

Gender Differences in Ecuador's Urban Informal Economy: Survival to Upward Mobility ¹

Susanne Teltscher

*Department of Geography
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington 89195*

Abstract

The diverse nature of the informal sector has been the focus of recent studies on urban labor markets in Latin America. Field results from Quito, Ecuador, demonstrate that informal trade is differentiated by a variety of characteristics which lead to a continuum of welfare situations ranging from pure survival to well-established businesses. This internal diversity is revealed through an analysis of both productive and reproductive factors, including product supply and credit linkages, family support, life cycle, education, and household income. Female household heads account for one-third of all vendors. They frequently face dependent relationships to money lenders and suppliers which diminish potential profits and household incomes. In addition, low levels of formal education, lack of previous work experience, and little support from their families further restrict women's opportunities to develop stable businesses. Therefore, more female household heads are clustered at the lower end of the informal trade-continuum.

Keywords: Informal sector, female household heads, Ecuador, urban labor markets. production, reproduction

This paper is based on a larger research project which contributes to the current debate on the heterogeneous nature of urban labor markets in developing nations, ranges of urban employment forms, and the ways in which informal workers are integrated into the national and global economy.² Geographers have played an important role in these discussions. For example, Bromley (1979, 1988) extensively researched casual work forms in Latin American cities and their linkage to the development process and persistence of urban poverty. Others have linked changes in local labor markets in the developing world to global processes of industrial restructuring and relocation which originated in more advanced economies (Berger and Piore 1980; Peattie 1981; Fernández-Kelly 1983; Benería and Roldán 1987; Portes et al. 1989; Benton 1990; Lawson and Klak 1990). For many of these studies, the informal economy provided a convenient conceptual framework because it incorporates a wide range of economic activities, employment relations, and organizations of production.³

This paper researches economic links between informal trading and other sectors of the economy and examines their impacts on vendors' socioeconomic well-being. Hence, it reveals the underside of broader structures such as international and national networks of production and distribution by focusing on the individual's particular work and welfare situation. The need for establishing these links across geographic scales ranging from global to local has been pointed out by recent work in development studies and geography (Massey 1983; Storper and Walker 1983; Warf 1988; Cooke 1989; Bromley 1990; Scarpaci 1990; Randall 1992; Lawson 1992; Klak 1992). The paper contributes to these ideas and argues that an important part of identifying individual workers' economic well-being is to differentiate along gender lines. Hence, in recognizing the need for empirically grounded research to augment and expand existing theory, I am particularly interested in demonstrating socio-economic differences based on gender. In this paper, I compare men's and women's distinctive work and welfare situations in the informal trade sector of Quito based on the way they are integrated into the overall economy.

Most past research on these themes has neglected gender differences. Recent criticisms have pointed towards a male bias or gender blindness of the informal sector concept, which does not consider the

different demand and supply sides of women in the urban (informal) labor market such as the linkage between women's informal activities and their role in the family (Berger and Buvinic 1988; Scott 1991). This critique is largely based on feminist work which has revealed that women informal workers often play significant role in subsidizing the formal sector/capitalist economy by providing cheap (often unpaid) and flexible labor, thus enabling wages to stay below subsistence (Safa 1981; Redclift and Mingione 1985). Studies have been undertaken on industrial out-workers, streetsellers, and domestic servants, pointing out the significance of women's role in productive and reproductive spheres (Benería and Roldán 1987; Babb 1989; Chant 1991; Fernández-Kelly 1983). Such studies usually refer to women's combined responsibilities in the household and as income earners and how this is reflected in their economic activities.

This paper contributes to these debates by comparing men's and women's different experiences in the informal trading sector. Results are drawn from field work carried out in Quito, Ecuador in 1990. Central to this research was identification of the internal diversity of the informal trade sector, based on its interrelationships to global and national economies. In this paper, I use the same framework and present a gender-specific analysis of informal sector internal diversity. More specifically, I examine different work and welfare conditions that women face compared to men, their potentials for upward mobility, and levels of well-being; and look at how these are determined by different linkages they encounter with the formal economy. Hence, I combine an analysis of women vendors' social and economic constraints with examination of processes operating at various geographic scales, local (urban), national, and international. Particularly, I note the diverse nature of welfare conditions of female household heads. Case studies are used to illustrate and explain socioeconomic differences among women on each end of the spectrum. Previous studies on female vendors demonstrate the interrelationship between domestic and market responsibilities and the spatial and political economy of market women (Hays-Mitchell 1991; Greenow and Muñoz 1988; Babb 1989; Bunster and Chaney 1985). My research complements this previous work by comparing men's and women's different work opportunities and life chances and by identifying factors responsible for creating unequal economic and social conditions for men, women, and female household heads.

