

Education, Poverty and Crime: Links of Violence in Mexico?

Educación, pobreza y delincuencia: ¿nexos de la violencia en México?

Henio Millán-Valenzuela  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0115-0636>

El Colegio Mexiquense A.C., México, hmillan@cmq.edu.mx

Eduardo Pérez-Archundia  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2685-7347>

*Instituto Superior de Ciencias de la Educación del Estado de México, México,
eperarc@hotmail.com*

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Translated by
Luis Cejudo
Espinosa

Abstract: The goal is to analyze the influence of poverty and education on crime, especially on the recent wave of violence in Mexico. The methodology used consists in ten lineal regression models, which proceed in a deductive way, up to when determination coefficient does not increase. Results point out that influence is indirect in the case of violent crime; and direct, in the rest of cases. In both, crime prevails when certain low threshold of poverty and high level of educational are reached. First conclusion: the rent-extraction model of political management imposes these conditions; this way, it sets up an administrated impunity. Second: when the State becomes weak and loses control, owing to power dispersion and neo-liberal policies, impunity becomes generalized and loses its administrated character. This way violent crime is unlashd.

Key words: education, poverty, crime, violence, Mexico.

Resumen: El objetivo es examinar la influencia de la pobreza y la educación sobre la delincuencia, especialmente en la reciente ola de violencia en México. La metodología consiste en diez modelos de regresión lineal, que se suceden en forma deductiva, hasta que el coeficiente de determinación no aumenta. Los resultados indican que la influencia es indirecta en el caso de los delitos violentos, y directa, en el resto de los del fuero común. En ambos casos, la delincuencia se impone con ciertos umbrales bajos de pobreza y altos del promedio de escolaridad. Primera conclusión: este condicionamiento es suministrado por el modelo rentista de gestión política, que instala una impunidad administrada; y segunda: cuando el Estado se debilita y pierde el control, debido a la dispersión del poder y las políticas neoliberales, la impunidad se generaliza y pierde su carácter administrado. Así se desata la delincuencia violenta.

Palabras clave: educación, pobreza, delincuencia, violencia, México.

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Introduction

Mexico experiences a great social violence crisis; probably the largest in its history. There is alarm everywhere and it has produced a number of explanations. The most usual is the one that points at poverty and lack of education opportunities as the structural causes, which have to be dealt with by means of public policies. A poorer and more educated society, it is thought, will produce a lower crime rate, including the one that notoriously involves violence. On one side, some national cases support this stance: Switzerland, Japan, Canada and the Scandinavian countries (Meghir *et al.*, 2012); while on the other, one notices Sub-Saharan countries (Hjalmarsson and Lochner, 2012).

Following this idea unfolds a series of suppositions regarding the human behavior that modernity has propitiated, whereas this series has been undermined by pre- and postmodernity. The first of them is that individuals pursue their own interests, however society restricts this search up to constraining it solely to the sphere of legality. In this way, such interest is socially modified to the extent that the net result of the benefit—determined by the risk of being punished and how severely—becomes a sufficiently powerful incentive to inhibit criminal behaviors.

This is according to Hobbes' vision of modernity (Hobbes, 1982: 1651). The second is that education decisively contributes to contain such drives or, as Rosseau considered (2000: 1972), reconvert them to produce a natural good man. In any case, the idea is that education conveys invaluable teachings: the arrangement of social life according to Virtue, which makes it possible for free and solidary citizens to appear. According to this thinker, progress would be the vessel to escape from poverty; so, there is no incentive for crime. Though it is not enough: searching for wealth for proper interests has to be halted by a State that banishes impunity, and also by education that convinces that social harmony is the best form in which individuals can coexists in community.

In this regard, the relationships that links better schooling to lower crime rates has been endorsed by other researchers. For instance, Nateras and Zaragoza (2017) point out that in Mexico, dropping out of school is one of the determining sociodemographic factors of crime. Similarly, in Uruguay, arrested adolescents are usually men with low schooling levels, who have experienced trouble to access education and job opportunities (Trajtenberg and Eisner, 2015). Moreover, Huang (2016) states that the relationship between crime and education is crossed over high school dropping.

However, the link of crime to poverty is less clear. The national cases above have some counterexamples: Italy, where in parallel to an acceptable welfare level there are criminal activities, not only in the more traditional south, but also in other regions of the country. In Mexico, one notices that violence proliferates where communities are more prosperous; while, in states such as Oaxaca and Chiapas, it is far from those levels, despite these states have higher poverty levels.

Owing to this, the weakness of this link is more stressed in the case of education and so have stated authors such as Guillén (2006), Ortega (2010), Nateras and Zaragoza (2017), Trajtenberg and Eisner (2015). All of them have declared poverty is not a decisive factor to explain crime: there are other factors that activate individual predisposition to commit a crime, and poverty is not one of them.

