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The Nature And Location Of Women's Informal Economic
Activities: A case
study in Quito, Ecuador.

by

Lise Martin

A thesis
presented to the University of Ottawa
in fulfillment of the
thesis requirement for the degree of
Master of Arts in Geography
in
Department of Geography, University of Ottawa

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ABSTRACT

Women's participation in informal economic activities has allowed much of their work to remain "invisible". As their economic activities are becoming increasingly important in their households' survival strategies, it is imperative that their work be better understood and be given due recognition. The objective of this thesis is to study the employment issues concerning women of the urban poor. Special attention has been given to the nature and location of their informal economic activities. We have thus examined how the nature and location of women's informal activities may be influenced by 1) their socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics and 2) the location of their home "barrio". To gather the data on which this thesis is based, questionnaires were administered by the researcher in two of Quito's "barrios populares". A total of 133 questionnaires were completed, of which 126 were retained for data analysis.

In this sample of working mothers, the majority engaged in informal economic activities. Age, number of children and level of education were identified as factors which limit women's possibilities of engaging in formal employment. As most women are channelled, with few options, into informal

economic activities, this study has focused on this particular group of women. Both the extent of women's domestic activities and the financial situation of their household have been identified as the factors which most strongly influenced the nature and location of their informal economic activities. In this sample, most of the women did not work in proximity of their homes, as indicated in the literature. For many women, it was not possible to bring paid work into their homes. In order to fulfill their dual role, their working days must thus be largely extended.

Although the majority of the women from both "barrios" travelled to their work place, those from the more peripheral "barrio" travelled greater distances. The predominance of women selling cooked foods in this latter "barrio" can be explained by its location and lack of infrastructure. The results of this thesis have provided a further understanding of women's informal economic activities as well as demonstrated the value of their work within the household.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

This last decade has been marked by an increasing amount of interest, both in the literature and in the development community, for issues concerning women and development. Many of these efforts have focused on the underestimation of women's work in rural as well as urban communities. In terms of work and employment issues in the urban environment, the concept of "informal sector" has without doubt dominated discussion. This concept, although still strongly debated, has provided a better understanding and shed new light on the survival strategies of the urban poor. As the importance of informal economic activities was being recognized, so was the fact that women formed a major part of this labour force. Even though women's work is increasingly being acknowledged, their participation in informal activities allows much of their work to remain "invisible".

As a geographer, the nature and location of women's informal economic activities, are of particular interest. Women have been identified with poorly remunerated activities, which tend to be downwardly mobile. The reasons as to why they engage in these particular activities have, however, not been sufficiently examined. The link between

the nature of women's activities and their location also requires further consideration. Although the location of women's economic activities has at times been briefly considered in the literature, the links between nature and location of activities have not been empirically examined. The extent to which women must travel to encounter employment opportunities has also not been sufficiently recognized. The literature has too often tended to assume that most women worked in proximity of their homes. This thesis will closely examine the location of women's activities as well as the links between the nature and location, and thus provide a clearer picture of the locational aspects of women's informal economic activities.

In view of furthering the understanding of the employment issues surrounding women of the urban poor, the following research objectives have been elaborated:

1. To identify which socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics may influence women's participation in informal rather than formal economic activities.
2. To determine the value of women's work within the household.
3. To identify which socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics may influence the nature and location of women's informal economic activities.
4. To determine if the nature and location of women's informal economic activities vary in function of the location of their area of residence.

Field work was carried out in Quito, Ecuador, during the winter/spring of 1984. As the capital of Ecuador, Quito has for a long time been an administrative city with an important cultural role. Since the early 1970's, the city has become increasingly industrialized. Over the last three decades, the city has witnessed a population increase of two hundred percent. The population of the city at present is slightly over one million, with approximately forty percent of the people living in slums or squatter settlements (Ruiz, 1985).

The field survey during which the data for this thesis were collected, took place in two of Quito's "barrios populares". As our objective was to obtain a representative cross-section of women's informal economic activities, the research was carried out at the woman's home rather than work place. To gather the required data, questionnaires were administered by the researcher and recorded by a colleague. A total of 133 questionnaires were completed, of which 126 were retained for analysis.

A review of the literature dealing with women and the informal sector concept will be presented in order to identify the gaps in the literature, and to situate the thesis in this area of research. A detailed account of the research methodology will follow. The study's research objectives will be dealt with in a third and fourth chapter. The third chapter will examine the socioeconomic and

sociodemographic characteristics of both women engaged in formal and informal employment, in order to identify which of these may influence women's participation in one particular form of employment. As most of the women sampled engage in informal economic activities, their socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics will be studied in further detail. This chapter will also look at the income provided by women's informal economic activities and attempt to determine the value of this income as a proportion of the total household income. The final chapter will first identify the links between women's socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics and the nature and location of their informal economic activities. In the second part, the links that exist between the location of a woman's area of residence and the nature and location of her informal economic activities will be explained.

Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW: WOMEN AND THE INFORMAL SECTOR CONCEPT

The concept of the informal sector, first introduced in the early 1970's by Keith Hart, has been widely used in the literature by social scientists of all disciplines. Its applicability as a framework for analysis as well as for policy implications has been and remains an area of debate. Initially, this literature review will briefly examine the theoretical approaches associated with the study of the informal sector, as well as the problems encountered in attempting to define the concept. The second part of this review will focus on the literature dealing specifically with the role of women in the informal sector.

2.1

THE URBAN INFORMAL SECTOR

Introduced in 1971, the urban informal sector concept was first described as a sub-sector of the economy outside the formal employment structure, not accounted for in official statistics nor officially recognized. In introducing the formal/informal concepts, Hart associated

himself to a tradition of theorists who viewed the development of Third World countries in a dualistic fashion. His approach was nevertheless different in that he identified new income generating activities, emphasizing their productive role.

According to dualistic theory, an economy is comprised of a modern sector which is in opposition to a more traditional, archaic sector.¹ The existence of dual economies is traditionally viewed as a natural stage in the "modernization" process of developing nations. An underlying assumption in the conceptualization of dual economies is that both sectors are viewed as entities with separate and individual structures. The links between the two sectors are thus perceived as virtually non-existent. Researchers subscribing to dualistic theory have often considered low income self employment in the informal sector as a gradual and natural step toward formal wage employment. This sector has been viewed as an impediment to the growth of developing economies. These viewpoints have, however, been largely refuted by much of the recent literature which does not view the two sectors of the economy, whether they be formal/informal or modern/traditional, as exclusive entities. In his study of the informal sector concept, Lister has indicated three principal reasons as to why he feels the dualistic approach is inadequate:

¹ For a discussion on dualism, see Peattie (1980).

1. it has failed to provide a systematic and comprehensive set of definitional criteria on the basis of which the two sectors might be delineated,
2. it does not explain the conditions of informality,
3. it has excluded consideration of the political, economic and social processes which produce and maintain the informal sector dualist framework and thus provided nothing more than a partial picture of the reality of Third World poverty (Lister, 1980).

Although many authors have continued to use the formal/informal sector concept in their analysis of employment and underemployment, they have preferred to adhere to a non dualist approach.² The informal sector is recognized as potentially productive and thus a sector to be developed. It was this interpretation of the informal sector which encouraged the International Labor Office (ILO) to use the concept as a basis for analysis and policy. In his critique of the informal sector, Bromley indicates that the concept's wide usage is a result of an idea being introduced at the right time in the right place. He argues that the concept was adopted because it encompassed policy implications which were to the liking of international organizations and middle of the road governments. It was thus perceived as a means of improving the cause of the urban poor without greatly influencing the lives of the

² See for example, Portes (1983), Moser (1981-1979), Davies (1979), Bromley (1979).

ruling class (Bromley, 1979). The author goes on to enumerating nine deficiencies which he perceives within the formal/informal classification. In a more recent paper, Portes(1983), refers to the informal sector as one of the most important concepts to have recently emerged in the field of development. In his view,

"The concept conveys the idea that the poor are not simply "there", an inert mass excluded from participating in modern society. Instead, we have the image of a dynamic class of people engaged in a myriad of activities, which, if not highly remunerative, at least provide for their own subsistence and their children's." (p. 295)

In attempting to define the concept, Portes(1983) stresses the importance of an historical perspective. The author argues that such a perspective denies the validity of a description of the informal sector as a novel part of the labour market. It also demonstrates that the sector is not a residue of pre-capitalist modes of production but rather re-organized segments of pre-existing production arrangements linked by the functional relationship to the capitalist economy. To study the conceptual problems associated with the informal sector concept is, however, beyond the scope of this thesis.³ As this study examines the nature and location of women's informal economic activities, it is important, nevertheless, to have an understanding of the informal sector concept and the debate which currently surrounds it.

³ For a critical review of the informal sector debate, see Portes (1983) and Moser (1979).

2.1.1 Defining The Informal Sector

Although many authors have employed the concept of the informal sector, they have failed to come to an agreement upon a standard definition and thus have generated a great deal of overall confusion in the literature. The sector has been identified by both its activities and members. At times, it has been viewed as synonymous with the urban poor or those living in low income areas (Moser, 1979). Although the literature has emphasized the heterogeneity of informal activities, it has often too quickly associated these with the urban poor (Cho and Koo, 1983, Portes, 1983).

Porto (1980), in her study of Brazil, distinguishes the concept of informal sector from that of informal market. In her view, the concept of informal market leads directly to the key area of research, that is the labour market. Moser (1979) has also criticized the use of the "sector" concept. In their work on Tunis, Diemer & Van der Laan (1981) prefer to use the term 'circuit' as introduced by Milton Santos, as it evokes the image of a continuous exchange of goods and services. In their view, the concept of "sector", provides a static image.

The ILO, in its Kenya report (1972) defined the sector as one characterized by a) ease of entry, b) reliance on indigenous resources, c) family ownership of enterprises, d) small scale of operation, e) labour intensiveness, f) adapted technology, g) skills acquired outside the formal

school system and lastly h) unregulated and competitive markets. Certain authors have continued to use the characteristics as elaborated by the ILO. Unsatisfied with these, many have, however, opted to establish their own criteria. A noticeable trend in informal sector studies has in fact been to define the concept by a series of characteristics identifying the activities and/or persons to be considered.⁴ The concept can thus be better adapted to local conditions and/or target groups. The results of recent studies have pointed to various contradictions between theoretical definitions, such as that of the ILO and operational definitions which define the sector by its workers⁵ and/or activities. For example, empirical definitions, based on type of employment, have indicated that neither women nor recent urban migrants, are overrepresented in this sector. Significant entry barriers have also been identified (Portes, 1983).

The complexity and heterogeneity of the sector have made it extremely difficult for a definition to be agreed upon. In view of this, an approach which describes the sector through various characteristics appears to be most satisfactory.

⁴ See for example, Vasconcelos (1985), Belisle (1984), Cho and Koo (1983), Heyzer (1981), Peattie (1980), Porto (1980).

2.2 WOMEN IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR

Women's work has often been referred to as "hidden work". It is a well known fact that women's work is grossly underestimated. (Samman, 1983, Beneria, 1982, Rogers, 1980, Navaro, 1979). Their high participation rates in the informal sector of the economy can partially explain these underestimations. As women in Latin America migrate to cities in greater numbers than men (Samman, 1983, Tinker, 1979), they are often channelled, with few options, into the informal sector. Restrictions in terms of economic activities are not limited, however, to female migrants but to the ensemble of women of the urban poor. This section will review the literature dealing with the role of women in the informal sector. The objectives of this review are three-fold; firstly, to gain a better understanding of women's role in the informal sector, secondly, to identify the gaps in the literature and thirdly to situate this thesis in the area of research on women in the informal sector.

2.2.1 Motives For Women Entering The Informal Sector

Anthropologists and sociologists have provided much of the available information on women's role in the informal sector. According to these sources, women enter the informal sector first and foremost out of economic need. Work for women of these groups does not represent greater autonomy or

a form of liberation. On the contrary, their "double day" constrains their possibilities to participate in social and political activities (CEPAL,1984).

While women have greater difficulties than men in finding stable employment, and as their economic needs are as great (if not greater), they must increasingly rely on informal activities (Arizpe,1977). A recent study by the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL) has indicated that it is becoming increasingly difficult for women to insert themselves into the formal sector (CEPAL,1984). Limited access to the formal sector, in which workers have benefit of minimum wages and social services, has been explained by the male domination of trade unions, lack of access for females to formal education and marital status (Heyzer,1981). Age has also been identified as a factor which may limit access to formal employment (Arizpe,1977). Of these, marital status is perhaps the most crucial in determining the possibilities for women to enter the formal sector. When women marry, they often bear children soon after, and thus become totally responsible for their social reproduction. The rigidity of schedules in the formal sector makes it extremely difficult for women to fulfill their dual roles, being responsible for both economic and domestic activities. Their domestic responsibilities, notably the support and care for children, weakens their bargaining position in the labour market (Mackintosh,1981).

Women in lower economic strata must balance their participation in the labour force with their family responsibilities. Obligation to fulfill this dual role may be viewed as one of the principal motives for women entering the informal sector. The flexibility associated with informal activities allows women to better balance⁵ their activities and thus minimize conflict (De Silva, 1979). This flexibility is expressed in working hours and days as well as by location of work place. In her study of street vendors in Quito, Farrell (1983) notes how the flexibility of working hours, accompanied by the possibility of bringing children to the work place, makes the informal sector one which attracts female participation.

Thus, both social and economic factors give evidence to the high percentage of women in the informal sector. When studying women's involvement in this sector, one cannot separate the economic struggles from the social struggles (Heyzer, 1981). Heyzer (1981) has argued that an analysis of the economic participation of low-income women in Third World countries should take into account the following factors: 1) the changing structure of employment in certain sectors of production, 2) the selective nature of the labour utilisation in different branches of employment, 3) the ideological assumptions about women and work and 4) the intimate relationship between women's work in the household

⁵ It should be noted that such a balance can only be achieved through the extension of the working day.

and their position as specific kinds of wage and income generating workers.


2.2.2 Characteristics of Women In The Informal Sector

The heterogeneity of activities in the informal sector makes it difficult to ascribe characteristics to its members. Researchers who have done micro studies on the informal sector generally showed little interest in the number of women working in the sector or in the nature of their activities (Nelson,1979). It is, nevertheless, possible to identify certain characteristics pertaining to age, education and marital status.

Although women of all ages engage in the informal sector, their participation rates appear to increase with age. In her study of the informal sector in Mexico city, Arizpe,(1977) indicates that the participation of women in the formal sector decreases after the age of twenty five due to voluntary withdrawal or unavailability of employment. As women get older, they are increasingly discriminated against as employers prefer younger workers(Jimenez de Vega,1981). It has been suggested that female participation in the formal sector decreases with age, while participation in the informal sector increases with age(Arizpe,1977). The greater participation of older women in the informal sector has also been explained by the fact that younger women with children are less likely to engage in economic activities(Simon,1984,

Moser, 1981). In her study of Quito, Farrell (1983) has indicated that 71% of the women were between the ages of 21 and 45. In a case study of women vendors in Lima, the percentage of women less than 24 years of age was much lower than those in the 25 to 34 years age group (Mercado, 1976). Young, unmarried women are most often associated with domestic services (Smith, 1973). Older, married women appear to be the most discriminated against (Heyzer, 1981). In her study of market sellers in Bogota, Moser (1976) indicates that older women tend to be downwardly mobile.

Information pertaining to education and women's participation in the informal sector is scarce. Low levels of formal education have, however, been associated with women engaged in informal activities (Nelson, 1979). Farrell (1983) has indicated a need for non formal education ("capacitacion") in areas such as human relations and basic accounting.



Once women marry and/or have children, they generally look to the informal sector for income opportunities. Most of the women (72%) in Farrell's (1983) sample were married. Cho and Koo (1983) have indicated that married women, in comparison to single women, tend to participate in much greater numbers in the informal sector. As mentioned in the previous section, women fulfilling dual roles must generally rely on informal activities. In her study of Guayaquil, Moser (1981) identifies women's marital status as one of the

crucial determinants of their type of work. She however, goes on to say that both women with and without male counterparts, as well as older women without dependants, tend to engage in laundering. The link between women's marital status and the nature of their informal economic activities is thus not clear.

