

Breaking Painful Silences During and After the Bracero Program:

Through the Voices of Mexican Women

by

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ABSTRACT

This is a qualitative case study, using a feminist lens as a theoretical frame, that examines institutional problems that Mexican women encountered since the Bracero Program. At that time, women were not allowed to work certain jobs and were left at home separated from their husbands or fathers while the men migrated to The United States for seasonal agricultural labor as Braceros. Braceros were Mexican male farmworkers that were recruited through a federal guest program to legally work and migrate to the United States seasonally after World War II, from 1942-1964. As a result, women were left alienated and exploited on their own, and it was up to them to take charge of the family and hold everything and everyone together. There is little known research that discusses these women's experiences and stories. And to uncover these stories, I address the ways photography and traditional Mexican storytelling, and arts-based storytelling reveal hidden stories of family, longing, sacrifice, and women's unrecognized labors. Through an autoethnographic methodology, I explain my place as a Mexican American woman and as a researcher during the study. This study uncovers the history of migrating Bracero families, acknowledges the women's experiences, and discusses the importance of passing down stories of an often-overlooked moment and experiences of migration and immigration in both United States and Mexican history.

DEDICATION

En memoria y honor de las familias de Los Braceros

Para mis Abuelitos, Cecilia Martinez-Garcia y Rafael Martinez

y mis Padres, Norma Leticia Martinez y Marco Antonio Salas.

Gracias por todo lo que hicieron por mi futuro y el futuro de nuestra familia.

Nunca se me olvidará.

In memory and honor of the Bracero families

For my Grandparents, Cecilia Martinez-Garcia and Rafael Martinez

and my Parents, Norma Leticia Martinez and Marco Antonio Salas.

Thank you for everything that you did for my future and the future of our family.

I will never forget.

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND

Background

Migration and immigration from Mexico to the United States have been present for centuries. Often regarded with the conversation about whether it is done legally or illegally. Yet the stories about the individuals seeking work, a new life, a better life, opportunity, and the idea of “The American Dream” is not often considered. Typically, there are men, women, and families coming to this country working low-paying jobs in manual labor such as factories or agriculture. In addition, there are times when migrant and immigrant families cannot be together at home and need to separate to seek work in another country. Therefore, it impacts the lives of not just the individuals migrating, but the rest of the family. This creates, “a diminished emotional connection, combined with attachment-related issues brought on by a sudden separation, can effectively sever father-child and husband-wife relationships” (Langhout et al., 2018, p.6). However, an important perspective that history has often overlooked, is the women left behind during migration separation. What happens to Mexican women and children left behind when key family members migrate north is normally not a part of the national debate. (McCarty & Altemose, 2010).

Introduction

I wanted to do this research as it is very personal to me, my background, and my family heritage. To explore where I came from, tracing back my family’s history through the stories of some of the women in my family’s perspective. On occasion, the question of my background comes up now and again. I am an American-born, Mexican American

woman, with two parents that were born and raised in Mexico that immigrated to the United States, searching for better opportunities. My family raised my siblings and me in a largely Hispanic community in Los Angeles, California. Growing up, something that I will never forget, in a largely Hispanic-populated middle school I had an assignment that required the students to ask their parents, “How did you come into this country?” At that time, I was so excited to learn for the first time about my family and hear the stories my mother was going to share. I was excited to share and express who I was and my identity, as I was a timid teenager. Once I finished and turned in the assignment, having heard my mother’s story of my family’s part during the Bracero Program, my teacher at the time returned my assignment with a poor grade saying that she did not believe me, assuming my family came into this country “illegally.” Naturally, I was devastated. I showed my mom my returned assignment and my mom wanted to discuss this with my teacher, but out of fear, I asked her not to.

As years went by, I always held that in my heart and mind. Since then, I’ve thought about stories of families who migrate or immigrate to this country that are unknown or even ignored. And one of those is the history and stories of the U.S.-Bracero Program, which is a part of history that is not widely known unless you were affected in some way because of it. A federal guest program and agreement between the United States and Mexico, that recruited and employed Mexican male farmworkers to legally work and migrate to the United States seasonally after World War II. My mother’s side of the family was affected by the Bracero Program. My grandfather was a part of it, as a Bracero farm worker migrating to the Southwestern region of the United States while providing for his family that stayed behind at the time. My grandmother and their

children of mostly women stayed behind to take care of life back in Mexico. To me, their side of the story about their lives back home always seemed just as important to discuss and understand the difficulty of what life was like. Traditional Mexican storytelling provided and aided in this study.

The research that took place is a case study on how art, literature, and photography were used to show and express Mexican migrant women's oppression. This research was done through a feminist lens as a theoretical frame, recognizing the women's perspective during the 1940s-1960s in the U.S.-Mexico Bracero Program and afterward. This research uncovers the stories of some of the women in my family as participants. This research examines family separation, women's expectations, systematic oppression, and sacrifices during seasonal migratory labor. It recognizes the women it impacted and how they endured the realities of this program as many of them and their families stayed back.

Rationale

The importance of this research is to find ways women during that time, were finding methods of expression to speak their minds through various forms of art, such as written or verbal expressions, and photography. I wanted to research the ways photography can tell stories of oppression and hidden stories. The purpose of this research is to find these voices and expressions, during moments when Bracero migrant families, were being silenced by both cultural expectations and systematic oppression placed by both Mexico and U.S. immigration policies. At the time during the Bracero Program, there were not a lot of Mexican women photographers showing or taking

photographs that show what the Bracero life was like. Although, there were limited Mexican male photographers documenting the experience as well.

I used my family in this research as my maternal Grandfather was a Bracero himself, approximately during the late 50s to the early 60s. My Grandmother and their children were also affected during this program through separation and time lost without each other. My Grandparents had hoped to better themselves with this source of income for a brighter future for their family sacrificing everything. A narrative autoethnographic approach was utilized as a methodological frame in this research, talking about experiences that women in my family faced during the Bracero Program and my place and learning as both a researcher and a Mexican American woman.

The goals and importance of this research were to explore stories and realities that are beyond me and my family. My intention was to analyze a broad cultural significance to a population of people. My family's lived experience will act as a case study to examine the way women's stories might affect a broader understanding of this important movement.

Through a literature review, I investigated and found information on the Bracero Program. I approached this research and findings by conducting interviews on oral stories passed on from generations to break the silence on their experiences; I analyzed photographic documentation that gives a lens into a lived experience, to reflect the impact this form of art can bring into light some of the realities women faced during and after the Bracero Program. This research also focuses on the way the program affected and influenced generations of Mexican and Mexican American women since the Bracero Program ended and the effects it has on generations in the 21st century. I learned about

their education and art education during the time and how that has influenced the modern generations, discovering the ways education has inspired forms of expression. I found out ways women are expressing themselves in current times and saw some of the similarities and differences of the problems of oppression today.

Research Questions

1. How can documenting a Mexican family population affected during the Bracero Program demonstrate their conditions, concerns, and aspirations during and what followed from the program?
2. How can traditional Mexican storytelling and photography as forms of art expression, tell the stories of the silencing of women's voices in this significant moment in history and the way it affects women now?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

History of the Bracero Program

One prominent time in the United States and Mexico's history was during the Bracero Program. The Bracero Program was an agreement between the United States and Mexico, to recruit and employ Mexican male farmworkers to legally work and migrate to the United States seasonally after World War II. A&E (2019) shows that the agreement between the United States and Mexico started On August 4th, 1942 and lasted until 1964. Analyzing the Bracero Program can uncover the way women were also affected by it. The women's perspectives and stories have not received much attention as they should. Women faced oppression as stated in the literature (Avila, 2018).

“The typical role of women before the Bracero Program was highly circumscribed by oppressive gender traditions, institutions such as the church, school, and the family itself. Indeed, rural Mexican women were limited to a domestic role in Mexico's ‘patriarchal society in which they were marginalized from industrial work’ (Avila, 2018, p. 23).

When in reality, women were the source of strength in the family, the head of the household when left behind to support the family. Women at this point in history also played a huge role alongside their families. But, to look deeper into Mexican women's oppression at a moment in history during the Bracero Program between the United States and Mexico, we must analyze the history of this program, the policy, and the occurring situations that followed this program that led to painful experiences and memories.

The Bracero Program, a federal guest program between the United States and Mexico introduced in the Mid-20th century. It entailed, an agreement to recruit and “employ” Mexican male farmworkers to work and migrate throughout the United States seasonally, according to Clemens et al. (2018), “The six states where Braceros made up more than 20 percent of hired seasonal farm labor in 1955: Arkansas, Arizona, California, New Mexico, South Dakota, and Texas” (Clemens et al., 2018). Braceros worked as railroad workers or farmhands in asparagus, lemons, lettuce, cotton, strawberries, and tomatoes and more. Belluck (2008) says, “They earned about 50 cents an hour, and advocates say many were unable to read their contracts to learn about payroll deductions or were too daunted to try to collect their money in Mexico” (para. 10).

Additionally, the program was not intended to recruit women. Smith (2014) explains that the Bracero Program was, supposed to last throughout World War II, but in the end, the Bracero Program and the loan of guest laborers would end up lasting for 22 years (p. 191). While American men were away during the war, the U.S. was in need of agricultural labor workers, so guest workers from Mexico were brought in for the labor. According to Rosas (2014) in her book, *Abrazando El Espíritu: Bracero Families Confront the U.S.-Mexico Border* in her research, the encountered stories presented to her of the realities of the history said that,

The Bracero Program had been presented to recruits, and to U.S. and Mexican society as an honorable emergency wartime program, based on friendship between allied nations, that Braceros should embrace in the spirit of transnational patriotism, even at their own and their families’ expense (p. 40).

The idea for Braceros and migrant workers joining the program was to, "seek to work for the term of their visa, send money home, save a little, and return home to spend their savings" (Massey & Liang, 1989, p. 205).

Bracero's Oppressive Labor

The experiences and treatments migrant farmworkers faced have now come to light. A dark past in U.S.-Mexico policies that got turned away and not talked about, a moment where two countries were at fault and brushed accountability away. According to Plec, it was purposely, "Designed to provide low-wage, temporary immigrant labor for agriculturalists and for the railroads— two industries that had grown accustomed to Depression-era wages and had a history of reliance on migrant and immigrant workers (Plec, 2010, p. 55).