The goal of this research work is to review the relationships between education, poverty and crime since: a) the link between crime and poverty is ambiguous, and in any case, it has to be distinguished from social transgressions associated with violence and those unrelated; and, b) education does not necessarily acts as expected by the paradigm of modernity, in the sense that schooling reduces poverty and lowers crime. In point of fact, by means of ten linear regression models various results are obtained: poverty and education do not *directly* influence on criminal violence, nevertheless they do act on it indirectly: by means of crimes against health.¹

The second term, common crime, free from violence, is directly affected by poverty and schooling level, though in the opposite direction commonly considered: a more educated society, according to Tierney (2015) and Hannum *et al.* (2017), will alleviate poverty and its consequences, among which we find crime incidence, even that which entails a great deal of violence. The results of the present research indicate otherwise.

The consequence of these results for public policy as regards education and poverty alleviation is indeed valuable, to the extent it enriches the development of the capabilities of individuals (Sen, 2000). Its promotion does not offer short-term achievements in terms of violence reduction, but in terms of common crime. This means that while the latter is an expression of the sociodemographic conditions, violence obeys other factors, closer to the configuration of entrepreneurial activity, in which education level provides, though not necessarily, a profitable input.

1 In Mexico, drug trafficking is considered a “crime against health”.

These results guide the exposition of the following lines. In the first section, methodology is presented, which considers ten models divided according to the violent and non-violent nature of crime. The purpose is to find distinctive and similar elements that characterize them. In the following section, results are presented with a view to analyzing links between education, poverty and crime. Firstly, the role they have in the proliferation of criminal violence; then, this is carried out for common crime, excluding intentional homicide. In the third section, an interpretation of the results is assayed, supported on the hybrid characteristics of the Mexican political system and its deviation toward a scheme of managed impunity, which recently went out of hand once political power decentralized. The final section presents the conclusions.

Methodology and results

Although crime violence may express in a number of dimensions, intentional homicides are usually a good *proxy*² of aggressiveness. The reason is intentional homicides exhibit violence at its most extreme degree, and also pose an advantage for researchers: its denounce occurs more frequently and its registration is more accurate. Other crimes such as violent robbery or aggressions are not always denounced (Zepeda, 2004); and, in this entry, it is common for figures from *Secretariado Ejecutivo del Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública* [Executive Secretariat of the Public Security National System] (SESNSP, 2018) and *Encuesta Nacional de Victimización y Percepción sobre la Seguridad Pública*, ENVIPE [National survey on Victimization and Public Security Perception] to noticeably diverge (INEGI, 2017a).

In this sense, the variable selected to give an account of criminal violence is crime rate per 100,000 inhabitants; figures are directly provided by SESNSP (2018). The same is for the other two indices used in this exploration: crimes against health and common crimes (net homicide numbers).

These data allow distinguishing criminal activities as violent and that in which violence may be involved though it is not the essence of the activity neither is it utilized to annihilate the victim. Differentiation is important for this work's purposes because we will try to prove what is intuitively thought: both sorts of aggression respond to different logics, and only indirectly can they be linked to education and poverty.

2 It is a variable close to another variable when the latter cannot be directly mediated.

In order to study them, a ten-model methodology is proposed, as it admits a general classification, where two are dependent variables: intentional homicide rate and common crime rate, excluding the former. The search for the determinants of both unfolds deductively to the extent the estimation tries, discards and retains relevant factors. When these are identified as significant determinants, they take the place of the dependent variable in the following model, up to the adjustment (approximated by the determination coefficient) indicates it cannot be improved by adding variables associated to poverty-inequality and/or education.

The first comprise the incidences of poverty and extreme poverty and also Gini Index. The latter, the proportion of people with education delays, average schooling, dropout rate in intermediate education and education bonus. All the variables, dependent and explanatory, are supported on figures recorded by each of the federated states. Sources are as follows: poverty, inequality and education delays figures are from CONEVAL (2017); and, middle school dropout rate and schooling average from SNIEE (2017).

The education bonus deserves a separate explanation. It refers to the state mean income that one schooling year gives or takes in relation to the national referent. It is then, the difference between the (potential) *per capita* product a state should record only if it accounted for schooling level (regarding the national) and *per capita* GDP which it effectively has.³ It is formally calculated as follows:

1st The following semilogarithmic regression is calculated:

$$\ln PIBpcE_i = \alpha + \beta ESE_i + e_i$$

Where $\ln PIBpcE_i$ is the logarithm of the *per capita* GDP of the i-nth federated state; and, ESE_i , its mean schooling level; e_i , regression residue. α is the regression constant; and, β the regressor, which accounts for the variation or the percentage difference that comes from one school year, regarding the national average.

$$\frac{d PIBpcE}{PIBpcE} = \beta d ESE$$

The result of the estimations is presented in table 1.⁴

3 *Per capita* PIB figures were taken from INEGI (2017b) and Conapo (2017).

