No one wants silence to be the answer when a child asks, "What's for lunch?"

Summer feeding programs nourish young bodies when other support systems are down. Needs met during the school year by in-school breakfast and lunch programs do not disappear during summer. Feeding programs that bridge the summer months sustain growth and the better physical health and improved behavior parents observe when children have the food they need. Forty percent of households in the Lower Rio Grande Valley have experienced food insecurity, according to findings extrapolated from a larger study. The Lower Rio Grande Valley Nutrition Intervention Research Initiative is working to make sure silence is never heard.

3

Cultural, Demographic, Educational, and Economic Characteristics

Nelda Mier, Isidore Flores, John R. C. Robinson, and Ann V. Millard

OVERVIEW

The Lower Rio Grande Valley is a dynamic region characterized by pervasive Spanish and Mexican influences, contrasting historic and 21st-century ways of life, and ongoing and expanding cultural and commercial exchanges across its border with Mexico.

The population of the region is younger than that of Texas (almost half are younger than 24 years old) and predominantly Hispanic (87%). Spanish is spoken in more than three-quarters of homes. Few of these young people finish high school (29% to 46% have less than a ninth-grade education), and the percentages earning associate's, bachelor's, or graduate or professional degrees are in the single digits.

The economy of the Lower Rio Grande Valley has evolved from one of frontier ranching to a modern, service-based economy fueled by a growing population, tourism, a manufacturing base in northern Mexico, and increases in U.S.–Mexico commerce. Employment is based about 30% in services, 25% in trades, 25% in government, and 20% in manufacturing, construction, and transportation; however, unemployment remains high, in April 2004 ranging from 9.2% to 16.7% in the four counties. Per capita income was lower in Brownsville-Harlingen-San Benito and McAllen-Edinburg-Mission than in any other metropolitan areas in 2000 (as low as 44% of average U.S. per capita income), leaving from 42% to 59% of children living in poverty.

If educational attainment remains low and unemployment remains high, challenges to achieving a better standard of living in the Lower Rio Grande Valley are expected to grow as the population expands. > > >

A confluence of cultures, history, politics, and ways of life make the Lower Rio Grande Valley unique in many ways. One of the most dynamic cultural areas in the United States, the Lower Rio Grande Valley experiences cultural exchange with Mexico at all levels of society, formally and informally. The region is well known for its Tex-Mex piquant food and lively music and its hot weather, but less well known for its formal cultural institutions, including symphonies, opera and ballet companies, and universities. The regional culture differs from that of other areas nearby, including northern Mexico to the south and, to the north, San Antonio, the largest U.S. city within easy driving distance. The Mexican cities of Matamoros (across the Rio Grande from Brownsville) and Reynosa (across the Rio Grande from McAllen) have much larger populations than their sister cities, and they host major cultural events each year, including performances by Mexican opera singers and European symphony orchestras.

The region's international demographic make-up and economy contribute to its dynamism through high rates of border crossing in both directions by tourists, shoppers, students, and workers. Seasonal visitors and workers who summer in the northern United States and winter in the valley contribute to the ebb and flow of people in the region. Socially complex and multifaceted, the region has many families with members on both sides of the Rio Grande. Before the Rio Grande was an international border, it was a regional natural resource that served farms and ranches whose plots of land ran north and south across the waterway. Widely repeated is a favorite saying of the locals, "We did not cross over the border, the border crossed over us."

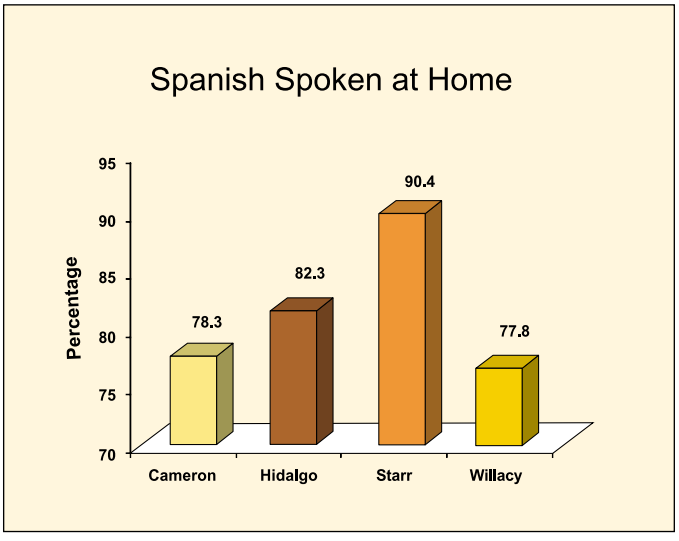

Figure 3.1. *Spanish is spoken in 78% to 90% of all homes in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. (Data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2000a.)*

The Lower Rio Grande Valley already has a minority majority population; specifically, Hispanics constitute 87% of the population. Spanish is spoken in 77.8% to 90.4% of all homes in the four counties of the Lower Rio Grande Valley (Figure 3.1) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000a).