Looking at a different perspective of this, in a video *Why Braceros* (1959) broadcasted to the American public, I noticed the way they talked about the program positively. This video was meant to justify the reasoning behind the program to U.S. citizens. It was to emphasize and reassure the public that U.S. and Mexican government officials do a good job in recruiting domestic U.S. workers in favor of Mexican labor works and reassured priorities, while also stating that the Braceros were very well treated (Why Braceros, 1959). But as history shows now, that was not the case. In truth, U.S. domestic workers in agriculture did not want the jobs because of the difficulty of stoop labor, and the little to no pay. The people in power, government officials, and employers were aware and took advantage of the little rights Bracero men had, for example as Waddell (2014) described, "charges against one California grower by the U.S. government for lying about the hours worked by the Braceros in his employment and

paying them lower wages than promised” (p. 25). And Braceros wouldn’t just speak out about their treatment out of fear of repercussions, meaning that the people of power exploited these men for profit.

If Braceros lodged a complaint about negative treatment, they had to fear reprisal in the form of deportation. No shifts to other jobs were possible because contracts explicitly tied them to a specific employer, and Braceros were powerless to negotiate with their employers. Given limited options for active protest, Braceros' main form of resistance was the exit option. Low wages, bad food, excessive deductions from paychecks, poor housing, domineering supervisors, or on-the-job injuries prompted many Braceros to leave their contracts (Parrillo, 2008, p. 94)

This policy exploited these workers, both Mexico and the United States governments did not do anything to keep their promises. The Braceros remained silent and felt alienated in a foreign country with no rights, no say, just the hope of providing for themselves or their families.

Thoughts on the little knowledge in this moment in U.S.- Mexico history according to González and Loza (2016) explains, “Although the Bracero Program officially ended over fifty years ago, many Americans still know absolutely nothing about it. Worse, aided and abetted by this historical ignorance, contemporary public deliberations about Mexican migration are still able to incite ugly nativist bigotry (such as in the likes of former President Donald Trump) to stimulate punitive attempts at regulation” (p.4). In modern times, Trump’s quotes and views on Mexican immigrants placed and stoke fear to divide our country in America and across the border. A well-

known statement on immigration he made during the 2016 debates was, “One where President Trump has called Mexican immigrants “rapists” and “criminals,” (Martínez, 2018, p. 110). The reality is that in the U.S., people do not always learn about these harsh truths in schools or history classes, and it is harmful to brush away from the past and not acknowledge the occurrences and mistakes. Doing so creates a continuous silencing of marginalized communities.

Women’s Experience

Having said the history of the Bracero Program, we now must think about the women left behind. As women were not allowed to participate in the guest worker labor program, how was it affecting them? What experiences did they endure? Historians have not put much light on the challenges women came across during or after the program’s existence. Women were often left to raise their children on their own, with few resources to provide for their families, while Braceros would migrate throughout the United States. Because of oral histories, these stories have lived on, passed from generation to generation, accounting for the lives of families that were affected. Some are very personal and intimate memories that aren’t known to many. The women were left alienated and exploited on their own.

I believe that we must honor and tell the stories of the experiences that women faced. One of them was a separation that created a huge impact on families. Rosas (2011) found that within seven years since the labor program started, approximately 385,000 Mexican men and women were separated from each other and their families. This led to a large number of Mexican women’s drastic change from some being married, to abruptly

having to be single mothers raising children on their own (Rosas, 2011). They had to continue and pick up the pieces to assume the obligations towards domestic responsibilities and “assume head of household obligations on their own under extremely gendered and precarious terms, forcing them to spend much time away from their children” (Rosas, 2014, p.15).

Women deserve recognition as triumphant, dedicated to taking it upon themselves to keep the family moving forward. The women that faced these experiences shared stories with their families and are now still passed along as they were silenced at one point in history. The demands for these women were a lot for someone left with little to no resources. The Mexican government officials were not doing anything about it, as if these separations were never happening or ignoring the impact on anyone.

Fernandez (2018) states, “Although women did not often participate in the labor process, they did not wait idly at home. They became the sole labor force in their hometowns” (p. 405). Just as the Braceros were away working hard, the women back home were too. Some findings of the women staying behind and working, according to Loza (2016), “Women, on the other hand, moved to the border for work opportunities and to stay closer to their Bracero relatives. Family bonds were strengthened or maintained when Braceros could make short visits across the border” (p. 69). It made it easier for when Braceros would be able to come home after the seasonal work. As Rosas (2011) states these women ranged, “In age between nineteen and sixty-six, female caretakers laboured for an estimated fourteen hours a day and held up to three or four jobs in order to support between two to eight children (p. 387). Jobs such as house cleaning jobs, washing clothes for the people they were working for, food vendors, or if

they were left behind with a family business, some attempted to keep them running. As women worked and the men were away, older children cared for their younger children and as Qin-Hilliard states, “Domestic workers and servants of all kinds have been cleaning and cooking for others and caring for other people’s children” (Qin-Hilliard et al., 2005, p. 170). Children were left with relatives or close friends; women took care of others’ children while some worked.

Systematic Oppression: Silencing Women

Intentional systematic oppression was placed to silence women during the Bracero Program era. Women have passed along oral stories stating that government officials from both sides of the border were purposely intruding on their privacy when it came to written expressions to be mailed across the countries. As Rosas (2014) examined throughout the stories that were told, “A little-known fact: starting in November 1942, the U.S. government censored letters written by Braceros and other Mexican immigrants to their relatives and friends in Mexico and the United States” (p. 86). The reasoning behind that, was solely for the purpose that these government officials did not want the men receiving these letters and messages to change their minds about working and going back.

That is when the silencing of women began. Therefore, both governments purposely did so if they found that women were expressing any form of longing and sadness to get the men to return home. They had this idea that these expressions of longing could encourage Bracero’s permanent stay, settling in the United States. Or the fear that U.S.-Mexico officials had of any exposure to the dangers of the Bracero

program. Any exposure to the hardships families faced such as family separation and oppression, was quickly silenced and shut down. Rosas (2014) found that the officials' argument was the desires that women hoped for such as a reunion can be seen as encouraging and demanding their migrant Bracero husbands to question their judgment and objective of staying in the program (p.3). Looking at the oppressions created, even the written form of expression was challenged, a silenced literacy. It is not surprising why the stories of the women's side of history in this program are often untold. Censoring from the beginning impacts the way history is written and taught. The primary truths are passed on verbally amongst loved ones.

Mexican Women's Traditional Expectations

Cultural tyranny has affected Mexican women over time, with expectations of women seen as traditional. But who forms and sets these expectations? How do we learn what is expected of women? What are the expectations set for these women? Those expectations for women were very much apparent during the Bracero Program. Policies in this program uncovered a patriarchal gender role that while men worked, many women stayed home to take care of their families and take care of household duties. Women were doing more than that. On the other hand, because of gender roles at the time, cultural expectations set for women were to always accept tradition and not ask questions as that's the way it is. Expectations are set up from culture, not just from the government, but from their very own families and neighbors. As Anzaldúa (2012) describes in her book *Borderlands: The New Mestiza = la Frontera*, "The welfare of the family, the community, and the tribe is more important than the welfare of the individual" (p. 40).

Meaning that everyone but the woman is placed first, or if a woman does not do as they are told, then they are told they are selfish. Patriotism comes first, your family, and that is when women are back to being silenced.

During the Bracero Program as Rosas found, “Town respectability and collateral were contingent not only on men’s successful contract completion but on women’s management of a household, property, business, or trade under honorable conditions that did not include interacting with and catering to men who were not relatives” (Rosas, 2014, p. 30). Some women are taught this at a young age and can still be very relevant in modern times, to this day. In culture, these expectations are always brought up by those in power, bringing up policies during this time in history for both men and women to know their place. A woman is to be left behind doing domestic household chores. Or as Rosas (2014) found, “women were prevented from expressing concerns and opinions beyond suggesting future meeting dates and times to organize town events that did not conflict with their household chores” (p.25).

Respect is gained not just for themselves, but as it was said, a lot about the woman’s upbringing and family values. Rosas (2014) found that expectations during the program were that women,

“Were also supposed to keep their anxiety, fears, and hopes for these long-distance romantic relationships to themselves if they were to be considered honorable, productive, responsible, and sexually virtuous—and thus eligible for marriage in the eyes of their families, prospective in-laws, and Mexican immigrant boyfriends” (p. 101).

So, this explains the way any form of emotional expression was being silenced, placed by cultural expectations, institutional, and systemic oppression by both Mexico and United States immigration policies.

Expression of Love and Longing

Expectations set on women during the Bracero Program did not allow expression of love and longing. As someone that uses art as a form of expression, I cannot imagine being told not to do that to release any form of sadness. A fear was placed that if women were to show and express their sadness or longing, it could affect their loved ones trying to provide for them and their families migrating on seasonal labor, so therefore censors took place. Aside from written expression, what were women using as other methods of expression? Were women expressing themselves through art? Many of the stories found by Rosas said women were using art, such as personal photos to go around the censoring that was happening at the time.

There is evidence on the ways women were finding different ways to go around and express themselves as the written form was lost, as Rosas described a story of a woman using photography and fashion as a subliminal message to her husband that she misses him and her desire for him to come back home. Rosas (2014) found a woman, “Veneranda staged and sent this meticulously crafted family portrait to confront and awaken him subtly to her longing for his return. Adorning the skirts of both dresses in a likeness of the face of a grandfather clock. These dresses showed that Veneranda and Maria were keeping track of their time apart. (p.3). It is such a clever idea, yet subtle, to stage a portrait innocent enough that it would not be obvious to any government official

going through their mail and letters. In the story Rosas (2014) showed the passage of time, a grandfather clock on a dress, to represent a tracking of time apart (p. 3) This placed or demonstrated the women expressing themselves to be vulnerable. Expressing their emotions at a moment when government officials were watching what was being said.