4 Tables and graphs are in the Annex, at the end of the present article (Editor's note).

2nd Calculation of potential **PIBpcE**, which would correspond only to schooling level. This calculation is estimated as a percentage difference regarding national referents:

$$PIBpcP_i = PIBpcN [1 + (ESE_i - ESN) 0.424]$$

Where, *PIBpcP_i* is the potential product of the i-nth state; *PIBpcN*, *per capita* national GDP; and, *ESN*, mean schooling in Mexico.

3rd Estimation of the education bonus (or punishment), in percentage:

$$PES_i = \frac{PIBpcE_i}{PIBpcP_i} - 1$$

Or, alternatively:

$$1 + PES_i = \frac{PIBpcE_i}{PIBpcP_i}$$

In this way, if:

- $PES_i > 0$ or, alternatively, $\frac{PIBpcE_i}{PIBpcP_i} > 1$,
the state has a greater *per capita income* than it should have, if solely the schooling degree would be considered.
- $PES_i = 0$ or, alternatively, $\frac{PIBpcE_i}{PIBpcP_i} = 1$,
the state has the same *per capita income* as it would correspond to its mean schooling.
- $PES_i < 0$ or, alternatively, $\frac{PIBpcE_i}{PIBpcP_i} < 1$,
if the state would have a lower *per capita income* than it should have, if only schooling would be considered.

The reason to incorporate the education bonus follows the usual interpretation, according to which returns from education influence on crime, as long as it represents a more profitable economic activity. The reason for this argumentation is to be found in the predominantly instrumental character that the discourse of modernity provides education with: it should serve to integrate into the labor markets and earn an income.

This is the logic behind the earliest works on human capital (Becker, 1980): people invest on education expecting to obtain an income to compensate the expenses involved, and besides, to supply a surplus that allows increasing the level of life that there would be in the absence of such investment. When education does not offer such return, rational actors will look for alternative activities; among them, crime, if the expected benefit is higher (a benefit weighed by the risk of being punished). By virtue of the high degree of impunity in Mexico and the expansion of education opportunities, which has become a relative decline of the education bonus (Millán, 2013). The bonus is expected to be relevant; this will be analyzed later in the text.

In any case, the analytical structure of the ten models is presented by means of this general formula:

$$Y_{ij} = \gamma + \beta_k \sum_{k=1}^n X_{jk} + u_{ij}$$
$$X_{jk}^* = \delta + \rho_q \sum_{q=1}^m Z_{jkq} + \varepsilon_{jk}$$

Where, Y_{ij} is the j-nth crime or social phenomenon of the i-nth federated state, which is explained by the determinant X_{jk} ; and u_{ij} is the linear regression error term. X_{jk}^* are statistically relevant independent variables and Z_{jkq} , their determinants.

The generation of models operates sequentially. It starts enquiring on the determinants of violent crimes, on one side, and common crimes without homicides on the other. Then, it goes on to the determinants. The process stops when the determination coefficient lowers or does not change.

Results

Due to a point of order, the analysis of results was divided into two sections: in the first, the influence of education and poverty on violence; in the second, they are examined in relation to non-violent crime: that not associated to intentional homicide. The results of the estimation are presented in Table 2.

Criminal violence: education, poverty, and intentional homicide rate

Violence expresses in various manners. However, the war on drug cartels of the Mexican State, started in 2006, not only has it relaunched violence up to reaching unprecedented levels, but also has been related more frequently to its extreme expression: intentional homicide. Owing to this, the homicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants was chosen as a *proxy* for this social phenomenon.

Precisely because its evolution is associated with this war, intuition guided us to a first model, which makes this index depend on the rate of crimes against health. As noticed in Model 1, this variable is statistically significant and shows a positive relation with intentional homicides per 100,000 inhabitants; this rate increases (or decreases) when that reason for crime does.

However, the determination coefficient (R^2) shows that the latter is responsible for 31.6% of the differences that, in this regard, display the Mexican states. Owing to this, socioeconomic and educational variables are added in the second and third model, respectively; in both models, crime rate is still significant, but its explanatory capacity slightly increases (from 2.255 to 2.512 and 2.449, respectively). What is surprising is that none of the sets of explanatory variables –moderate and extreme poverty, and inequality, on one side, and dropping out of school, average schooling, and education bonus and delay on the other– were significant. What's more, the determination coefficient, which had to increase with the inclusion of more arguments, remains unaltered or decreases a little.

This means that the rest of the explanatory factors of violences has to be sought somewhere else, not in poverty and inequality or in education opportunities, as a sociological easiness.

Though the actual meaning of that indetermination is in the results of models 4 and 5. By means of them, we enquire on the causal factors of the rate of crimes against health, which explains at once the discrepancies which, in homicides, are recorded in the 32 States. In both, moderate

poverty incidence affects this new dependent variable, and does so with about 30% of the explanation. Extreme poverty, inequality and educative phenomena do not contribute to that task whatsoever. What these results express is that poverty influences, though only *indirectly* on national violence. And, in second term, causality takes place in the opposite direction usually given to this relationship: a decrease (increase) of moderate poverty increases (lowers) the rate of crimes against health, and in this way, increases (decreases) criminal violence.

