepec, Nezahualcóyotl and Toluca (see Table 1).

Within the first ten places of concentration of economic units, there were 6 municipalities of Zona Noroeste (consist of 8 municipalities), which concentrated 31.8% of the total units in the entity, while the Zona Oriente had 15.11%.

Valle de Chalco Solidaridad ranked 11th with 14,431 economic entities. It is important to mention that in Zona Oriente, Valle de Chalco was surpassed by Chimalhuacán and Ixtapaluca.

Within the formal aggregated economy per sector, tertiary activities were the main source of employment in the municipality. The economy of the population under study is mainly based on small stores, whether in fixed or semi-finished establishments. A total of 55.28% of the economic units are small stores, which refers mainly to stores where grocery, food, beverages, ice and tobacco are sold. Also worthy of mention are the small stationary stores, small recreation business and stores that sell articles of personal use like shampoo, toothpaste, etc.

Continuing with small business, the second place refers to repair and maintenance of services, beauty salon, public restrooms, stores to get your shoes polished, laundries and dry cleaners. The third place refers to food and beverage preparation services. The fourth place is for the manufacturing industry.

Table 1: Economic units in Estado de México. 2014

Municipality	Economic Units
Total Estado de México	534,838
Ecatepec de Morelos	64,748
Nezahualcóyotl	44,331
Toluca	39,443
Naucalpan de Juárez	26,258
Tlalnepantla de Baz	24,847
Chimalhuacán	23,652
Cuautitlán Izcalli	15,472
Tultitlán	15,423
Atizapán de Zaragoza	14,656
Ixtapaluca	14,432
Valle de Chalco Solidaridad	14,431

Source: Compilation with data from economic censuses.

The economic units of this municipality are usually small, are characterized by having family investment and infrastructure and no formal accounting of the business.

In this sense, fixed assets are all the infrastructure, machinery, tools, etc., that the economic unit uses to produce goods and services. With respect to the current monetary value of fixed assets, 70.8% of the total value of the entity is distributed in eight municipalities: Toluca, Tlalnepantla, Naucalpan, Ecatepec, Cuautitlán, Cuautitlán Izcalli, Tultitlán and Lerma. Valle de Chalco Solidaridad contributes only 0.54% to the total value of the fixed assets of Estado de México.

Regarding the historical evolution, the commercial changes have been more dynamic, while the manufacturing units have decreased from 2008 to 2014 (See Figure 1).

The field tour showed the effects that cannot be seen in the statistics; that is, the great predominance of informal economic units. In this regard, key informant 4 (12/8/2011) said “today informal sector is the predominant in the municipality. Many people have tried to establish a business, but due to the informal sector they do not have much opportunity to grow...”

Employment generated

At the state level, economic units employ a total of 2,023,837 people. Although Toluca takes third place in total economic units, it is in the first place in terms of generating jobs, contributing 221,323 to the total of the state.

Zona Noreoeste created 42.45% of jobs in Estado de México, while Zona Oriente generated only 9.63%.

The municipalities that on average per economic unit generated more jobs are: Lerma (10.8), Tlanepantla (7.53), Cuautitlan 7.44, Naucalpan 6.75, Toluca (5.6) and Metepec (5.30). Although Ecatepec has the largest number of economic units, generates only 3.15 jobs per unit; probably due to its large population (Table 2).

Compared to the surrounding municipalities of ZO, Valle de Chalco is surpassed by Chalco and La Paz. Valle de Chalco is located in the 18th place with 30,241 jobs created in 2014.

This information suggests that the economic entities of Valle de Chalco are small since they generate on average 2.09 jobs per unit.

In addition, the sectors that generate more jobs are: retail trade, manufacturing industries, other services except government activities, temporary accommodation and food and beverage preparation services, wholesale trade and educational services.