Expression and Recollection Through Art, Music, and Photography

Recordings and documentation, much of what was lost from this moment in history can tell us more than the injustices faced, humanity, identity, and the relevance of everyday lives and realities. Bracero's history shows us the way art and expression were the ways families pushed through the constant silencing that government officials placed on them. Some used art, music, and photography as a form of documenting the experiences. Expressing their feelings, and daily lives. Using art as a form of expression such as these can be passed down by families as oral histories in times when written history has been lost. Through music, the Bracero workers were also expressing themselves and their feelings. A song discovered by Calvillo (2016) describes, "The narrator often began his song by stating upfront a *despedida* (goodbye) message to his family. In the *despedida*, the Bracero worker's motive for embarking on the trip to the U.S. was frequently tied to his familismo values" (p. 50). Family values both men and women had to sacrifice all for this. One research on the use of art in photography shows that "Our relationship with images is in constant evolution: the way we read them, how they drop in or out of relevancy is always in flux" (Espinoza, 2021, p.21) What we see

and experience through art and photography determines our position and our place to relate to stories.

Art Education Research

My research is a case study of the Bracero Program, that uses storytelling as an approach. I conducted and examined my research through a feminist lens from participants and as a researcher. An example in art education research according to Keifer-Boyd's chapter on *Feminist Perspectives* in Miraglia and Smila (2014) says, "Feminist methods examine intersections of gender, race, and socio-economic class that constitutes lived experiences and are manifested in undue privilege and oppressive living conditions" (p.193).

My approach also includes a narrative autoethnography, to get a sense of the lived experience, data, and analysis to reflect during and after the research. As Gallardo (2009) states, "Autoethnographies are written accounts about life experience providing rich, full, detailed narrative and insight from the perspective of the person who is living and experiencing the researched phenomena" (p. 288).

Art education research shows that there is limited research on multiculturalism in art education. This is another way that people of color, students, and artists, get silenced or ignored, and their stories and expressions are not getting told. My arts-based and art education research has explored ways to bring into light ways to preserve folk art, indigenous, multicultural stories, and histories, which is why it is being utilized in a growing body of research within art education. A study in an urban multicultural classroom in art education says about sharing stories among students by Chung and Li (2019) states

that, “Art educators listen to their student’s stories from their artwork and empower students on a learning journey so that they may grow together (p.4). In a classroom with a culturally responsive pedagogy, when listening to stories, inclusivity can let students of all backgrounds appreciate not just their own heritage, but others’ experiences and stories as well. This way they can, utilize their learning styles to develop critical thinking and act on unjust issues (Chung & Li, 2019, p. 2). Another study on multicultural research from Coffey and Farinde-Wu (2016) explains that “Ethnically diverse students will improve when taught through their own cultural lens” (p. 26). So, when given opportunities to explore students’ own identities, backgrounds, and stories through any form of art expression, can support a classroom form a learning community that motivates students to pass along and learn each other’s stories.

So, for this study, the purpose of my approach in storytelling through arts-based research, according to Sutherland and Jelinek (2015), “Arts-based learning claims to have great potential in connecting intellect and emotions, to meaningfully challenge norms and assumptions, and to value the relational and subjective aspects of human experience” (p. 289).

Storytelling as a form of art as research shows that through an arts-based pedagogy, one can associate it with lived experiences for all learners and participants to educate one another from traditional storytelling. A study by Hobson and Seay (2020) also shows that for learners, arts-based storytelling, “Allows the opportunity for students to share stories about their cultural selves and their intercultural leadership identity expressed through art” (pg. 77). This is a way for learners to learn beyond themselves and take into account other perspectives. Hobson and Seay (2020) say that, “Providing access to class readings, guest

speakers, and other experiential educational opportunities for learners to experience the stories of historically underrepresented and underserved individuals without tokenization or misrepresentation.” (p. 79).

Art and Photography During the Bracero Program

Through photography, in arts-based research, a study by Duff (2021) states that through the power of art and imagery, “Facts of our social experience and any reflection on them, we need the mediating images of artists and storytellers to give us some way of reading the signs of our times” (p. 114). Even the viewers themselves can get a sense of emotions when looking at the art left behind. It invokes something and tells us stories about the past and any form of relevance in modern times. So, showing imagery to participants in my research will help bring stories just like a study by Clarkson (2021) found that when, “Looking at a sculpture or reading/hearing a text, memories or emotions may be evoked according to the viewers’ own experiences” (Clarkson).

Mexican women photographers showing or taking photographs of the Braceros are not known. Although there are limited Mexican male photographers or artists that capture what the Bracero life was like. Hispanic artists such as The Hermanos Mayo and Domingo Ulloa shows the representation by documenting the program and lived experiences. These are art photographs of frozen images in time that captured and exposed a very constant fast-paced rough labor. On the other hand, mainly well-known White American photographers captured the Braceros and their families. Some of these artists include Marjory Collins, Dorothea Lange, and Leonard Nadel.

A look back in history, Braceros were placed in poor working conditions. The power that photography and art, can document and follow lives that should be heard and seen. But were artists and photographers truly showing that? As the article by Toffoli (2018) describes, “The “innocent eyes” of many photographers of Bracero life highlighted affluence, domesticity, and psychological satisfaction to shield spectators from the program’s abuses and opponents’ critiques (Toffoli, 2018, p. 132).

According to the New York Times, author Cowan (2020) depicts Dorothea Lange’s photo of *Braceros*, “Was trying to emphasize the dignity of these people and the labor they were doing” (para.19). Two of her works capturing Braceros are two images titled *First Braceros*, which are photographs of the first Braceros arriving in the United States. Marjory Collins captures the agricultural stoop labor of the Bracero Program in her photograph, *Mexican Agricultural Laborer Topping Sugar Beets* (Collins, M., 1970).

In Leonard Nadel’s photograph, the photo of *Bracero Workers Being Fumigated*, he described the photograph as “Much in the same manner and feeling used in handling livestock, upon crossing over the bridge from Mexico at Hidalgo, Texas, the men are herded into groups of 100 through a makeshift booth sprayed with DDT” (Latino stories, 2018). A difficult image to see, yet capturing what Braceros faced. Looking at this image one can wonder about the conditions Braceros were put into. This photograph unpacks that conversation. How were these men affected afterward? A negative photograph of a woman working at a table, Nadel describes as the home of a Mexican Bracero family. According to Latino Stories (2018) The image depicts a woman working on house chores, down one of two rooms for a family of nine, and the other room on the side of the camera serves as a kitchen, workroom, and storeroom” (para. 1). According to Toffoli

(2018) about Nadel's photographs, "These photographs enable braceros to act as political subjects as they address viewers directly, reminding consumers that capitalism operates through and on workers in historically specific contexts" (p. 131).

Lastly, artist and painter, Domingo Ulloa, painted a group of Braceros in Oil on Masonite in the 1960s. According to the Smithsonian American Art Museum, "Ulloa's crowd of workers, who peer dejectedly through a barbed-wire fence, reinforce the mounting public protest against their poor living and working conditions. His composition recalls photographs of concentration camp inmates, which Ulloa—a World War II veteran—was familiar with" (Ulloa). It was important for Domingo Ulloa to capture everyday people in their struggles to show viewers what was going on and was being hidden from public view. Ulloa's painting "Braceros" has a lot of expression and detail. The expressive tired-looking faces of Bracero workers, the barbed wire that makes them look like prisoners, and the muted colors of the men outside in the sun.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Overview

This is a narrative autoethnographic study utilized as a methodological frame to examine experiences that women in my family faced during the Bracero Program and afterward, as well as my place while I learned as both a researcher and as a Mexican American woman in the family. My family's experiences became a case study to examine ways women's stories might affect broader understandings of this important movement in history often overlooked. I conducted interviews of oral stories to break the silence on experiences during and after the program. These interviews were taken place in Arizona, where some of my family members mainly reside, and a common location where the Bracero Program took place (Clemens et al., 2018). After conducting these interviews, I compared commonalities, connections, and differences in responses to understand my findings. I anticipated that these interviews would be conducted in Spanish by me, as this is their native language, and during the data analysis, translated into English, as I speak both English and Spanish.

In this study, I analyzed the way photographic documentation gives a lens into a lived experience. I also searched for data that reflected the impact this form of art can bring into light the realities women faced during and after the Bracero Program. The goal was to explore deeper contexts in the lives that were affected. I anticipated discovering much more knowledge that is out there in current studies, as many of these women's stories and perspectives have not been formally documented. One of the ways I analyzed themes was by getting participants to see images during the Bracero Program and analyze how they

read these photographs. I mainly wanted to focus on the women's oral histories in Mexican cultural history. I wanted to listen to these stories that have been passed down from generations to and think about where everyone's place has been because of these experiences. I also wanted to get a detailed analysis of photographs if they have some of their own and unpack them. I analyze and see what these women held on to as material mementos, such as letters or photographs. Which can uncover why they held onto these.

As a researcher, my role was to break through silences that were once created by oppressive authorities. I intended to honor and recognize the women that were impacted by a moment in history and allow them to express themselves further, sharing stories and memories of family, separation, longing, love, art, and the future. I sought out the generations of women that were affected and influenced by the program. I also sought out their experiences and aspirations through art, education, and art education. This research was to acknowledge this study is beyond me, even as an autoethnographic approach. As a researcher, I learned about myself and who I am in the process.

Research Methodology

This research study integrated four techniques of data collection. These techniques include interviews, audio recordings for documentation, analysis through photography, and field notes for storytelling.

Interview:

This research utilized interviews as the main source for oral stories that were shared using storytelling as an arts-based methodology. The interviews were conducted in person and in Spanish, as that is the language only spoken by the interviewees. I am bilingual in Spanish and English speaking, so I asked the questions in Spanish, and felt so

personal and comforting to both the interviewees and me, talking about stories related to Mexico and home felt appropriate. Eventually, this was translated into English after the data analysis. The interviews that were held were done as informal open-ended interview that was carried out in conversation style. I had a sheet of questions prepared of what I wanted to ask, but as the interview went on, I followed up with the conversation about some of the things that were being shared.

Audio Recording for Documentation: During the interview, I recorded all the conversations that took place through an audio recording app. I thought it was important to use an audio recording to go back to what was said and make it easy to analyze afterward. It was in the case that I missed something that was said, audio recording is an amazing tool to have. I also did some audio recordings of myself to reflect on my experiences during any of the interviews.

Analyzing Through Photography: I gathered other forms of documentation such as personal photographs from one of the interviewees, that was used to share her take and relate to it through the recounting of stories. That same photograph was then used by the other interviewees to get their take on what they saw in these personal photos. There also were other photos shown during the interview from online library searches collected for historical information on photographs during The Bracero Program. These were shown to get their point of view and take what they saw in these photos. I also collected data with photographs of my own as an ethnographic method of the interviewee's environments and the communities in which they live.