In the following description of the area, population, economy, and educational features of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, readers will discover a unique community, distinguished by a one-of-a-kind amalgam of the culture and commerce of Texas and Mexico.

THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY REGION AND ITS PEOPLE

The South Texas border runs 1,248 miles, and the border region encompasses 32 Texas counties, from El Paso to Brownsville, including a population of more than two million people in the United States. Sharing this border are the people of four Mexican States—Chihuahua, Nuevo Leon, Coahuila, and Tamaulipas. In the easternmost part of South Texas lies the Lower Rio Grande Valley, which comprises Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, and Willacy counties. The Lower Rio Grande Valley is home to almost half of the population of the South Texas border region, where 978,369 people currently live.

Of the four counties, Hidalgo is the most populated (569,463), followed by Cameron (335,227), Starr (53,597), and Willacy (20,082) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000a) (Table 3.1). The population density varies greatly among these counties with the number of persons per square mile varying by as much as a factor of 10: 34 per square mile in Willacy, 44 per square mile in Starr, 363 per square mile in Hidalgo, and 370 per square mile in Cameron County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). Eighty-seven percent of the population in the four-county area is Hispanic, compared with 32.0% in Texas and 12.5% in the United States. Most are of Mexican descent. Trends indicate, too, that these counties are growing ever more proportionately Hispanic. Between 1990 and 2000, Cameron's Hispanic population increased from 81.9% to 84.3%, Hidalgo's from 85.4% to 88.4%, Starr's from 97.2% to 97.5%, and Willacy's from 84.4% to 85.7%. In the same

Table 3.1. Population by Race and Ethnicity—United States, Texas, and Lower Rio Grande Valley, 2000

Place	Population	Hispanic (%)	Mexican (%)	Not Hispanic (%)	Non-Hispanic White (%)
United States	281,421,906	12.5	7.3	87.5	69.1
Texas	20,851,820	32.0	24.3	68.0	52.4
Lower Rio Grande Valley	978,369	87.4	73.4	12.6	11.4
Cameron	335,227	84.3	67.6	15.7	14.5
Hidalgo	569,463	88.3	76.1	11.7	10.4
Starr	53,597	97.5	85.8	2.5	2.0
Willacy	20,082	85.7	63.4	14.3	11.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000a).

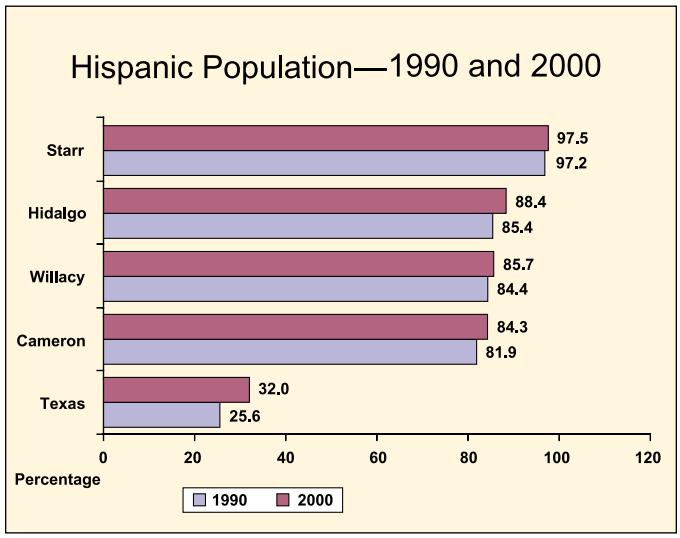

Figure 3.2. *Between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of the Hispanic population of the four Lower Rio Grande Valley counties increased proportionately, as did the Hispanic population of Texas. The percentage of the population that is Hispanic in Starr County is three times greater than the proportion that is Hispanic in Texas. (Data from the Texas State Data Center and Office of the State Demographer, 2000b.)*

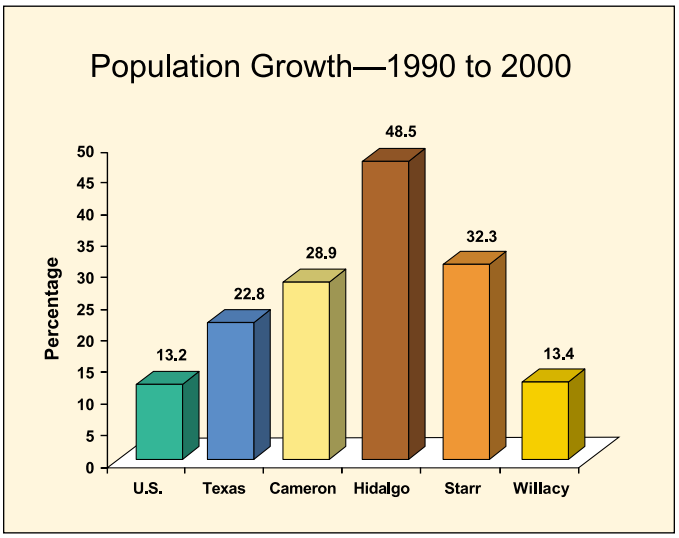

Figure 3.3. *Population growth in the Lower Rio Grande Valley between 1990 and 2000 ranged from 48.5% in Hildago County to 13.4% in Willacy County, the only one of the four counties to have a growth rate lower than that of Texas (22.8%). (Data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2000a.)*