HETEROGENEITY IN THE INFORMAL TRADE SECTOR

Earlier work on the informal sector was usually characterized by approaches which viewed informal workers as a homogeneous group of people, characterized by either a benign (Tokman 1978; Schmitz 1982; Lipton 1984; Strassman 1987) or exploitive relationship (Gerry 1978; Moser 1978; Peattie 1981; Gerry and Birkbeck 1981) with the formal sector. Today, most researchers take into account the heterogeneous nature of the informal sector, which is characterized by ranges of urban employment forms, different social classes, and different articulations with the formal sector (Bromley and Birkbeck 1988; Portes 1985; Portes and Sassen-Kob 1987; Roberts 1989).

This paper derives its conceptualization of the heterogeneous nature of the informal sector from the previous work noted above and extends it by analyzing differences within informal trade. It is often assumed that street and market vendors face similar unstable work situations, struggle for economic survival, and similarity in terms of capital supply, income, or upward mobility. This is a widely held conclusion among researchers and policy makers, based on the presumption that informal trade requires little initial capital and few skills and hence frequently serves as a last resort to those who are unable to find employment in informal manufacturing or the formal sector. As a result, little research has focused on identifying differences among small traders and determining how such differences might explain why some people are attracted to working in informal trade while others may not have a choice.

However, my research on informal trade in Quito, Ecuador, demonstrates a variety of socio-economic situations among small-scale vendors. These differences are based on a set of household and enterprise variables which, in combination, determine a spectrum of working conditions ranging from very unfavorable, i.e., with little or no capital accumulation or upward mobility, to very favorable, i.e., with high

capital accumulation and economic upward mobility.

Central to the identification of different work situations among informal traders was an examination of the nature of interrelationships between small traders and other sectors of the economy. Based on previous studies on the articulation between formal and informal sectors, the assumption here was that these linkages determine the level of (in)dependence of individual workers, and, as a result, levels of profits and resulting socioeconomic well-being (Bromley and Gerry 1979; Bromley and Birk [end p. 82] Beck 1988; Peattie 1981; Portes 1987; Roberts 1989).⁴

Field research in Quito revealed that capital and supply linkages are key variables which define economic differences among small traders.

Product Supply

Access to products explains what types of products are sold in the business, where they are bought, and how these factors affect profit levels. Three aspects play an important role in determining the levels of potential capital accumulation of profits, (1) the origin of a product (imported or not), (2) the level of capital intensity of a product (high or low), and (3) the relationship between vendor and supplier (direct or indirect). High profits can be achieved if products are imported and of high capital investment, and if they are bought directly from the manufacturer. Low profits are a result of selling products made in Ecuador, products of low capital investment, and goods which are bought through middlemen.

Capital supply

Access to capital plays an important role in determining the level of financial independence of individual enterprises. Capital is needed to open a stall or small store and, later, to expand the business through purchase of new merchandise. Favorable capital (credit) sources are banks and suppliers of merchandise. Unfavorable capital sources are *chulqueros* (loan sharks) since they charge high monthly interest rates. Some vendors do not have access to any type of credit at all, which limits their ability to expand merchandise lines or sell more capital intensive and competitive products.

Besides these economic characteristics of small trading businesses, which are responsible for different work situations of small vendors, field work showed that the household and family situation plays an important role in determining different work situations. In fact, a causal relationship has been found between individuals' household and enterprise situations. Three aspects of the household can be directly linked to the business: (1) family support, such as capital supply or access to providers of goods allows vendors to eliminate credit and buy products which are more competitive, (2) a high level of formal education enables vendors to better manage a business and adapt quickly to market fluctuations, and (3) small household size and high household income allows vendors to spend less in the household and thus invest more in the business.

Based on these findings, a typology of informal traders was developed, reflecting the diverse nature of enterprise and household conditions. This typology represents a continuum of work and welfare situations where vendors at the lower end of the scale face the most disadvantageous (unfavorable) enterprise and household conditions, while vendors at the opposite end of the continuum face the most advantageous (favorable) conditions (Figure 1).⁵ Results of the research show that 47 percent of all cases fell toward the lower end of the continuum, 37 percent in the middle, and 15 percent toward the upper end of the scale.