Source: Compilation with data from economic censuses

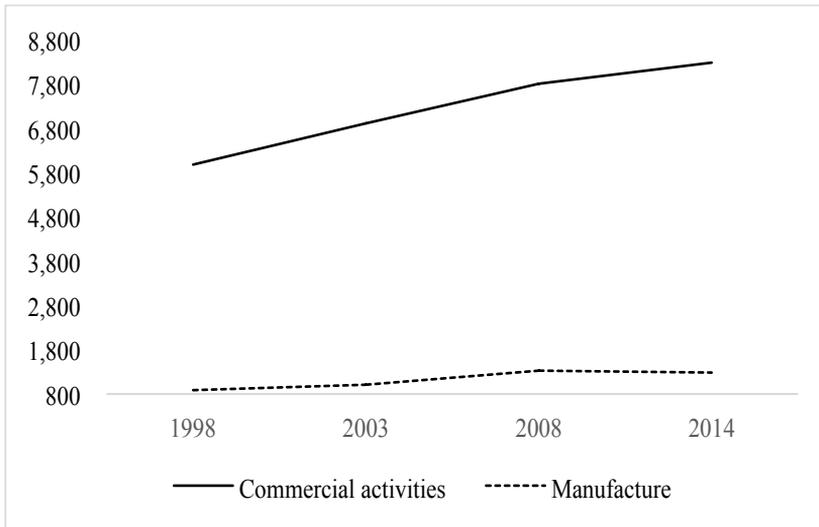


Figure 1: Historical evolution of economic units.

As for the historical evolution of the jobs generated, it is observed that from 2008 to 2014 a downward trend is shown (see Figure 2). This factor would be a possible explanation for the fall in income and mobility to the informal sector as a labor source.

The demographic dynamics of the municipality aim to the young people incorporating massively to the economically active population. However, they face the problem of saturation of workforce in the economic units, reducing the opportunities of having paid employment. In this context, one of the key informants expressed the following:

Given the lack of formal employment for young people, the municipal authorities are trying to lead education according to the needs of the municipality. There are schools with degrees and engineering schools, but there are no companies that can provide jobs for graduates. In the future, courses must be created that are necessary for the municipality and in accordance with the resources and infrastructure that is possessed (key informant 4, 12/8/2011).

Table 2: Employees in Estado de México, 2014

Municipality	Employees
Total Estado de México	2,023,837
Toluca	221,323
Ecatepec de Morelos	204,423
Tlalnepantla de Baz	187,106
Naucalpan de Juárez	177,388
Cuautitlán Izcalli	115,175
Nezahualcóyotl	105,392
Tultitlán	73,709
Atizapán de Zaragoza	59,186
Lerma	56,138
Metepec	51,627
Chimalhuacán	44,508
Ixtapaluca	39,698
Tecámac	37,720
Chalco	34,797
La Paz	33,287
Texcoco	32,835
Huixquilucan	30,920
Valle de Chalco Solidaridad	30,241

Source: Compilation with data from economic censuses.

Income from work remuneration

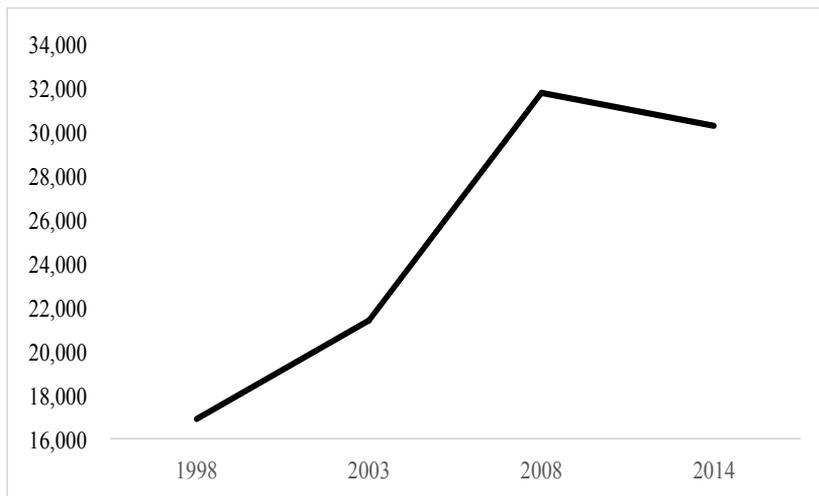
With respect to the remunerations that the economic units perform to the employees, in Toluca they have the best payments; That is to say, it occupies the first place in the total amount of remunerations to the factor work in the entity.