Owing to this, it is congruent with the panorama of the Mexican geography: in States with wealthier societies, as in the north and central pacific regions, narco and intentional murders proliferate, which in their southern-southeastern counterparts, where poverty is higher and the rate of crimes against health, are fewer. This relation is displayed in graphs 1, 2, and 3.

One first conclusion is that poverty has an influence on violence only in the presence of some form of drug trafficking in society; on the contrary, there is no influence. The reason is that activities associated with drugs proliferate in non-poor societies; or else, where there is money and it is distributed in a relatively reasonable manner so that poverty is not a widespread phenomenon. Table 3 shows the correlation.

As observed, thus far no ascendance of educational factors over violent crime is noticed, neither over its main determinant: drug trafficking. However, Model 6 opens the way for such influence. It shows that poverty, which negatively affects, violence by means of crimes against health, is determined by only one educational factor: mean schooling. Neither inequality nor other educational components such as dropping out or the bonus affect the proportion of poor in the population. Neither does inequality, according to GINI. What's more, means schooling exhibits a very high explanatory level for the incidence of poverty: around 75%, as displayed by the adjusted determination coefficient.

The finding above allows outlining the causal chain: higher (lower) mean schooling reduces (increases) the state poverty incidence; for its part, this influence stimulates (inhibits) the proliferation of crimes against health. By doing so, intentional homicides per 100,000 inhabitants increase (decrease), which was chosen as criminal violence *proxy*. Therefore, educational factors and poverty influence on violence indirectly: as long as they reflect in a variation of the rate of crimes against health; however, they do so in an opposite direction to the usual.

The inclusion of education bonus has a purpose: to assess the hypothesis that criminal activities, especially the violent ones, compete with the education bonus. Millán (2013) has demonstrated that those offered by intermediate and higher education have reduced regarding those of basic education. It is an evolution over time, which is linked to the growing offer of labor force with secondary schooling, in a context of poor dynamism of skilled labor force demand, spurred by the low economic growth pace of the sectors that support capital accumulation in Mexico.

In this way, it would be expectable that in the States of the Mexican republic with higher education bonuses, crime rates would be lower. However, the significance level and correlation coefficient both show that it has not been the case when the analysis is run transversally for the purpose of underscoring differences between federated States.⁵ With this, the general belief that education competes with criminal activities, in terms of returns, is disproven.

Common crime (with no intentional homicides)

Intentional homicides are part of common crimes, though we decided to exclude them to focus on non-violent or acts or with lessened violence in the sense that they do not end up taking someone's life intentionally. The goal—to say it in clearer terms—is to separate the violence most likely linked to drug trafficking from other sort of transgressions that may or not include violence, but not with the intention of killing the victims, and which mainly follow a logic other than the economy of drugs.

Model 7 tries the determination of socioeconomic variables (poverty and inequality) and educational (dropping out of intermediate schooling and mean schooling), by resorting to the same regression model. The results state that none of these variables explains the rate of common crimes, exempt from homicides. This is so when both groups are jointly operated; however, when taken on their own, poverty incidence (Model 8) or mean schooling (Model 9), both variables are statistically significant and explain between 25.8 and 23% of crime rate state discrepancies. For its part, model 10 states that not even poverty and education together are capable of explaining the latter.

5 Pearson's correlation coefficient between education bonus, on one side, and the rates of common crime, crimes against health and homicides on the other, were not statistically significant.

Political system and impunity: the hybrid return model and power dispersion

To find the meaning of these data, it is convenient to analyze the results. In the first place, poverty incidence and mean schooling cancel their influence in the presence of other socioeconomic and educational variables, which reveals the inability of both to influence on crime rate. This fact banishes two resorted expressions: crime may be caused by inequality to the extent that a higher income concentration produces a feeling of social “envy” or frustrations, which drive individuals to violence and/or crime, which for its part, allows leveling via illegal means. Neither in the case of intentional homicides nor common crimes that exclude them is this proposal true.

Seemingly, social inequality does not unleash collective or individual illegality movements, as unjust as it seems. Its presence cancels the determining effect of poverty and education, which means that, in a poor society, or not so poor, though more educated, there is a tendency to accept inequality or to disassociate it from the sentiment of injustice.

The reasons are several. The median voter theorem (Downs, 1957) predicts that democracy will boost distributive policies (Milanovic, 2000). Analogously, it may be argued that when this is not so, either because there are no public management democratic mechanisms or because these do not lead to such predictions (Benhabib and Przeworski, 2006), illegal mechanisms activate and carry out a determinate deliberate redistribution. This does not seem to be the case, nevertheless.

Shapiro (2003) argues there are three elements that prevent such distribution: physical separation between rich and poor; gulfs of empathy that lead the less fortunate to admire and try to emulate the wealthiest; and the marginalization of the poor operated by middle and upper classes. The three components work in Mexico to avoid that inequality produces a feeling of injustice which over time will produce more crime as a redistributive strategy.