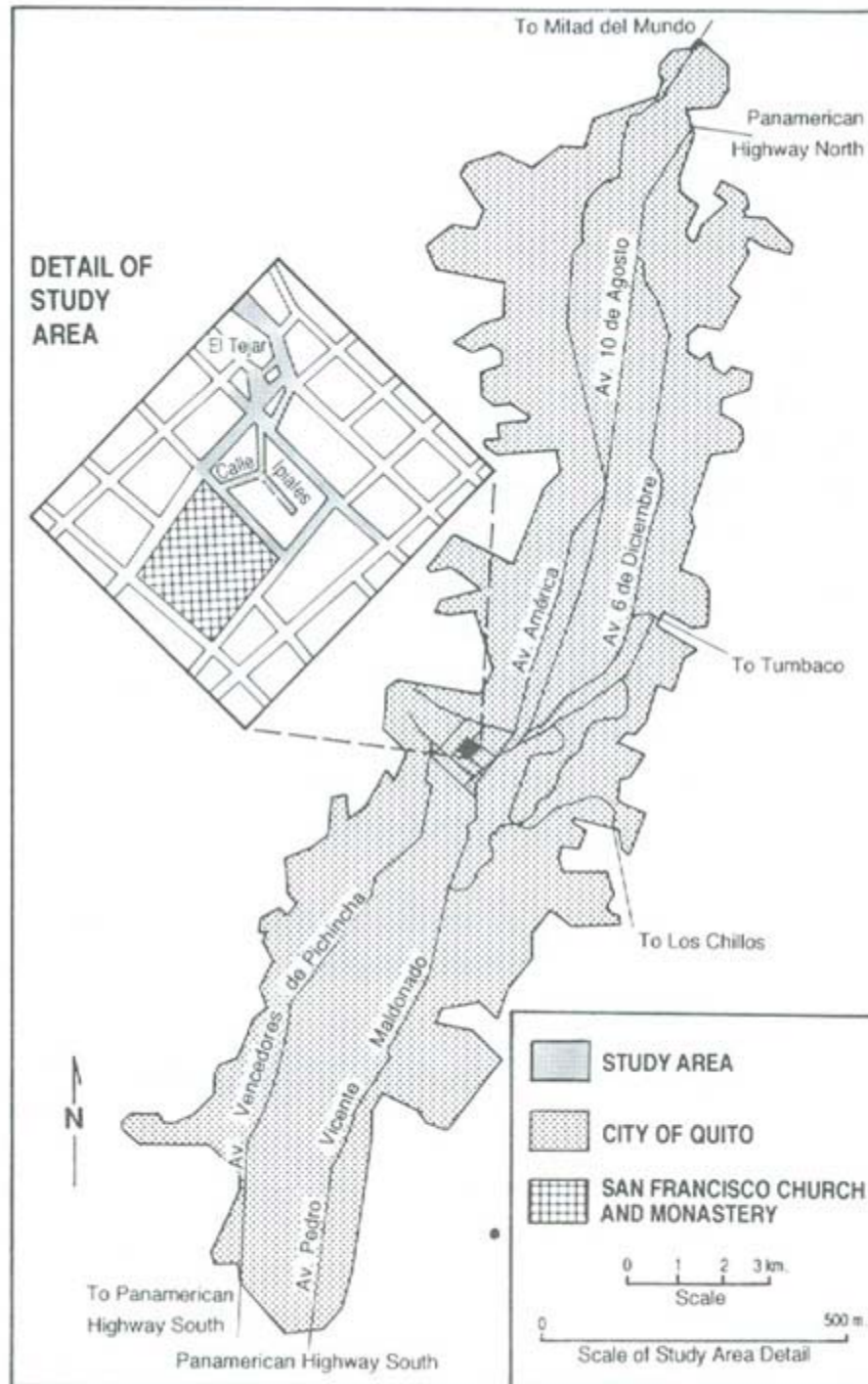


Figure 2. Mercado Calle Ipiales location within the city of Quito.

Four different types of sales units are found in Ipiales, *ambulantes* (those who walk with their merchandise), *puestos fijos* (fixed sites without any infrastructural equipment), *casetas* (closed stalls where vendors can leave their products overnight), and small stores (*almace [end p.83] nes*). Most vendors sell in *puestos fijos*. They are easier to obtain than *casetas* or *almacenes*, and less capital is required to open a business since less merchandise can be sold. However, vendors who sell in *puestos fijos* need to acquire and pay for a storage

space where products can be left overnight.