Similarly, 54.71% of total wages and salaries were concentrated again in the 8 municipalities of the Northwest Zone, while the Eastern Zone earned only 4.7% of total labor income.

Earned income

With respect to the income paid by the economic units to employees, Toluca has the best wages; that is to say, ranks first in the total amount of earned income in Estado de México.

Figure 2: Historical evolution of the jobs generated in Valle de Chalco Solidaridad



Source: Compilation with data from economic censuses.

Similarly, 54.71% of total wages were concentrated again in the 8 municipalities of Zona Noroeste, while Zona Oriente had only 4.7% of earned income.

By 2014, Valle de Chalco Solidaridad was one of the municipalities with the lowest income in the state; that is, despite of ranking 11th with respect to the total of economic units, it is ranked 25th in terms of wages. In this regard, the employed population of Chalco, Ixtapaluca and La Paz had better wages.

It follows that with very low wages, inhabitants have to look for jobs in Mexico City or nearby municipalities that offer better pay.

In 2005, Zona Oriente recorded the lowest percentage of employed people who had income greater than two minimum wages. Almost half (47%) of people employed in Valle de Chalco earned less than two minimum wages (Pérez, 2014: 63-64).

At the national level, there was an economic recession that affected the performance of economic sectors in 2001, manifesting itself in a contraction of GDP (Gross Domestic Product). Although a moderate recovery in the national economy occurred in 2004, the world crisis broke out in 2008, thus lowering oil prices affected the Mexican economy with a sharp fall in GDP in 2009, which caused unemployment population.

From 2008 to 2014 incomes are steep and are expected to continue with the same trend given the global macroeconomic situation and continued cuts to the national budget. Under this macroeconomic context, the population of the peri-urban municipalities such as the case of Valle de Chalco Solidaridad were also directly or indirectly affected.

With the data presented of generated jobs and wages, it can be asserted that in recent years the income of the families from Valle de Chalco tended to be downstream due to the fall of the wages perceived, causing that families have to work more hours and in multiple activities to supplement the income.

Aggregate gross value from census

The aggregate gross value from census of the economic unit, is defined by INEGI as the value of production that is added during the labor process by the activity and transformation of the employed personnel, capital and organization (factors of production), carried out on the materials that are consumed in the accomplishment of the economic activity. It is called gross because it has not been deducted the consumption of fixed capital⁶.

With data from the economic census of 2014, it can be stated that an employed in Toluca is on average four times more productive than an employed in Valle de Chalco Solidaridad. In addition, with only a slight difference from Valle de Chalco, Chimalhuacán appears at the bottom of the list in terms of the average value added per person. With this, it is evident that at the commercial level, Zona Oriente is not competitive.

Informal sector and other sources of employment

In the informal sector, the main activity of families is street commerce. To such degree that in the municipality there are a total of 48 street markets. This activity dates from the beginnings of the creation of the town in the 80's when the leaders of the social groupings began to establish the street commerce.

⁶INEGI. Censos Económicos 2014.

In the interview, key informant 1 (09/22/11) said that informal commerce is

wrong but necessary, because there are no jobs to be offered to the people carrying out this informal commerce, as long as there are no jobs for them, they can't be asked not to perform this activity. The problem is not that these persons are selling vegetables on the streets, the problem is when they try to sell stolen things, that's when we have to be very careful. For example someone trying to sell a bike at a street market, but he stole it a night before, that's the problem, and we have to be careful with that.

On the other hand, the same anonymous informant 1 (09/22/11) said

a sensitive issue are the places where narcotic drugs are sold, because this activity has increased and although neighbors report that nobody dares to state it on a formal record, people do it anonymously living a piece of paper to the authorities telling the address, complicating the exercise and application of the law. It is worrying that there is a high rate of crime. Another issue is the reproduction of clandestine bars. Some organizations have been dedicated to protect those places, so authorities can't do anything, and it is the same problem that with the street markets where there are leaders to whom their interests are affected; this also turns complicated because of the threats received when legal action is taken.