High participation rates for migrants were often identified as a characteristic of the informal sector in its introductory phases. The sector was perceived as a means for migrants to enter the urban labour market. This view was reiterated by Mercado (1976) in her study of women traders in which women migrants represented 84% of the sample. Recent studies have, however, indicated that ease of entry for migrants as well as high participation rates for migrants, are not necessarily characteristics of the informal sector. In an analysis of autonomous workers in Quito, Farrell (1983) has indicated that her results allow us to tone down a common hypothesis in informal sector studies which describes the sector as a means for migrants to enter the urban labour market. The same holds true for Vasconcelos's (1985) analysis of informal activities in Salvador.

As mentioned previously, the diversity of activities in the informal sector makes it difficult to characterize its members. Informal sector studies have largely ignored the characteristics of women engaged in this sector. Although

certain studies have attempted to identify various characteristics, these have remained at a descriptive level.

2.1.3 The Nature Of Women's Activities In The Informal Sector

By and large, the informal economic activities of women are an extension of their domestic activities. They are generally concentrated in the tertiary sector, providing laundry, domestic, sewing and hairdressing services. In Latin America as a whole, it is estimated that 67% of women workers are in the services sector, the majority being in domestic services (Chant, 1985). Food related activities are also frequently associated with women. The type of work undertaken by such women tends to be characterized by low productivity, and little room for upward mobility. (Torres, date not available).

The literature dealing with women in the informal sector has principally studied their activities in retail and as "live in" domestics. In her study of the sexual division of labour in a Nairobi squatter settlement, Nelson (1979) has indicated that women tend to concentrate in areas such as beer brewing and the selling of charcoal, maize flour and vegetables. A study of a Singapore market found that women specialized in selling vegetables while men specialized in selling meat and fish, both areas of higher economic return (Heyzer, 1981). Bromley's (1975) study of the markets of Quito showed how women tend to concentrate in the

selling of vegetables. Informal sector studies have indicated that traders generally begin selling lower order goods such as food related products, the more successful ones progressing to higher status commodities. This mobility from one set of goods to another is, however, quite difficult and demands greater capital outlay. As this is usually not available to women, they most often remain selling goods of lower return. In a study of market sellers, Moser(1977) has noted that women, notably older women, generally enter the market with little capital and tend to be downwardly mobile.

Unlike most informal activities women engage in, retail is not accompanied by a strict sexual division of labour(Nelson,1979). Moser (1981) has indicated that where there is greatest potential for competition between men and women, gender is used as an essential element in the division of labour, women being allocated the less innovative activities.

Domestic activities in the context of "live in" servants have largely been associated with poor working conditions and long working hours with little income in return. As mentioned in the previous section, young, unmarried women usually engage in activities of this nature. Once they marry and/or have children, these opportunities are no longer available to them(Smith,1973). Women do, however, continue to provide certain domestic services,

notably hand laundry, as these do not require a prolonged absence from the household. Moser(1981) has described laundering as the most exploitative work. In her study of a suburbio in Guayaquil, laundry work was recorded as an activity of last resort. Da Silva(1979) has noted that laundry work along with sewing are activities which can be subordinate to women's daily routine and be adapted to their personal life cycles. Such activities increase the possibility of conciliation between women's domestic and economic activities(Da Silva,1979). Although the literature on women in the informal sector is not extensive, one thing is clear:women sell skills which they normally practice within their homes(Nelson,1979).

Structural constraints arising out of cultural constraints largely determine the nature of women's economic activities(Nelson,1979). Cho and Koo(1983) have indicated that women's reproductive sphere shapes the pattern of their labour force participation more than anything else. Women organize their schedules around those of their male counterparts and the care of their children(CEPLAES,1984). The nature of women's activities in the informal sector and their intensity in terms of working hours will thus largely depend on the presence or absence of a spouse, the economic situation of the household, the need for child care and the attitudes of the male when present.

2.2.4 The Location Of Women's Activities In The Informal Sector

The location of women's activities has received limited attention in past informal sector studies. When considered, research has mainly focused on the location of retail activities.⁶ For women, location of activities is of great importance as they must attempt to minimize conflict between their domestic and economic engagements in order to fulfill their dual role. Location of activities is thus largely influenced by these obligations.

In reference to retail activities, Moser and Young(1981) have indicated that an aspect of the unequal power of women and men in the informal sector is clearly the spatial restrictions placed on women. As competition in retail is severe, these authors have stated that men will make use of their ideology of male dominance to exclude women from the more profitable areas. Moser(1981) has offered this hypothesis to explain the location of many of women's retail activities within the barrio of Indio Guayas in Guayaquil. Competition for space is however not limited to this strict sexual division of labour. When considering street foods, Lawson(1976) showed how areas physically located near places of employment are controlled by previously established traders. Arizpe(1977) has also observed the importance for women to finding a "good spot".

⁶ See for example Farell, (1983), Moser, (1981), McGee, Yeung, (1977).

Although competition may limit women's choice and access to certain locations, there is nevertheless a combination of other factors which may explain the location of women's informal activities. The opposition between the domestic and public sphere of women's work is a major aspect of the existing conflict between housework and remunerated work (Da Silva, 1979). The preceding section indicated that once women married, many left their employment as "live in" domestics, often to become washerwomen. In discussing female labour, Da Silva notes:

"Admitting that there are no significant differences in the employment relations of "maids" and "washerwomen": this suggests that the conflict exists basically in terms of locale in the realization of specific tasks--- domestic versus public ones." (1979:223)

Domestic responsibilities are, therefore, a strong determinant of the location of women's activities in the informal sector. Women will thus principally engage in economic activities in their home or in its proximity (CEPAL, 1984, CEPLAES, 1984). The following quotations reveal certain views, expressed by women, on the location of their economic activities.

Yo siempre trabaje, pero mejor en casa...por los hijos, estando en casa, hay que estar todo el dia, pero yo prefiero...

Trabajar en mi casa si, porque una elimina el problema de quien se queda con las ninas, y la tranquilidad de saber si habran llegado bien de la escuela, las habra recogido... ademas, estar al lado de los hijos; mi esposo no viene a almorzar, pero si viene yo por lo menos puedo estar..." (CEPAL, 1984:8)

Although women may prefer to work within their home in order to also fulfill their domestic work, their daily routines express the hardships of this dual role.

Y si, cuando nosotros estabamos aca, teniamos un dormitorio que era donde estaba la maquina...y ahi andabamos...estabas martillando y te levantabas martillando e ibas a la cocina y la seguias martillando, te levantabas y hacias un mandado y asi...empiezas a las 6 y terminas a las 12 de la noche."(CEPAL,1984:8)

The location of women's economic activities may also be limited by men not approving of women leaving the household to work(CEPLAES,1984).

"El prefiere (el marido)...que quede en casa, no quiere que salga a la calle, el me dice:cose"(CEPAL,1984:8)

The perception of activities in public spaces as a male responsibility is quite common among Latin American men(CEPLAES,1984). Many women are therefore directly or indirectly obliged to remain in proximity of their homes while engaging in remunerative work. Gugler(1982) has also indicated that women tend to engage in part-time, home based, informal activities which allow them to combine household responsibilities with remunerative work. Their range of activities is, however, largely restricted by their limited physical mobility.

The literature has indicated that the location of women's informal economic activities may be determined by one or a combination of the following factors:
1)competition, 2)the imposition of a dual role, 3)male

attitudes. Although location of activities is an important aspect in the understanding of women in the informal sector, it has received limited attention in past studies.

2.3 SUMMARY OF MAIN THEMES

As women increasingly turn to informal activities for survival, it is of utmost importance that their role in the urban informal sector be recognized and understood. Gender has been shown to be a revealing factor in determining the extent of possible success in the informal sector.

The need to fulfill a dual role accompanied by the flexibility of informal activities has resulted in high female participation rates in this sector. Although flexibility in terms of location and nature of activities may be advantageous to women, it may also hinder their possibilities for upward mobility and higher capital gains. In reference to petty traders, stability of working hours and location is required if one is to establish a regular clientele. Regular schedules are also necessary if a trader is to maintain a "good spot" in an area providing a substantial number of potential customers. Women's obligations to work in a flexible manner in order to fulfill their dual role thus limits their possibilities for success.

Certain general characteristics pertaining to age, marital status, and educational level have been identified along with the principal informal activities in which women

tend to engage. The relationship between these various characteristics and the nature of activities has only briefly been studied. It has been shown that young, unmarried women predominantly work as domestics while older women are generally associated to the retail selling of lower order goods. The literature has, however, not considered the reasons why women may choose one activity rather than another.

The location of women's informal activities has but recently been considered in the literature. As women in the informal sector must fulfill a dual role, the location of their activities is consequently of particular importance. To study the links between women's socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics, the type of activities they engage in, as well as their location, would be most useful for further understanding of working class women and their role in the urban informal sector. The economic value of women's informal activities is another aspect which requires further consideration. Although it is known that women participate in great numbers in the informal sector, their economic contributions towards their families' survival have not been sufficiently recognized.

Past studies of women in the informal sector have tended to focus on specific activities, ie. retail or domestic. Few have considered the realm of informal economic activities women may engage in. A sample design which would

select women according to the location of their home rather than their economic activities, could provide a better understanding of the employment situation of women of the urban poor. The objectives of this study have been elaborated in view of the above mentioned gaps in the literature. These objectives, along with the research methodology, will be presented in the following chapter.

Chapter III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Social science research can draw on primary or secondary data. The decision as to which type of data should be used depends on the study's objectives. Very often, one form of data can complement the other. In this research, the objectives can best be fulfilled through the use of primary data as such detailed information on women's informal economic activities cannot be obtained through secondary data sources. The required information was thus gathered by means of personal interviews, in which standardized questionnaires were administered. The objective of this chapter is to present the research objectives as well as the methodology involved in data gathering. We will thus deal with the research objectives, the selection of a representative research area, the sample, as well as the elaboration of the questionnaire.

3.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

When carrying out research of this nature, it is important to establish specific objectives in order to maintain a manageable scope. As indicated previously, this study has the following objectives:

1. To identify which socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics may influence women's participation in informal rather than formal economic activities.
2. To determine the value of women's economic activities within the household.
3. To identify which socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics may influence the nature and location of women's informal economic activities.
4. To determine if the nature and location of women's informal economic activities vary in function of the location of their area of residence.

In order to fulfill these objectives, field work was carried out in Quito, Ecuador. The data was gathered by means of personal non-scheduled interviews in which standardized questionnaires were administered by the researcher and recorded by a colleague. A total of 133 questionnaires were completed, of which 126 were retained for data analysis.

3.2 RESEARCH AREA

The specific research area was selected in function of three methodological decisions taken at the outset of the research project. Although previous research dealing with informal economic activities has often opted to focus on specific activities and work places, it was decided that in view of the objectives, the interviews should be held at the subjects' residence rather than work place. As our objective was to obtain a sample which would represent a cross-section of the informal economic activities of women of the urban poor, this approach was deemed to be more appropriate. The link between area of residence and informal workers was identified in the work of Vasconcelos(1985) and Portes(1978).

An approach which would have selected the subjects according to work place could not have provided an unbiased sample of women's economic activities. The typology of women's economic activities demonstrates how the survey of women in the "barrios" allowed for a representative cross section of women's economic activities to be identified(Table 1). A similar typology of women's economic activities was obtained in Moser's(1981) study of Guayaquil. This approach was not only adopted for methodological reasons, but also for practical reasons. In a study of informal economic activities in Recife, Da Silva(1981) proceeded in this fashion indicating that interviewing at

TABLE 1

Typology Of Women's Economic Activities

Type Of Activity	Frequency	Percentage
"Ambulante"(Foodstuffs)	2	1.6
Brick Vendor	1	.8
Cardboard Collector	3	2.4
Cook	3	2.4
Daily Agricultural Worker	1	.8
Day Care Worker	2	1.6
Domestic	11	8.7
Factory Worker*	4	3.2
Hairdresser	2	1.6
Hospital Worker*	6	4.7
Ironing Woman	2	1.6
Labourer*	4	3.2
Restaurant Helper	2	1.6
Seamstress	10	8.0
Secretary	1	.8
Security Person*	2	1.6
Sewing Teacher	1	.8
Shoemaker	1	.8
Store Employee	1	.8
Store Employee*	2	1.6
Store Owner(edibles)	11	8.7
Store Owner(non edibles)	2	1.6
Teacher*	1	.8
Vendor(prepared food)	21	16.6
Vendor(non edibles)	2	1.6
Washerwoman	26	20.6
Total	126	100

Footnote: Formal economic activities are indicated by an asterix(*).

Source:L.Martin,Women And Employment Sample Survey,1984

the work place was accompanied by a series of constraints. It is believed that this would also hold true for this particular case study. Interviewing at the work place would have made it difficult to retain the subjects' attention for a prolonged period. Greater time pressures would have limited the amount of additional information provided by the subjects: Gaining the subjects' confidence in public areas would have also been more difficult.

A second methodological decision concerning the research area was that the study should be carried out in two "barrios". As one of the study's objectives was to determine if the nature and location of women's informal economic activities varied according to the location of their homes, it was necessary to select two "barrios" with varying distances from the city's colonial centre.⁷ The optimal situation would have been to select one barrio in the heart of the city's centre and another in its periphery. Although attempts were made to establish contacts in the very central "barrios", these proved unsuccessful.

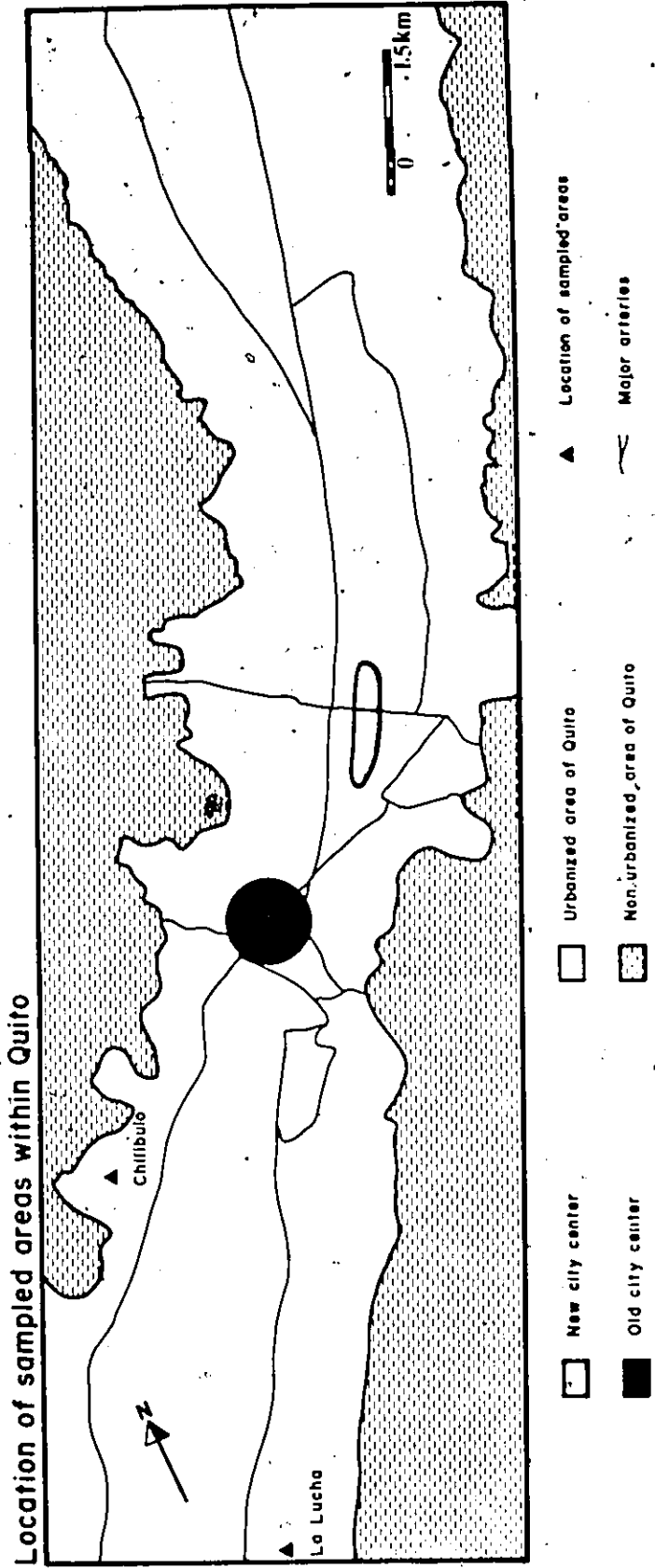
The "barrios" then selected were in areas where the research was well received and where the elements of the research could be maintained (Figure 1). The first "barrio", known as Chilibulo, is located 4 kilometers from the city

⁷ Quito, like many other developing Third World cities, is comprised of two city centres, a modern and a colonial. For the subjects in this study it is the colonial centre which is considered the city's centre. The distance between the subjects home "barrio" and the colonial centre thus determines their accessibility to the market.

centre while the second, known as Lucha De Los Pobres, is located 7 kilometers from the city centre. By means of public transportation, a period of twenty to forty minutes is required to travel from Chilibulo to the centre. To travel from Lucha De Los Pobres to the city centre, a period of one and a half to two hours is required. These differences, in distance and access to city centre, between the "barrios" were judged significant in terms of the research objectives.