Field Notes: As I was holding the interviews, I had a journal close to me to jot down and document along with the interviews to get a sense of any observations, I noticed during

the interviews. Some of the journaling happened before the interview was conducted, where my mind was, during the interview, and after. These written notes also reflect and unfolded a personal diary with my own experiences, thoughts, and feelings during any of the interviews. Some of the journaling happened before the interview was conducted, where my mind was, during the interview, and after. I also created a survey questionnaire for the interview, and I created a table chart and map in the journal to help compare some of the responses to find patterns for the research.

Interview Questions

- What is your name?
- Where are you from?
- What is your cultural background?
- Can you recount what the Bracero Program was for you?
- How old were you during the Bracero Program?
- Do you think this affected you in any way?
- How did it affect you? (Question for both then and now family generations)
- How did it affect your family or loved ones?
- How do women learn what is expected of them? (Then and now?)
- What were traditional gender roles and expectations?
- How did you express yourself during the program?
- How do you still express yourself now and is it related to the past?

- Do you think the woman's perspective during this moment in history is acknowledged?
- Why do you think stories such as these are hidden in history? How can this be changed?
- How has the Bracero Program experiences shaped who you are and those around you?
- Do you have any documentation such as photographs or artwork that can further tell these stories?
- Have you held on to materials from that time? (Cultural materials, letters, photographs)
- Why did you hold on to these?
- Did you know of Bracero families making art as a form of expression during this program?
- Did you create art as a form of expression during this time? How?
- What is your education and your experience in art education?
- Do you still recount these stories? To whom? Why?
- Explain these photographs.
- There were not a lot of Mexican men and no known women photographers capturing the experiences during the Bracero Program. Do you think they would have shown anything different compared to these photographs from American photographers?

Population and Study

As a Mexican American woman, being the researcher myself, I had a unique position being bilingual and fluent in Spanish. This came as an advantage and was beneficial in not only understanding and speaking the language, but it is my background and deep understanding of my culture and those members of my life that experienced this moment in history. My population for my research consisted of family members that live in Arizona that were in many ways affected by the Bracero Program. At first, I had one person in the family in mind and then I used the snowball recruiting method to see who can provide more conversations and stories to pass along and recount their experiences and recollections. I chose to conduct the interviews in this state, as that is where most members of my family reside, and Arizona is connected as a huge part of the history of the Braceros migrating to this state.

Data Analysis

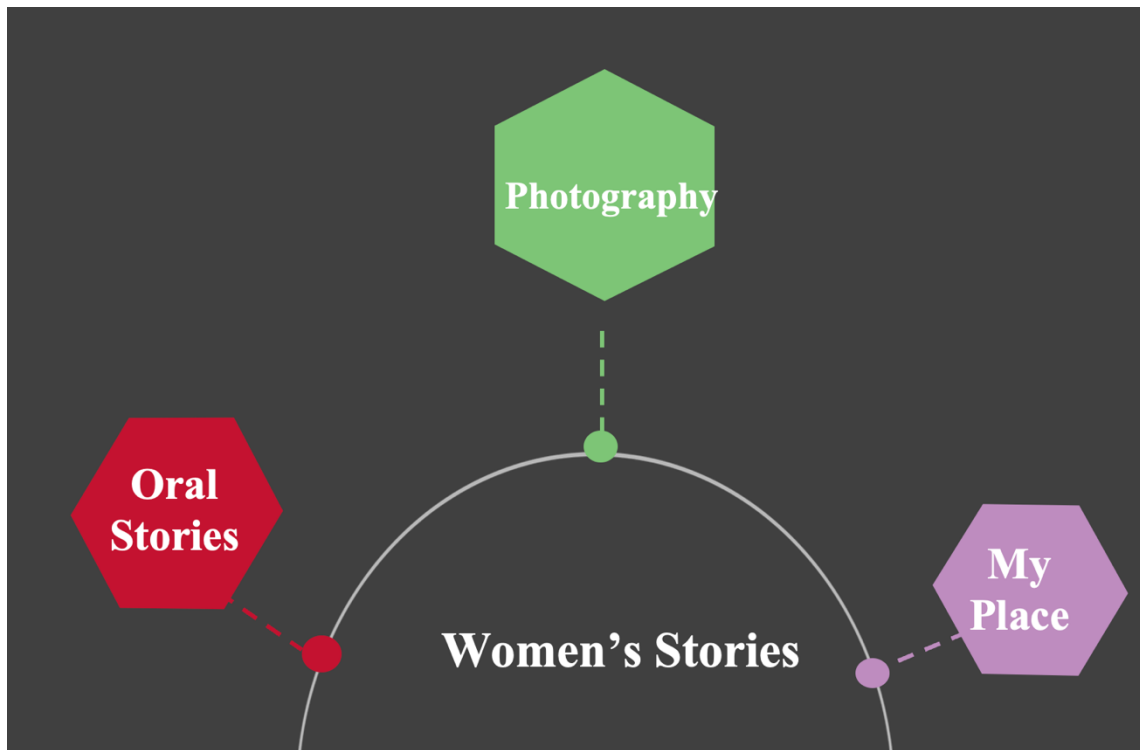
I analyzed the data by seeing sets of patterns and themes in tables and maps through my journaling. I wanted to clearly illustrate the material I had already collected. I wanted to make connections to the literature review and extract the parts that are most relevant to my research questions. I also found patterns from the photographs, recordings, and my fieldnotes from the separate stories my interviewees shared. All these comparisons of any commonalities within the oral stories told were journaled in my field

notes or drawn as a map or chart. In Figure 1 below, I created a brainstorm diagram that helped me look for topics during and after my interviews (see Figure 1).

All the interviews and the conversations were held in Spanish, and most data collected was transcribed into English by the researcher. Going back to the audio recordings made it easy to transcribe the conversations later for the translated writing.

Figure 1

Brainstorm Diagram That Helped Look for Themes



In the discussion of The Analysis of The Findings chapter, the final chapter of this research, I will analyze the women's perspectives. I will go through my thoughts, compare, and contrast the stories and themes that emerged, once I went back and listened and read the data that I had collected. I will also discuss my place through an autoethnographic lens as both the researcher and through my heritage.

Ethics, Human Subjects, and Data Management Issues

To manage and store the data collected, and to keep confidential computer files and data secured, I will make sure the data is backed up regularly in a secure location on my graduate chair member's computer. I will ensure to protect and safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of the participant's information and data. To protect the anonymity of interviewee participants I will remove any identifiers by omitting personal information such as names or contact information. Throughout the study, pseudonyms have been given to the participants to further ensure and protect their privacy and anonymity.

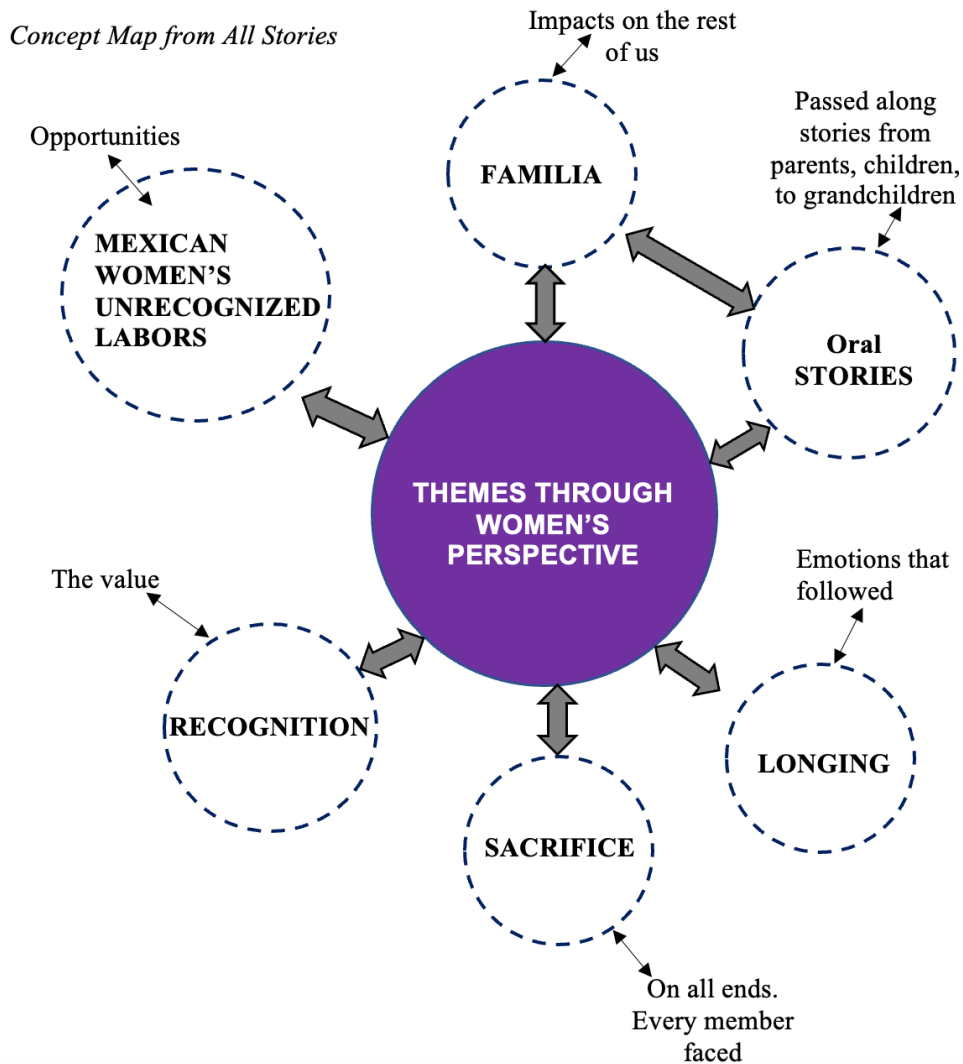
Participants in the research will be voluntary, with informed consent. All the information was stored on a secured external hard drive during the study. As the researcher, I also understand my place in the culture and place impacted by the stories of the study as this is familial.