Interviews were carried out with vendors in all four types of unit. First, a questionnaire survey was administered to 150 vendors (8 percent sample size), employing stratified sampling techniques according to sales unit and location. Interviews included owners and workers of 20 almacenes, 51 casetas, 68 puestos fijos, and 11 ambulantes.⁶ This sample represents the numeric distribution of these sales units in the market. Questions in the questionnaire were partly closed, partly open-ended. They were designed to examine economic links between the vendors and other sectors of the economy. Then, a sub-sample of twelve vendors was drawn and in-depth interviews were carried out. The objective of this second research phase was to obtain as much information as possible about vendors' work (job, business) and welfare (household) situation. Hence, these tape-recorded interviews were relatively unstructured and open ended.

MEN AND WOMEN IN INFORMAL TRADING

Male and female vendors encounter very different work and welfare experiences. Approximately two-thirds of the market vendors are women, and half of those are female household heads.⁷ The average age of both men and women is 35 years, however, ages among women are more polarized, with higher percentages of both younger (20s) and older (40s and 50s). The average age of female household heads is 44, and the majority of them fall into the 41-50 year age cohort.

With respect to occupational categories of women vendors, most are self-employed, and a higher percentage are employers (8 percent compared to 5 percent for men). Women who were not household heads made up 90 percent of the wage workers in the interview sample. A significant difference in business size can be found between female household heads and other vendors. Among female household heads, 80 percent work on their own in single-person enterprises, compared to 42 percent for men and 58 percent of all women. Employment of wage workers was reported by 11 percent of female household heads, while most men were helped by their spouses.

Gender differences

Three additional typologies of informal traders were developed, based on a combination of the eight enterprise and household variables that were reported (Figure 1).⁸ In each step of the analysis, several subgroups were identified and ranked to create these typologies. The first typology is based on data from the total population. Then, typologies based on men, women, and female household heads, respectively, were developed. In each typology, sub-groups were aggregated into three categories: low, middle, and high. The majority of female household heads cluster toward the lower end of the continuum (62 percent), while the majority of all women are concentrated in the lower (42 percent) and middle (40 percent) sectors, as [end p.84] are the men (38 percent) also in the lower and middle segments.⁹ However, the percentage of men who cluster toward the upper end of the continuum is higher (24 percent) than either all women (18 percent) or female household heads (14 percent). This means that, in general, female household heads face the most disadvantageous enterprise and household situations as compared with all women and men.

Work and Welfare Differences

Table 1. Level of capital investment in products (%)

	low	middle	high
Total	29	58	12
Men	17	66	17
Women	37	54	9
Female household heads	45	47	8

Table 2. Access to credit (%)

	none	loan shark	supplier	bank
Total	17	23	53	7
Men	9	22	53	16
Women	19	19	57	5
Female household heads	3	26	66	6

Table 3. Levels of sales by gender (%)

	low	middle	high
Total	34	48	18
Men	27	55	18
Women	39	42	19
Female household heads	52	39	9

Table 4. Educational level by gender (%)

	primary school	secondary school	university
Total	40	41	19
Men	36	38	26
Women	41	45	14
Female household heads	67	25	8

Table 5. Household size and income by gender (%)

	# household members	none	low	high
Total	4.8	55	27	18
Men	4.9	65	30	5
Women	4.7	42	33	25
Female household heads	4.5	69	19	12

Eight variables were used to classify vendors (Figure 1). Four of these variables describe the conditions of the enterprise (supplier of products, origin of products, level of capital intensity of products, and source of capital), and the other four variables characterize the household conditions (number of household dependents, educational level, additional income, and level of sales). Combinations of these variables determine where vendors fall along the continuum of work and welfare conditions in the informal trade sector. Some variables behave differently for men and women. For example, women more frequently deal in nationally produced goods. In addition, their products are of lower capital-intensity than men's. Whereas 37 percent of all women sell products of low capital investment, only 17 percent of the men do (Table 1). With respect to access to capital, fewer women (4.5 percent) than men (15.5 percent) have access to bank credit (Table 2). Sales levels of women are overall lower than men's, however, the same proportion of women (18 percent) falls into the high category as men (Table 3). In summary, we can observe that women's enterprise conditions are generally less favorable than men's.