The third methodological decision, was that the research should take place in "barrios populares", that is, poor, working class neighbourhoods. As this study is limited to the economic activities of women, of the urban poor, it was essential that neighbourhoods ("barrios") of this nature be selected. In order to assure ourselves of the representativeness of the selected "barrios" as "barrios populares", locally informed people from both academic and non academic research institutes were consulted. Although both "barrios" are characterized as "barrios populares" they not only differ in their access to the city's centre but also in their history, their community organization and their infrastructure.

The first "barrio", Chilibulo, is one of the city's older "barrios". Its history goes back more than three hundred years when it was not a "barrio" of Quito, but rather an indigenous rural village. The community was first



Gary Auper 1988

Source: "Plano guía de la ciudad de Quito", Instituto Geográfico Militar, 1978

Figure 1: LOCATION OF SELECTED BARRIOS WITHIN QUITO

formally organized in 1908 when it was given poorly located pieces of agricultural land on the slopes of the Pichincha. With the growth of the capital, Chilibulo has become quite a central "barrio" with a population of approximately 2,000. It is a "barrio" known for its poor but inexpensive housing. Most of the residents (70%) in this sample were tenants.

The infrastructure is limited. Chilibulo has only had access to electrical and water services for the last ten years. Most of the homes, however, remain without these services. The streets are unpaved and not maintained. There are no formal education facilities. An area for women to wash clothing is available. A large modern hospital, located at the "barrio's" limits was officially opened in the fall of 1983. Although it offers several jobs to the residents of Chilibulo, the residents of the "barrio" cannot take advantage of the facilities because of financial reasons. The "barrio" benefits from a day care center and four "Hogares Infantiles" (homes for children). The day care center is funded by the "barrio's" Catholic mission, while the "Hogares Infantiles" are funded by UNICEF although managed by a government agency. Chilibulo is one of three "barrios populares" to benefit from this program. At the time of this study, the day care was responsible for 40 children and was building a larger center. The four "Hogares" were each responsible for 6 to 8 children. The day care centre is more "formally" organized in comparison to the "Hogares" which are rather "informally" organized.

The second "barrio", Lucha De Los Pobres, has to the contrary, a very short history. The "barrio" is the result of a land invasion which occurred on the evening of August 24, 1983. At the time of this study the "barrio" had been established for a mere ten months. The invasion was well organized by several leftist groups and the FADI, (Frente Amplio De Izquierda) a leftist political party. Prior to the invasion, the organizers had studied several sites and selected the present one as most suitable. As Chilibulo, and most of Quito's "barrios populares", La Lucha is located on the steep slopes of the Pichincha. These areas, because of their high altitudes, are especially cold and damp.

All people living within this "barrio" must be members of the cooperative Lucha De Los Pobres. The population in June of 1984 was of approximately 8,000. With regard to infrastructure, this "barrio" was particularly destitute. It had one source of running water for the community. Most of the women therefore did their laundry in nearby creeks. Electricity was only available in the "barrio's" coordination office. Roads within the "barrio" were non-existent. A very small and poorly equipped health care centre was available. Eight classrooms¹ had been built by the cooperative's members, although the government had not yet fully agreed to supply teachers. The school was,

¹ The construction of these classrooms, as well as other community projects, were carried out on Saturdays, during the "minga". It was mandatory that at least one adult member of each household participate in the "mingas".

however, operational as the cooperative's committee had hired uncertified teachers. The residents' were not tenants as they had built their own homes on land which was not legally theirs.

Although very different in their backgrounds, these two "barrios" are both comprised of poor working class households, forced to struggle for survival. The residents' socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics are, as a result, largely similar.

3.3 SAMPLE

A total of 133 women were included in the sample. Of these women, 64 were from the first "barrio" while 69 were from the second. As our objective was to study the nature and location of women's economic activities, the sample was limited to women who engaged in some form of work for which they received an income. In order to obtain a more homogeneous sample, it was decided that the women should also be parents and thus have at least one child.

Because of local conditions, the sampling method differed from one "barrio" to the other. In the first "barrio", Chilibulo, a map was drawn up in order to assure that all areas would be represented equally. As the initial contacts in this barrio were through the intermediary of the day care center, a number of interviews (14) were carried out here. An additional 13 interviews were carried out in

the "hogares infantiles". For these groups, the subjects were assigned to their residence on the map. This provided us with a sample of the women who had access to basic child care facilities. When interviewing at these centers it was also established that the women met the selection criteria, ie. they were working mothers. Having been personally introduced by the coordinators of the centers also made the subjects less doubtful of the researcher and the research objectives. As a result, a high level of confidence was obtained. When engaging in research of this nature, it is most important for the researcher to have confidence in his subjects and vice versa. As a stranger in a foreign country, this requirement is sometimes difficult to achieve.

The remaining 37 women in the Chilibulo sample, were selected randomly bearing in mind the location of their residence. The subjects were generally approached by the researcher, who clearly explained the objectives and motives of the research. If the women met the selection criteria, they were asked to participate in the study.

As field conditions in the second "barrio" (Lucha De Los Pobres) were very different from the first, a different method of sampling was utilized. The subjects were, however, selected according to their residence within the barrio. These areas were not selected by the researcher but by the cooperative's central committee, which asked district coordinators to volunteer in the study. The research was

thus carried out in the 5 districts whose coordinators had volunteered. These coordinators later introduced the research project to their fellow district members. He/she also provided a list of homes where the woman engaged in some form of economic activity. In three of these districts, the project was introduced by the researcher during weekly meetings. Once these five districts had been determined, interviews were carried out with all consenting women who met the selection criteria. Although the majority of the women were from the five selected districts, others were also approached and included in the sample.

As a result, it is felt that in both "barrios" a representative sample of women and their economic activities was obtained. Although the total number of women interviewed in each barrio is similar (64 in the first, 69 in the second), the population of these "barrios" (2,000 in the first, 8,000 in the second), differ greatly.

Needless to say, all samples are subject to some form of bias. In this particular sample, it is quite possible that women working extremely long hours, are underrepresented. Since we never interviewed beyond 7.30 pm, some individuals may have been excluded from the sample. The interviewing generally ended in the early evening due to availability of public transportation and personal safety. Our presence on a daily basis, however, eliminated the possibility of excluding women whose presence in the "barrio" was associated to specific days.

3.4 QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to gather the required data, a standardized questionnaire was designed and later administered to the 133 women in the sample. The initial questionnaire was redesigned by the researcher with the assistance of Gilda Farrell, professor of Economics at the Catholic University of Quito. The questionnaire (see Appendix 1) is essentially divided into two sections; a first section deals with the socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics of the woman and a second section deals with the woman's economic activities as well as those of her male counterpart, when applicable. The questions are mainly close ended as the data required was best suited to this type of information. Five optional questions were also included at the end of the questionnaire. These were designed to provide additional qualitative information. Although informative, these questions were not essential in terms of the research objectives. As these questions were optional, they were not applied in the same rigorous manner as the close ended questions. Rather, they were applied to those women who were less busy at the time of the interview or/and more open to speak. The interviews, in which the questionnaire was administered, ranged from ten minutes to one hour, the average interview taking approximately twenty minutes. The questionnaire was designed to allow for this flexibility as we did not wish to impose on the subjects.

The information provided by the subjects is considered honest and trustworthy. In circumstances where the information was doubtful, the questionnaire was not retained for analysis. The questionnaire design allowed for several counterchecks. Locally informed people had provided us with some indication of average incomes for women's economic activities. The questionnaire also made it possible to know how much a woman could earn while engaging in a specific activity. It was thus quite easy to recognize when the income figures provided had been inflated or deflated. It should be noted, however, that this rarely occurred. One could also judge the validity of the questionnaire by looking at the response to questions such as female and male income, number of children and amount paid in rent. This was not possible in the second "barrio" as the residents did not pay rent. Asking women the location of their work place and later asking how long it took them to travel to this area also made it possible to countercheck the response.

A pre-test of the questionnaire was carried out before designing the final version. Ten questionnaires were utilized in the pre-test. No major changes were made as the initial questionnaire had been redesigned in Quito before the pre test. Several questions were nevertheless added. Question 2.3 (Do you work for yourself or for someone else?) was added as it provided useful information on the various working arrangements in different informal economic

activities. Questions 2.9 and 2.21 (Do you have access to social security benefits? Does your husband have access to social security benefits?) were also added to the questionnaire. The information obtained from these questions was most useful in determining the formal or informal nature of an economic activity.⁹

The open ended questions were simplified in order to facilitate more direct response. Although retained in the questionnaire, question 2.12 (How many hours per day do you devote to housework?) was rather difficult for the subjects to answer. As women's economic activities are often combined with their domestic activities, the subjects could not easily disassociate these activities and provide an exact figure. By and large, the questionnaire was clear and well understood by the respondents.

⁹ When an employee has access to social security benefits, he/she is registered with the 'Instituto Ecuatoriano De Seguridad Social' (Ecuadorian Institute of Social Security). These recipients have access to health care services at certain designated areas. In certain cases, they may have access to loan services when purchasing a home. With a minimum of twenty years in the labour force, they may also have access to social security benefits once over the age of sixty. For someone engaging in the informal sector it is virtually impossible to have access to these services. Under normal conditions, workers in the formal sector, have access to these social security benefits once they have been employed for a three month period.

3.5 CONCLUSION.

This thesis thus draws upon the information provided from the questionnaires. Although this method of gathering data is by far the most appropriate for a study of this nature, it is one which requires time, patience and, most importantly, cooperation of the locals. As increasing academic interest is being given to the problems facing developing countries, the people of these nations are becoming increasingly critical of the results, or rather the lack of results, of this research on their lives. For these reasons, obtaining data of this nature is a delicate task. In this particular case study, we were most fortunate to meet two responsive women who introduced us to their respective communities. These introductory contacts are essential, although not necessarily sufficient, if one is to be "accepted" by the locals.

In the following two chapters, the results of the data analysis will be presented. A first chapter will examine the socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics of the women sampled. The second chapter will focus on the links between the nature and location of women's informal economic activities and 1) their socioeconomic/sociodemographic characteristics and 2) the location of their home "barrio".

Chapter IV

WOMEN OF THE URBAN POOR: THEIR SOCIOECONOMIC AND SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Lack of employment and underemployment in Latin American cities has forced most working class households to adopt multiple income strategies in order to survive. Women are thus increasingly becoming members of the active labour force. As their economic activities are often classified as "informal" they are rarely accounted for. Indeed, most women of the urban poor have few options but to enter informal employment. This may be explained in part by structural constraints, such as lack of access to education and the obligation to maintain the physical well-being of the household. This in turn may be explained by cultural constraints (Nelson, 1979). As this research draws on a sample survey of these working women, this chapter will examine their socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics and identify which of these may influence women's participation in informal rather than formal economic activities.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the women in this sample reside in two distinct "barrios populares". A series of chi-square tests have indicated that there are no significant differences between the women engaging in informal economic activities in these two "barrios". Marked socioeconomic differences do exist, however, between women engaged in formal economic activities and those engaged in informal economic activities. In this Quito sample, 15% of the women are engaged in formal economic activities while the remaining 85% are engaged in informal economic activities. Most of the women engaged in formal economic activities are from Chilibulo. The fact that these women had access to child care facilities, and that most had indeed placed their children in a centre, can to some extent explain this result.

4.1 LIMITING FACTORS TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN FORMAL EMPLOYMENT

Age is an important factor limiting access to formal employment (Figure 2). This point was confirmed in the case study as well as in local newspapers where advertisements often specified that the candidate should not be over the age of thirty (Figure 3). It should be noted that this was not exclusive to women. As figure 2 demonstrates, there are no women over the age of 41 participating in formal economic activities. It is clear that most of the women (53%) engaged in formal economic activities are between the age of 18 and

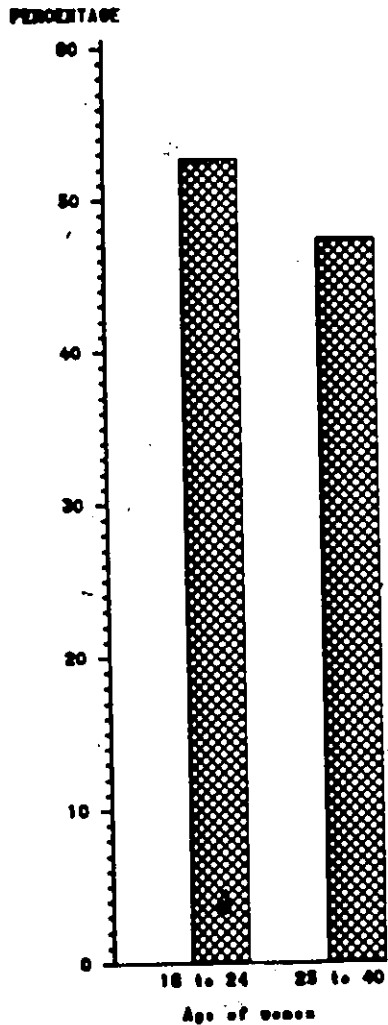
24. Once these women are over the age of thirty, it is extremely difficult for them to insert themselves in the formal labour market. With age, their participation in the informal labour market thus tends to increase. This study's results thus confirm those of Arizpe's (1977) study on women's activities in the informal labour market of Mexico city.

Although these women may be classified as having formal employment, their work is usually of an unskilled or semi-skilled nature. Thus, they are easily replaced when their work pattern is interrupted by a pregnancy or a child's illness. Once one withdraws from formal employment, it is generally quite difficult to reinsert oneself.

It is also often stated that employers prefer young workers, since they are believed to be more efficient. The age pattern of women engaged in informal economic activities, falls into a more normal distribution. Women's participation in these activities does not appear to be age specific.