CHAPTER 4

DATA RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The themes that came out from the interviews that I will focus on are, familia or family, recounting of stories, longing, sacrifice, recognition, and Mexican women's unrecognized labors (see Figure 2). The migration of my grandfather as a Bracero throughout the Southwestern parts of the United States is the discussion that the stories will focus on. However, the focus of this research is mainly on the other side of the Bracero story, the impacts that were created due to that program, that were placed upon the family of a mother and her children that were left behind. As well as taking a look at everything else that transpired years later because of it. This study will present these themes through oral stories, photography, and my own story and experiences from my field notes. I've included these experiences through my autoethnographic approach that developed as a personal and deeper understanding of the topic and conversations, and family stories. In this chapter, I will also answer my first research question, while going over the oral stories and photography.

Figure 2



Oral Stories

There are a lot of stories to talk about when discussing immigration and what people must go through for a better life. The first theme that came across in this study was the passing of stories from generations. Oral stories can be defined as, storytelling that comes from shared memories and connections to individual experiences, all the way

to bigger historical-cultural moments (Reyes, 2019). The stories that this research goes over are stories of hope and struggles by our country's neighbors in Mexico. We might form our opinions on how we feel about immigration without really thinking about the realities that people must face. My family's background and history inspired me to examine a certain moment in Mexican and American history, the Bracero Program. I wanted to focus on this moment in history on the women's side of the story as my research showed me that these stories are less known.

This study practiced listening to stories that have been passed along to the current 4th generations in the family. The retelling of stories about the interviewee's parents, and their experiences during the migrating for work and immigrating for a new life. These stories are passed along to the family through the practice of oral story traditions. Typically, these stories in Mexican families are told in Spanish and are passed along from grandparents, children, grandchildren, to great-grandchildren. Furthermore, it gives families a cultural resource and opportunities to talk about history, empowering lived experiences, struggles, triumphs, advice, sayings, family traditions, and more. These stories are typically introduced with, *En el aquel tiempo*, ("Back in those days") as an invitation for the family oral stories to begin in a family home through family game nights, over coffee, or family gatherings (Reese, 2012). And that is how this study took place, to take a moment and listen to stories about lived experiences in a moment in history during and after the Bracero Program. An opportunity to give an ear to unheard stories and continue to pass along those that persevered through the immigration process for a better life.

The first interview was with Lety, born and raised in Mexico, a sixty-six-year-old mother of four, and grandmother, who was ready to proudly share a moment in her family's history. The interview was held in her home in Arizona. But before she got comfortable with retelling a significant part of her life, she wanted to make sure there was comfort and ease during a summer evening with *chocolate con pan* (Mexican hot chocolate with bread). A common snack Latino families share while gathering with friends or family to welcome or open to others. She retold the story, starting with what she recalls the Bracero Program was to her. Lety was someone who had a closer connection to that time when her father, Rafael, a Bracero, would migrate to the United States when she was about the age of six years old in the early 1960s. She recalls when her father would go to Empalme Sonora, Mexico to get a work visa to work in the United States, working in fields all over Arizona and California. We followed through the conversation about how this impacted her as a young child. Her memory of her father leaving for the U.S. brought up the impact on not just her but on "*La Familia*" her mother and young siblings that stayed back home. In the conversation, in Spanish, Lety said,

"Cuando mi papá se tenía que ir para Arizona, para trabajar, nos quedábamos solos con mi mamá, y ella se quedaba cargo de la familia, como cada dos a tres meses él venía para traernos dinero, y eso nos afectó porque nosotros estábamos sin mi papá"

Translation: "When my father had to go to Arizona to work, we stayed alone with my mother, and she took charge of the family, about every two to three months and he would come to bring us money, and that affected us because we were without my father"

The family was dealing with an absence that lasted months, so her father would bring back any form of finance. Meanwhile, it was up to her mother, Cecilia to take charge of “*La Familia*” and hold everything and everyone together. As I heard this story, I realized what family meant to them as something so much more. As a family, they were all in this together, from young to old, and were doing everything possible to just live. Lety recalls the Bracero Program did not give opportunities to Mexican women. It was a moment when gender roles were infused in the Mexican people. Lety recognized that in the past, the idea that men went off to work to provide for the family, while women stayed back at home, and how that’s changed over time. Lety stated, “women can now work in agricultural labor.” One thing that I found interesting was that she brought up, the Bracero era was a time when no one was allowed to question anything, especially Mexican women. They were supposed to be traditional and adjust to life no matter the circumstances.

Another story that Lety shared was the way her mother found a way to express herself while dealing with the massive difficulties and experiences of her own life without her complete family Her mother picked up knitting to make clothes, sweaters, and accessories. Lety explained her close experience in agricultural labor and migrating for work, once women were allowed to work and this program ended. By the time, she was a young thirteen-year-old, even she was working in agricultural labor in the United States of America until she was eighteen years old. She stated that apparently, age certainly did not matter to have child workers, yet a person’s gender was questioned not too long ago from then. Which eventually impacted her by not completing all her

academic education. But overall, her experience made her see two sides of the Bracero family. Her experience staying back as a young child, and a look on the other side of heavy labor. A look into what the Bracero life was like. Eventually, their family's destiny changed their whole world. Her father was able to get residency in the U.S.

“Despues del programa, mi papá aplico y pudo arreglarnos nuestra residencia permanente. El arreglo su residencia en Estados Unidos primero en 1962 y después el nos arreglos a la familia la residencia en 1970. Y para nosotros, todo cambio.”

Translation:

After the program, my dad was able to apply and obtain permanent residency for us. He obtained his residency in the United States first in 1962, and then he obtained residency for the rest of our family in 1970. And for us, everything changed.”

In all, Lety was able to see both sides of the story, to her, it is very important to hear these stories and continue to pass along every side of the experiences. She was able to see what her mother had to endure at home and learned what her father had to deal with in his job.

The second interview was with Yoli, born and raised in Mexico, and a fifty-six-year-old mother that retold her perspective of the Bracero Program. The interview was also held in Arizona where she resides. When recounting what the Bracero Program was, she started with what it meant to her,

“Este programa fue una gran oportunidad para que mi papá y otros mexicanos pudieran venir a los Estados Unidos a buscar un mejor futuro.”

“This program was a great opportunity for my father and other Mexican men to come to the United States to seek a better future.”

The story that she shares and will further elaborate in this study when her father was a Bracero, was when she was two years old, but even though she was too young to remember, her family always made sure she was aware of how they were brought up. We will uncover what followed once the Bracero Program was over and the years that followed into each theme of this study.

The third interview held in the State of Arizona was with Juana, also born and raised in Mexico, and a fifty-year-old mother of three and grandmother. Juana made sure to bring up that she was not around during the Bracero Program, but she too had the stories of life during that time passed along to her about her father being part of that program of migrating all over the southwestern parts of the United States. She understood that her father was able to work as a Bracero *“en el otro lado”* (the other side) referring to working in the United States with his work visa. The impact due to this moment in their family’s lives was that she knew based on conversations talked about with her

family. She knew what her mother must have gone through when her father would have to leave town to work. Her mother had to deal with life without her husband. Knowing that at times moments in life such as childbirth on her own. To Juana she understands what the expectation of Mexican women was then, to stay back and behind.

She then proceeded to recount similar experiences of migration and immigration even as she was a young girl. Juana's story, with a similar experience to compare life during the Bracero Program was when she was growing up, her father continued to work in agricultural labor migrating to the U.S. The impact on her that followed even then was that since he continued to migrate, she was able to experience what her older siblings went through. In her experience, she and her younger siblings also wouldn't see their father for temporary seasonal times, he would return home months after working, and this was what their mother had to endure as well. As a young girl, she expressed the way her mixed feelings due to the lack of seeing and experiencing her father

“Después de algunos meses, yo sentía que como no había convivencia, me daba vergüenza al verlo, me daba mucho gusto saber de que había llegado, pero me daba mucha vergüenza verlo y abrazarlo.”

Translation:

“After a few months, I felt that since we weren't living together, I was shy when I would see him. I was very happy to know that he had arrived, but I was very shy when I'd see him and hug him.”

Emotionally, she recalled feeling shy at times when she finally was able to see her father, but she knew deep within, she knew she was happy to see him and see her family together again. The point that Juana made about the emotional experiences she would feel struck me. While their mother was holding life at home together, and their father was migrating for work, the young girls, the children, were also dealing with their own emotional impacts.

Familia

“Familia” (family) was an overall theme in this study and a word that was constantly brought up when passing along the oral stories from the interviewees. This was an overall important word. I realized this study included listening to valuable family stories that focused on acknowledging untold stories through women’s lens, of the true emotions and conversations that came out beyond the questions prepared. It was to talk about the realities that the Bracero Program put people through, not just the migrating Bracero farmworkers themselves, but to acknowledge the way that too impacted all family members involved and even generations afterward. When the Bracero man left, it was up to the wife of the husband to handle life back home on her own. It was up to the mothers and sisters. It was the children left behind struggling with issues with what seemed like a life with a single parent.

During the first oral story interview with Lety, a story she wanted to share about her family is a story that she keeps close to her heart and makes sure to let her children know. The story of how her family eventually decided to make the move to the United

States after the Bracero Program was over. The story when she was around the age of twelve, she would hear the first conversations that her father would ask his wife, Lety's mother, multiple times about immigrating the family and finally making the move to live in the United States. But her mother expressed that she was happy and comfortable in the home they already had and that she knew nothing about what life would be like in the U.S. But to convince their mother, her father said something that has always stayed with Lety and her family. Lety remembered her father's conversation with their mother Cecilia about moving was:

“Cecilia, lo que yo quiero es que nuestros hijos, y cuando ellos tengan a sus familias, los hijos de nuestros hijos, tengan una vida mejor. No por' nosotros, si no por ellos”

Translation:

“Cecilia, what I want is for our children, and when they have their families, our children's children, to have a better life. Not for us, but for them”

And that is what convinced their mother to go ahead and make the move. This was a dream that was going to impact not just her parents, but for the generations to come. Their parents were able to immigrate and get green cards for all their eight children at the time in the 1970s. After becoming U.S. residents, Lety recalled her mother being able to work for herself and provide an extra income for the family. Her mother and father thought it was important to fight for agricultural labor workers' rights. So, her parents joined in supporting and representing their community, for their family and other

Mexican families. And they boycotted and marched in support of the United Farm Workers Movement alongside Cesar Chavez in the early 70s.