time period, Texas also grew proportionately more Hispanic (from 25.6% to 32.0%) (Figure 3.2) (Texas State Data Center and Office of the State Demographer, 2000a).

Compared with state and national populations, the population of the Lower Rio Grande Valley is young. Whereas a little over 31% of the population in Texas and almost 29% of the population in the United States was under 19 years of age in 2000, more than 38% of the Lower Rio Grande Valley population belonged to this age group (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000a). Moreover, almost 46% of the population in the four-county area is less than 24 years of age, compared with 39% in Texas and 35% in the United States. The age distribution of the Lower Rio Grande Valley implies that the population is increasing. The 2000 census reported that between 1990 and 2000 there was a population growth of 48.5% for Hidalgo, 32.3% for Starr, 28.9% for Cameron, and 13.4% for Willacy, on average far outpacing the 10-year growth rate for Texas (22.8%) and for the United States (13.2%) (Figure 3.3). Growth is projected to continue in the Lower Rio Grande Valley through 2005

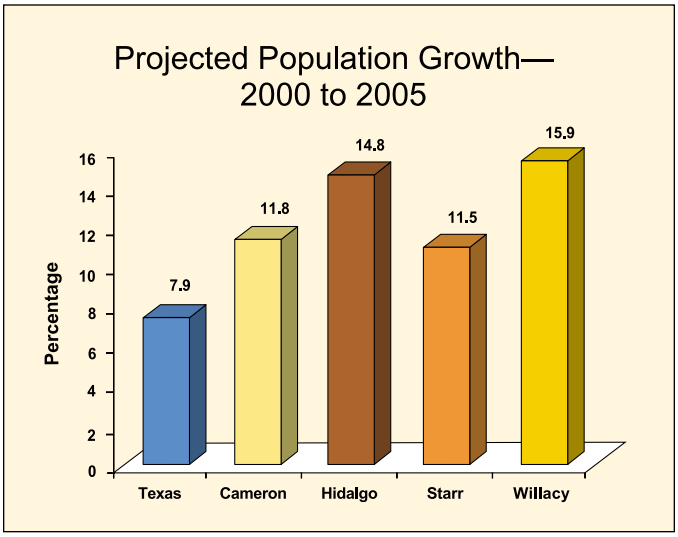

Figure 3.4. *Population growth between 2000 and 2005 in the four counties is expected to range from 11.5% to 15.9%. During the same period, the population of Texas is expected to grow 7.9%, a rate half that of Willacy, the fastest growing of the four. (Data from the Texas State Data Center and Office of the State Demographer, 2000a.)*

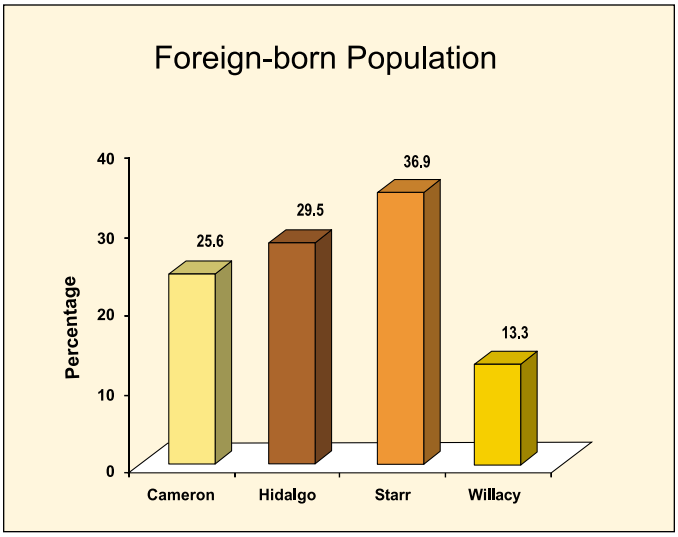

Figure 3.5. *Of the four counties, Starr has the population with the greatest percentage who are foreign born. (Data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2000a.)*

at an even higher rate than that of Texas (Figure 3.4) (Texas State Data Center and Office of the State Demographer, 2000a). The population in Texas is projected to increase 7.9%, while the population in Willacy is expected to increase 15.98%; that in Hidalgo, 14.8%; that in Cameron, 11.8%; and that in Starr, 11.5%.