The marital status of women is another factor which may influence the nature of their economic activities. Employers often prefer single women to married women. Good physical appearance is also often stated as a prerequisite to formal employment (see Figure 3). Although the majority of the women in this sample participating in formal employment were married, they generally had fewer children than those

Age Of Women:Formal Sector



Age Of Women:Informal Sector

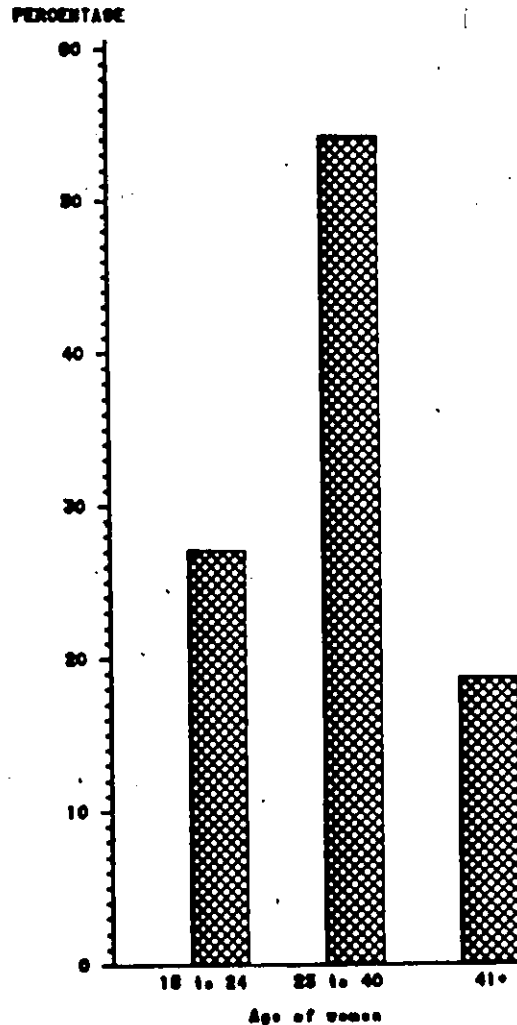


Figure 2: AGE OF WOMEN PARTICIPATING IN FORMAL AND INFORMAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES Source:L.Martin, Women And Employment Sample Survey,1984

SEÑORITAS BACHILLERES

46

NECESITA IMPORTANTE EMPRESA COMERCIAL DE QUITO

REQUISITOS:

- "Acta de Grado o Título de Bachiller"
- "Excelentes referencias personales"
- "Muy buena presencia" (indispensable).

Presentarse en el CENTRO COMERCIAL QUICENTRO en la calles Naciones Unidas y 6 de Diciembre a partir de las 09h00.

INDUSTRIAL DE GASEOSAS CIA. LTDA.

COCA - COLA

Requiere los servicios de señorita Secretaria, para su Departamento de Mercadeo.

REQUISITOS:

- Soltera
- Buena presencia
- Edad mínima 22 y máxima 28 años
- Título de Secretaria
- Experiencias laborales
- Buenas relaciones humanas.

Personas interesadas acercarse portando su curriculum vitae y una foto tamaño carnet actualizada, a la Oficina de Personal, a partir lunes 27.

Dirección: Isaac Albéniz 203, El Inca.

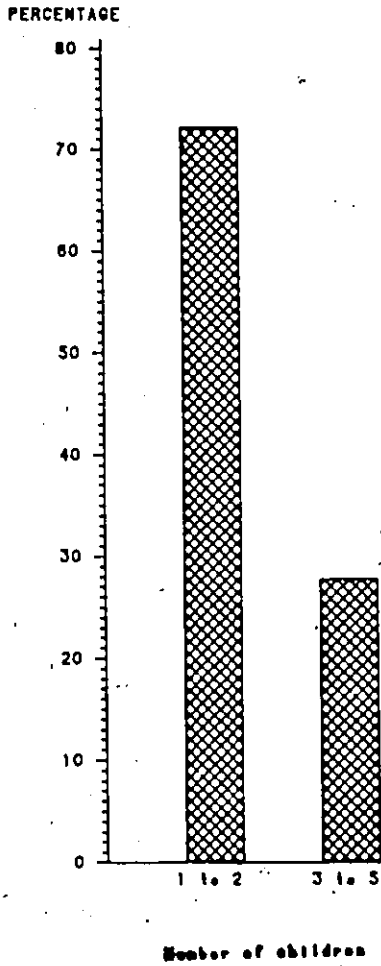
Figure 3: ADVERTISEMENTS FOR FORMAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES Source: Hoy, Quito, March 14/June 9.

participating in informal employment (Figure 4). As one of the selection criteria was that women should have a minimum of one child, it is evident that childless women cannot be considered here. What is noticeable, however, is the tendency for women engaged in formal activities to have fewer children. Of these women, 70% had only one or two children.

As mentioned, the majority (90%) of the women participating in formal economic activities, resided in the first barrio, Chilibulo, where basic child care facilities were available. Most of the women made use of these services. Without them formal employment would not be feasible. As women are generally totally responsible for the care of their children, it is quite difficult for them to leave their homes for prolonged periods of time. Even when women with children have the qualifications to enter formal employment, it is impossible for them to work without some type of child care arrangements during working hours. Child care facilities, however basic they may be, are thus most valuable for women engaged in economic activities.

A certain level of formal education is also a requirement for acquiring formal employment. In this sample, women who successfully entered this sector generally had completed a minimum of six years of primary school education (Figure 5). In societies where education is not the responsibility of the state, females in low income

**Number Of Children Per Woman
:Formal Sector**



**Number Of Children Per Woman
:Informal Sector**

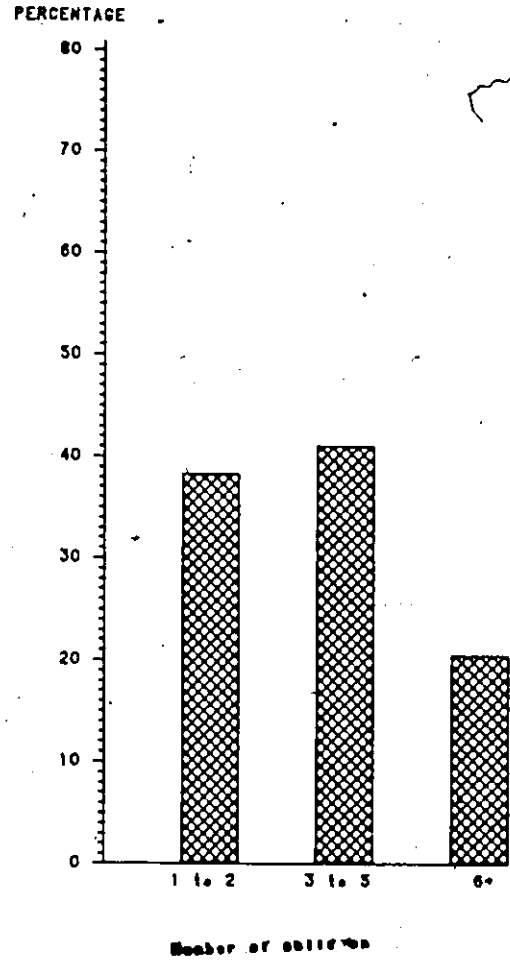


Figure 4: NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER WOMAN PARTICIPATING IN FORMAL AND INFORMAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES
Source: L. Martin, Women And Employment Sample Survey, 1984.

households are at a disadvantage since education for the male members is more highly valued. Frequently when girls reach the age of ten, they are elected without choice to remain at home in order to assist their mothers with household chores. They therefore have no option but to withdraw from school. This lack of access to education in turn limits their possibilities for employment.

Although many of women's formal activities in Latin America do not require special skills, the excessive labour offer allows employers to demand certain levels of education. In the Quito sample, 63% of the women engaged in formal activities, had completed seven or more years of formal education while only 18% of those engaged in informal activities had attained such a level. As one may see in Figure 5, it is quite unlikely for women with low levels of education to obtain formal employment. A mere 5% of the women in this category had a maximum of three years of education. There is thus a strong link between one's level of education and the possibility of obtaining formal employment.

Factors such as age, number of children, lack of access to day care and level of education therefore limit women's possibilities of engaging in formal employment. In this sample of 126 women, 19 engaged in formal employment while 107 engaged in informal employment. When considering these results, the limited number of women participating in formal

Educational Level: Formal Sector

Educational Level: Informal Sector

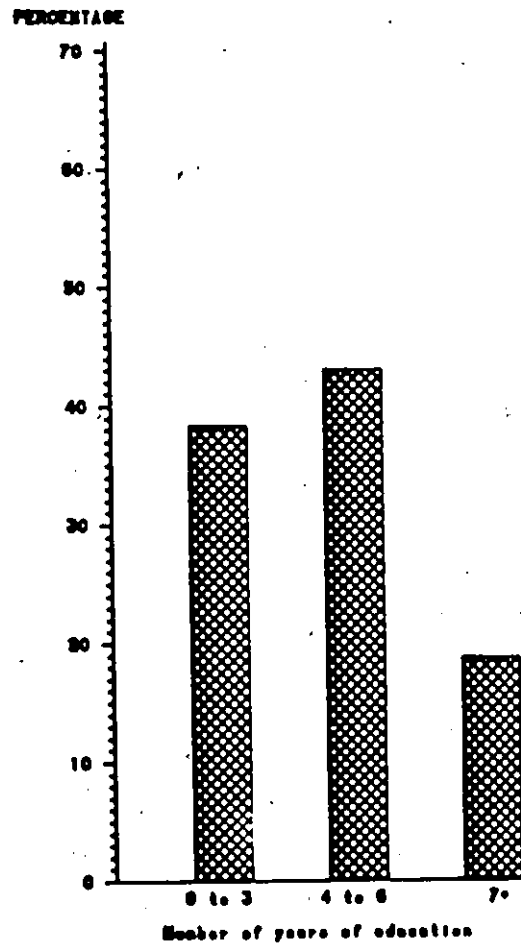
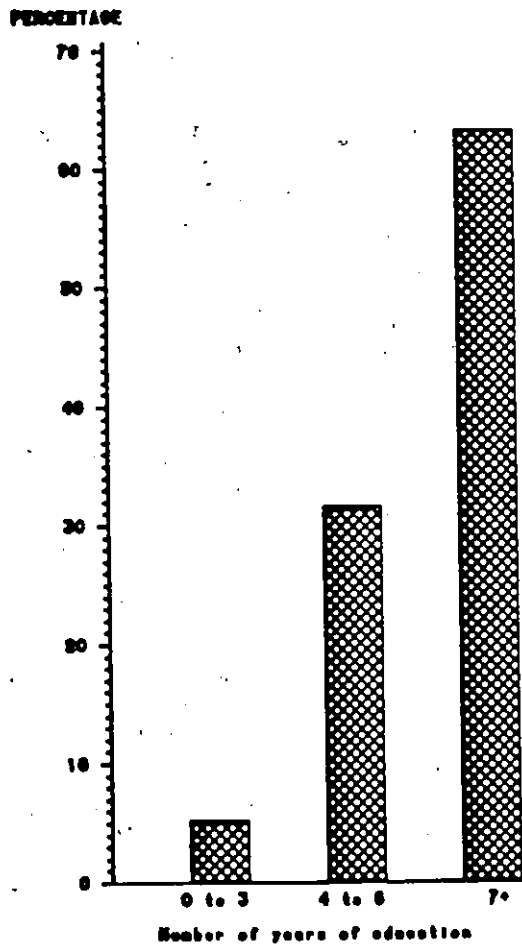


Figure 5: LEVEL OF EDUCATION FOR WOMEN PARTICIPATING IN FORMAL AND INFORMAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES
Source: L. Martini, Women And Employment Sample Survey, 1984

employment must thus be taken into consideration. The distribution of women engaged in informal(85%) and formal(15%) economic activities is, nevertheless, felt to be representative of the current employment situation for these women. This sample thus illustrates how women of the urban poor have few options but to enter the informal sector. As most economically disadvantaged women engage in the informal sector, this study will focus on these women's economic activities, which for too long have not been accounted for. Women that have formal employment will not be included in further analysis.

4.2 SOCIOECONOMIC AND SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN ENGAGED IN INFORMAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

This section will examine the socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics of the women engaged in informal economic activities. The characteristics to be studied are age, number of children, marital status, educational level, income and length of residency in Quito. A description of women's socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics will allow for a better understanding of the women in this sample. This in turn will be most useful when studying the links between the nature and location of women's economic activities and their socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics.

In the Quito sample, the age of the women ranged from eighteen to fifty eight, the average being thirty two. Although most of the women(62%) are between the ages of twenty five and forty, the age distribution of the women in this sample indicates that women of all ages participate in informal economic activities.

The number of children born to these women does vary according to their age(Table 2). The average number of children per family in this sample was 3.5.

Age of Women	Total Number of Children						Total
	1-2		3-5		6+		
	Freq.	Pct.	Freq.	Pct.	Freq.	Pct.	
18-25	22	76	7	24	0	0	29
26-40	17	29	29	50	12	21	58
41+	2	10	8	40	10	50	20
Total	41	38	44	41	22	21	107

Source:L.Martin, Women And Employment Sample Survey,1984

Statistics have indicated a trend towards declining birth rates in many developing countries. In a 1984 survey on

fertility, the Ecuadorian National Institute for Statistics (Hoy, June 1985) indicated that more than half (56%) of Ecuadorian women did not wish to have more children. When asked how many children they would like if they could choose the exact number, 24% said three, 22% said four, and 21% said two. A mere 4% said they would elect to have one child while only 8% wished for a large family of eight or more. The opinions reflected by the women in this survey may be a further indication that birth rates are slowly declining.

Although Table 2 indicates the total number of children per woman, only children living at home will be considered in this analysis. As these children are directly dependent on their mothers, it is the daily domestic activities associated with them which may influence the nature and location of women's informal economic activities. For this reason only children living within the home will be considered. The differences between the total number of children per woman and the number of children per woman living at home are nevertheless minimal (Table 3). When considering the variable number of children, it is important to take into account the age of the children. In this sample, 71% of the women have at least one child of three years or less. Since a child of three years or less cannot be left alone for a prolonged period of time, most women are therefore constantly responsible for the care of at least

one child.¹⁰ The women in this sample, therefore, did not withdraw from the labour force during childbearing and early childrearing as suggested by Moser(1981).

	Number of Children						Total
	1-2		3-5		6+		
	Freq.	Pct.	Freq.	Pct.	Freq.	Pct.	
Total Number Of Children Per Woman.	41	38.5	44	41	22	20.5	107
Total Number Of Children At Home	46	43	50	47	11	10	107

Source:L.Martin, Women And Employment Sample Survey,1984

In this sample, 25% of the households were managed by women, while the remaining 75% were jointly managed (Table 4). When studying women's economic activities, it is not their marital status which is of concern, but rather whether they share their household with a male counterpart. A study done of seventy four developing countries, indicated that

¹⁰ Circumstances, however, often oblige women to leave very young children alone or under the supervision of their siblings, usually older sisters.

the regional average for women headed households in Latin America was 15 percent. The article in which this study was cited underlined that internationally de facto figures are estimated to be much higher, with perhaps one third of all households headed by women (Taylor, 1985). Samman (1983), has also indicated that approximately 25 to 30 percent of the households in developing countries, are headed by women. Low income groups in urban areas of Latin America demonstrate that women, heads of households, generally account for 20 to 25 percent of the population (Chant, 1985). This sample's figure of 25% is thus felt to be representative of the situation in working class urban areas of Latin America.

TABLE 4
Marital Status Of Women

	Frequency	Percentage
Married	68	62
Common Law	14	13
Single	11	10
Separated	12	11
Widowed	04	04
Total	107	100

Source: L. Martin, Women And Employment Sample Survey, 1984

The results of this sample indicate that there are no significant differences between the number of children per

household and the absence or presence of a male counterpart (Table 5). Similar results have been obtained in Chant's (1985) study in Mexico where the average size of a nuclear family was 6.2 in comparison to 5.4 for a single-parent family. Women headed households thus have very strong economic pressures as they are responsible for similar numbers of children. Most of these women are thus engaged in casual relationships or have either left or been abandoned by their male counterpart.

As previously mentioned, the level of education for the women in this sample is relatively low. Fifteen percent of the women had not obtained any formal education, while 28% had received one to three years and 43% had received four to six years of primary school education. The remaining 18% had attended school for seven or more years. The average number of years of formal education is 4.5. It is not surprising that these women have low levels of education as informal economic activities are often characterized by their low requirements for formal education.

It is also possible for women to receive some form of informal education, often referred to as "capacitacion". Although education of this nature is important for women, only 22% of those in the sample had received some form of "capacitacion". It should be noted that all courses taken by the women were in domestic related activities such as

TABLE 5

Number of Children And Marital Status

Number Of Children	Household Status		
Frequency			
Expected			
Deviation			
Cell Chi2			
Percent			
Row Pct.			
Col Pct.			
	Jointly Managed	Female Managed	Total
1 to 2	31 30.7 0.3 0.0 28.97 75.61 38.75	10 10.3 -0.3 0.0 9.35 24.39 37.04	41 38.32
3 to 5	35 32.9 2.1 0.1 32.71 79.55 43.75	9 11.1 -2.1 0.4 8.41 20.45 33.33	44 41.12
6+	14 16.4 -2.4 0.4 13.08 63.64 17.50	8 5.6 2.4 1.1 7.48 36.36 29.63	22 20.56
Total	80 74.77	27 25.23	

Statistics For 2-Way Table

Chi-Square=1.993

DF=2

Probability=0.3692

Source:L.Martin, Women And Employment Sample Survey,1984

sewing, knitting and hairdressing. In her study of autonomous workers in Quito, Farrell(1983) has observed that it is not formal education which concerns those participating in informal activities, but rather courses in human relations, marketing and accounting. These courses, however, appear to be severely limited in both their availability and accessibility.