During Juana's interview, her story about her family involved, something her father told her about his experiences migrating and working as a farmworker in the fields.

“Mi papá me llevo contar que cuando el tenía su trabajo, tenía que regar en las noches y pasarla solo ahí en el fil, y luego llevo a mirar sobras moverse, ruidos. Entonses el tenía que soportar todo eso por tal de darnos un mejor futuro.”

Translation

“My dad told me that when he had his job, he had to water at night and spend it alone there in the fields, and then he came to see shadows move, noises. So, he had to put up with all that in order to give us a better future.”

Their father's job at times was to spend long nights by himself working and guarding the crops. He'd see things and hear noises that were all in his head. From so much stress and sleepless nights. Noting that it was probably the anxiety and exhaustion of constantly being overworked. He had to endure so much, all to give back to his family and give them a better future. Which brought her to question, what did the other members of the family experience through this family separation.

Longing

The third theme that came up was the expression of longing for migrant or immigrant families. In the second interview with Yoli, she recalled the impact of the Bracero Program in the way that she realized how much she missed her father. During that moment, she was a child longing to see him. Her father would last four months migrating and working by the time she saw him visiting the family. A moment that she says impacted her childhood when all she needed and longed for was to see him and hug him.

“Me afectó porque lo extrañaba mucho y me hizo mucha falta en mi niñez. Porque lo mirábamos cada tres o cuatro meses, y siempre queríamos estar mirándolo, abrazándolo. Toda la familia sufrió su ausencia, casi nunca lo mirábamos porque siempre estaba trabajando en los Estados Unidos.”

Translation:

“It affected me because I missed him a lot in my childhood. Because we would see him every three or four months, and we always wanted to be seeing him, hugging him. The whole family suffered from his absence; we hardly ever saw him because he was always working in the United States.”

During the third interview with Juana, her recollection of her longing was when she was a child, she remembered how much she hoped and longed for both of her parents to be there together. She emphasized knowing that their mother doing everything and keeping

everything together in Mexico all on her own. So, it was their mother that held the family together in Mexico, while their father provided finance while migrating to the U.S. and it was something that they had to accept as life and work in Mexico was difficult.

Sacrifice

Another theme that emerged from the oral stories shared by the women sharing their voices, was sacrifice. The word was brought up repeatedly as the interviewees emphasize some of the sacrifices their mother and siblings had to face while their migrating father would be gone for long periods of time. Sacrifice noticeably impacts every single member of the family, with such examples as the struggles they endured or the fact that they must leave family behind, friends, and their whole life behind. In the interview with Lety, we see that immigrant families learn to live life with a constant temporary separated family. Her story about her father's decisions after being a Bracero was that his job eventually opened opportunities for him and his family. A chance, where he proved to his workplace that he was able to endure long periods of time in the fields, to the point where his "*patrones*" (bosses) highly recommended him in the U.S. and got him started in the immigration process working on his residency. This eventually led to the beginning thoughts about having to sacrifice and leave their family home behind, and the home they had built.

The term sacrifice or self-sacrifice in this theme, for migrant or immigrant families, is defined for mothers and fathers as an act to benefit the current and next generations (Rumayor & Chaidez, 2019). Separation is a sacrifice that these families have

dealt with and continue to deal with when going through the process of seeking a new life in another country. In Yoli's interview, her thought about one's family's sacrifice involved the absence that was left in her life. And was something that every member faced in their way no matter the age. Yoli brought up the sacrifices her mother endured made her see her mother as a hard worker and a fighter.

Recognition

The theme of retelling women's stories involves the recognition of their experiences and voices. These women were impacted by a U.S.- Mexico program that took advantage of immigrant Mexican families in ways that go beyond themselves. They faced a mixture of hardships and pain, but at the same time, they recognize the good that came from that. Lety's story brought up the impact on the next generations. She recognized both the pros and cons, the pros are the opportunities about the way she was able to form her family in the U.S. after her father was able to provide residency for his wife and children. Lety now has her children that are now grown, given opportunities that she knows they would not have back in Mexico. Such things as better and higher education, better job opportunities, rights, and privileges in the United States. Lety makes sure she passes along this moment in the family's history to her three children, to recognize the life once lived, for their good and the future of the next generations. She stated how she wants to make sure how proud she has always been to talk about her parents' strength and sacrifice.

In Yoli's story, she also recognized that her family benefitted from her father's and mother's hardships and triumphs that started since the program. Because of this, she has been grateful to her parent's ability to get her, and her siblings green cards and they were able to immigrate to the U.S. The importance of this story has now been shared with her so that he is familiar with the sacrifices that the family and other Mexican families go through for a brighter future. Juana's recognition and what she passes along to her children is to know why and how her family immigrated to this country. She wants her family and others to recognize that immigrating with your whole family is not easy. A resonating comment from Juana was,

“La historia de Los Braceros y inmigrantes es importante saber, porque mi familia, y mis hijos tienen que valorar el saber porque ellos están aquí, y porque nacieron aquí. Ellos tienen mirar las oportunidades que hoy en día tienen. Y que sepan y valoren eso, porque no es fácil poder emigrar. Hoy en día, es mucho más difícil poder tener papeles para arreglar para la residencia. Yo pienso que nuestros hijos deberían de valorar los esfuerzos.”

Translation:

“The history of the Braceros and immigrants is important to know because my family and my children have to value knowing why they are here, and why they were born here. They have to look at the opportunities they have today. And that they know and value that because it is not easy to immigrate. Nowadays, it is much more difficult to be able to

have papers to apply for residency. I think that our children should value the pain and efforts.”

In today’s world and politics, has simply gotten much more difficult. She recognized that her father was fortunate at the time to show his hard work to be recognized as a Bracero in the States, and the way her mother picked up the pieces back home.

Mexican Women’s Unrecognized Labor

Another theme in this study brings up to focus on Mexican women’s unrecognized labor at this moment in history. Since Mexican women were not allowed to work during the Bracero Program in the United States, they had no choice but to stay behind on their own or take care of family life back home. Women too provided as much as the men that went off to work in another country. Although, they were seen in a lesser way or unrecognized. In all the participants family’s story, they disclosed that their mother became the head of the house, the backbone that kept life at home together. And formed a mostly matriarchal family led by their mother, and as the family consisted of more women their mother and mostly sisters in the family and fewer brothers. From hearing these women’s stories, it was apparent the importance her role played while their father migrated to the U.S. They shared that family separation may have effects on the family that can be unknown or unrecognized years later.

To Lety, unrecognized Mexican women’s sides of history start from the beginning. From not being allowed to work certain jobs in Mexico, especially jobs in agricultural labor migrating to the United States. She acknowledged how that eventually changed, where women get to work the same jobs.

“En esos tiempos, no permitían que la mujer trabajaran, o estudiaran, porque se quedaban a cargo de la familia. Pero ahora todo a sido más diferente porque tienen más derechos. Derechos como de trabajar, estudiar, y le dan un mejor futuro a su familia.”

Translation:

“In those times, they did not allow women to work or study, because they were left in charge of the family. But now everything has been more different because they have more rights. Rights such as working, studying, and giving your family a better future.”

Lety stated that she wants to make sure to recognize the women that were doing the impossible, all while getting pushed away. Yoli’s interview illuminates the expectations that her mother experienced. She recalled that her mother had no choice but to stay back and care for and raise all the children on her own for periods of time. Her mother would take charge of saving the money and as much as her father could send home. Yoli also talked about the way it has been normalized the way women have been seen in a negative manner, for women that stayed back at home, the idea of them becoming stay-at-home mothers. When it is obviously much more than that. Women were dealing with restrictions in job opportunities, all while rearing their families and getting life back together at home.

And finally, Juana’s view on women’s unrecognized labors and stories mentions that she knew women had limited rights in Mexico during the Bracero Program based on what their families experienced. Women’s ability to express an opinion was often taken away. All three women in this interview expressed how grateful they are after everything their mother and father did for them and the family. Especially for a family with mainly women in it. Their family eventually decided to immigrate to the United States for new

freedoms and rights, and a better future for themselves and the generations after them. The families now reside in the U.S. to move forward in life and have been given opportunities to overcome.

Photography

The final concept brought up during this study along with acknowledging Mexican women's perspective, focuses on photography that was provided during the interviews. The purpose of this concept was to get the interviewees to analyze photography during the Bracero Program and to give them a chance to share any materials or photos of their own that can further tell these stories. Along with the sharing of oral stories, we looked at photography as a form of expression. Expression has been widely discussed throughout this research and in the literature review, I provided information on the ways families used this tool during the Bracero Program.

Some of the photos that were shown during the interviews were personal and others were photography collected from online library resources. Two photos were provided and analyzed by the first interviewee, Lety. And were also analyzed by the third interviewee Juana. The rest of the photographs were looked at by all three interviewees. Using the photographs, the six themes emerged during the oral stories that illuminated and voiced the untold stories through women's lens: oral stories, "*familia*" (family), longing, sacrifice, recognition, and Mexican women's unrecognized labors. The photographs shed light on more stories and insights into institutional problems, real-life lived experiences, childhood memories, and emotions. Along with knowing the oral

stories that have been passed down by generations, photography is also a tool for documenting the experiences, a form of expression, and a way to relate to the stories.

Research Question One

As I will investigate the interviewee's breakdown of photograph materials, I will address my research questions: How can documenting a Mexican family population affected during the Bracero Program demonstrate their conditions and concerns, and aspirations during and what followed from the program? The oral stories shared from the photographs analyzed as a form of expression will disclose the side of a woman and mother's point of view to look at a moment in time in her life during the Bracero Program and after the program ended. These stories and photographs will uncover another side of the story from a woman's lived experience and connect the themes that previously emerged.

