

ABSTRACT

CORDERO OCEGUERA, EMILIA ITZEL. Transformative Harvests: Everyday Resistance and Relational Care in the Food and Agricultural Work of Mexican Migrant Farmworker Mothers in North Carolina. (Under the direction of Dr. Sarah Bowen)

Women make up 28% of the migrant farmworker labor force in the United States (NCFH 2018), yet their contributions to the food system are often overlooked. Farmworker mothers help feed their communities and society by laboring in the fields, and they also feed their families at home. This dissertation investigates how and whether migrant farmworker mothers transform their everyday experiences with intersectional oppression through their farm and food work, and how their everyday food and agricultural practices shape the relationships of care they build with their families and community. This study draws on interviews with farmworker women who are mothers in rural North Carolina. It contributes to our understanding of how migrant Mexican farmworker mothers shape the US food system through their everyday food and agricultural work, even under conditions of exploitation and marginalization. I find that migrant women's foodwork is essentially relational, meaning that women build and shape relationships of care with others through the acts of procuring and cooking food. Women's foodwork is also transformational, because it can shape and change the environments where women interact with others through their food practices. This study contributes to the literature on care and foodwork by highlighting that a woman's foodwork is not merely labor; foodwork is also a set of complex relationships that shape her life and that of the people she cares for through food. It also contributes to the literature on migrant mothers' foodwork by showing how women do not see foodwork as just a burden. Foodwork is also a way to provide dignity for themselves, their children, and their communities and improve the environment where they live.

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Transformative Harvests: Everyday Resistance and Relational Care in the Food and Agricultural
Work of Mexican Migrant Farmworker Mothers in North Carolina.

by
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DEDICATION

Para todas las mujeres que me ayudaron a hacer esto posible. Este trabajo se hizo con su conocimiento, su vulnerabilidad y su fuerza. Por que juntas construyamos un mundo que tome sus experiencias de vida como bandera y hagamos posible un mejor mañana. Gracias por siempre. To all the women that helped me make this possible. This work is built on your knowledge, your vulnerability, and your strength. May we create a world where your life experience guides us to a better tomorrow.

BIOGRAPHY

Emilia Cordero Ocegüera was born and raised in Mexico City, Mexico. After finishing her Bachelor's in Latin American Studies at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, UNAM), she moved to California to do a Master's in Latin American Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. She focused her studies on the indigenous knowledge and agroecological practices of the communities in the highlands of Ecuador. Before moving to Raleigh, North Carolina, to begin a doctoral program in Sociology at the North Carolina State University, she travelled to Chile, Bolivia, and Mexico to work in agricultural farms and learn more about indigenous agroecological practices. Then she joined a six-month farming internship at the Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems of the University of California, at Santa Cruz. There she became interested in the struggles of Mexican migrant farmworkers in the United States. During the six years she lived in Raleigh, NC she collaborated with the Farmworker Unit of Legal Aid North Carolina and the Episcopal Farmworker Ministry to support migrant farmworkers in the area. At the moment she is back in Mexico and creating connections between Mexican migrant farmworker women in North Carolina and the Mexican audience, by showing the short documentary film she directed, "Tradiciones Enraizadas" ("Rooted Traditions"), which tells the story of a group of migrant farmworker women in rural North Carolina. She hopes to keep building on this work as she moves onto the next stage of her career.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Women make up 28% of the migrant farmworker labor force in the United States (NCFH 2018), yet their contributions to the food system are often overlooked. Farmworker mothers help feed their communities and society by laboring in the fields; and they feed their families at home. Farmworkers in general are underpaid and under-protected as they do physically demanding work that makes them prone to injuries and health problems (Arcury and Quandt 2020, Holmes 2013, Quandt et al. 2006). Additionally, women farmworkers face specific challenges related to sexual harassment, gender discrimination, health problems during pregnancy, and limited childcare assistance (Golichenko and Sarang 2013, Jung-Eun Kim et al. 2016, Morales Waugh 2010, Southern Poverty Law Center 2010). Women farmworkers are also unique in that they engage in multiple forms of foodwork, at home and in the fields (Abarca 2006, Beoku-Betts 1995, Mares 2019, Williams-Forson 2006), through the relationships they form with their families and community (Doucet 2023). This study brings together research on two forms of foodwork: literature on farmworker labor and literature on foodwork and motherhood. Studies of farmworkers have primarily focused on men's labor (Holmes 2013, Gray 2014, Estabrook 2011). Additionally, literature on gendered foodwork and motherhood has, with some exceptions, centered primarily on the experiences of white, middle-class mothers (Cairns and Johnston 2015; Cairns, Johnston, and MacKendrick 2013; for exceptions see Bowen et al. 2019, Bowen et al. 2023, Fielding-Singh 2017). This study examines how migrant farmworker mothers are both food workers and caregivers that use their foodwork to transform their lives and that of their loved ones. This dissertation addresses the ways in which their farmwork shapes their foodwork at home and with their community and vice versa.

In general, the lived experiences of working-class mothers of color have historically blurred social divisions between home and work life (Hill Collins 1994, 2000, Nakano Glenn et al. (ed.) 1994, Segura 1994). This is also the case for migrant women farmworkers. Their experiences are framed by the context of their intersecting positionalities in US society (Nakano Glenn 1994), as working-class women of color who are migrants, often undocumented, and by the relationships of care they build to shape and change their everyday reality (Doucet 2023).