The income generated by women's informal economic activities is minimal. Of the women in this sample, 57% earned less than 600 sucres per week.¹¹ Another 31% earned between 601 and 1,500 sucres, while only 12% earned more than 1,501 sucres. When this study was carried out, the official monthly minimum wage was set at 6,600 sucres.¹² None of the women engaged in informal economic activities earned the official minimum wage. In fact, the maximum amount earned by a woman was between 3,000 and 3,500 sucres, half the suggested minimum wage.

The income of these women's male counterparts is also generally low. They are nevertheless greater than a woman's income. The distribution of weekly incomes for males is as follows: 24.5% earn between 200 and 1,000 sucres, 57.5% earn between 1,000 and 2,000 sucres and 18% earn over 2,000. Of the men living with women engaged in informal economic activities, 57.5% also engage in informal economic

¹¹ At the time of study, 700 sucres was the equivalent of ten Canadian dollars.

¹² The equivalent of approximately 95 Canadian dollars.

activities, 11.25% are economically inactive and 31.25% participate in formal economic activities.

As mentioned previously, 75% of the households are managed by both a man and a woman. Of these working class households, 68.5% rely totally on informal economic activities as their source of livelihood. The female managed households (25%) in this sample of women participating in informal economic activities are also totally dependent on informal activities. Income provided by informal economic activities accounts for 100% of the total household income in 76% of the households in this sample. These data clearly demonstrate the importance of the informal sector for working class households. Without this possibility of creating employment for themselves, many could not meet their personal basic needs, let alone those of their families.

An article (Hoy, June, 1985) analysing the economic situation of Ecuador, indicates that the purchasing power of 6,600 sucres was of 2,185 sucres in 1979. According to various studies, one would need 14,000 sucres monthly to purchase the minimum basic needs. With an underemployment rate of 40% and an unemployment rate of 8.3%, it is extremely difficult for most working class households to provide sufficiently for their families, even when adopting multiple income strategies.

Very often, women's income is considered secondary. Although they have always contributed directly or indirectly to their households' total income, their economic activities have far too often been associated with their domestic activities and thus, not been awarded their proper value. It is an acknowledged fact that women's economic participation has been underestimated and undervalued. It is hoped that the results of this study will further demonstrate the value of women's economic participation within the household¹³ (Figure 6). The value of women's work must not only be recognized in the eyes of officials, but also in the eyes of the women themselves. Far too often, they have been led to believe that their work is of little relevance and value. This is, however, obviously not the case.

The bar graph in Figure 6 illustrates the extent of women's economic contribution to the household's total income. In 45% of the cases, the income provided by women's work accounts for 31 to 50% of the households total income. Although women's work does not necessarily account for 50% of the total income, it should by no means be considered as secondary.¹⁴ It should also be mentioned that in many parts of Latin America, it is virtually impossible for a woman to

¹³ Although the importance of women's participation in domestic activities has been acknowledged, it too has often been undervalued.

¹⁴ If one were to quantify the value of women's domestic activities, their contribution would definitely exceed the 50% mark.

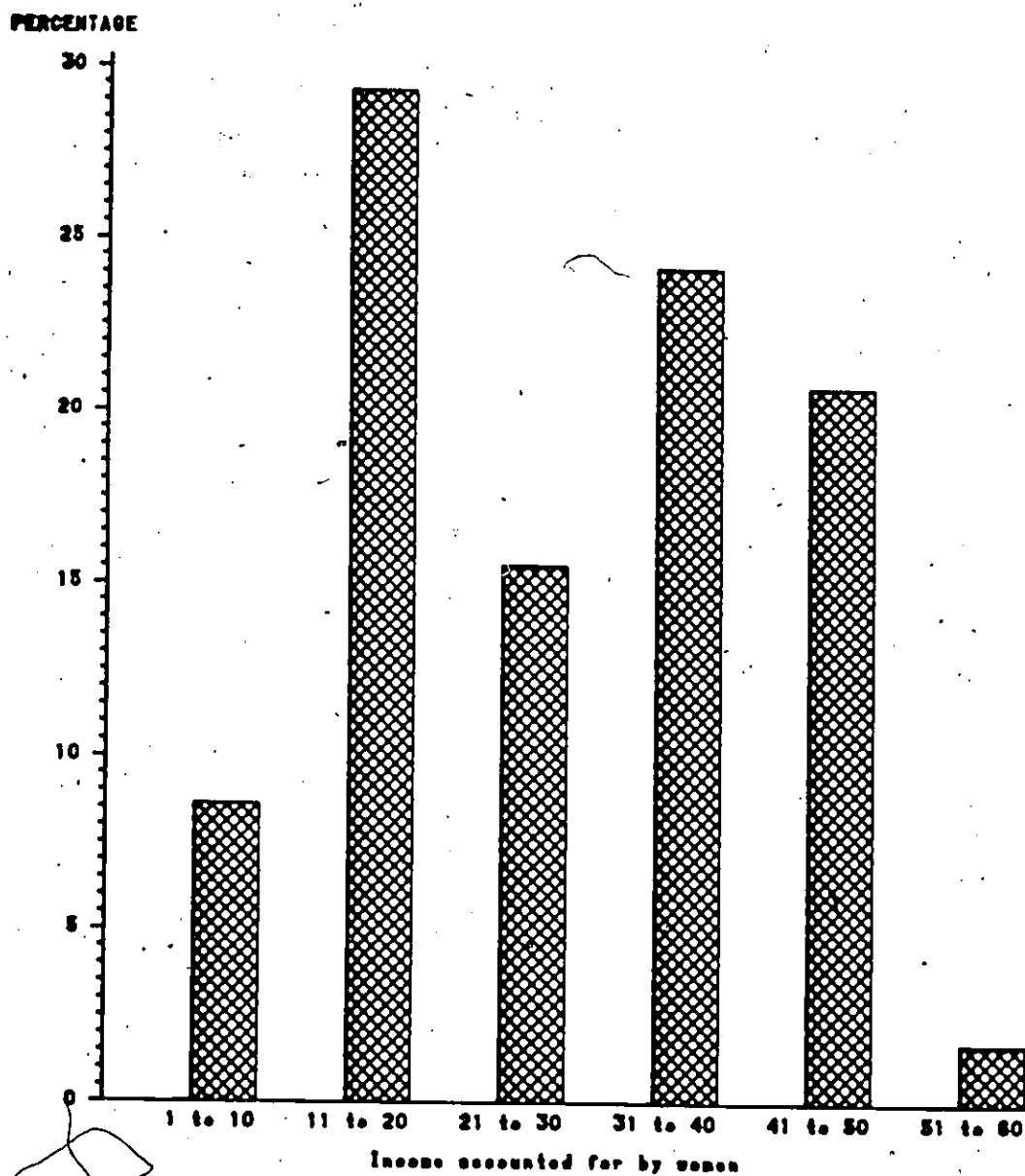


Figure 6: PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME ACCOUNTED FOR BY WOMEN Source: L. Martin, Women And Employment Sample Survey, 1984

earn a wage equivalent to that of a man of the same social class(Chant, 1985). Women's economic contribution in terms of percentage will also vary according to the total family income. Their contribution is thus often greater in the poorer households. As most of these families¹⁵ live far below the poverty line, women's income is essential to the families survival. It is also important to note that in many of these households, women must spend their income on food and clothing for their children, while men are generally free to use their income as they please. Very often, women cannot rely on their counterparts' economic contribution, which varies from week to week. In a case study of Mexican shanty towns, in-depth interviews with members of 22 nuclear families showed that just over half of the males retained as much as 50% of their wage for their personal use(Chant,1985).

Length of residency in a city is also a factor which may influence the nature of women's economic activities. In this sample, 75% of the women had lived in Quito for a period of five years or more.¹⁵ These results thus demonstrate that non-migrants also participate in considerable numbers in the urban informal sector. Along with the results of Vasconcelos(1985) and Farrell(1983), these data help de-emphasize a common hypothesis in informal

¹⁵ A period of 5 years is judged sufficient for a person to integrate himself or herself into a city and thus no longer be considered a "migrant".

sector studies which states that informal economic activities are most often carried out by migrants. These results also indicate that regardless of one's integration into a city, it is extremely difficult for the urban poor, notably women, to insert themselves into formal employment. The majority of the women (67%) were born either in Quito or the surrounding provinces (Chimborazo, Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, Pichincha and Imbabura). At birth, 54% of the women were of rural origin while 46% were of urban origin, which demonstrates an important influx of rural migrants to urban areas..

4.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics of the women in this sample. It has been indicated that women of the urban poor have great difficulties inserting themselves in formal employment. Factors such as age, marital status, number of children, access to day care and level of education have all been cited as factors which may limit women's access to formal employment. With few options, most women turn to informal economic activities. For this reason, this analysis has focused on this particular group of women. It has been demonstrated that women's participation in informal

activities is not age specific. Most of the women(71%), regardless of age, are responsible for at least one child of 3 years or less. Although the level of education for women is low, it appears as though further informal education would be of greater value than formal education(Farell, 1983). Women headed households represent 25% of the total households, while in another 11.25% of the cases, the economic survival of the family depends totally on female income. It was shown that women's income from informal economic activities is far below the monthly minimum wage, and that men's income, although greater than women's, is also generally low. The importance of the informal sector in providing income to working class households has been stressed as well as the value of women's work within the household. Finally, it was indicated that most of the women could no longer be considered migrants although a fair number had rural origins at birth. This chapter has thus examined the socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics of women, with the intention of providing a clearer picture and a better understanding of the numerous women involved in informal economic activities.

Chapter V

THE NATURE AND LOCATION OF WOMEN'S INFORMAL ACTIVITIES

The objectives of this chapter are twofold: first to identify which socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics may influence the nature and location of women's informal economic activities, and second, to examine if the nature and location of women's informal economic activities vary in function of the location of their home "barrio". In order to establish the links between the nature and location of women's informal economic activities, these terms must be defined at the outset.

5.1 NATURE OF WOMEN'S INFORMAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

When studying informal economic activities, it is often necessary to establish some form of classification, whether it be by the activities themselves or those engaged in these activities. As indicated in the literature review, no standard form of classification has been agreed upon. Certain authors have distinguished between those working for themselves and those earning a wage. In his work, Da

Silva(1979) identifies three types of women's work; 1)housework, 2)remunerated work performed at home, and 3) regular wage employment. In her study of Guayaquil, Moser(1981) concludes that the diversity of activities makes it difficult to establish a classification:

"The description of the diversity of economic activities in the two sectors where the majority of women in Indio Guayas participate economically-domestic service and retail selling - indicates the limitations of defining their work in terms of a dualist dichotomy such as wage sector/self employment or formal/informal sector division. Within both sectors, as indeed with dressmaking, it is possible to identify a continuum, with totally waged employment at one end, and unwaged work at the other, with accompanying degrees of autonomy over the production process." (p.28)

The problem of classifying women's economic activities is one which must also be dealt with in this particular study. The activities have thus been classified according to the means in which women earn their income. The basic distinction is between those women who sell their labour, and those who sell a product of some kind. It is therefore possible to have a seamstress hired by someone operating a small informal enterprise in a first category, and a seamstress working at home, selling clothing to her neighbours, in a second category. Activities in which women sell their labour have been classified under the label, "Personal Services", whereas activities in which women sell some type of product have been classified under the label "Retail Services"(Table 6).

TABLE 6

Classification Of Women's Economic Activities

Personal Services	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
"Ambulante"	1	.93
Cook	3	2.80
Daily Agricultural Worker	1	.93
Day Care Worker	2	1.87
Domestic	11	10.28
Hairdresser	2	1.87
Ironing Woman	2	1.98
Retail Employee	3	2.80
Seamstress	7	
Secretary	1	.93
Sewing Teacher	1	.93
Shoemaker	1	.93
Store Employee	1	.93
Waitress	1	.93
Washerwoman	26	24.30
Sub-Total	63	58.88
Retail Services		
"Ambulante"	1	.93
Brick Vendor	1	.93
Cardboard Collector	3	2.80
Seamstress	3	2.80
Store Owner (edibles)	12	
Store Owner (non edibles)	2	1.87
Vendor (prepared foods)	20	
Vendor (non edibles)	2	1.87
Sub-Total	44	41.12
TOTAL	107	100.00
Source: L. Martin, Women And Employment Sample Survey, 1984		

The activities were classified in these two categories as they were believed to best reflect the fundamental differences which exist between the economic activities of the women in this sample. For example, the activities classified in the first category (personal services) do not require a capital investment as it is the labour of the women themselves which is being sold. In these circumstances, the women are generally dependent on the individual to whom they sell their labour. Activities classified in the second category (retail services), however, require a minimum capital investment. As these women generally operate their own small retail business, they are autonomous in their economic activities. Perhaps the most important difference between these two types of activities, is the location where they are carried out. Personal service activities are generally carried out in areas other than the women's home "barrio", whereas retail service activities are generally carried out within the women's "barrio" (Table 7). The link between the nature of women's economic activities and their location is such that one can, with difficulty, be considered without the other.

As shown in Table 6, most (59%) women engage in activities in which they sell their labour. The typology also reflects the link between women's economic and domestic activities. Women working as cooks, domestics, washerwomen, ironing women, seamstresses and retailers of prepared foods

TABLE 7

The Nature And Location Of Women's Economic Activities

Type of Activity	Location of Activity			
	At home	In "barrio"	Out "barrio"	Total
Personal Services	9	5	49	63
Expected	20.6	5.9	36.5	
Deviation	-11.6	-0.0	12.5	
Cell Chi2	6.5	0.1	4.3	
Percent	8.4	4.67	45.79	58.9
Row Pct	14.3	7.94	77.78	
Col Pct	25.7	50.00	79.03	
Retail Services	26	5	13	44
Expected	14.4	4.1	25.5	
Deviation	11.6	0.9	-12.5	
Cell Chi2	9.4	0.2	6.1	
Percent	24.3	4.6	12.1	41.1
Row Pct	59.1	11.4	29.5	
Col Pct	74.3	50.0	21.0	
Total	34	9	64	
	31.78	8.41	59.81	

Statistics for 2-way table

Chi-Square 25.315 DF= 2 Probability=0.0001

Source:L.Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey, 1984

account for 69% of the sample. Women thus tend to concentrate in activities which generate low incomes and offer little room for upward mobility. For women with little or no formal education, who must fulfill a dual role, the choice of activities is often limited to work of this nature.

Although lack of education undoubtedly limits one's work options, the obligation for women to fulfill the household's domestic chores is perhaps the most decisive factor determining the nature of their economic activities. It is these activities which limit their physical mobility in time and in space. Women with greater domestic pressures have less available time for their economic activities as well as less time and facility to displace themselves from their area of residence to their work place. As a result, women must select domestic related activities with little upward mobility, as these generally entail a certain degree of flexibility in scheduling and child care arrangements. For women in need of income, these poorly remunerated, domestic related activities are the most accessible.

5.1.1 Women's Work Schedules and Income

The intensity of women's work schedules demonstrates that the role they fulfill is indeed a dual one. The women surveyed generally (72%) worked between five and seven days per week. This was applicable in both personal service and

retail service activities. Women in personal service activities, however, tended to work less hours per week than those in retail service activities (Table 8).

Type of Activity	Hours Worked per week					
	9 to 35		36 to 50		51+	
	FREQ.	PCT.	FREQ.	PCT.	FREQ.	PCT.
Personal Services	29	49	19	32	11	19
Retail Services	9	28	8	25	15	47
TOTAL	38	42	27	30	26	28

Source: L. Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey, 1984

This can be explained by the fact that many of these women carried out their economic activities within their homes, and could more easily combine their domestic and economic activities. The total number of hours devoted to economic activities is, in reality, substantially less.