In the face of crisis situations and the lack of generation of formal jobs for families, and particularly for young people, employment in the informal economy and crime has increased.

According to Key Informer 5 (7/12/2011),

Every day there are long street markets, these street markets are places of distraction for the family. However, one factor that has not been analyzed is that in those places violence is generated. There is a lot of piracy, inside these street markets there are 20 or 30 places selling illegal copyright movies showing violent scenes (someone beheading another person) on three or four TV screens. There are places where you can buy beer in hours when it is already forbidden to sell it, there are not regularizations.

Beneficiaries of social programs

According to information from Secretaría de Desarrollo Social (SEDESOL, 2011), there are 12 social programs in operation to boost or strengthen the capacities and potential of families, raise their standard of living,

generate opportunities and promote their incorporation into integral development. In 2011, there were 12,398 beneficiaries of the program known in Mexico as *OPORTUNIDADES*. On the other hand LICONSA delivered fortified milk to 72,595 inhabitants of Valle de Chalco. The program known in Mexico as *Apoyo Alimentario* (PAL) provided financial support to 63,009 beneficiaries; while the program known as *70 Y Más* provided financial support to 115 adults over the age of 70.

In the suburb known as colonia Ampliación (San Miguel Tláhuac) and Xico, the program HABITAT carried out projects that benefited 1,712 inhabitants. The projects of the program HABITAT were directed mainly to the construction of physical infrastructure of basic social benefit of the community with provision of public services: drinking water, drainage, electricity pavement, among others. This program also supported the creation of infrastructure for the improvement and equipping of specialized centers for the care of victims of violence.

On the other hand, the program *Desarrollo de Zonas Prioritarias* (PDZP) development of priority areas benefited 2,124 inhabitants with projects that fall within the system of maintenance of drinking water, drainage, educational infrastructure, productivity, health centers. In addition, this program also supported families for the improvement of their homes providing solid floors, sanitary services, reinforced walls and roofs. It was found that there were only eight beneficiaries of the program *Jornaleros Agrícolas* in Xico. The program *Programa de Rescate de Espacios Públicos* (PREP) public space rescue carried out projects in almost all localities, with the exception of colonia Ampliación.

The program daycare center to support working mothers (known in Mexico as *programa de estancias infantiles PEI*) only supported families in Xico, where the children of 441 mothers are cared for. In the colonia Ampliación (San Miguel Tláhuac) federal subsidies were given to build, acquire, expand or improve the housing of 50 families.

Moreover, the Program of support to settlers under patrimony poverty conditions to regulate irregular human settlements (PASPRAH in Spanish), provided financial support to 584 heads of families of the community of Xico. Two artisans received financial support provided by the *Fondo Nacional de Fomento a las Artesanías* (FONAR) in Xico were registered and 14 daycare centers joined the network of daycare centers.

The order of importance of social programs is shown as follows according to the number of beneficiaries: LICONSA, PAL, OPORTUNIDA-

DES, PDZP, HABITAT, PASPRAH, PEI, 70 Y MÁS, PREP, TU CASA, JORNALEROS AGRÍCOLAS AND FONART.

Regarding the extended coverage, OPORTUNIDADES, LICONSA, PAL, JORNALEROS AGRÍCOLAS, PEI, PASPRAH and FONART focused almost entirely to benefit the inhabitants of Xico. While the programs HABITAT and TÚ CASA operated essentially in the locality of Ampliación (San Miguel Tláhuac). Among the programs that recorded a broader coverage were: 70 Y MÁS, PREP and PDZP. Although the latter transferred support in about 60% of the total resources to Xico.