The transnational population living in the Texas Lower Rio Grande Valley and the Mexican borderlands are generally united by a common motherland and social identity (Millard & Chapa, in press). Though the population is descended from many different peoples—including pre-Columbian native inhabitants; North, Central, and South Americans; and others from islands in the Caribbean and Atlantic (Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Cubans, and others)—it is predominately of Mexican heritage. These include Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Dominicans, Guatemalans and other Central Americans, and others of Latin American and of Caribbean descent. Among the Lower Rio Grande Valley counties, Starr is identified as the one with the most foreign-born residents (36.9%), but the other counties have substantial foreign-born populations (Figure 3.5) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000a), and, as mentioned above, the population in the Lower Rio Grande Valley uses Spanish as the primary language in the home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000a). Paredes (1993) points out that the United States–Mexico border differs considerably from many other international borders: at the Mexican border, one of the major ethnic groups of the United States remains in close contact with its country of origin, resulting in an ongoing, strong, contemporary cultural influence.

Harder to gauge is the population of migrant workers who live in the Lower Rio Grande Valley and travel to the Midwest, Southeast, and Northeast for farm work and undocumented workers who live temporarily or permanently there. Though organizations and governments vary in the way they define a migrant farm worker, most formal definitions require that a minimum distance be traveled for

Table 3.2. Texas Migrant Workers and Seasonal Farmworkers—Lower Rio Grande Valley

County	Migrant Workers	Seasonal Farmworkers	Total
Cameron	8,012	1,207	9,219
Hidalgo	31,894	8,606	40,500
Starr	4,467	578	5,045
Willacy	1,420	770	2,190
Total	45,793	11,161	56,954

Source: Larson (2000).
Note: Estimates are based on those engaging in field agriculture, nursery/greenhouse work, and food processing.

the work, a state or county line be crossed, or a night be spent away from home. Migrants work at different jobs in different locations over the course of an annual cycle, and they frequently hold a nonagricultural job at some point during the year (Roeder & Millard, in press). The Lower Rio Grande Valley has been the winter home to many migrant farm workers for more than a century. These patterns continue today and are an important aspect of migration through the region. Seasonal work represents one strategy low-income valley residents pursue to make a living. Although federal estimates report more than one million farm workers nationwide (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2000), another source estimates that there may be twice that number, including 900,000 who work as migrants (Rothenberg, 1998, p. xvii). Some of the most recent data available on Texas are from a report prepared for the Migrant Health Program Bureau of Primary Health Care in 2000 (Larson, 2003). These data indicate that there are more than 45,000 migrant workers and 11,000 seasonal workers in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (Table 3.2). This constitutes 34.8% of all migrant workers and 17.2% of all seasonal workers in Texas.

In contrast to this informal worker migration, a formal arrangement, called the Bracero Program, brought Mexican workers to the United States, beginning during World War II and ending in 1964. The Bracero Program was a legal arrangement for Mexican workers to come to the United States. (Guest worker programs take many forms around the world, but they all involve governments granting permission to workers from abroad to be employed temporarily.) Massey, Durand, Malone, and Buch (2002) point out that undocumented Mexican immigrants provide the United States today with a de facto guest worker program in the sense that the immigrants are an integral part of the workforce in many areas of the United States, even though they lack official permission to work in the country. It is estimated that approximately 4.5 million immigrants from Mexico, including those with and without permission to enter the country legally, are a part of the U.S. workforce (Millard & Chapa, in press; Bean, Van Hook, & Woodrow-Lafield, 2001). The government estimates that in 2000, seven million undocumented immigrants were living in the United States (U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, 2003). Most of these—68.7%—were thought to be from Mexico, and one-seventh of these were thought to live in Texas. Other countries' contributions are estimated for 2000 in the single digits, and all are below 3%. With 2.2 million unauthorized residents, California is the only state that has a larger proportion of undocumented immigrants than Texas. The number of undocumented immigrants who reside temporarily in the valley is unknown.

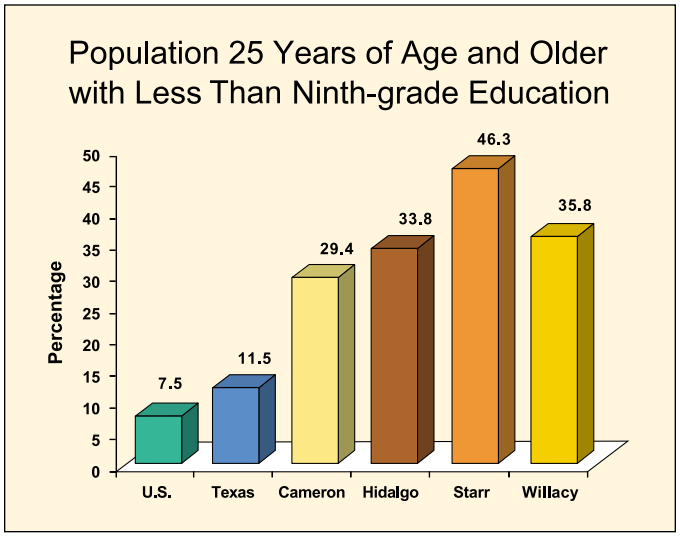

Figure 3.6. *In the United States overall, 7.5% of residents who are 25 years of age or older have less than a ninth-grade education; however, in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, this proportion of the population is much higher, ranging from 29.4% to 46.3%. (Data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2000b.)*

EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Education has been a path out of poverty for many in the United States. Unfortunately, education is increasingly beyond the reach of many residents living in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, where educational attainment is very low compared with the population in Texas and the United States. Nationally, 7.5% of the population has less than a ninth grade education, and in Texas the percentage is even higher—11.5%. These numbers more than quadruple in the counties of the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Almost half of the population age 25 years or older in Starr County and at least one third of that population in Hidalgo and Willacy counties have an education level below ninth grade (Table 3.3. and Figure 3.6). To some degree, this pattern reflects immigration from Mexico, where lower educational levels are the norm in low-income families. The extent to which this pat-

Table 3.3. Educational Attainment of Persons Age 25 Years and Older—United States, Texas, and Lower Rio Grande Valley, 2000

Area	Population 25 Years Old and Older	Less Than Ninth Grade (%)	Ninth to 12th Grade, No Diploma (%)	High School Graduate (%)	Some College, No Degree (%)	Associate Degree (%)	Bachelor's Degree (%)	Graduate or Professional Degree (%)
United States	182,211,639	7.5	12.1	28.6	21.0	6.3	15.5	8.9
Texas	12,790,893	11.5	12.9	24.8	22.4	5.2	15.6	7.6
Cameron	187,064	29.4	15.4	20.1	17.5	4.3	8.4	4.9
Hidalgo	304,670	33.8	15.8	20.2	14.5	2.9	8.4	4.5
Starr	27,716	46.3	19.0	16.9	9.3	1.6	3.7	3.2
Willacy	11,332	35.8	15.4	24.4	15.2	1.7	5.4	2.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000b).

tern contributes to the low average educational levels among Mexican Americans in the region is unknown, however.

The high school dropout rate is also an issue of great concern. Dropping out has serious economic consequences. School dropouts are three times more likely to live in poverty than those who obtain a high school diploma (Dallas Commission on Children and Youth, 2000). They are also more likely to experience delinquency (89% of Texas prison inmates did not complete high school), teen parenthood, and unemployment (Dallas Commission on Children and Youth, 2000).

In 2000, the high school dropout rate for the United States was 9.8%, and for Texas, it was 12.5% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000b), based on data for the population 16 to 19 years of age, not enrolled in school and not high school graduates. A report by the Texas Education Agency (2003) indicates that, for example, in 2002 the high school dropout rate for Hispanic students from grades 9 through 12 in Cameron County was 5.3%, 3.5 times higher than the rate for white students (1.5%), and in Hidalgo County, the rate for Hispanic students (8.9%) was 3.2 times higher than that for white students (2.8%).

ECONOMIC HISTORY AND CURRENT ECONOMIC TRENDS

The economic history of the Lower Rio Grande Valley region has evolved through several phases, the first two of which are centered on agriculture. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Lower Rio Grande Valley was a frontier ranching economy, with an accompanying trade sector based on overland travel to Mexico and riverboat traffic (Alonzo, 1998). As is typical of a semisubsistence ranching economy, hard currency was scarce. Land and breeding stock were the main tangible assets. The early 20th century saw the development of railroads, irrigation systems, land development for towns and farming, and massive immigration of refugees fleeing the violence and instability in Mexico during that country's revolution of 1910.

In the Lower Rio Grande Valley, this combination of capital investment and labor enabled the development of the truck-farming, citrus-growing, and row crop industries that characterized the region for the remainder of the century (Santa Ana, 2003). The railroads enabled the profitable transport of fresh produce and the migration of northerners to the region. These developments fueled a more active land market, and land values increased from 25 cents an acre in 1903 (i.e., before the introduction of the railroad) to $50 per acre by 1906 and to $300 per acre by 1910 (Garza, 2003b). The distribution of economic gains and wealth in this system followed the typical pattern for labor-intensive, plantation-scale farm economies: wealthy landowners, a small merchant and tradesman middle class, and a large, relatively poor, ethnically segregated labor class.