In many cases, however, these women cannot be considered employed, but rather underemployed and underpaid. The need to work a greater number of hours was expressed on repeated occasions. The washerwoman wished to work for more families while the seamstress wished to obtain more piece work from her employer. At times, women's domestic responsibilities also limited the extent of their economic activities. Women who left children at home or whose children attended school in the mornings, often felt the obligation to restrict their economic activities to the morning hours. Their domestic activities not only determined the extent of their workdays, but also narrowed their choice of economic activities.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, it was extremely difficult for the women to provide an exact figure for the number of hours devoted to domestic activities. It is clear, however, that there is little recreational time for these women. The varying degrees of intensity and the flexibility of scheduling in both women's economic and domestic activities makes accounting for women's work a difficult task. Measuring their labour force participation and perhaps more importantly, their level of underemployment, is thus problematic (Beneria, 1982).

Women's economic activities, however minimal they may be, are essential to their families' survival. The income earned by personal service and retail service activities do

not differ greatly (Table 9). In terms of income, one cannot say that one type of activity is superior to the other. The activities in which women engage can thus be characterized by their inability to provide incomes comparable to local minimum wages.¹⁶

TABLE 9

Income Generated By Economic Activities

Type of Activity	Weekly Income					
	0-600S.		601-1,000S.		1,001+S.	
	FREQ.	PCT.	FREQ.	PCT.	FREQ.	PCT.
Personal Services	33	53	24	39	5	8
Retail Services	25	62.5	8	20	7	17.5
TOTAL	58	56.8	32	31.4	12	11.8
Missing Values=5						
Source: L. Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey, 1984						

¹⁶ At the time of study, the local weekly minimum wage was 1,650 sucres.

5.2 THE LOCATION OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES.

In this analysis of the location of women's economic activities, the locational aspect will be treated in terms of locale and distance travelled. The locale of activities has been classified in the following way; 1) activities which are carried out at the woman's home, 2) activities which are carried out within the woman's home "barrio", and 3) activities which are carried out in a "barrio" other than the woman's home "barrio" (Figure 7). In our discussion, those women working at home and within their "barrios" are often referred to as working within the "barrio", in opposition to those working outside the "barrio".

Although the literature has indicated a preference on both women's and men's part for women to work near their residence, the reality of their economic situation forces them to obtain work, regardless of its location. Women wishing to work in proximity of their homes are largely obliged to engage in retail services, as the "barrios populares" do not generate much demand for service related activities. The "barrios", however, do not have the demand required to sustain large numbers of small businesses. As a result, women have few options. Many of them must travel, often considerable distances, in order to obtain work. In fact, most women (60%) do not work in proximity of their homes. Activities which are not carried out in the women's home "barrios" are generally those classified as personal

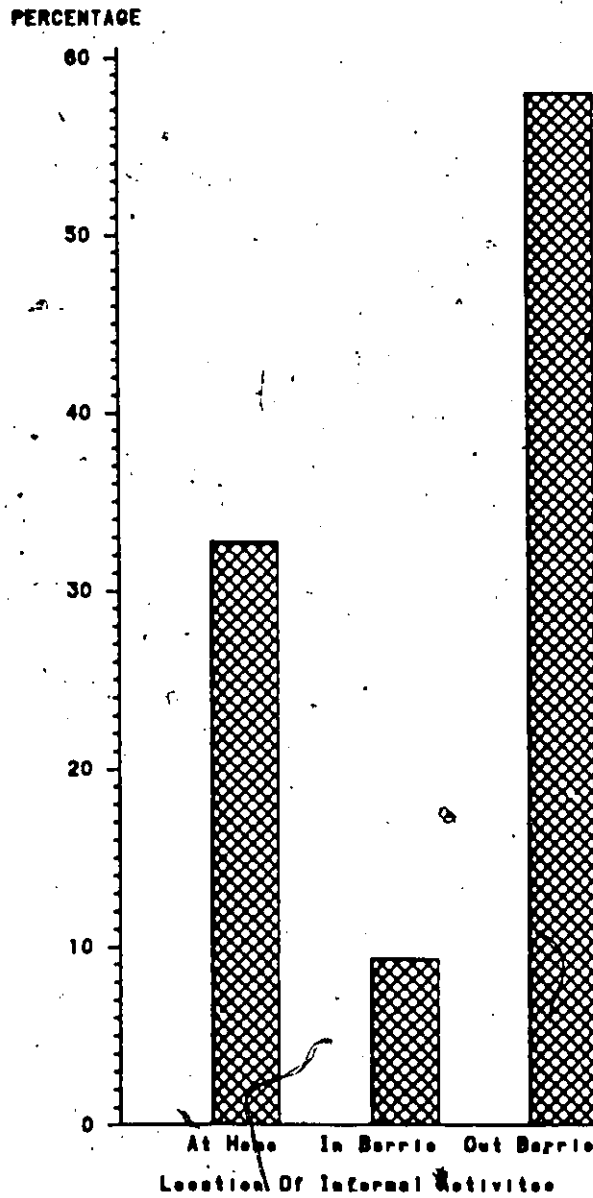


Figure 7: LOCATION OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES
Source: L. Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey, 1984

services. As demonstrated earlier, a strong link exists between the nature of women's economic activities and their location.

Because so many women cannot obtain work within their "barrios", they must select activities which allow them to have their children accompany them. Activities classified as personal services allow for such child care arrangements.

The strong relationship which exists between the location of women's economic activities in terms of locale and the nature of these activities also applies when the location is considered in terms of distance travelled. Distance travelled is measured by the time required to travel from residence to place of work (Table 10).

TABLE 10

Distance Travelled And Nature Of Economic Activity

Type Of Activity	Distance Travelled			
Frequency	0-45min.	46-80min.	81+min.	Total
Personal Services	23	15	23	61
Expected	36.1	11.3	13.6	
Deviation	-13.1	3.7	9.4	
Cell Chi ²	4.8	1.2	6.5	
Percent	22.33	14.56	22.33	59.22
Row Pct.	37.70	24.59	37.70	
Col Pct.	37.70	78.95	100.00	
Retail services	38	4	0	42
Expected	24.9	7.7	9.4	
Deviation	13.1	-3.7	-9.4	
Cell Chi ²	6.9	1.8	9.4	
Percent	36.89	3.88	0.0	40.78
Row Pct.	90.48	9.54	0.0	
Col Pct.	62.30	21.05	0.0	
Total	61	19	23	103
Expected	59.22	18.45	22.33	100.00

Statistics For 2-Way Tables

Chi-Square=30.593

DF=2

Probability=0.0001

Missing Values=4

Source: L. Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey, 1984

5.3 WOMEN'S SOCIOECONOMIC AND SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND THE NATURE AND LOCATION OF THEIR ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

In order to identify the possible links which may exist between women's socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics, and the nature and location of their informal economic activities, the following will be considered: age, number of children and child care arrangements, marital status, income of male counterpart, level of education and length of residency in Quito. A series of Chi-Square tests were carried out in order to measure the association between these various characteristics and the nature and location of women's informal economic activities.

5.3.1 Age of Women

The results of our sample do not demonstrate any particular links between the nature of women's activities and their age (Table 11).

The literature has indicated that young, unmarried women, tend to work as domestics "puertas a dentro",¹⁷ whereas older women tend to work as petty traders. Although young girls do work in large numbers as domestics "puertas a dentro", once they marry or bear children these opportunities are no longer available to them. What the

¹⁷ This term is commonly used to refer to domestics living within the household of their employer. The term "puertas a fuera", refers to domestics working on a daily basis, and living with their own family.

TABLE 11

Age Of Women In Informal Economic Activities

Type of Activity	Age of women			
	18 to 25	26 to 40	41+	TOTAL
Frequency	18	35	10	63
Expected	17.1	34.1	11.8	
Deviation	0.9	0.9	-1.8	
Cell Chi2	0.1	0.0	0.3	
Percent	16.82	32.71	9.35	58.88
Row Pct	28.57	55.56	15.87	
Col Pct	62.07	60.34	50.00	
Personal Services	11	23	10	44
	11.9	23.9	8.2	
	-0.9	-0.9	1.8	
	0.1	0.0	0.4	
	10.28	21.50	9.35	41.12
	25.00	52.27	22.73	
	37.93	39.66	50.00	
TOTAL	29	58	20	107
	27.10	54.21	18.69	100.00

Statistics for 2-way table

Chi-Square=0.825

DF=2

Probability=0.6621

Source: L. Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey, 1984

results of this study indicate, however, is that many of these women continue to work in similar activities but simply change the locale of their residence. There is not a concentration of younger women in services and older women in trade as one may have believed. Many of the women in this sample presently working in services had also previously engaged in service related activities. In their studies, Moser(1981) and Da Silva(1979), have indicated that one of the advantages of remunerated domestic activities, such as those of the washerwoman, was that they could be carried out in the woman's home alongside their own domestic activities. In the case of Quito, it is clear that these activities are carried out at the employer's residence and not at the woman's home. In this particular sample, it is not the locale of the work place which changes, but rather the locale of the employee's residence. Therefore, for many of the women in this sample, it is not possible to reconcile the conflict between their domestic sphere and public sphere by bringing work into their homes, as suggested by Da Silva(1979).

In order for women to continue working in services, they must travel considerable distances. For many of these women, without any particular skills, activities of this nature are among the few options available to them. Age does not appear to be a significant factor influencing the nature and location of women's activities.

5.3.2 Number of Children.

It has been indicated that women most often bear the responsibility for their children's social and physical upbringing. The number of children for which they are responsible will largely determine the extent of their domestic activities. The results of this study demonstrate a link between the number of children per woman and the nature and location of her activities (Tables 12 and 13). Most women (69.5%) with one or two children engage in personal service activities, whereas 54% of the women with three to five children engage in retail service activities.

The same type of pattern applies when we consider the number of children in relation to the location of women's activities. Women with one or two children generally (67%) work out of their home "barrio", whereas women with three to five children (52%) tend to work within their "barrio" of residence. Of the women working within their "barrio" (40% of sample), 65% had three or more children.

When studying these results, it is clear that women with one or two children have a strong tendency to work out of their "barrios" in personal services. As personal service activities are generally carried out in a "barrio" other than that of the woman's home, it is more likely for these women to engage in these activities as they have greater flexibility and physical mobility than women with three to five children. For women working in personal

TABLE 12

Number Of Children And Nature Of Economic Activity

Type of Activity	Number of Children			
	1 to 2	3 to 5	6+	Total
Personal Services	29 24.1 4.9 1.0 27.10 46.03 70.73	20 25.9 -5.9 1.3 18.69 31.75 45.45	14 13.0 1.0 0.1 13.08 22.22 63.64	63 58.88
Retail Services	12 16.9 -4.9 1.4 11.21 27.27 29.27	24 18.1 5.9 1.9 22.43 54.55 54.55	8 9.0 -1.0 0.1 7.48 18.18 36.36	44 41.12
Total	41 38.32	44 41.12	22 20.56	107 100.00

Statistics for 2-Way Table

Chi-Square = 5.860 DF=2 Probability=0.0534

Source: L. Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey, 1984

TABLE 13

Number Of Children And Location Of Economic Activity

Number of Children	Location		
	In "Barrio"	Out "barrio"	Total
1 to 2	15 18.5 -3.5 0.7 14.02 32.61 34.88	31 27.5 3.5 0.4 28.97 67.39 48.44	46 42.99
3 to 5	26 20.1 5.9 1.7 24.30 52.00 60.47	24 29.9 -5.9 1.2 22.43 48.00 37.50	46.73
6+	2 4.4 -2.4 1.3 1.87 18.18 4.65	9 6.6 2.4 0.9 8.41 81.82 14.06	11 10.28
Total	43 40.19	64 59.81	107 100.0

Statistics For 2-Way Table

Chi-Square=6.218 DF=2

Probability=0.0447

Source: L. Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey, 1984

service activities, it is usually necessary to make child care arrangements. This is easier for women with one or two children in comparison to women with three to five children. Child care arrangements will be discussed in further detail in the following subsection. For women with three to five children, the relationships are not as evident. Although women with three to five children tend to engage in retail service activities within their "barrios", the links between number of children and the nature and location of their economic activities are not as strong as those demonstrated by the women with one or two children. As indicated earlier, most women would prefer to work in proximity of their homes. Their households' economic situation obliges them, however, to seek work, regardless of its location. Many of the women with three to five children must therefore also displace themselves considerable distances to travel to their place of work.

Although relatively few women (10%) in this sample have six children or more at home, the majority (73%) of these women engage in personal service activities. This could perhaps be explained by the fact that these women no longer worry about child care as their older children can take care of the younger ones. Households with greater numbers of children also tend to be poorer and are thus less likely to engage in small business activities.

5.3.3 Child Care Arrangements

For women who must fulfill a dual role, child care arrangements are a constant preoccupation. Although one often hears of children being locked up in their homes, this phenomenon is not so widespread. Women, however poor they may be, are most concerned with the well-being of their children. For most women, their children's education was definitely a priority. Without choice, certain women must, nevertheless, leave their children behind, and at times, if very young, lock them up. Needless to say, this is an extremely heavy burden on their conscience.

As the results of this sample demonstrate, there is a strong link between the nature and location of women's economic activities, and the child care arrangements they must make (Tables 14 and 15).

When studying child care arrangements, it is the care given to the youngest child which is taken into account. It is clear that women participating in home based, retail service activities, tend to keep their children at home. Women working out of their home "barrios" must, however, resort to different child care arrangements. As shown in Table 15, 35.5% of the women have their child accompany them, 30% leave them at home, while 23% place them in a day care centre.

At the time of study, only residents of Chilibulo had access to day care. A total of eleven women engaged in,

TABLE 14

Child Care And Nature Of Economic Activity

Type Of Activity	Child Care Arrangements				Total
	School/ Day Care	Home	Neighbours/ Relatives	With Mother	
Personal Services	15 11.1 3.9 1.4 15.31 26.32 78.95	20 28.5 -8.5 2.5 20.41 35.09 40.82	6 4.1 1.9 0.9 6.12 10.53 85.71	16 13.4 2.6 0.5 16.33 28.07 69.57	57 58.16
Retail Services	4 7.9 -3.9 2.0 4.08 9.76 21.05	29 20.5 8.5 3.5 29.59 70.73 59.18	1 2.9 -1.9 1.3 1.02 2.44 14.29	7 9.6 -2.6 0.7 7.14 17.07 30.43	41 41.84
Total	19 19.39	49 50.00	7 7.14	23 23.47	98 100.00

Statistics For 2-Way Table

Chi-Square=12.845 DF=3 Probability=0.0050

Non Applicable values=9

Source:L.Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey, 1984

TABLE 15

Child Care And Location of Economic Activity

Location	Child Care Arrangements				
	School/ Day Care	Home	Neighbours/ Relatives	With Mother	Total
In 'Barrio'	6	32	2	2	42
Frequency	8.1	21.0	3.0	9.9	
Expected	-2.1	11.0	-1.0	-7.9	
Deviation	0.6	5.8	0.3	6.3	
Cell Chi2	6.12	32.65	2.04	2.04	42.86
Percent	14.29	76.19	4.76	4.76	
Row Pct.	31.58	65.31	28.57	8.70	
Col Pct.					
Out 'Barrio'	13	17	5	21	56
Frequency	10.9	28.0	4.0	13.1	
Expected	2.1	-11.0	1.0	7.9	
Deviation	0.4	4.3	0.3	4.7	
Cell Chi2	13.27	17.35	5.10	21.43	57.14
Percent	23.21	30.36	8.93	37.50	
Row Pct.	68.42	34.69	71.43	91.30	
Col Pct.					
Total	19	49	7	23	98
Frequency	19.39	50.00	7.14	23.47	100.0

Statistics For 2-Way Tables

Chi-Square=22.614 DF=3 Probability=0.0001

Non Applicable Values=9

Source:L.Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey,1984

informal activities made use of these services. All worked in personal service activities. The average age of their youngest child in day care was 1.5. Of these women, seven(64%) earned between 600 and 1,000 sucres per week, while two earned less than 600 and two earned more than 1,000. Many engaged in activities which demanded extended schedules, (four were domestics, four were seamstresses). Most worked (82%) between 36 to 50 hours per week. As these women's activities required a minimum work day of seven hours, it was difficult for them to have their children accompany them in these circumstances. Without doubt, women with access to day care, have greater flexibility in the scheduling of their economic activities. Many who had to bring their children to work limited their economic activities to the morning hours.