A more diverse picture emerges with respect to household situation. Fewer women (14 percent) than men (26 percent) had post secondary education, a condition that reflects women's generally poorer access to higher education in Ecuador (Table 4). However, women have an advantage over men in both average number of household dependents and additional income (Table 5). This is because many women market

vendors provide secondary income in male headed households, while male vendors' spouses may not contribute income to the family; in fact, they are counted in the total number of household dependents, thus contributing to the impression that male vendors support more family members than females.

How does the work and welfare situation change if we consider female household heads? Most female household heads (53 percent) acquired their puestos through vendors' organizations.¹⁰ They received less support from families and friends in finding their jobs (39 percent) than either men (49 percent) or female non-household heads (56 percent). On the other hand, capital to start a business was mainly provided through family and friends. This reflects the fact that most female household heads did not have access to alternative capital resources (eg. bank or personal savings) when initiating the business, since many had **[end p. 85]** been housewives and not previously economically active. For similar reasons we find more women (15 percent) and female household heads (14 percent) who used credit from product suppliers when initiating their businesses than men (8 percent).

More female household heads buy through intermediaries (46 percent) than all women (30 percent) and men (27 percent). This is largely based on the fact that: (1) most of these women work alone in their business and thus have to close it down, with associated loss of income, if they want to travel to buy products directly from suppliers, (2) they are often the only income earners and hence cannot afford to lose profits, and (3) they have to take care of their children while selling in the street and so are unable to leave their business location. In addition, Table 1 indicates that levels of capital intensity of products are lower for female household heads (43 percent) than all women (37 percent) and men (17 percent). These unfavorable product supply conditions are reflected in considerably lower sales levels with 53 percent of female household heads in the low category, compared with 39 percent of all women and 27 percent of men, while the corresponding levels in the high category are 9 percent for female household heads, 19 percent for all women, and 18 percent for men (Table 3). Another interesting result is that the overwhelming majority of female household heads works with credit (97 percent compared with 80 percent of all women), which they obtain mainly from suppliers (66 percent compared with 57 percent of all women and 53 percent of men) (Table 2). This can be explained by the fact that many of these women: (1) lack access to bank credit and (2) sell locally produced goods which they buy from small informal manufacturers who provide credit. In summary, the economic conditions of female household heads are less advantageous than those of other vendors.

The household conditions of female household heads are also less favorable than are those of other women. Educational levels are the lowest of all vendors (Table 4). Likewise, household incomes are lower since female household heads are often the only income earners in the family (69 percent of the sample). More household heads (40 percent) fell into the highest number of dependents category, as opposed to 31 percent of all women, but 29 percent of female household heads also fall into the lowest level of dependents (Table 5). The latter clearly have an advantage since fewer dependents generally mean lower household expenses. In summary, while some household conditions are less favorable for female household heads, others may be more favorable compared with other vendors.

The average household size of all interviewees is 4.9 (Table 4). Female heads have smaller households (4.5) than either all women (4.7) or men (5). As noted above, the women vendors are usually the sole source of income for their household while in those households in which women are additional income earners, incomes are much higher.

CASE STUDIES OF DIVERSITY

An important finding from the previous analysis is that a large proportion of female household heads faces unfavorable enterprise and household conditions. Nevertheless, there is internal diversity among female household heads, with 24 percent falling into the middle category and 14 percent in the highest (Figure 3).

small store in the same market and helped her children get started in commercial activities. Hence, Martha did not have to support her family as long as Mariana.

Gloria¹¹ represents the upper levels of the continuum, where advantageous situations of both enterprise and household dominate. She is 28 years old and solely responsible for her business, a small electronics store in the center of the market. Gloria has three employees and sells highly capital-intensive goods imported from East Asia, the United States and Europe. She buys directly from importers in Guayaquil. Gloria works with bank credit and recently invested in real estate in downtown Quito. Gloria's success was highly favored through her parents. They are in the vending business as well, and Gloria inherited the store when her parents moved to Guayaquil. At that time, she was a college student in economics. She did not finish her degree because she was more interested in the business. Her relatively high level of education helped her to run the store. Financial aid and access to importers of electronic goods was provided through her parents and relatives. Gloria is still single and invests a large proportion of her profits in expanding her business. Why is her situation so different from the previous two examples? First, Gloria has never been married and therefore has no family responsibilities. This is enhanced by the fact that she lives by herself. She can devote most of her time to the business, travel in order to contact importers in Guayaquil, and take evening classes at the university. Since she does not have to support a family, she is able to reinvest most of her income in the business. Second, she comes from an upper-middle class, less traditional family where the mother has always been economically active in her own vending business. Gloria was more encouraged to pursue higher education than are most Ecuadorian women. In addition, she was financially supported by her family when she began her business career and was, therefore, not exposed to sexist policies of financial institutions. Similarly, her family contact provided [end p.87] her with access to capital-intensive goods and (male) importers. This would otherwise have been difficult given the prejudice against professional women in Ecuadorian society.