The reason is that inequality crosses wealthy and modern and poor and pre-modern societies in like manner.⁶ Albeit, in them, disparity is processed differently. In premodern societies, ruled by personal links and extra-interested social-cohesion mechanisms, the individuation process is virtually inexistent. In this regard, all manner of social differentiation, including individual crime, is inhibited by control and self-control mechanisms the community exercises (Boix, 2015): from mockery and social despise to extra-legal punishment (lynching is an extreme case).

6 Pearson's correlation coefficient between Gini index and *per capita* State GDP was 0.069, and not significant: sig.: 0.709.

In these demographic centers, crime —when it takes place— holds a common feature associated with justice and collective participation, which provide crime with a high degree of legitimacy. While inequality does not confer them with such sense of inequality, they are communities inside broader conglomerates, marked by hierarchical status, which comes from a determinate natural order, to the extent that such stratification is necessary for survival.

Furthermore, in modern societies, individuation processes are intense, and to a good extent, definers of such societies. The incentive to differentiate via crime intended to increase wealth is large. However, they also regulate by means of meritocratic criteria, which imprint a nature free from injustice on inequality. Before “social envy” is caused, it activates a feeling of charm toward those with the most, which are usually nourished by the dissemination of the life styles of the wealthiest on TV.

There, biographies that deeply connect everyone (passions, feelings and problems) are exhibited despite the physical distance and marginalization that separate rich and poor. This same process of “charm” caused by the XIX-century novels to extent the recognition of human rights for every race and population strata (Hunt, 2008). These mechanisms usually banish inequality from the causals of common crime.

Secondly, we have to pay attention to the sense of causality of determinants. As in the case of the rate of intentional homicides, a decrease (increase) of poverty or an increase (decreases) of mean schooling pushes the increase (decrease) common crimes, exempt from those transgressions. The explanation is similar: prosperity is a condition for crime to become attractive. However, it is not enough, an additional ingredient is necessary: impunity. In traditional societies, penury and resource scarcity usually prevail, at once there are informal mechanisms to punish transgression. But also, apprehension to preserve the customs and regulations that rule social coexistence, as well as the quasi-familial nature of such communities make impunity highly improbable: even the closest character becomes a vigilant and potential whistleblower of the transgressor.

In this way, it is complex that someone comes out unpunished. In these premodern communities, poverty has a more noticeable influence, while schooling level is usually lower. In this regard, the sign of causality is easily explained: higher poverty and lower schooling lead, in combination and with lower impunity, toward a lower crime rate.

At the other end, modern societies are usually more prosperous, but also more law-abiding. The first active quality was a strong incentive to engage

in crime; though, this is hindered by a more efficacious application of legal prescriptions. North American and Occidental European countries are instances of this: lower poverty and better generalized schooling tend to decrease crime rates.

However, it is worth wondering about hybrid examples, as it is the case of Mexico. Premodern and modern communities coexist almost as of their appearance. Their respective attempts to prevail virtually lead to constant conflicts from the end of the XVIII to the last third of the XIX, which often ended up in armed confrontations. In this way, it may be understood that attempts to modernize the Bourbon reforms, the liberals, and the boost by Salinas de Gortari were followed by the independence wars, the 1910 Revolution and the Chiapas' uprising, respectively. Men in Reform and Porfiriato found the solution, which post-revolutionaries continued: the balance between social actors, woven by a managed distance between the law and its enforcement.

The presence of legal dispositions met the demands of the modern; the discretionary application, those of the premodern. In this way, there appears a "soft" institutionalism, which makes room for a strong Executive and ruling capabilities, which apart from formal faculties holds others of metaconstitutional nature. The dilemma between governability and democracy was solved by means of the sacrifice of this regime; however, also by means of the creation of a vigorous State capable of penetrating the most remote dimensions of the social sphere, and ruling all the society.

However, the most important consequence for the present purposes was the appearance of a degenerated sort of modernity: rentier capitalism. Balance between social actors, the ruling of their potential conflicts and those that appeared between political elites demanded concessions for quasi-monolithic entrepreneurs and the configuration of a corporate schema that delivered another monopoly to unions and social organizations: that of guild representation. In them, mechanisms of elitist welfare management, independent from productivity and oriented toward profit obtaining proliferated.

Rentier capitalism is supported on the privilege granted by closeness to power and in the delegation of its mechanisms. It goes from the union leader, who exercises veto power on education and energy policies, to the bureaucrat who is able to obtain a bribe from the citizen asking for a determinate service. Though also from the large entrepreneur who receives special benefits from high authorities to the inspector that "turns a blind eye" when inspecting, for example, a place of work, in return for a bribe. In all

these cases, there are exceptions to the law in exchange of revenues not linked to productivity and labor effort. Then, impunity installs as a discretionary form to maintain the balance of actors, nevertheless, this is *managed* impunity, subject to the ruling needs this balance requires.