So far, we have considered the child care arrangements of women who worked both in and out of their "barrios" of residence, as well as women who had access to day care. A closer examination of the women, with a child of three years or less, not working within their "barrios" of residence, and without access to day care, is however, of greater interest. It is these women who encounter the greatest difficulties when combining domestic and economic activities(Table 16).

Fifty five percent of the women with young children, who had to travel to their work place, had their child or

TABLE 16

Child Care For Women Without Access To Day Care And
Working Out 'Barrio'

Type Of Activity	Child Care Arrangements					
	At Home		With Neighbours		With Mother	
	Freq.	Pct.	Freq.	Pct.	Freq.	Pct.
Personal Services	7	26	5	18	15	56
Retail Services	3	50	0	0	3	50
Total	10	30	5	15	18	55

Source: L. Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey, 1984

children accompany them. Most of these women (84%) engaged in personal service activities. The women in this sample who had their children accompany them, worked as the following: washerwomen, "ambulantes", domestics, cardboard collectors, retailers of cooked foods and cooks. Although these activities may have allowed women to bring their children to work, it is important to stress the difficulties this presented for the mothers. While engaging in physically demanding work, the women also had to care for their children. Many thus worked long hours with a child on their back. This was not only a problem for the mothers, but also for the children who were often in unsanitary conditions.

For women engaging in economic activities, notably those in personal services, child care arrangements were definitely a problem. Women working in areas other than their "barrios" must often select their economic activities in function of child care arrangements. Those who cannot leave their children behind must engage in activities where it is possible to have their children accompany them. For this reason, many of the women working as washerwomen had selected the activity for its flexibility in terms of child care arrangements. The following quotations of two washerwomen demonstrate the links between the nature of women's economic activities and child care arrangements:

"En empresa, no aceptan mujer con guagua con ella, entonces empiezo a lavar."

"Asi puede trabajar solo de manana y atender a ninos por tarde."

The fact that women must care for their children undoubtedly influences the nature and location of their economic activities. Although many women would prefer to work in proximity of their homes, this option is not always available to them.

5.3.4 Marital Status

As indicated in the previous chapter, there are no significant differences between female managed households and jointly managed households and the number of children per household. There is, however, a link between the nature

of women's economic activities and their marital status (Table 17).

It is clear that most female managed households engage in personal service activities. As these households are often the poorest of the poor, it is extremely difficult for them to accumulate the required capital to invest in a small business. These households can also not permit themselves the financial risks involved in retail activities. Women heads of households are thus more likely to engage in service related activities, where there are no capital investments involved and where the income is, to some extent, more stable. The predominance of these women in personal service activities, explains the link between the location of their activities and their marital status. Thus, 85% of the women that are heads of households work in a "barrio" other than their home "barrio".

Although female managed households have less financial resources than jointly managed households, the income generated by women heads of households is greater than that generated by women living with male counterparts (Table 18). The economic needs of these households, undoubtedly force the women to earn slightly higher wages in order to assure the survival of their children. Even so, these families barely survive. For example, 54% of the households must meet their basic needs with a weekly income of nine to fourteen Canadian dollars. This link between women's marital status

TABLE 17

Nature Of Economic Activity And Household Status

Type Of Activity	Household Status		
	Jointly Managed	Female Managed	Total
Personal Services	43 47.1 -4.1 0.4 40.19 68.25 53.75	20 15.9 4.1 1.1 18.69 31.75 74.07	63 58.88
Retail Services	37 32.9 4.1 0.5 34.58 84.09 46.25	7 11.1 -4.1 1.5 6.54 15.91 25.93	44 41.12
Total	80 74.77	27 25.23	107 100.00

Statistics for 2-Way Tables

Chi-Square=3.444 DF=1 Probability=0.0635

Source: L. Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey, 1984

TABLE 18

Women's Income And Household Status

Income	Household Status		
	Jointly Managed	Female Managed	Total
Frequency			
Expected			
Deviation			
Cell Chi2			
Percent			
Row Pct			
Col Pct			
0-600S.	49 44.4 4.6 0.5 48.04 84.48 62.82	9 13.6 -4.6 1.6 8.82 15.52 35.50	58
601-1,000S.	19 24.5 -5.5 1.2 18.63 59.38 24.36	13 7.5 5.5 4.0 12.75 40.63 54.17	32 31.37
1,001+S.	10 9.2 0.8 0.1 9.80 83.33 12.2	2 2.8 -0.8 0.2 1.96 16.67 8.33	12 11.76
Total	78 76.47	24 23.53	102 100.00

Statistics For 2-Way Tables

Chi-Square=7.581 DF=2 Probability=0.0226
 Missing Variables=5

Source:L.Martin, Women and Employment Survey,1984

and their income does not indicate that women heading households have greater financial resources, but rather that these women have much greater financial needs. A recent article pertaining to single-parent families in Mexico (Chant, 1985) argues that female managed households can have a better overall economic situation than jointly managed households, as the former may have fewer budgeting problems than the latter, which generally depend on unstable male contributions. The author, however, indicates that most of the households sampled were owner occupants and therefore had fewer economic pressures. The argument, thus, remains debatable.

5.3.5 Income of Male Counterpart

As mentioned above, females heading households with few capital resources tend to engage in personal service activities. When one considers the income of the male counterpart in jointly managed households, one can also see a link between available capital and the type of activities women engage in (Table 19).

There are less women than expected in retail service activities, with male counterparts earning 601 to 1,000 Sucres weekly, whereas there are more women than expected in retail service activities with male counterparts earning more than 1,500 Sucres weekly. The contrary holds true for women engaged in personal service activities. This may be

TABLE 19

Nature Of Economic Activity And Male Counterpart's
Income

Type Of Activity	Income Of Male Counterpart			
	1-600S.	601-1,500S.	1,501+S.	Total
Personal Services	2	19	13	34
	5.0	12.8	16.2	
	-3.0	6.2	-3.2	
	1.8	3.0	0.6	
	3.28	31.15	21.31	55.74
	5.88	55.88	38.24	
	22.22	82.61	44.83	
Retail Services	7	4	16	27
	4.0	10.2	12.8	
	3.0	-6.2	3.2	
	2.3	3.8	0.8	
	11.48	6.56	26.23	44.26
	25.93	14.81	59.26	
	77.78	17.39	55.17	
Total	9	23	29	61
	14.75	37.70	47.54	100.0

Statistics For 2-Way Table

Chi-Square=12.228 DF=2 Probability=0.0022

Missing Values=10

Source:L.Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey, 1984

explained by the fact that women engaging in retail services need greater financial support. This support is required for the initial capital investment involved in starting a small business. As the income generated by small business activities tends to be irregular, it is necessary for the household to rely on other sources of income. Activities classified as retail services also tend to involve certain financial risks. Petty trading is known to be one of the most competitive informal activities. Women whose male counterparts earn greater incomes can thus more easily take these risks. Although retail service activities do not necessarily involve greater incomes, they are perceived as being more "prestigious" than personal service activities as they allow the women to engage in remunerative work while remaining at home.

5.3.6 Level of Education

In this sample, there are no apparent links between women's educational level and the nature of their informal economic activities (Table 20). This is, however, to be expected, as the majority of women's informal economic activities are related to their domestic activities and thus do not require formal education. In the typology of activities obtained in this sample, the work of the seamstress is perhaps what requires the highest level of specialization. Although this specialization is not

necessarily obtained within the formal educational system, it is interesting to note, nevertheless, that nine of the ten seamstresses had completed a minimum of six years of formal education.

Further formal education is, however, not what these women require. As indicated earlier, courses which could teach them practical skills would be of much greater value.

TABLE 20

Nature Of Economic Activity And Educational Level

Type of Activity	Years Of Formal Education			
	1-3	4-6	7+	Total
Frequency				
Expected				
Deviation				
Cell Chi ²				
Percent				
Row Pct.				
Col Pct.				
Personal Services	24 24.1 -0.1 0.0 22.43 38.10 58.54	28 27.1 0.9 0.0 26.17 44.44 60.87	11 11.8 -0.8 0.1 10.28 17.46 55.00	63 58.88
Retail Services	17 16.9 0.1 0.0 15.89 38.64 41.46	18 18.9 -0.9 0.0 16.82 40.91 39.13	9 8.2 0.8 0.1 8.41 20.45 45.00	44 41.12
Total	41 38.32	46 42.99	20 18.69	107 100.0

Statistics For 2-Way Tables

Chi-Square=0.202 DF=2 Probability=0.9041

Source:L.Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey, 1984

5.3.7 Length of Residency

It has been observed in the informal sector literature that a positive correlation exists between the success of an individual's informal activities and the number of years he/she has lived in a particular urban area. A chi-square test measuring the association between the nature of women's economic activities and the number of years they had lived in Quito indicated that in this particular sample this relationship did not exist (Table 21).

As previously stated, most of the women (75%) could not be considered migrants and thus the informal sector can not be characterized by a predominant migrant labour force. That there is no apparent link between the nature of women's economic activities and length of residency is, however, of no great surprise. If one were to scale the activities which are classified as "informal", one would quickly see that the majority of women's informal activities would be at the lower end of this scale. As their activities carry a lower status and fewer possibilities for upward mobility, it is difficult for women, even with time, to move on to more profitable activities.

TABLE 21

Nature Of Economic Activity And Length Of Residency

Type Of Activity	Years Of Residency				Total
Frequency	-1	1 to 3	3 to 5	5+	
Expected					
Deviation					
Cell Chi ²					
Percent					
Row Pct.					
Col Pct.					
Personal Services	4	6	6	47	63
	3.6	5.3	6.5	47.5	
	0.4	0.7	-0.5	-0.5	
	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	
	3.77	5.66	5.66	44.34	59.43
	6.35	9.52	9.52	74.60	
	66.67	66.67	54.55	58.75	
Retail Services	2	3	5	33	43
	2.4	3.7	4.5	32.5	
	-0.4	-0.7	0.5	0.5	
	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	
	1.89	2.83	2.83	31.13	40.57
	4.65	6.98	6.98	76.74	
	33.33	33.33	33.33	41.25	
Total	6	9	11	80	106
	5.66	8.49	10.38	75.47	100.0
Statistics For 2-Way Tables					
Chi-Square=0.450	DF=3	Probability=0.9297			
Missing Values=1					
Source:L.Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey,1984					

5.4 LINKS BETWEEN THE LOCATION OF WOMEN'S "BARRIOS" OF RESIDENCE AND THE NATURE AND LOCATION OF THEIR ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

The objective of this section is to determine if the location of women's area of residence influences the nature and location of their informal economic activities. In order to identify the links which may exist, the nature of women's activities, as well as their location, in terms of both locale and distance travelled, will be considered in function of women's area of residence. If one examines the relationship between the two studied "barrios" and the nature of women's activities as classified into personal services and retail services (Table 22), it is clear that the location of the "barrio" does not influence the nature of women's economic activities.

A more detailed classification of retail services, however, demonstrates that the products being sold differ in the two barrios. A classification which sub-divides women's retail services into activities in which they sell goods which they themselves have made or prepared, and activities in which they sell goods which have been purchased, often in bulk or wholesale, thus identifies a link between the nature of women's informal economic activities and their "barrio" of residence (Table 23).

The differences between women's economic activities in these two "barrios" thus lie in the retail of prepared products, that is activities in which women sell home made goods,

TABLE 22

Nature Of Economic Activity And Barrio Of Residence

Type Of Activity	"Barrio"		
	Chilibulo	La Lucha	Total
Frequency			
Expected			
Deviation			
Cell chi2			
Percent			
Row Pct.			
Col Pct.			
Personal Services	27 26.5 0.5 0.0 25.23 42.86 60.00	36 36.5 -0.5 0.0 33.64 57.14 58.06	63 58.88
Retail Services	18 18.5 -0.5 0.0 16.82 40.91 40.00	26 25.5 0.5 0.0 24.30 59.09 41.94	44 41.12
Total	45 42.06	62 57.94	107 100.00

Statistics For 2-Way Table

Chi-Square=0.040

DF=1

Probability=0.8408

Source:L.Martin, Women and Employment Sample Survey, 1984

TABLE 23

Nature Of Economic Activity And Barrio Of Residence

Type Of Activity	"Barrio"		
	Chilibulo	La Lucha	Total
Personal Services	27	35	62
Frequency	26.1	35.9	
Expected	0.9	-0.9	
Deviation	0.0	0.0	
Cell Chi ²	25.23	32.71	57.94
Percent	43.55	56.45	
Row Pct.	60.00	56.45	
Col Pct.			
Sale Of Prepared Products	3	16	19
Frequency	8.0	11.0	
Expected	-5.0	5.0	
Deviation	3.1	2.3	
Cell Chi ²	2.80	14.95	17.76
Percent	15.79	84.21	
Row Pct.	6.67	25.81	
Col Pct.			
Sale Of Purchased Products	15	11	26
Frequency	10.9	15.1	
Expected	4.1	-4.1	
Deviation	1.5	1.1	
Cell Chi ²	14.02	10.28	24.30
Percent	57.69	42.31	
Row Pct.	33.33	17.74	
Col Pct.			
Total	45	62	107
Frequency	42.06	57.94	100.00
Expected			
Deviation			
Cell Chi ²			
Percent			
Row Pct.			
Col Pct.			

Statistics For 2-Way Table

Chi-Square=8.045 DF=2 Probability=0.0179

Source:L.Martin, Women And Employment Sample survey, 1984

generally cooked food. A considerably greater number of women in the second "barrio", Lucha De Los Pobres, relied on activities of this nature as a means of livelihood. The prevalence of activities of this nature in this particular "barrio" can be explained by its location and lack of infrastructure. As transportation from the city centre to La Lucha is rather difficult in the early evening and extremely difficult after nine p.m., most people cannot take the time to eat before returning to the "barrio". Many of the women and children in this "barrio" do not eat a warm meal on a daily basis. It is therefore generally the men who serve as the *clintele* for the women providing these goods.¹⁸ In view of the transportation problems, due to the location of the "barrio", there is a considerable demand for warm prepared food.

Another factor which may explain the greater demand for these services in this "barrio" is its lack of infrastructure, namely electricity and running water. As many of these households cannot afford small propane stoves, wood is often the only available resource to prepare warm meals. For these reasons, it was more difficult for individual households to prepare warm meals on a regular basis. The location of La Lucha, as well as its lack of infrastructure and make shift conditions, can thus explain

¹⁸ As previously mentioned, men generally have total control of their earnings, whereas women's income is most often shared between their children and themselves.

in part the demand for prepared meals.

In terms of women engaging in personal services and retail of purchased products, there are no major differences between the "barrios". The sample also demonstrates that regardless of the location of one's home, women engage in significant numbers in activities related to personal services (60% of the women in Chilibulo and 56.5% of the women in La Lucha).

In this analysis of the location of women's economic activities in function of the location of their area of residence, the locale (In "Barrio" vs Out "Barrio") of women's economic activities as well as the distance (measured in time) required to travel to these activities will be considered. As demonstrated in Table 24, there are no major variations in the locale of women's economic activities between the two barrios. In general, the women in this study tend to work in areas other than their areas of residence (60% in Chilibulo and 56.5% in La Lucha). The number of women working within their "barrio" is thus similar (40% in Chilibulo and 43.5% in La Lucha). The location of La Lucha, its distance from the city centre and higher income areas make it more difficult and expensive for the women of this "barrio", especially those accompanied by their children, to travel to their place of work.

In terms of distance, it is clear that women working out of their "barrios", living in La Lucha, generally travel longer distances than women living in Chilibulo (Table 25).