In summary, these cases clearly demonstrate the disadvantaged position of women vendors. For them, the stage within their life cycle when initiating a business is crucial for determining future socioeconomic well-being and potential upward mobility. Women like Gloria who do not have marriage and household responsibilities are able to move higher up in the continuum than women who need to take care of a family (eg. Mariana) or women who had to take care of a family previously and thus never had time or funds to spend on developing and expanding a business (eg. Martha).

CONCLUSION

This study is developed from geographic research on urban labor markets, the informal sector, and work force fragmentation which has identified links between changes in local labor markets in the developing world and global processes of industrial restructuring and relocation which originated in more advanced economies. It contributes to these themes by linking urban informal commercial activities to broader networks of production and distribution. Within that framework, the present paper demonstrates how work experiences and life chances differ between male and female informal workers. Crucial to identifying the heterogeneous nature of informal trading activities was an investigation of the relationships of various informal subgroups to the formal sector, and the development of a typology of informal activities. Research results demonstrate that informal working arrangements comprise a variety of socioeconomic situations ranging from pure survival to economic upward mobility. A gender-blind analysis suggests that the internal diversity of the informal trade sector is determined by (1) the nature of relationships between informal workers and the formal economy, and (2) the type of support people receive through informal networks of family and friends. By contrast, a gender analysis extends this conclusion and argues that productive and reproductive spheres differ between male and female vendors, thus directly determining their different socioeconomic situations.

This was demonstrated by the distribution of cases along the work and welfare continuum which changes

significantly if we add the gender dimension to the development of the typology of vendors. Men clearly cluster toward the upper end of the continuum, whereas women, and especially female household heads, cluster toward the lower end. These disadvantages are largely based on the patriarchal nature of Ecuadorian society, which discriminates against women from childhood. Furthermore, remarriage (after the husband has left) is usually impossible for women due to religious and cultural beliefs and constraints. The latter restrict female vendors' economic success through: (1) their double responsibility in household and business, (2) lack of travel time to buy more competitive/cheaper goods, and (3) their frequent position as only income earner in the household, which restricts reinvestments in business.

In order to fully understand the diversity within the informal trade sector and the related impacts on welfare and life chances, future work must take into consideration the role gender plays in determining these different work experiences. Geographic research on the articulation of formal and informal sectors and/or the nature of integration of informal workers into national and international economies does not provide a complete analysis unless it considers the different responsibilities of women workers, their limitations in society and economy, and the resulting impacts on the heterogeneous structure of urban labor markets in developing nations.

NOTES

1. The research presented here was funded by NSF Grant No. SES-9001220. This support is appreciated.
2. Ideas and results of this paper are based on my dissertation work. For further information see Teltseher 1992.
3. For reviews of the informal sector concept see Portes et al. 1989; Bromley 1978; Breman 1980; Moser 1984; ILDIS and CEPESIU 1987.
4. Studies on informal activities in the footwear, textile/ garment, recycling, and food industry revealed that production and employment relations between formal and informal sectors determine levels of independence of informal workers, control over their job, and thus levels of potential profits. A key argument of these studies is whether control over the produced surplus of informal workers is determined by themselves or by someone else (eg. a formal enterprise). This factor is **[end p. 88]** crucial for understanding the amount of income that can be generated and the resulting welfare among informal workers and their families.
5. In addition to the above mentioned characteristics, another variable, "sales level," was included in the analysis. Sales levels reflect the amount of capital invested and correspond to income levels.
6. Interviews were held with 11 employers, 10 wage workers, 119 self-employed workers, and 10 unpaid family workers.
7. Household heads are here defined as the persons responsible for family maintenance. Hence, the term refers to the principal household income earner. For a more elaborate definition see Chant (1991); Youssef and Hetler (1983); Harris (1981).
8. This has been done through a quantitative analysis of the survey data. The eight variables were applied to a SPSS-X cluster analysis which groups cases based on the similarity of the defined variables. Each variable was assigned three values, "low", "middle", or "high". A cluster analysis allows a grouping of vendors where cases in each group face similar (either "low", "middle", or "high") conditions related to each variable. The range "low" to "high" describes economic and household conditions ranging from "most disadvantageous" to "most advantageous".