However, for someone to obtain a revenue, it is necessary that another agent produces it. This was noticed by Ricardo (1988) as he marked the conflictive association between agricultural entrepreneurs and landlords. Prosperity is stimulated in order for that to be possible, though in the end it means a long-term brake. And such prosperity is driven by modern actors in society.

In this way, the premodern rentier model enables certain prosperity limited by profits, though it also sets the *basis* to *manage* impunity. Both are essential to keep the balance that enables governability. In this way, the two conditions are cemented for poverty incidence to negatively relate common crime rate.

The novelty is that the same correlation is made with the rate of violent crimes: intentional homicides. For it to operate and violence to unleash, it is necessary that impunity loses its *managed nature* because in this way, the cost of falling in transgressions and the risk of being punished reduces. The loss was triggered by the weakening of the State and the undermining, up to disappearing, of the ruling capacities of the Executive. Previously, the State machinery and the central role the President, his delegates (ministers, governors, and municipal presidents) and the official party had in what Michael Mann (cited by Loaeza, 2010) called infrastructural power and despotic power, made it possible to have stability and social peace under control. These were the penetration of hegemony in all the geographic areas and in all social-base relationships, as well as in the subjection of the elites to the political leaders, respectively.

With the arrival of democracy, power dispersed between the congress, political parties and governors, as well as factual powers, to the detriment of the Executive; which lost its ruling capacity. While for their part, neoliberal policies dismantled the infrastructural power by cutting social programs or subjecting them to technical and budgetary criteria in a privileged manner (Loaeza, 2010). In this way, the State lost control of large social sectors and noticeable geographic spaces. In this way, the managed nature of impunity was lost. The gaps it left were filled by the factual powers engaged in illegal and violent activities, which led to *widespread impunity*. Rentier capitalism recruited a new social actor, now without state control: organized crime, specially associated with drug trafficking. Owing to this, poverty affects the intentional homicides' rate only through crimes against health.

The final aspect to be analyzed is the role of intermediate education. This is positively related to the rest of common crimes; though, unlike intentional homicides, influence is direct. A more educated society is more prone to common crime; nevertheless, the conjunction of poverty leads to the disappearance of the explanatory capacity of those variables. The message may be that the presence of one of them is a necessary and sufficient condition to activate interstate variations of common crime.

However, data verify that both variables coexist indissolubly. Therefore, Model 10 must be considered a spurious schema; and it is so: the regression equation that generates it has strong collinearity between education and poverty. In point of fact, as revealed by Model 6, the incidence of poverty may be expressed as a linear combination of the mean schooling. If this relationship is validated, then the right reading is that this mean reduces (increases) poverty and such decrease (boost) increases the rate of common crime, exempt from intentional homicides.

Conclusions

Poverty, education and crime are associated, but their influence on violence is indirect. The contrary takes place with non-violent common crime, on which they influence directly. In order for them to be mortal aggressions, it is necessary that transgressions that attack health are rooted in a certain society. This rooting however is associated with changes experienced by the Mexican political system. Supported on two pillars —corporatism and presidentialism—, it was devised for a later purpose: manage governability, in the face of a panorama where social heterogeneity was a continual and legitimate threat for it and for social stability. The solution was a compromise between modern and premodern actors, woven with the managed administration of law.

Maintaining this system needed an Executive with ruling capacity, as well as a State capable of imposing its dominion everywhere and upon every actor in society. In this way, impunity settles, but it is managed by virtue of the control of the State of almost all the social problems. With the arrival of democracy and neoliberal policies, the State lost control because power scatters among elites and the presence of the State in daily life is diluted. Hence, impunity stops being *managed* and *becomes widespread*: the brakes that restrain violence were loosen.

In the case of less violent crimes —common crimes, exempt from intentional homicides—, poverty directly influences on the rate that

measures them. But it does in the opposite direction to the usually expected: a higher prevalence reduces the rate, another lower, increases it. The key of this relationship is the existence of a rentier model: a distorted hybrid of modernity and premodernity. Which lacks the traditional mechanisms that inhibit transgression, by means of social disapproval and high punishing efficacy, at once it stimulates, and —sequentially and pendularly— restricts production

It is the typical accumulation–redistribution cycle. However, in such cycle a modern tendency toward higher prosperity is imposed for it is the material base of income accumulation. In this way, they root the lax use of law, which leads to daily impunity and a wealthier society. Here, where those two elements concur, poverty negatively relates with common crime rate, without counting intentional homicides.

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Annex

Table 1

GDP percentage difference per schooling year

	B	t	Sig.	Adjusted R2
Constant	7.849	10.198	0	0.448
Mean schooling	0.424	5.111	0	
Depending on: LnPIBpcE				

Source: Own elaboration based on data from: INEGI, 2017b; SNIEE, 2017; Conapo, 2017.