The third and modern phase of the Lower Rio Grande Valley's economic history is characterized by a modern, service-based economy fueled by a growing population, a tourism industry, a nearby manufacturing base in northern

Mexico, and increased trade between the U.S. and Mexico (Phillips & Manzanares, 2001). A prominent indicator of this transition is the booming market for land, this time with the demand being for farmland (at $1,500 to $2,500 per acre for land in agricultural use) to develop into commercial and residential property worth 10 times that much prior to development. A second measure of the modern transition is evidenced by comparing the regional sales value of agriculture (approximately $500 million annually in the late 1990s) to the roughly $7 billion in retail sales for 2000 (personal communication with M. Johnson, Valley Chamber of Commerce representative, 2000).

A considerable proportion of these retail sales are "export" sales—purchases made by Mexican shoppers. In 1998, for example, McAllen alone had $901 million worth of retail purchases made by shoppers visiting from Mexico (Phillips & Manzanares, 2001). A decade prior to this there was $1 billion worth of trade goods passing through the free trade zone in McAllen (Garza, 2003a). Thus the trade sector, represented broadly by both international shoppers and the value of trade goods, was already a major force prior to the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994, which has only encouraged the trend.

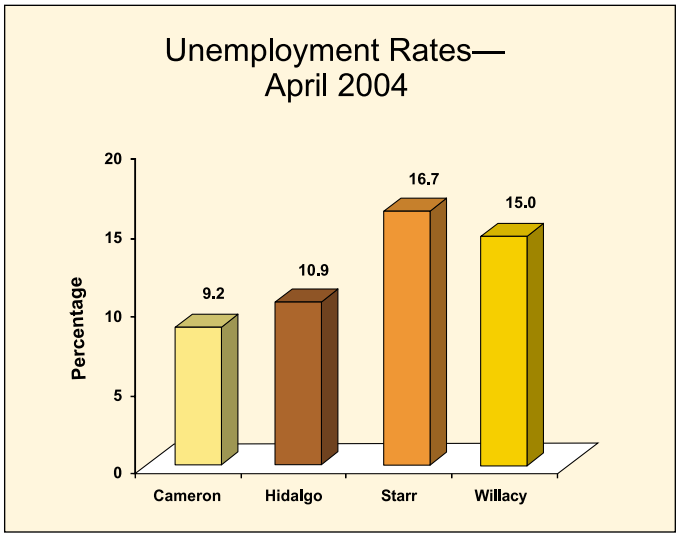

Figure 3.7. *Unemployment is typically higher in the valley than it is in most of the United States, as demonstrated in these statistics from April 2004. Both the Brownsville-Harlingen-San Benito and McAllen-Edinburg-Mission metropolitan statistical areas were in the 10 statistical areas with the worst unemployment rates in the country (number 323 and 328, respectively, in a list of 331 areas). (Data from U.S. Department of Labor, 2003; Texas Workforce Commission, 2004.)*

Employment

In the major Lower Rio Grande Valley cities, the major sources of employment are services (about 30% of the jobs), trade-related and government jobs (each with roughly 25%), and manufacturing, construction, and transportation jobs (20%) (Phillips & Manzanares, 2001). Unemployment levels in the Lower Rio Grande Valley exceed the average unemployment rates in Texas (6.5%) (U.S. Department of Labor, 2003a) and the United States; however, the rates of job growth in this region are relatively high at around 4% (Phillips & Manzanares, 2001), and the unemployment rate has been dramatically decreasing. For example, the unemployment rates in McAllen and Brownsville declined 12.5 and 6 percentage points, respectively, between 1990 and 2000, but even the decreases indicate how high the rate was. In April of 2004 unemployment rates were 9.2% in Cameron, 10.9% in Hidalgo, 16.7% in Starr, and 15.0% in Willacy (Figure 3.7) (Texas Workforce Commission, 2004). The decline in unemployment is basically the result of an increase in jobs, particularly in government, retail, and trade, which exceeded population growth (Orrenius & Berman, 2002). The largest percentage of the industry in the Lower Rio Grande is from educational, health, and social services followed by retail (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000a). Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining are next in importance in Starr and Willacy counties.

Income and Poverty

The Lower Rio Grande Valley is home to the poorest of the U.S. poor. The pattern of low income levels and high rates of growth repeats patterns in the employment trends, with the border city inflation-adjusted per capita incomes rising 12.7% over the 1990s (Orrenius and Berman, 2002). Even with this growth, the major Lower Rio Grande Valley metropolitan areas rank last in the nation in per capita income, averaging only 45% of the U.S. per capita income in 2001 (Table 3.4). The highest per capita income in the Lower Rio Grande Valley in 2000 was $10,960 in Cameron County and the lowest was $7069 in Starr County. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Part of this is the legacy of the low-wage, seasonal agricultural labor from the previous era that left the baseline income levels at a relatively low level. Wages for half of farmworkers in 1997 fell below $7500, accord-

Table 3.4. The 10 Metropolitan Areas Nationwide with the Lowest Per Capita Incomes—United States, 2000 and 2001

Place	Income in Dollars		Percentage of U.S. Per Capita Income	
	2000	2001	2000	2001
United States	29,760	30,413	100	100
Visalia-Tulare-Porterville, CA	19,539	20,166	66	66
Provo-Orem, UT	19,046	19,271	64	63
El Paso, TX	18,398	19,186	62	63
Auburn-Opelika, AL	18,714	18,923	63	62
Merced, CA	18,268	18,461	61	61
Las Cruces, NM	17,090	17,984	57	59
Yuma, AZ	15,819	16,839	53	55
Laredo, TX	15,011	15,508	50	51
Brownsville-Harlingen-San Benito, TX	14,954	15,334	50	50
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX	13,238	13,788	44	45

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce (2003).

ing to a national study of agricultural workers (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998).