9. An important observation is that within men's "low" categories there were no groups at the very low end on the continuum, but most of them clustered towards the "middle" category. By contrast, most of the female heads "low" group clustered towards the very end of the continuum thus facing even more disadvantageous situations compared to their male counterparts in the same category.

10. Each street in this market is controlled by a different organization. Organizations assign sites to the vendors. An advantage for those who want to obtain a site is to know a vendor (member) from a particular organization who will then provide contact with the organization and easier access to a site that opens up. Many female household heads did not have these contacts and therefore directly approached the vendor organization.

11. Gloria is single and lives by herself. Although she does not have to support a family she is defined here as household head since she is solely responsible for her economic well-being.

REFERENCES CITED

Babb, F. 1989. *Between Field and Cooking Pot. The Political Economy of Marketwomen in Peru*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Benería, L. and M. Roldá 1987. *The Crossroads of Class and Gender. Industrial Homework, Subcontracting, and Household Dynamics in Mexico City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Benería, L. 1989. Subcontracting and employment dynamics in Mexico City. In *The Informal Economy. Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries*, A. Portes, M. Castells. and L.A. Benton, 173-88 Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Benton, L. 1990. *Invisible Factories: The Informal Economy and Industrial Development in Spain*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Berger, M. and M. Buvinic. 1988. *La Mujer en el sector informal. Trabajo femenino y microempresa en América Latina*. Quito: Editorial Nueva Sociedad, ILDIS.

Berger, S. and M. J. Piore 1980. *Dualism and Discontinuity in Industrial Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Breman, J. C. 1980. The "Informal Sector" in *Research: Theory and Practice*. Rotterdam: CASP.

Bromley, R. 1978. Introduction: The urban informal sector: Why is it worth discussing? *World Development* 6 (9-10): 1033- 39.

_____. 1990. A new path to development? The significance and impact of Hernando De Soto's ideas on underdevelopment, production, and reproduction. *Economic Geography* 66(4):328-48.

_____ and C. Birkbeck. 1988. Urban economy and employment. In *The Geography of the Third World: Progress and Prospect*, ed. M. Pacione, 114-47. London: Routledge.

_____ and C. Gerry, eds. 1979. *Casual Work and Poverty in Third World Cities*. Chichester: J. Wiley.

Bunster, X. and E. M. Chaney. 1985. *Sellers and Servants. Working Women in Lima, Peru*. New York: Praeger.

- Chant, S. 1991. *Women and Survival in Mexican Cities. Perspectives on Gender, Labor Markets, and Low-income Households*. Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press.
- De Soto, H. 1989. *The Other Path: The Invisible Revolution in the Third World*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Fernández-Kelly, M. P. 1983. *For We Are Sold: Women and Industry in Mexico's Frontier*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Gerry, C. 1978. Petty production and capitalist production in Dakar: The crisis of the self-employed. *World Development* 6(9-10):1147-60.
- Gerry, C. C. Birkbeck. 1981. The petty commodity producer in Third World cities: Petit-bourgeois or "disguised" proletarian? In *The Petit Bourgeoisie. Comparative Studies of the Uneasy Stratum*, eds. F. Bechofer and B. Elliott, 121-54. London: Macmillan.
- Greenow, L. and V. Muñiz 1988. Market trade in decentralized development: The case of Cajamarca, Peru. *Professional Geographer* 40(4):416-27.
- Harris, O. 1984. Households as natural units. In *Of Marriage and the Market*, 2nd ed., eds. K. Young, C. Wokowitz, and R. McCullagh, 136-55. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. [end p.89]
- Hays Mitchell, M. 1991. Working the streets: Economic crisis and informal livelihoods in Peru-A study of streetvending. Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Miami, Florida.
- ILDIS and CEPESIU. 1987. *EI sector informal urbano en los paises Andinos*. Quito & Guayaquil: ILDIS and CEPESIU.
- Klak, T. 1992. Recession, the state and working class shelter: A comparison of Quito and Guayaquil During the 1980s. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 83(2):120-37.
- Lawson, V. 1992. Industrial subcontracting and employment forms in Latin America: A framework for contextual analysis. *Progress in Human Geography* 16(1):1-23.
- _____. and T. Klak 1990. Conceptual linkages in the study of production and reproduction in Latin American cities. *Economic Geography*, 66(4):310027.
- Lipton, M. 1984. Family, fungibility and formality: Rural advantages of informal non-farm enterprises versus the urban-formal state. In *Human Resources, Employment and Development*, Vol. 5: Developing Countries, ed. S. Amin, 189-242. Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of the International Economic Association held in Mexico City, 1980. London: Macmillan.
- Massey, D. 1983. Industrial restructuring as class restructuring: Production decentralization and local uniqueness. *Regional Studies* 17(2):73-90.
- Moser, C. 1978. Informal sector or petty commodity production: Dualism or dependence in urban development? *World Development* 6(9-10):1041-64.
- _____. 1984. The informal sector reworked: Viability and vulnerability in urban development. *Regional*