Table 2
 Linear estimation of the determinants of intentional crime rate and common crime, without intentional crimes

	Explanatory variables	Coefficients	t	Sig	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F
Model 1	Constant	9.44	1.92	0.640	0.338	0.316	15.33
	Rate of crimes against health	2.255	3.916	0.000			
	Dependent: Rate of crimes against health						
	Constant	63.032	1.122	0.272	0.403	0.314	17.45
Model 2	Rate of crimes against health	2.512	3.482	0.002			
	Poverty incidence	0.192	0.397	0.695			
	Extreme poverty incidence	0.373	0.396	0.695			
	GINI index 2014	-137.376	-1.236	0.227			
Model 3	Dependent: intentional homicides rate						
	Constant	-11.136	-0.063	0.95	0.413	0.296	3.51
	Rate of crimes against health	2.449	3.765	0.001			
	Intermediate school drop out	0.944	0.825	0.417			
Model 3	Mean schooling	-0.55	-0.037	0.971			
	State education bonus	-0.066	-0.69	0.497			
	Percentage of people with education delay	0.885	0.378	0.709			
	Dependent: Rate of crimes against health						

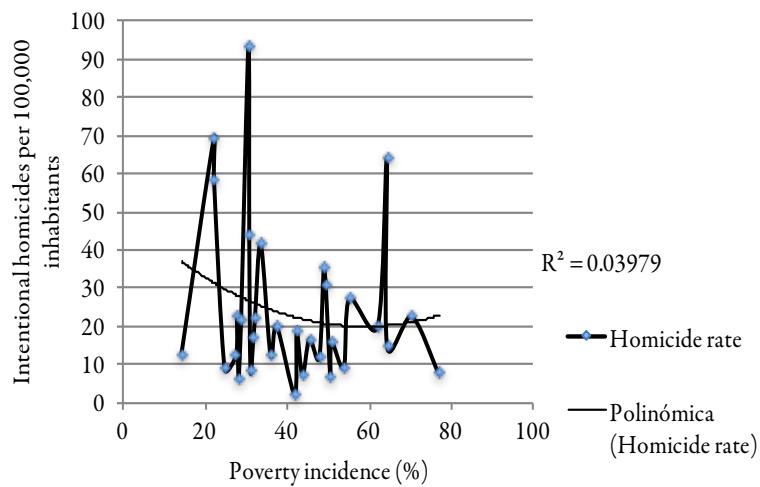
Explanatory variables		Coefficients	t	Sig	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F
Model 4	Constant	28.588	2.088	0.046	0.361	0.293	5.28
	Poverty incidence	-0.339	-3.093	0.004			
	Extreme poverty incidence	0.398	1.695	0.101			
	GINI index 2014	-22.248	-0.772	0.446			
	Dependent: Rate of crimes against health						
Model 5	Constant	6.786	0.143	0.887	0.402	0.309	4.36
	Poverty incidence	-0.351	-3.214	0.003			
	Mean schooling	0.429	0.107	0.915			
	Percentage of people with education delay	0.692	1.192	0.244			
	State education bonus	-0.025	-1.038	0.309			
Modelo 6	Constant	152.701	4.895	0.000	0.769	0.753	48.17
	Mean schooling	-15.863	-8.922	0.000			
	GINI index 2014	73.988	1.578	0.125			
	Dependent: Poverty incidence						

Explanatory variables		Coefficients	t	Sig	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F
Model 7	Constant	2163.353	0.537	0.595	0.314	0.212	3.08
	Poverty incidence	-15.492	-0.871	0.391			
	GINI index 2014	-4312.447	-0.92	0.366			
	Intermediate school drop out	4.208	0.091	0.928			
	Mean schooling	214.936	0.651	0.52			
Dependent: common crime rate without intentional homicides							
Model 8	Constant	2682.433	7.297	0	0.282	0.258	11.77
	Poverty incidence	-28.679	-3.432	0.002			
	Dependent: common crime rate without intentional homicides						
Model 9	(Constant)	-3282.478	-2.199	0.036	0.256	0.231	10.32
	Mean schooling	516.965	3.212	0.003			
	Dependent: common crime rate without intentional homicides						
Model 10	(Constant)	610.079	0.171	0.865	0.291	0.242	5.95
	Mean schooling	185.512	0.582	0.565			
	Poverty incidence	-19.958	-1.202	0.239			
Dependent: common crime rate without intentional homicides							

Source: Own elaboration with data from Coneval, 2017; SESNSP, 2018; and, SNIEE, 2017.