The main reasons offered for the current low per capita income statistics are that *(a)* border households are more likely to be younger and therefore have lower incomes, *(b)* border households are more likely to have larger families, *(c)* the region is characterized by lower education levels and higher school dropout rates, and *(d)* the statistics are skewed downward by the large population of migrant workers whose out-of-state earnings are not being measured (Orrenius and Berman, 2002).

In 2000, 33.1% to 50.9% of the people in the Lower Rio Grande Valley had incomes below the federal poverty threshold, which in 1999 for a family of two adults and two children was $16,895 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). One third of the population living in Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy counties and half of the population in Starr County were below that line. In all four counties, 20% to 60% of children less than 18 years of age live in households below the poverty line (Table 3.5) (Texas Department of Health, 2003).

Table 3.5. Percentage of Persons Living Below the Poverty Line—Texas and the Lower Rio Grande Valley, 2000

Population	Texas (%)	Cameron (%)	Hidalgo (%)	Star (%)	Willacy (%)
All ages	15.4	33.1	35.9	50.9	33.2
<18 years of age	20.2	43.1	45.5	59.4	42.0
≥18 years of age	13.3	27.8	30.5	45.7	28.8

Source: Texas Department of Health (2003).

Living below the poverty line has negative effects, particularly on children. Young adults who grow up poor are more likely than others to be delinquent, to earn low wages, and to be unemployed (Gregg, Harkness, & Machin, 1999). The implications for nutritional status and health are several: many families have to stretch their budgets to buy food, they may curtail fresh fruit and vegetable purchases because of the expense, they may have poor cooking facilities, and they may lack medical benefits. Eating well on a tight budget is possible, but it requires gathering and processing specialized information, requiring skills and knowledge beyond the scope of those of many valley inhabitants, and sometimes requiring diet or meal preparation changes that are counter to the usual preferences of people in the region (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2003).

SUMMARY

The culture of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, comprising the four southernmost counties of Texas, is a confluence of Mexican-American and mainstream U.S. ways of life that have come together to create a unique regional culture. Overwhelmingly Mexican American, the population of the Lower Rio Grande Valley speaks Spanish at home. Both urban and rural, the four counties are home to cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants as well as to ranches and wide-open spaces. Today's Lower Rio Grande Valley economy is service based, fueled by a growing population, tourism, manufacturing plants across the border in northern Mexico, and increased trade between the United States and Mexico. Nonetheless, part of the Lower Rio Grande Valley's population is the poorest of the poor in the United States; unemployment rates are some of the worst in the country; and work for many, because is farm-related, is seasonal and physically demanding. Rates of children in poverty rise as high as 60%. High school graduation and higher education, often a path out of poverty, remain beyond the reach of many residents: on average, about a third of all residents 25 years of age or older have less than a ninth-grade education, and only about 13% graduate with a bachelor's or graduate degree, about 10 percentage points below the state and national averages. School dropout rates for Hispanic students outpace those for white students in some cases by more than three to one. Challenges faced by today's Lower Rio Grande Valley population are expected only to continue to grow as the population expands, educational attainment fails to rise, and unemployment remains high.

REFERENCES

Alonzo, A. A. (1998). *Tejano legacy: Rancheros and settlers in south Texas, 1734–1900*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Bean, F. D., Van Hook, J., & Woodrow-Lafield, K. (2001). *Estimates of numbers of unauthorized migrants residing in the United States: The total, Mexican, and non-Mexican Central American unauthorized populations in mid-2001*. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center.

Dallas Commission on Children and Youth. (2000). *Student dropout: Summary report and recommendations*. Dallas: Dallas Commission on Children and Youth.

Diamond, J. M. (1999). *Guns, germs, and steel: The fates of human societies*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Garza, A. A. (2003a). Hidalgo County. In *Handbook of Texas online*. Retrieved November 14, 2003, from http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/HH/hch14.html

Garza, A. A. (2003b). Willacy County. In *Handbook of Texas online*. Retrieved November 14, 2003, from http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/HH/hch14.html

Garza, A. A., & Long, C. (2003). Cameron County. In *Handbook of Texas online*. Retrieved November 14, 2003, from http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/HH/hch14.html.