According to the key informant 4 (12/8/2011)

agriculture is not a relevant economic sector in the municipality. The cultivation of vegetables and flowers predominates mainly in Mixquic, where there is an agricultural strip that covers an area of around 1,720 hectares. However, the financial support has not been able to flow properly to the benefit of the producers due to property rights problems since ejidatarios live in delegación Anahuac and its production unit is located in Mixquic”; that is, the producers are not living in the agrarian nucleus. The informant continues, explaining “it is planned to create a center for the collection of agricultural products; however, there is no project to support action measurements due to property problems, coupled with the nonconformities of certain leaders who would be affected. Given this situation, some producers which are ejidatarios inhabitants of Valle de Chalco were grouped and informally or irregularly established a wholesake food market know in Mexico as ‘central de abastos’ to sell their agricultural goods.

Other social programs are coordinated by the Secretaría de Economía (SE), the Secretaría de Desarrollo Económico (SDE) and the Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social (STPS). However, the municipality lacked a pattern of beneficiaries with the specific amounts of financial support. However, it is estimated that the amount of financial support of the programs of the SE ranged in \$25,000 pesos for investment in machinery and equipment of businesses like tortillerías (where tortillas are made and sell), bakeries and beauty salons, among others. The financial support of the programs of self-employment provided by STPS are intended for people already established and engaged in service activities such as stylists, garment workers, tinsmiths, carpenters, etc.

Poverty and inequality

At the national level, the situation of poverty has not presented outstanding changes, the numbers have been 46.1%, 45.5% and 46.2% of the

poor population compared to the total population for the years 2010, 2012 and 2014 respectively. Estado de México has gone from 42.9%, 45.3 and 49.6% for the same years⁷. Due to patrimonial poverty level (which also includes those who suffer from food and skills), we have in descending order, Chimalhuacán, Valle de Chalco and Chalco. Chimalhuacán has 3.5 times more inhabitants below the patrimonial poverty line than Cuautitlán Izcalli; Chalco records twice as many inhabitants below the poverty line compared to Atizapán. About half of the population in the situation of patrimonial poverty of Zona Oriente is concentrated in this three poor municipalities; that is, out of every ten inhabitants, five can be classified below the patrimonial poverty line (Pérez, 2014:77). It was also found that 57.8% of the population does not have right to medical services from a public or private institution, 21.4% are affiliated with IMSS, 11.6% to Seguro Popular, 5% to the ISSSTE and 3.5% have other types of medical service (CONAPO, 2010). In recent years this situation has worsened the living standards of workers and the general population.

For Valle de Chalco Solidaridad, CONEVAL reported that in 2010 58.3% of the population was in poverty (46.2% in moderate poverty and 12.1% in extreme poverty). In 2005, 64.8% of the population was in patrimony poverty, 27.3% in capacity poverty and about 15% in food poverty. However, the degree of social backwardness (-0.91349) of the municipality in 2010 was very low and ranked 1,978 at the national level. In 2000 it occupied the place 2102, while in 2005 it occupied the place 1,950.

The Consejo Nacional de Población (CONAPO) report two types of marginalization: marginalization for the entire country and exclusively urban marginalization. According to CONAPO, for 2010, the marginalization index of Valle de Chalco Solidaridad was -1.22461, which classifies it as a municipality with a low degree of marginalization, with that index this municipality located at the 2182 place at a national level, while at the state level was located in place 83.

Given the geographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the municipality, it is more appropriate to analyze the index of urban marginalization. In 2005, the municipality had medium-high marginalization; however, most of the population was in a situation of high marginalization. Chalco and La Paz also have a degree of medium-high marginalization, while Ixtapaluca is in better conditions since its degree of marginalization is low to very low.

7 <http://www.coneval.org.mx/Paginas/principal.aspx>. Consultado el 26 de julio de 2016

Comalchica is a neighborhood belonging to Valle de Chalco Solidaridad with high degree of marginalization. Under average marginalization we found the following neighborhoods: colonia El triángulo and Colonia Ampliación (San Miguel Tláhuac). Xico is the locality with low degree of marginalization (CONAPO, 2005).

According to data from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), in 2000 the value of the Human Development Index (HDI) of Valle de Chalco Solidaridad was 0.7694, ranking 531 at the national level. For 2005, the value of the index was 0.8128 and rose to the place 452.