Lety Photography Breakdown:

Lety provided a photograph of her mother Cecilia and Cecilia's children. She held the photograph in her hands to show its true size in person and shared why she protects this small 2"x2.5" photo. Lety said the photograph of Cecilia and her children, "was taken during the U.S. immigration process in Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico in 1969. The immigration process for permanent residency happened years after the Bracero program ended and the family decided to move to the United States." (see Figure 3). Before Lety further analyzed this photograph, she mentioned to me that she never really gave the photo a deeper thought over the years, as she was keeping it and conserving it as

a family photo. Yet when looking at it deeper during the interview, it provided her with a memory of mixed emotions and experiences that she and her family faced. This photograph was a perfect representation depicting what their life looked like when their family was separated for periods of time. This image brought back the stories Lety shared about the family staying behind in Mexico, while her father migrated to the U.S. It also depicts a sepia image of a mother alone, holding her young boy, and surrounded by her young children. The older girl on the left is Lety herself, her mother Cecilia in the middle, and her brother Domingo. On the bottom row, is her younger siblings, on the bottom left her sister Silvia, her brother Rafael in their mothers' arms, their sister Martha in pigtails, and Yoli on the right. To her, the faces of the children could show a variety of emotions, from curiosity about something new or uncertainty about the unknown.

Figure 3

Lety Showing Her Photograph of a Similar Moment After the Bracero Program



Lety holds on to her precious family photograph because she never wants to forget about it. She wants her family to continue to pass along the story behind this photo that occurred a couple of years after the Bracero Program ended. The overall photograph shows an image during the green card process. (see Figure 4). This photograph is a memory to her, when the family immigrated and became U.S residents, but also a reminder of the way their mother Cecilia held the family together in her way, through her sacrifices for the family. This still image of a moment in someone's life history brings back the themes that were brought up in this study, recounting family's experiences, and emotions.

Figure 4

Photograph of Cecilia and Her Children During U.S. Immigration Process. Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico, 1969.



Excerpt from my fieldnotes

As I hear and see Lety analyze the small family photo, I am thinking about how mighty their story of migration and immigrating really is. This photograph gives the viewer a glimpse into real people and real stories, of what their life looked like, just as Lety just commented. Seeing the children, around their mother, I now want to know more about children immigrant's experiences and compare that to modern-day child immigrants. I ask myself now... How do they feel? Do they understand? In a way, I'm currently getting that with Lety, as she is the older little girl in the photo. She's sharing to me her story, her voice, her perspective, and her thoughts now, years later since this moment in the photograph.

The next photo Lety analyzed was a studio portrait of Cecilia taken in 1949 (see Figure 5). Lety describes that when this photo was taken, Cecilia had no children. The photo was originally a black-and-white image that Cecilia eventually modified and restored into a colorized sepia photograph. It was intended for Lety's father while he traveled, in case he missed her.

Figure 5

Studio Portrait of Cecilia, 1949.



When looking at the photo of the studio portrait of Cecilia, I asked Lety what did see when looking at her. Lety said, that she saw a young woman. And this young woman demonstrated even then, up until when she was raising her family, a strong woman. Lety analyzed the photo and said,

“Ella le demostró a su familia, alguien que siguió siendo responsable de todo lo que tuvo que enfrentar, y es el epítome de una verdadera guerrera.”

“My mother demonstrated to her family, someone that remained responsible for everything that she had to deal with, and is the epitome of a true warrior”

Excerpt from my fieldnotes

We are sitting down on the living room sofa, our chocolate con pan nearly finished on the coffee table. I just asked Lety about what Cecilia meant to her. Lety was pensive when looking at the photo. The conversation is a heavy one, from talking about family sacrifices, longing, and looking into their experiences through photographs. Yet, when looking at the family photographs, Lety remained prideful of her family and story. When looking at the photo of Cecilia and the way Lety described her, I see a tenderness in the softness of Cecilia’s photograph. The image is sepia with a bit of rosy color on Cecilia’s cheeks and lips, giving an elegance with her necklace. The softness of the colors in the photo brought up the memory of what Cecilia meant to Lety. Cecilia was beautiful. The memory of her is beautiful.

The following photos depict individuals’ life during the Bracero Program, after seeing all of them, Lety realized these photos were mainly photographed by American photographers. She brought up that she noticed these images show the life and treatment of Bracero workers and just one side of the history (see Figures 6-11) She realized she wanted to see more of the women and families that stayed behind in Mexico as they too endured their own experiences while Braceros were migrating. She stated that believes

that maybe a Mexican photographer, as opposed to an American photographer might show delicate realities and shared experiences.

Yoli Photography Breakdown:

During the second interview, when looking at the Bracero photographs, Yoli analyzed,

“En las fotografías, expresan cómo era despedirse de los Braceros cuando tenían que partir. Las familias se quedaban unidas en una profunda tristeza, tanto los que partían a Estados Unidos, como los que se quedaban en México. Las madres haciendo sus labores, criando y educando a sus hijos.”

Translation:

“The photographs, express what it was like to say goodbye as Braceros when they would have to leave. The families remained united in deep sadness, both those who left for the United States, and those who stayed and remained in Mexico. The Mothers doing their jobs, raising, and educating their children.” (see Figures 6-11).

To her, she thinks a Mexican photographer versus an American photographer, would capture a deeper connection to the realities of everyday life. This can be a way to document more of a series of photos instead of individual ones to get a bigger picture of a story.

Figure 6

The Hermanos Mayo: Braceros, Mexican migrant laborers, saying goodbye at the Buenavista Station. The Hermanos Mayo.



Figure 7

Domingo Ulloa: "Braceros" Domingo Ulloa, Oil on Masonite 36 × 49 in. (91.4 × 124.5 cm), 1960.



Figures 8 and 9

Dorothea Lange: First Braceros. ca. 1942. Dorothea Lange, photographer. Gelatin silver print. Collection of Oakland Museum of California. Gift of Paul S. Taylor.



Figure 10

Marjory Collins: Marjory Collins, photographer. Stockton (vicinity), California. Mexican Agricultural Laborer Topping Sugar Beets. 1943. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.



Figure 11

Leonard Nadel: negative. México, San Mateo Atenco. 1956
Photograph: A woman works at a table as children stand nearby in a Bracero family home in San Mateo, Mexico.



Juana Photography Breakdown:

When Juana looked through all the photos during the Bracero Program, she brought up the way these photos would make her feel. After seeing these photographs her emotions gave her a way to imagine what her family must have gone through. Her father is a Bracero, and her mother stays behind. During the conversation, she said and asked, *“Me puedo imaginar que mi papá también en algún tiempo se llegó sentir triste y solo. ¿Por lo que deben haber pasado mi madre y mi padre? “¿Cómo se han sentido realmente soportando trabajos forzados y estando lejos de la familia durante mucho tiempo? Tanto mi madre como mi padre debieron sentirse solos y tristes.”*

Translation:

“I can imagine that my dad also at some point felt sad and lonely. What must my mother and father have gone through?” “What have they truly felt like enduring hard labor and being away from family for a long time? Both my mother and father must’ve felt alone and sad.”

This was a moment that brought up that they never truly talked about the life they endured. Another photo that Juana analyzed, made her realize the photo showed a moment of humiliation captured of a man being sprayed disinfectant in the face (see Figure 12).

Figure 12

Leonard Nadel, 1956. Bracero workers being fumigated NMAH, History of Technology Collections



After talking about these family stories about the Braceros, I asked her what her mother meant to her.

“Para mi, mi mamá fue alguien que fue valiente y alguien que luchó por lo mejor de todos, mientras asumía el papel de madre y padre.”

Translation:

“For me, my mother was someone who was brave and someone who strived for the betterment of everyone, all while taking the role of mother and father.”

After seeing all these images, Juana remained thoughtful. That’s when she realized what her mother meant to her. The stories of all three women, Lety, Yoli, and Juana will remain passed along to close family members and friends. Their mother, Cecilia passed

away in May 2009, but her story and her family's story will always be one that can show the triumphs of overcoming loss and hardships. A true story that has impacted the generations that followed, and one that they can look back and admire, and value.

Excerpt from my fieldnotes

I'm sitting at my desk, I hit play on the audio app to listen back to the participant's audio recordings, reliving the conversations. Play, pause, rewind... Now that I've just heard the stories again that came out from looking at the photographs, the ones archived from historical photos, but mainly from the personal family photographs, I think about how photography can truly tell the stories of the way women were silenced. Most of the historical photographs just show what the Bracero Program was, but they do not say the full story. As the participants mentioned, every side of the story in this moment in history should be heard. Every story, the women's stories, the children's stories, they all play a huge role in learning about the reality of the Bracero's family life, and immigrant's lives. Then when I look at the personal photographs, I get the perspective and a glimpse of what life for the family that was separated looked like and could have felt like. The women in these stories used their resources such as photography to remain vocal and pass along their stories to the generations that come.

My Place

This study also put me, as the researcher, in a place to write and gather my autoethnographic approach in my field notes. Which put me in a place where I had to gather my own experiences and thoughts while listening to these women's stories. I

started to ask myself, “What does family separation look like to me based on the stories that were shared? What are the effects that are caused because of this?” I learned that family members that get left back and separated from family due to migration, immigration, or in some cases deportation may suffer multiple psychosocial consequences (Statement on the Effects of Deportation and Forced Separation on Immigrants, their Families, and Communities, 2018).

Right from the beginning when this project was coming together, during the IRB research process, while thinking about what this study was going to be, I knew then that I wanted to research and discuss stories that were close to my heart and culture. And with that, I realized the unique position I was going to be in. It is my background and knowledge of certain moments in cultural history between the United States and Mexico that made me want to do this. The Bracero Program was a moment in history that impacted my family and years after it was over, the next generations, including me. I am a Latina, Mexican- American Woman with two parents that were born and raised in Mexico. Ever since I was a little girl, I remember hearing my mother proudly tell me and my siblings where our family came from and how she and her family eventually immigrated to the United States, just as my mother has always found it important to pass along this story about our family’s history, I too realized it will always be just as important to continue to discuss the history and have these conversations.

As I held the interviews I jotted down in my field notes journal, personal diaries of thoughts that went through my mind before, during, and after the interview. I started to think about the stories that were being told and how personal it was for the interviewees

to share their experiences during or after the Bracero Program. I couldn't help but realize something that stood out to me. Before the first interview, I wrote in my notes the optimism that I felt at first about this project and getting it done, but I wasn't necessarily thinking anything beyond that. As I held the interviews, I felt deeper emotions develop. While going back to the recorded audio and listening back to the stories when transcribing and translating, I started writing about the roller-coaster of emotions that I felt listening to the stories. I realized that this has always been beyond me.