Gregg, P., Harkness, S., & Machin, S. (1999). *Child development and family income*. York, England: YPS in association with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Hernandez, E. (2003). *The border region: Texas/Mexico 2000. Archives drawn from U.S. Census Bureau Quick Tables, March 2003: DP-1, DP-2, and DP-3*. McAllen, TX: Texas A&M University System Health Science Center, School of Rural Public Health, Archives of the South Texas Center.

Katz, S. H., Hediger, M. L., & Valleroy, L. A. (1974). Traditional maize processing techniques in the new world. *Science, 184*, 765–773.

Larson, Alice C. (2003). *Migrant and seasonal farm worker enumeration profiles study, Texas, September 2000*. Retrieved December 19, 2003, from http://www.bphc.hrsa.gov/migrant/Enumeration/EnumerationStudy.htm

Massey, D. S., Durand, J., Malone, N. J., & Buch, A. J. (2002). *Beyond smoke and mirrors: Mexican immigration in an era of economic integration*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

McConnell, E. D. (in press). Latinos in the rural Midwest: The twentieth-century historical context leading to contemporary challenges. In *Apple pie and enchiladas: Latino newcomers in the rural Midwest*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Millard, A.V., & Chapa, J. (in press). *Apple pie and enchiladas: Latino newcomers in the rural Midwest*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Orrenius, P., & Berman, A. (2002). Growth on the border or bordering on growth? *Southwest Economy, 3*.

Paredes, A. (1993). *Folklore and culture on the Texas-Mexican border*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Phillips, K., & Manzanares, C. (2001). Transportation infrastructure and the border economy. In M. Yucel (Ed.), *The border economy* (pp. 11–14). Dallas, TX: Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.

Roeder, V., & Millard, A. V. (in press). Latina women in the migrant stream: A case study of Michigan farm workers. In L. Gouveia & R. Saenz (Eds.), *A volume on immigrants in the Midwest*. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University, Julian Samora Research Institute.

Rothenberg, D. (1998). *With these hands: The hidden world of migrant farmworkers today*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Santa Ana III, R. (2003). Historical marker: Irrigation system fueled valley ag industry. Retrieved November 10, 2003, from http://agprogram.tamu.edu/publications/lifescapes/fall01/marker.html

Texas Department of Health. (2003). *Selected facts for Texas counties—2000*. Austin: Texas Department of Health.

Texas Education Agency. (2003). *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools 2001–02*. Austin: Texas Education Agency, Department of Accountability Reporting and Research.

Texas State Data Center. (2002). Texas population estimates and projections programs, Texas A&M University. Population projections, '05 scenario. Retrieved April 9, 2004, from http://66.241.202.7/profile_index.cfm

Texas State Data Center and Office of the State Demographer. (2000a). Comparing race/ethnicity between the 2000 census and earlier censuses (Table 3). Retrieved December 12, 2003, from http://txsdc.tamu.edu/data/census/2000/redistrict/p194–171/race-edu/table3.txt

Texas State Data Center and Office of the State Demographer. (2000b). Hispanic percent of total population in counties in the State of Texas, 2000. Retrieved December 19, 2003, from http://txsdc.tamu.edu/maps/thematic/cnty_hipct.php

Texas Workforce Commission. (2004). Tracer: Texas labor market information. Retrieved May 25, 2004, from http://www.tracer2.com/cgi/dataanalysis/AreaSelection.asp?tableName=Labforce

U.S. Census Bureau. (2000a). *American factfinder*. Quick tables. Retrieved March 3, 2003, from http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet

U.S. Census Bureau. (2000b). *School enrollment: 2000*. Census 2000 brief. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2003). *State and county* QuickFacts: *Texas*. Retrieved March 3, 2003, from http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48/48000.html

U.S. Census Bureau. (2004). *American factfinder help*. Retrieved January 16, 2004, from http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/MetadataBrowserServlet

U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2000). *Farm labor report*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. (2003). News release. Retrieved November 20, 2003, from http://www.bea.gov/bea/newsrel/mpi0503.htm

U.S. Department of Labor. (1998). *National agricultural workers' survey, 1997–1998*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor.

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2003a). *Local area unemployment statistics, information and analysis, McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX: Economy at a glance*. Retrieved November 14, 2003, from ftp://ftp.bls.gov/pub/economy/economy.tx_mcallen.txt

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2003b). *Unemployment rates by county, not seasonally adjusted. Texas, October 2003*. Retrieved December 19, 2003, from http://data.bls.gov/servlet/map.servlet.MapToolServlet?state=48&datatype=unemployment&year=2003&period=M10&survey=la&map=county&seasonl=u

U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, Office of Policy and Planning. (2003). Estimates of the unauthorized immigrant population residing in the United States: 1990 to 2000. Retrieved December 20, 2003, from http://uscis.gov/graphics/shared/aboutus/statistics/Ill_Report_1211.pdf.