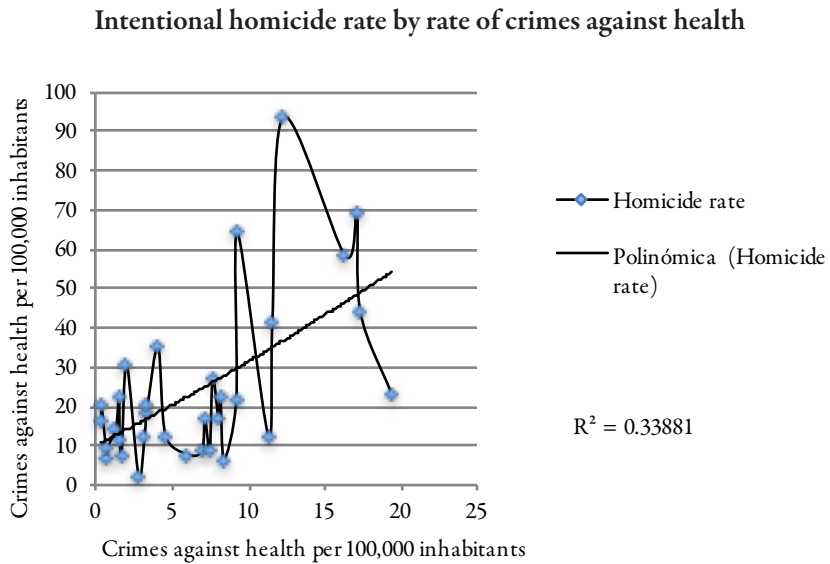
Graph 1

Intentional homicide rate by poverty incidence



Source: Own elaboration based on data from Coneval, 2017, and SESNSP, 2018.

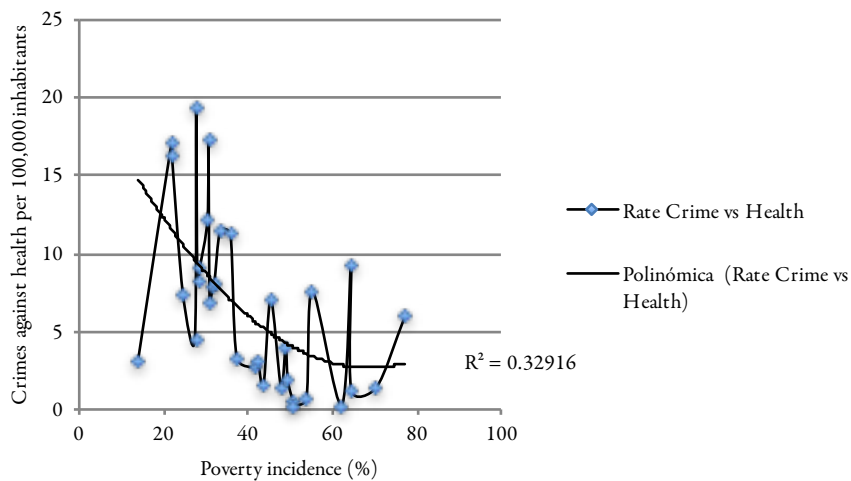
Graph 2



Source: Own elaboration based on data from SESNSP, 2018.

Graph 3

Rate of crimes against health and poverty incidence



Source: Coneval, 2017, and SESNSP, 2018.

Table 3

Correlation between poverty incidence and rate of crimes against health

Correlations		Poverty incidence	Rate of crimes against health
Poverty incidence	Pearson's correlation	1	-.540**
	Sig. (2-tails)		0.001
Rate of crimes vs health	Pearson's correlation	-.540**	1
	Sig. (2-tails)	0.001	

Source: Own elaboration based on data from Coneval, 2017; SESNSP, 2018.

Henio Gonzalo Millán-Valenzuela. Doctor in Social and Political Sciences from Universidad Iberoamericana; Master in Economy from CIDE, and Graduate in History from UAM-Iztapalapa. A member of the National System of Researchers, level 3. In 2014, he was awarded with *Premio de Ciencia y Tecnología* from Consejo Mexiquense de Ciencia y Tecnología. A researcher in El Colegio Mexiquense since 1995. Research lines: democracy and institutions; poverty and development. Recent publications: Millán-Valenzuela, Henio Gonzalo (2018), “Trampas de la pobreza en México: ¿economía o política?”, in *Intersticios Sociales*, vol. 8, no. 15, Mexico: El Colegio de Jalisco, A.C.; Millán-Valenzuela, Henio Gonzalo (2018), “Trabajo y vulnerabilidad hacia la pobreza”, in Porras, Iván, Fabián, Leodegario and Noriega, Fernando [coords.], *El mercado de trabajo: visiones alternativas*, Mexico: Universidad Autónoma “Benito Juárez” de Oaxaca.

Eduardo Pérez-Archundia. Doctor in Social and Political Sciences, researcher professor in Instituto Superior de Ciencias de la Educación del Estado de México and representative Academic Staff “Perspectives and actors of social coexistence”. Research lines: violence at schools and school inclusion. Recent publications: Pérez-Archundia, Eduardo and Guerrero, Diana (2016), “La inclusión armónica desde la educación para la paz y la planeación de la convivencia”, in *Revista Ra Ximhai*, vol. 12, no. 3, January–June, Mexico: Universidad Autónoma Indígena de México; Pérez-Archundia, Eduardo and Gutiérrez, David (2016), “El conflicto en las instituciones escolares”, in *Revista Ra Ximhai*, vol. 12, no. 3, January–June, Mexico: Universidad Autónoma Indígena de México.