In accordance with the institutional data presented, it is revealed that welfare conditions of the population of the municipality have improved in recent years; however, the perception of the inhabitants is totally contradictory when affirming that “the majority of the people belong to the low class and those who have low resources get used to live on things that they receive. Most who have large resources or businesses don’t live in the municipality; however, sometimes you see ostentatious houses” (key informant 2 (09/22/2011)).

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE EMERGENCE OF VIOLENCE IN VALLE DE CHALCO SOLIDARIDAD

After describing the socioeconomic circumstances of the municipality of Valle de Chalco Solidaridad, we present some possible factors that constitute the elements that may form part of the emergence of violence, given the conditions of marginalization and exclusion.

Precursor factors

1. A first precursor factor is the overpopulation of Mexico City in the 1970s, due to the massive rural migration to the urban area. Due to demographic pressure, homes were scarce and rents to live in the city increased. Increases in rents in the city forced the working families to seek their own home at low cost in the outskirts of the city.
2. The second factor is the recurrent economic crises since 1982. In this context, unemployment increased and wages fell, living conditions in Mexico City worsened and this expelled the mass of wage earners to the periphery founding neighborhoods in areas of high risk.

3. A third factor was the earthquake in 1985 that forced many families who lived in the city to migrate to locate their homes on the periphery, without going too far from their sources of employment.
4. The municipality of Valle de Chalco Solidaridad is relatively new and in its process of formation has gone through different stages of conflict. In this way the settlement process has caused:
 - a. Conflicts between settlers and ejidatarios (Martinez, 2011: 45-49) due to public services such as electricity, drinking water, drainage, education, public transport and health. All these demands were the principles of violence in the new municipality. Conflicts arose because the ejidatarios sought to keep the new inhabitants subjugated with the artifice of control over public services they provided with the consent of some authorities. In this regard, key informant 9 (11/22/2011) said: “the role of women has been important because they were given the task of fighting for services, we walked to Chalco, men support us but they had to go to work. The women arranged all about sidewalks, water, schools, we brought electricity from Ayotla. Population began to organize against the supposed leaders who took advantage of the need of the people and crime increased. We traveled very long distances to manifest in Chalco, sometimes we slept in front of the town hall to pay the property tax, because we felt safer having our receipt of the property tax since we did not have ownership titles. After we covered the service needs, we lost that social leadership and then came political leaders, who take advantage of the population. Before we looked like a single family, we looked after each other, but it was lost because there is no need, everyone take care of its own interest”.
 - b. Pressure and competition for obtaining monetary income in the municipality. Due to the population of both cultivable areas and areas destined to social infrastructure by invaders, the population faced the need to create sources of income in a municipality with little urban planning, so that the informal sector was gradually created.

Risk factors

1. Asymmetry in the development of the urban areas of the State of Mexico. Zona Noroeste and Toluca had greater economic growth and therefore higher development compared to Zona Oriente. Although Zona Oriente has a large number of economic units, they tend to be small and cannot absorb the economically active population in constant growth. The area where Valle de Chalco is located has not had enough investment in productive infrastructure to generate better paid jobs, which is why there is an exclusion and marginalization of the process of economic development.
2. Fall of wages and decrease in income. The drop in income is mainly due to lower wages; that is, from 2008 to 2014, income has declined and almost half of the population earn less than two minimum wages. Even in Zona Oriente, municipalities like Chalco, Ixtapaluca and La Paz have better salary levels.
3. Increase in unemployment rates. The highest rates of unemployment occurred after the global crisis of 2008. In a municipality like Valle de Chalco, with small production units and with such low wages, it is expected that the turnover of personnel will be very high. However, this rotation is also influenced by the lack of academic preparation of the employee. With information from CONAPO (2010), 66.6% of the population aged 15 and over has only basic education, which is an easily replaceable workforce because they do not have unique skills. In this regard, key informant 7 (20/10/2011) said “the lack of employment, lack of academic preparation and, consequently, low-paid employment is what causes idleness. The fact that a boy doesn’t go to school and stays at home because his father can’t longer pay for school uniform or school registration fee ... later this boy could start using drugs and that brings him closer to crime, violence, social decay.”
4. High employment rates in the informal sector. The employment rate in the informal sector also shows upward trends, by 2014 just over half the population was working in this sector (50.93%). Before the crisis of 2008, only 33.82% of the population was engaged in informal activities. The main activity in this economic sector is the street commerce, with the existence of about 48 street markets. In this regard, the key informant 5 (12/7/2011) said: “when we are looking for work opportunities and these opportunities are not given, then we look for some other alternatives and this generates a climate of violence. Now gangs are absorbed by criminal organizations, thieves are controlled