Development Dialog 5(2): 135- 78

Peattie, L. 1981. What is to be done with the "informal sector"? A case study of shoe manufactures in Colombia. In *Towards a Political Economy of Urbanization in Third World Countries*, H. Safa, ed.,208-32. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Pérez Sainz, J. P. 1987 Informalidad urbana: ¿Cual sendero? *Palabra Suelta*, 2.

Portes, A. 1985 Latin American class structures: Their composition and change during the last decade. *Latin American Research Review*. 20(3):7-39.

_____. and S. Sassen-Koob. 1987. Making it underground: Comparative material on the informal sector in Western market economies. *American Journal of Sociology* 93(1):30-61.

_____. Castells, M. and L. A. Benton, eds. 1989. *The Informal Economy. Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries*. Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Redclift, N. and E. Mingione. 1985. *Beyond Employment: Household, Gender, and Subsistence*. New York: Basil Blackwell.

Roberts, B. 1989. Employment structure, life cycle, and life chances: Formal and informal sectors in Guadalajara. In *The Informal Economy. Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries*, eds. A Portes, M. Castells and L. A. Benton, 41-59. Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Safa, H., ed. 1981. *Towards a Political Economy of Urbanization in Third World Countries*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Schmitz, H. 1982 *Manufacturing in the Backyard. Case Studies on Accumulation and Employment in Small-Scale Brazilian Industry*. London: Frances Pinter.

Scott, A. 1991. Informal sector or female sector: Gender bias in urban labor market models. In *Male Bias in the Development Process*, ed. D. Elson, 105-132 . Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press.

Storper, M. and R. Walker. 1983. The theory of labor and the theory of location. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 7:1-41

Strassmann, W.P. 1987. Home-based enterprises in cities of developing countries. *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 36(1):121-44.

Teltseher, S. 1992. Informal Trading in Quito, Ecuador: Economic Integration, Internal Diversity, and Life Chances. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington.

Tokman, V. E. 1978 Competition between the informal and formal sector in retailing: The case of Santiago. *World Development* 6(9-10):1187-98.

Urriola, R. 1989. *Crítica a una visión del sector informal*. Serie CEPLAES I, Quito, Ecuador.

Warf, B. 1988 Locality studies *Urban Geography* 10(2): 178-85

Youssef, N. and C. Hüer 1983. Establishing the economic condition of women-headed households in the Third World: A new approach. In *Women and Poverty in the Third World*, eds. M. Buvinic, M. Lycette and W. McGreevey, 216-43. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Resumen

Muchos estudios recientes sobre los mercados urbanos de mano de obra hablan de la naturaleza diversa del sector informal. Resultados de investigaciones del campo en Quito, Ecuador, muestran que el intercambio informal se distingue por una variedad de características que conducen a un continuo de situaciones de bienestar económico que se encuentran dispersado desde pura supervivencia a negocios muy bien establecidos. Esta diversidad se revela por medio de análisis de factores productivos y reproductivos que incluyen abastacimiento de productos, acceso a crédito, apoyo de la familia, etapa de la vida, educación, y ingresos familiares. La tercera parte de los vendedores informales son mujeres, amas de casa. Estas mujeres enfrentan relaciones prejudiciales con prestamistas y mayoristas o [end p. 90] proveedores que actúan a disminuir las ganancias de los negocios y bajan los ingresos de la casa. Además, bajos niveles de educación, falta de experiencia con trabajo, y ausencia de apoyo de la familia limitan aún más las oportunidades de crear negocios estables para estas mujeres. Así que más de las mujeres amas de casa se encuentran hacia la parte más baja del continuo de comercio informal en el sentido de ingreso y bienestar familiar.

Palabras clave: *sector informal, mujer jefe de casa, Ecuador, mercados de mano de obra urbano, producción, reproducción social.* [end p. 91]