TABLE 24

Location Of Economic Activity And Barrio Of Residence

"Barrio"	Location Of Work Place		
	In "Barrio"	Out "Barrio"	Total
Chilibufo	18	27	45
	18.9	26.1	
	-0.9	0.9	
	0.0	0.0	
	16.82	25.23	42.06
	40.00	60.00	
	40.00	43.55	
La Lucha	27	35	62
	26.1	35.9	
	0.9	-0.9	
	0.0	0.0	
	25.23	32.71	57.94
	43.55	56.45	
	60.00	56.45	
Total	45	62	107
	42.06	57.94	100.00

Statistics For 2-Way Tables

Chi-Square=0.135 DF=1 Probability=0.7136

Source:L.Martin, Women And Employment Sample Survey, 1984

TABLE 25

Distance Travelled And Barrio Of Residence

"Barrio"	Distance Travelled			Total
	0-45 min.	46-80 min.	81+ min.	
Chilibulo	12	8	6	26
Frequency	8.1	8.1	9.8	
Expected	3.9	-0.1	-3.8	
Deviation	1.9	0.01	1.5	
Cell Chi2	19.67	13.11	9.84	42.62
Percent	46.15	30.77	23.08	
Row Pct.	63.16	42.11	26.09	
Col Pct.				
La Lucha	7	11	17	35
Frequency	10.9	10.9	13.2	
Expected	-3.9	0.1	3.8	
Deviation	1.4	0.0	1.1	
Cell Chi2	11.48	18.03	27.87	57.38
Percent	20.00	31.43	48.57	
Row Pct.	36.84	57.89	73.91	
Col Pct.				
Total	19	19	23	61
Frequency	31.15	31.15	37.70	100.00

Statistics For 2-Way Tables

Chi-Square=5.850 DF=2 Probability=0.0537

Missing Values=1

Source: L. Martin, Women And Employment Sample Survey, 1984

For example, 49% of the women from La Lucha must travel over eighty minutes to reach their place of work whereas only 23% of the women from Chilibulo must travel such a length of time. In comparison, 46% of the women from Chilibulo are within forty-five minutes of their place of work while only 20% of the women from La Lucha are in such proximity. As La Lucha is located further away from the city centre and the middle and upper class neighbourhoods than Chilibulo, the location of women's economic activities living in this "barrio" also tend to be further away from their area of residence. Women living in La Lucha must not only travel longer distances and spend more time travelling from their area of residence to their place of work, they must also spend a considerably greater amount of money on transportation. Women travelling from La Lucha generally spent twenty-two Sucres to travel to and from their place of work, while women from Chilibulo spent either six or twelve Sucres. The women from La Lucha were therefore obliged to spend twice as much as the women from Chilibulo. As most women working in service related activities rarely earned more than 100 sucres daily, those from La Lucha had to spend 25% of their total income on transportation.

5.4.1 Conclusion

This chapter has thus examined in a first part the links between women's socioeconomic and sociodemographic characteristics, and the nature and location of their informal activities, and in a second part, the links between women's area of residence and the nature and location of their informal activities. Women's domestic responsibilities and the financial situation of their households have been identified as the principal factors influencing the nature and location of women's informal economic activities in the informal sector. As mentioned in the early section of this chapter, it is often difficult to consider nature and location separately as they are both so closely associated to one another. Women's domestic activities, however, appear to have a stronger influence on the location of women's informal economic activities, whereas the financial situation of the household appears to have a greater influence on the nature of the activity.

As it was difficult for the women to provide exact figures as to the number of hours devoted to their domestic chores, the extent of their domestic activities was measured in terms of their number of children. The results of this study have indicated a link between number of children and the nature and location of women's informal economic activities. Of the women working within their "barrios" of residence, 65% had three or more children, while only 35%

had one or two children. In fact, most (67%) of the women with one or two children worked out of their "barrios", generally in personal service activities. Women with greater domestic pressures are less flexible, in time and in space, and thus tend to engage in home based activities. It is important to note, however, that this option is not open to all women. In this sample, 60% of the women worked in a "barrio" other than their home "barrio". For these women, child care arrangements are of utmost importance. It was shown that women with access to day care generally worked extended hours in service related activities. Day care is limited and can unfortunately accommodate but a small number of children. Most of the women not working within their "barrios" must therefore engage in economic activities which allow them to be accompanied by their children.

The results of this study also demonstrate that the nature of women's economic activities can be influenced by their household's financial situation. It was observed that female managed households, women with six children or more and women whose male counterparts earned limited incomes, tended to engage in personal service activities. Women whose male counterparts earned higher incomes, however, tended to engage in retail service activities. Women with fewer capital resources can with greater difficulties engage in economic activities involving risk. For these women, it is also more difficult to obtain the required initial capital investment, however small it may be.

Characteristics such as women's age, their level of education and their length of residency in the studied urban area do not seem to influence the nature and location of their informal economic activities. Women's informal economic activities are thus not age specific in this particular sample. Many of the women working as domestics in their adolescence, continue to engage in domestic related activities once they marry or bear children. In terms of education, many of the women in this sample are disadvantaged at the outset, by the simple fact of being female. Remunerated work for women is thus often limited to domestic related economic activities. Of equal importance to formal education, is access to "informal" education. The results of this sample do not indicate a link between the nature and location of women's informal economic activities and their length of residency in Quito. As women's activities show little room for upward mobility, it is not surprising that this link is virtually non-existent.

This analysis has demonstrated that the location of women's area of residence can, to some extent, influence the nature and location of their economic activities. Although women in both "barrios" tend to engage in service related activities, it is their retail activities which differ. The

predominance of women selling cooked food in La Lucha can be explained by its location and lack of infrastructure. As most women work in services, the majority work outside their "barrios". The percentage of income which is spent on transportation is, however, much greater for the women from La Lucha. These women also spend considerably more time travelling to and from their place of work. The economic situation of their households, as well as their lack of skills and domestic responsibilities, provides them with few options. The location of women's economic activities, in terms of locale, is however, not influenced by the location of their "barrios". Although one would tend to believe that women would remain in proximity of their homes in order to minimize the conflict between their economic and domestic activities, the realities of the employment situation provides them with few options. The limited demand for services, both retail and personal, generated in these "barrios" can explain why many women cannot work in proximity of their homes.

Chapter VI

CONCLUSION

The objective of this research has been to gain a better understanding of the employment issues concerning women of the urban poor. Special attention has been given to the nature and location of women's informal economic activities. Age, number of children, and level of education have been identified as factors which may limit women's access to formal employment. These limiting factors thus confirm those identified in the literature (age, marital status, level of education). There are, nevertheless, a series of both economic and cultural forces which also strongly influence the extent of women's participation in formal employment. As expressed by the women in this sample, the rigidity of schedules in the formal sector makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for women to obtain formal employment. Although many of the women would have preferred formal work, along with its social benefits, most indicated that formal employment opportunities were extremely scarce, and that more importantly, their obligation to fulfill a dual role would not allow them to engage in work of this nature. Most of these women are thus channelled, with few options, into informal economic

activities. For this reason, this study has focused on this particular group of women.

The links between the nature and location of women's informal activities is an area which has received little attention in the literature. As women must work extended hours in order to balance their economic and domestic activities, the types of activities they engage in, as well as the location of these activities, is of particular importance. This study has indicated that a strong link exists between the nature and location of women's informal activities. Activities in personal services are thus largely carried out in areas other than the women's home "barrio", while activities in retail services are generally carried out within the women's home "barrio". Both the extent of women's domestic activities and the financial situation of their household have been cited as the factors which most strongly influenced the nature and location of women's informal activities. Although the literature has given little consideration to the location of women's informal activities, when mentioned, it was generally assumed that women worked in proximity of their homes. The empirical evidence in this study is, however, not supportive of this. Most of the women sampled engaged in personal service activities and thus did not work in their home "barrios". Although many women would prefer to work in proximity of their homes, the employment opportunities within the

"barrios populares" are limited. There is a certain demand for retail services but extremely little demand for personal services in these areas. The often saturated number of small businesses in these communities oblige women in need of income to look to other areas for work. As the women's income is vital for their families' survival, they will often travel considerable distance and spend a considerable percentage of their income on transportation in order to obtain some form of work.

The literature has indicated that women will provide domestic related services in order to bring paid work into their homes. This study has, however, led us to believe that to many women this option is not available. Laundering has been identified as one of women's major informal activities, both in the literature and in this sample survey. The overwhelming majority of washerwomen in this sample did not work in their home "barrios". Although laundering has been identified as an activity which can be carried out at the woman's home, this does not seem very feasible for both practical (washing facilities, transportation) and social (mistrust) reasons.

As most women must engage in personal service activities, they must also work in areas which are not in proximity of their homes. In comparison to retail activities, personal service activities operate "unseen". This is perhaps one of the reasons why the literature has

identified women's homes as the location of their economic activities. The location of women's informal activities should be given further consideration in future attempts to account for women's work. Further research is, however, required as one cannot generalize from this case study.

For women who must work beyond their "barrios", child care arrangements are a constant preoccupation. Child care facilities for these women would, to some extent, lighten their domestic burden. Child care programs such as those of the "hogares infantiles" in Chilibulo should be encouraged. Such programs would not only provide most useful services to the working women, but would also create employment for other women. As most of the women in this sample had at least one child of three years or less, these services are of great importance.

The literature has indicated that women tend to withdraw from the labour market during childbearing and early childrearing years. Although this sample was limited to women engaging in an economic activity, most of the women sampled had a child of three years or less and thus had remained economically active during childbearing and early childrearing years. Considering the acuteness of the present economic situation, rising inflation, increasing unemployment and underemployment, have provided few options for the women of these households. The income provided by their economic activities has become essential, as without

it many of their children's basic needs would not be met. In terms of income, these results have demonstrated that women's income is significant and should not be considered as secondary.

The location of women's home "barrio" did not influence the locale of their informal activities as similar percentages of women worked in and out of their "barrios". In terms of distance, the women from the more peripheral "barrio" had to travel longer distances and spend a greater percentage of their income on transportation. The location of La Lucha, as well as its lack of infrastructure, explained the predominance of activities in which women sold cooked foods. This link between lack of infrastructure, distance from city centre and the selling of cooked foods was also mentioned in the literature. The results of this study indicate that regardless of the location of women's home, most women work in personal services and thus do not work in proximity of their home.

This study has confirmed that women's dual role severely limits their employment opportunities. Most women have few options but to engage in informal economic activities which offer little room for upward mobility. Nevertheless, the work performed by these women is of great value. It is important that this work be recognized not only in the eyes of the officials but also in those of the women themselves. Too often women have been led to believe that

their work is of little value. This is best explained by the fact that their economic activities are closely associated to their domestic activities, which are most often viewed as a duty. The value of women's economic activities within the household should be given due consideration in future studies dealing with the employment strategies of the urban poor. It is not sufficient to acknowledge that women are active members of the labour force. Recognition must be given for the economic value of work performed.

Although one cannot draw general conclusions from such a case study, these results can, however, point to certain trends in terms of women and informal employment. It is thus hoped that this thesis will have provided further insight on the employment strategies of women of the urban poor.

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Appendix A
QUESTIONNAIRE

LA MUJER Y EL TRABAJO

No. _____

Nombre: _____
 Dirección: _____

1. CARACTERISTICAS PERSONALES

1.1 Cuántos años cumplidos tiene usted? _____

1.2 Dónde nació? Provincia _____)
 Lugar _____)
 1.Capital de provincia _____ 3.Pueblo _____
 2.Ciudad no capital _____ 4.Campo _____

1.3 (si no nació en Quito)

Hace cuánto tiempo que vive en Quito? 1.menos de 1 año
 2.entre 1-3 años
 3.entre 3-5 años
 4.más de 5 años

1.4 Hace cuánto tiempo que vive en este barrio? 1.menos de 1 año
 2.entre 1-3 años
 3.entre 3-5 años
 4.más de 5 años

1.5 Qual es su estado civil? 1.Soltera
 2.Casada
 3.Viuda
 4.Separada
 5.Unión Libre

1.6 Hasta cuándo ha podido estudiar usted? 1.Escuela
 2.Colegio
 3.Universidad
 4.No estudió

1.7 Hasta que año llegó? _____

1.8 Ha hecho algún curso de capacitación? Si No
 En el caso positivo: De que tipo? _____

Hace cuánto tiempo? _____

1.8 Cuántos hijos vivos tiene usted? _____

1.9 Cuántos viven todavía en la casa con usted? _____

1.10 Características de hijos que viven en la casa;

Hijos	Edad	Sexo	Estudia	Año	Trabajo	Occupación	Ingreso (semanal)
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							

2. ACTIVIDADES QUE GENERAN EL INGRESO PRINCIPAL

En el caso negativo; Cuándo fue la última vez que trabajaba? _____

2.2 Que tipo de trabajo hace usted?

1) vende comida o productos hecho en casa

en casa _____
en barrio _____
fuera del barrio _____

2) tiene comercio

en casa _____
en barrio _____
fuera del barrio _____

3) vende su fuerza de trabajo

en casa -coge trabajo a domicilio _____
-la gente lleva sus artículos _____
en barrio _____
fuera del barrio _____

4) participa en un taller de producción (comunal, fuera de la casa)

en barrio _____
fuera del barrio _____

5) tiene un trabajo fijo en el sector formal

en barrio _____
fuera del barrio _____

6) otro

2.3 Trabaja usted para otra persona o por su propia cuenta?

Dependiente
Autónomo

Si es dependiente; Sector público
Sector privado
Particular

2.4 Hace cuánto tiempo que tiene este trabajo? _____

2.5 Esta segura de que la semana próxima va a tener trabajo? Si No

2.6 Si vende en calle; Necesita una autorización del municipio? Si No

2.7 Si no trabaja en casa; Cuánto tiempo necesita para llegar a su trabajo? _____

Qué tipo de transporte utiliza? _____

2.8 Cuánto más o menos gana por semana?
1. hasta/200 sucres
2. entre 201-600
3. entre 601-1,000
4. entre 1,001-1,500
5. entre 1,501-2,000
6. más de 2,001

2.9 Esta afiliada? Si No

2.10 Cuántos días por semana trabaja usted? _____

2.11 A qué hora del día trabaja usted? _____

2.12 A qué hora se dedica a sus actividades domésticas?

2.13 Cuando trabaja, qué hace con sus niños?

- 1. Guardería
- 2. En casa
- 3. Vecinos
- 4. Parientes

- 5. Escuela
- 6. La acompañan
- 7. Otro

2.14 En qué trabajó antes de ser _____?

2.15 Pertenece usted a una organización o asociación? Si No
En el caso positivo; Qué tipo? _____

2.16 Y su marido, trabaja? Si No
En el caso negativo, pasa a 2.22

2.17 En qué tipo de trabajo?

1) vende comida o productos hecho en casa

en casa _____
en barrio _____
fuera del barrio _____

2) tiene comercio

en casa _____
en barrio _____
fuera del barrio _____

3) vende su fuerza de trabajo

en casa _____
en barrio _____
fuera del barrio _____

4) participa en un taller de producción

en barrio _____
fuera del barrio _____

5) tiene un trabajo fijo en el sector formal

en barrio _____
fuera del barrio _____

6) otro

2.18 Trabaja para otra persona o por su propia cuenta?

Dependiente
Autónomo

Si es dependiente; Sector publico
Sector privado
Particular

2.19 Esta seguro él que la semana próxima va a tener trabajo? Si No

2.20 Cuánto más o menos gana por semana?

- 1. hasta 200 sucres
- 2. entre 201-600
- 3. entre 601-1,000
- 4. entre 1,001-1,500
- 5. entre 1,501-2,000
- 6. más de 2,001

2.21 Es afiliado? Si No

2.22 SI NO TRABAJA; Por qué no trabaja?

1. enfermo
2. no hay trabajo
3. busca trabajo
4. fue expulsado
5. no quiere
6. otro _____

2.23 Arrienda su vivienda?

Si

No

En el caso negativo; propietario
otro

En el caso positivo; Cuánto paga, mensual? _____

PREGUNTAS ABIERTAS

- 1) Hay una razón particular por la cual hace este tipo de trabajo?
- 2) Si sería posible, preferiría usted un trabajo fijo, con sueldo fijo? Por qué?
- 3) Le gusta su trabajo?
- 4) Qué problemas tiene con su trabajo?
- 5) Hay una razón particular por la cual usted trabaja en _____ (la casa, el barrio o fuera del barrio)?