by larger criminal groups. Nothing can be done against this because if you want to stand out and start your own business you can be extorted, in Valley of Chalco already all businesses are forced to pay money to criminal organizations and now nobody wants to start his own business. Crime is the only profitable activity”.

5. Women’s entry into the labor market. The contribution of monetary income to the household by women has been increasing. The female population is increasingly taking an active part in the labor market. This implies that they are assuming a double role: the role of housewives and raising children, but also, contributing with income.
6. Little coverage of social programs. Although subsidies and money transfers made to the families of the municipality fulfill the criteria according to the geographical and socioeconomic area, there is a poor coverage since social programs are mainly destined to the locality of Xico and to a lesser extent to the neighborhoods with the population in situation of poverty and with greater degree of marginalization.
7. Municipality in an area at risk of flooding. The Rio de la Compañía (sewage) has been overflowed several times (in 2000 and 2010), first in May 2000 in the section located between Ixtapaluca and Valle de Chalco. On that occasion that caused damages to more than 1,200 families, and houses “flooded with sewage, in neighborhoods like El Triunfo, Avándaro, San Isidro, Emiliano Zapata, Tlalpizáhuac and El Molino”. The second major overflow occurred in June of that same year, affecting the municipality of Valle de Chalco. It is important to mention that none of the other urban regions studied have recorded such damages; in those regions the control and management of sewage has been better designed; in other words, facilities are not neglected compared to those in Zona Oriente (Pérez, 2014:138-139).

Containment factors

1. Contributions to households. Aid contributions in the municipality are key to containment of violence. These contributions operate from different perspectives where households receive financial support or basic basket products and these contributions increase in crisis situations. González and Ziccardi (2011: 63) indicate that during the flood of February 5, 2010, affected neighbors initially reacted by carrying out rescue and evacuation actions of the population that slept when the disaster occurred, in addition the church community played an important role in the articulation of local solidarity. Even the inhabitants

came together to put pressure on the government when they felt it was important for the support to be given to the victims.

2. Family businesses and self-consumption. Informal businesses have been listed as risk factors; however, they can also be a restraint factor as pointed out by the key informant 1 (22/09/11), affirming that “street markets are wrong but necessary because there are no better alternatives of formal employment”.
3. Closeness to Mexico City. Mexico City remains very attractive as a source of paid employment for many persons. The city offers the best conditions of salary, benefits and access to health institutions, in spite of the disadvantages that have been outlined previously.

Regarding the risk factors raised, Herrera and Molinar (2010: 222) affirm that poverty engenders feelings of marginality, impotence, dependence, inferiority, instability and discomfort, which intensify by conflicts within the families adding problems of alcohol or drug addiction, paternal abandonment or even maternal abandonment, intra-family violence, among many other social evils.

Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004: 3), cited by Azaola (2012: 16-17), mention that violent behavior in families is often a response to socio-political or economic exclusion that made violent behavior appear to be the only one possible under the circumstances. They point out that structural violence, i.e. poverty, hunger, social exclusion and humiliation leads to domestic and intimate violence.