Excerpt from my fieldnotes

I just finished listening back to each interview I held through my audio recording app. The last interview I just listened to was Juana's story and she expressed her emotions during family separations and the effects that it caused her. She'd felt shy around her father after not seeing him for a while. What about the countless children over the years that have dealt with similar or worse situations in modern times because of current immigration policies? Children and parents forced separation still happens. I am now thinking about the immigrant families that don't have opportunities and face deportation as immigrating to a new country is not easy. My grandparents are no longer here, I wish I could have been able to have these conversations with them and show them my gratitude. In a way, I'm starting to feel guilty.....

A prominent emotion that kept coming up in my mind was the guilty feeling about the privileges that I now have. I analyzed my emotions of guilt as I realized I've been more privileged in many ways as an American-born Latina. I started to think about

what my family before me had to go through to where I am today. But then my feelings that followed with a sense of pride and joy because my own family was not doing this for themselves, as they were thinking and doing it for my generation too. I am proud of my family's history and learning about them. The rest of the family continues to keep these stories alive, and I get to pass along these stories proudly, just as the way my mother shared these stories since I was a little girl. I acknowledge how grateful I am to be where I am today and for everything I have. I think back to Lety's quote of how her parents had to think. They did not sacrifice everything they had to immigrate to a new country just for themselves. They knowingly wanted to do this for the good of the family and their futures. I know and realize now that these stories need to be told and heard, especially when learning that some stories used to get covered or shut down to not discuss the realities of the poor treatment of human lives. I now hold a position where I can pass along these stories in written form, and will continue to do so, in any format whether it is passed along through oral stories, written, or through the expression of the power of fine art.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF THE ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

This research study brought in traditional Mexican oral stories through a feminist lens as a theoretical frame. It was designed to evaluate and recognize the women's perspectives that were impacted from the 1940s to the 1960s in the U.S.-Mexico Bracero Program and years afterward. As stated in the background of the problem, the perspectives at this moment in history have often overlooked the Mexican women left behind during the seasonal agricultural labor migration separation. And their perspectives and experiences were completely disregarded. So, I will interpret the stories and themes that were presented through oral stories, and photography: and I will also analyze the research from my place that was through the autoethnographic lens as both the researcher and a Mexican woman. In this section of the chapter, I will further discuss my analysis of the findings and answer my second research question that this study addressed, as this illuminates the side of the story that usually gets dismissed of migrating Braceros families in history to current immigration experiences.

As stated in the story in my introduction, I wanted to do this research because this moment in history is very personal to me. I wanted to explore where I came from tracing back my family's history through the stories of some of the women in my family's perspective. Oral stories about my family's history have been passed and shared with me and my siblings since we were young. I go back to the story of my middle school teacher who felt like my family's story was wrong because it didn't fit what she knew or believed about immigration. My findings looked at the importance of passing along true realities

and lived experiences. As for my place and my experiences, adding my thoughts that came up while listening to difficult, yet empowering stories added to the impacts these stories caused. I wanted to have my field notes as my point of view, to explore my mind while I listened to the stories, and to show how the interviewees impacted my way of thinking and understanding. I realized hearing these stories, I got a sense of self. I explored my understanding of my culture and family's experiences that have shaped even me. I unpacked more of my identity by looking at my place through autoethnography.

Research Question Two

How can traditional Mexican Storytelling and photography as forms of art expression, tell the stories of the silencing of women's voices in this significant moment in history and the way it affects women now? My findings revealed that when the participants examined personal photos and photos taken during the Bracero Program, they realized that these photographs unwrapped stories that surfaced from seeing them. When looking at the photographs, the silence was seen when most of the historical photos did not show the true experience of families that stayed back in Mexico. The personal family photographs gave another view into the history and brought out the perspectives of the women and the family's story. My findings also show the way that the stories of the Bracero families impact the women now. The participants shared the way the newer generation of women in the family can look back and see how far they have come, and the possibilities in life they now have. The interviewees thought of the importance of continuing to pass down these stories. For example, when the interviewee Juana stated that the reason why she passes along this family story and history, her wish is for her

family to know the value of where the family is from and know the history. For her, it is a recognition of the experiences of the many sides of the immigration process. Lety's view on the importance of passing along stories such as this is to acknowledge different sides of the family impact the Bracero Program brought. To let her own children, know how they are linked to the family's past and the way that impacts their present and future lives. Just as she remembers her parents' discussion that she keeps close to her heart and passes to her family, Lety stated, "They did this for us, their children, and were thinking about our children, for us to have a better life. Not just for themselves, but for the future children, their grandchildren".

Storytelling Analysis

The participants used storytelling through memories they experience and through photography. From the oral stories shared, I discovered what it takes when family members talk about sacrificing for one another. The women had to make the best out of the circumstances in their lives and what they have. Yoli commented in her interview:

"This impacted all of us, the whole family, because we suffered the absence of our father. We barely saw him at all because he was always working in The United States."

When it came to family sacrifice when looking at the photos Lety noted:

"For us, the family that stayed behind, had to learn to live life with the constant, temporary life with our family incomplete. The family, my mother and father were going to be separated while our father was migrating and working."

The stories drew attention to the impacts that developed during these experiences and how this impacted the rest of the family, even the future generations. In my research, I heard from the point of view of the women that were young with their mother and her family left behind. Through oral stories, my study found that older participants experienced the impacts and witnessed what their parents went through during the Bracero Program, while other participants, learned through family stories passed down to them, and this is how they learned what their parents had to deal with. The study uncovered separation, and after being separated, it took both immigrant mothers and fathers to provide for their families.

The women during the Bracero Program were doing so much more than household work. After everything they endured, these mothers and daughters showed leadership to their families even while they did not have the right to work in what was considered a man's job, as an agricultural farm worker. Mexican women proved to be independent back home while taking over the roles and responsibilities that were traditionally intended for men, during the absence of their migrating husbands, or fathers. As the participants disclosed, the separation took three to four months during the farm working seasons. The women would become the head of the household since women were not allowed to work as a Bracero at the time.

Thus, there were both positive and negative impacts after the Bracero Program and because of family separation. Opportunities followed, but they came at an expense. One of the participants recalled when she was a young girl, she expressed mixed feelings of feeling shy at times due to the lack of seeing and experiencing her father. Another participant's story, when her parents decided to leave everything behind for a new life in

the United States, once they got their green cards. Yet they recognized the good that followed, to be given new opportunities in the U.S., not just for themselves but for the next generations.

Since other studies showed the U.S. and Mexican governments censoring Mexican women so they cannot express any form of grieving for their loved ones (Rosas 2014), I realized how little it was known that this was happening. I wanted to make sure the women's stories continue to be told. These stories need to be told for who these women are, as individuals, and represent them as much more than the established roles placed on them. One of the participants shared the way her mother picked up knitting as her way to express herself, and perhaps release any stress. To these participants, their mother endured more than was known as someone that represented strength and courage.

Connections to Art Education

After doing an analysis of my studies and research, I have discovered more about traditional storytelling to talk and learn about family and history. While holding the interview for one of the interviewees before she started, she welcomed me by sharing traditional Mexican snacks before starting, and made it feel so casual and relaxed, to open her storytelling about everyday lived experiences in the past and the outcomes. In art education, storytelling and traditional storytelling can be integrated into arts-based storytelling pedagogy as a form of art and expression. As referenced in the literature review, an arts-based pedagogy can engage in meaningful relationships, and emotions, with the human, lived experiences of learners (Sutherland, & Jelinek, 2015).

So, with that in mind, I knew from the beginning that I wanted to approach art-based storytelling and photography as a method of expression when interviewing my participants, to make it feel more like a conversation and get oral stories that have been passed down. And with that, I was able to get deep a deeper understanding of personal stories. Even while analyzing the photography, it allowed the participants to have thoughtful and meaningful experiences and conversations about the memories that these photos brought to them. The way this research of stories and photography contributes to art education research says that to further tell and listen to cultural stories even in a multicultural art classroom, Chung and Li (2019) says, “Art teachers should guide students to explore their unique artistic expressions, societies, and cultures and to develop understanding, acceptance, and tolerance of other cultures” (p. 4). Multicultural stories in art need to be told and need to be heard, to appreciate each other’s backgrounds.

As for storytelling or oral stories in a traditional Mexican custom, is that families get to pass along historical events or family experiences to the next generations. This study was done through storytelling to learn about another perspective during the Bracero Program, the impacts on women and their families, emotions, sacrifices, recognitions, and unrecognized stories. All three participants said they will continue to talk about these family stories. Yoli’s comment about passing down the stories about family recognition and sacrifice, was:

“I like telling my son about these stories so that he knows the sacrifice of my parents and other Mexican families go through. It was all done so that I and my son would have a better future here in the United States”

All three women in this study said they want to recognize the story of their mother, and father as symbols of empowerment, as in later years, they continued to show support in their communities, to represent those that went through and have the same struggles and stories.

Conclusion

This historical family story can illuminate the true realities that families face and the hardships of migration and immigration. The study showed a key perspective that history often overlooked was a moment during the Bracero Program and the Mexican women and their families left behind during migration separation. Women endured hardships and more than was known such as the institutional problems that hurt Mexican women. Some of these were the inability of women and their families to express longing, and opinions, old traditional expectations, few work opportunities, and constant family separations. It is necessary to continue to pass along every side of the experiences, the stories of the migrating Braceros and the family left behind. The women's experiences are a huge part of this history, as well as the children impacted growing up. Mexican families pass along stories such as this moment in history in traditional ways such as oral stories as a form of storytelling. The intention is to teach newer generations about history, family, sacrifices, and opportunities. Storytelling, as found in arts-based storytelling research, provides access and exposure to stories of historically underrepresented people without tokenization or misrepresentation (Hobson & Seay, 2020). Learning from the Bracero Program, and as the Latino and the Hispanic population continues to grow, it is necessary to look at both U.S. and Mexican history of harsh policies and new policies

when it comes to immigrant human lives seeking a chance for opportunity. It is essential to incorporate, represent, discuss, and understand the stories of difficulties of what life was like and maybe even continues to be for modern immigrant families.

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APPENDIX A
PHOTOGRAPHY RELEASE FORM

PHOTOGRAPHY RELEASE GRANTED

On November 4th, 2022, I authorized and approved Nancy Salas to use my family photographs in her thesis. I understand that these photos are to be used in Nancy Salas's, interviews, observations, and research and I grant permission for use.

The signed forms are in a secure file with Nancy's thesis advisor.