In the particular case of women entering the labor market, Herrera and Molinar (2010:219) deduce that when women have to face economic leadership, women feel guilty for not taking care their children and the older daughters or grandmothers are those who assume this task. In most cases, mothers overwhelmed to cover the minimum necessary and perform their endless work day do not have the time or emotional energy to face the needs of interaction and affection with their children, in addition to recognizing that they do not know how to show their affection. In this respect key informant 3 (11/17/2011) says that, *children no longer receive love from parents after long hours of work, there is no time to play with them and to help them with homework.*

In the matter of asymmetry in the development of urban areas, Arteaga and Lara (2004:183) indirectly indicate that social distance (i.e. the exclusion of certain localities and potential beneficiaries) becomes a phenomenon that requires analysis insofar as it allows observing the formation and

mediation of social conflicts and their composition in possible detonators of violence.

Among other contributions made in the municipality of Valle de Chalco Solidaridad are: Trejo (2008), studied the processes involved in creating the identity of the youth of this municipality; Mendoza (2009) carried out an analysis on the situation of migrants to the United States; González and Ziccardi (2011) address climate change and the flood case in 2010; and Martínez (2011:19) studied the process of generation of the existing political class. These authors also discuss some issues of violence in Valle de Chalco Solidaridad; however, none of them analyze the factors of emergence of violence so it is difficult to find similarities or differences with our study.

CONCLUSIONS

Toluca, along with the municipalities of Huxquilucan, Naucalpan, Atizapán, Metepec and Valle de Bravo are those with greater economic development in the entity. The state government must generate the conditions for the other municipalities and especially Zona Oriente to have the same conditions of investment.

There is a drop in formal employment, which leads family heads to seek alternatives in the informal economy to obtain monetary income that allows them to support their families. The informal sector is the option that can be considered the least of evils; however, there is a latent danger that family leaders may engage in illicit activities in order to sustain themselves. Illicit activities can range from robbery to kidnapping. Indeed, some key informants mentioned that in the municipality there are houses that function where hostages are kept. The informal sector is an undeniable fact at the national level, but in Valle de Chalco Solidaridad it is even more acute because it is on the fringe of Mexico City. In this sense the key informant 4 (12/8/2011) said:

there have been talks to establish a fixed space for these informal business and regulate them; however, it is a very complex issue since in principle this sector acts as a container of violence and in the event that this means of survival is removed, crime can increase in the municipality.

There is a need for in-depth analysis by the authorities responsible for administering the support of social programs in order to expand coverage, since the current conditions of operation of these programs encourage the

exclusion of some neighborhoods by concentrating support in the place known as Xico.

All the authors mentioned here comment the multiplicity of factors for the emergence of violence. The present study also concludes this particularity; however, the idea is that given certain factors (cultural, psychological, educational, etc.), marginalization and exclusion intensify the social problem. For example, feelings of exclusion and few opportunities create discontent and distrust among the youth population in both governmental and social institutions.

In this sense, Saraví (2004:135) also concludes that economic deprivation combined with other local problems would contribute to the development of a social environment in which crime increases; where the individual experience of economic deprivation can't be considered the only explanatory variable of the crime.

Current policies to combat crime, homicide, drug trafficking, etc. have not diminished these problems, because only the effects of the problem are being attacked.

To reduce situations of violence, comprehensive approaches are needed. Starting with economic stability policies to ensure sustained economic growth and development. These economic policies should privilege the generation of formal jobs with access to statutory benefits. Economic growth would ensure greater output, which would imply an increase in the level of wages.

Mechanisms must also be sought to increase social capital; that is, the ties that bind a particular community. Contributions for the municipality are key to containment of violence. In this sense, key informant 6 (12/12/2011) said:

neighbors organize to take care of each other, their houses and in case they see someone suspicious they call the police, but police release these suspects immediately due to human rights provoking thieves continue with robberies in other places. Also, neighbors collect basic food products to take them to the church and help the most needy.

He assured that municipal authorities only help those who support its political party". The need to increase this social capital arises from the expressions of some inhabitants as the key informant 8 (11/14/2011) who said:

in my neighborhood there was organization, but due to the new generations this becomes difficult. In the past, when someone was in danger he/she whist-

led (call for help) and all neighbors came out their houses and gather, now because new generations have been growing and some of these young people are involved in crime this becomes more complicated, there is no communication, and people don't want to be involved in this because they say "I cannot participate because my family member is also involved in that" in the past this didn't happen.

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