This dissertation investigates how migrant farmworker mothers transform their everyday experiences with intersectional oppression through their farm and food work, and how their everyday food and agricultural practices shape the relationships of care they build with their families and community. Previous studies have addressed farmworker resistance to oppression mainly in the form of organized movements and unions (Estabrook 2011, Sbicca et al. 2020, Gray 2014). However, migrant women, when undocumented and low-wage workers, may be less likely to get involved in forms of resistance that can risk their livelihood in the United States. Looking at their everyday acts of resistance (Cohen and Hjalmarson 2020, Hollander and Einhowler 2004, Johansson and Vinthegen 2016 and 2020, Ochoa 1999) adds complexity to the traditional portrayal of the farmworker struggle in the United States. Literature on farmworker resistance has not centered the discussion on everyday acts of resistance. A few studies have examined how migrant farmworkers transform their relationship with intersectional oppression by growing their own food using the knowledge and skills learned in their hometowns (Mares 2019, Minkoff-Zern 2019). Others show that Mexican migrant women do this through their culinary practices and expertise as they prepare and share meals that use recipes and ingredients from their hometowns (Abarca 2006, García et al. 2017). Yet, none have centered specifically on the ways that migrant farmworker mothers transform their everyday lives through their food

labor at home and at work. Additionally, literature on foodwork has addressed the ways mothers care for their children when they feed them and provide nourishment (Bowen, Brenton and Elliot 2019, Bowen et al. 2023, Brenton 2017, Cairns and Johnston 2015, Cairns et al. 2013, DeVault 1991, Fielding-Sing and Cooper 2023, Mackendrick 2014). However, this literature has not looked at how women build relationships of care through their foodwork outside their household. This dissertation seeks to understand how migrant women who do farmwork, transform their everyday interactions with oppression by providing care for their children, coworkers, and friends through their foodwork, at home and in the fields. Drawing on interviews with farmworker women who are mothers in rural North Carolina, this study contributes to our understanding of how migrant Mexican farmworker mothers shape the US food system through their everyday food and agricultural work, even under conditions of exploitation and marginalization.

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 2 reviews the literature that addresses migrant farmworker women's context, their interactions with intersectional oppression, their experiences with motherhood as women of color, and their foodwork. Chapter 3 describes the methodology I used to collect data for this study. It describes the case, the interview process, and the data analysis for each of the chapters. The first substantive chapter, Chapter 4, examines at the ways Mexican migrant mothers shape their everyday lives by resisting oppression through their foodwork, at home and in the fields. The second substantive chapter, Chapter 5, addresses the ways migrant mothers build relationships of care through their foodwork with their families and communities to transform the oppression they experience in their everyday lives. Chapter 6 is a methodological analysis where I discuss how a reflexive methodology, where my participants and I interact and together shape the data collection

process, results in a narrative that reflects the complexity of their everyday reality. Finally, Chapter 7, offers a summary of the key findings my analysis provided and the contributions my dissertation offers to the literature and methodological tools.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Much of the research on migrant farmworkers in the United States has examined the dynamics of inequality that exist in the agricultural fields. These studies describe the deplorable working and living conditions farmworkers experience—from disregard of their basic human needs, like accessible bathroom facilities and access to drinking water, to lack of basic protection against pesticide poisoning, deadly sun exposure, and overcrowded housing (Brown and Getz 2011, Estabrook 2011, Gray 2014, Mares 2019, Sbicca et al. 2020). Holmes' (2013) ethnographic study of indigenous Triqui farmworkers from Mexico highlights how their substandard working and living conditions constitute a form of structural violence that deteriorates their quality of life. Holmes' (2020) more recent work examines how quantitative and qualitative methodologies help normalize farmworker injuries. Arcury and Quandt (2020) discuss the safety hazards and lack of health regulations, including those related to mental health and women's health, that migrant and seasonal Latin American farmworkers experience in their jobs. Another body of work examines the risks of deportation that farmworkers' face and the way they have responded. Meierotto et al. (2020) discuss how Latina farmworkers in rural Idaho have experienced increased fear and isolation during the Trump era, while Medeiros and Guzmán (2020) focus on the resistance efforts among Mexican and Guatemalan farmworkers in New York towards harshened immigration policies in the last four years.

A strand of research within the food justice and farm labor literature also discusses how ironically, farmworkers, the people working hardest to feed U.S. families, often suffer from food insecurity themselves (Mares 2019). Minkoff-Zern (2014, 2014a, 2014b, 2019) examines farmworkers' experiences with food insecurity in California, a state with one of the largest

agricultural economies in the United States. Her research shows two contrasting ways farmworkers cope with limited access to food. First, farmworkers access governmental programs, even though these potentially constrain their food choices, and second, they grow food in community gardens, which increase farmworkers' autonomy and control over their own food supply. In her study of farmworkers in Vermont's dairy industry, Mares et al. (2017) show how their invisibility within the US food system limits farmworkers' ability to change their work and living conditions. Similarly, Brown and Getz (2011) discuss how the invisibility of farmworkers heightens migrant food insecurity. They argue that food insecurity among immigrant farmworkers in California is caused by an agricultural economy based on the accumulation of capital, immigration policies that target racialized bodies, and a trade policy based on neoliberal ideals. Mares (2019) critiques the concept of "food insecurity" itself and the quantitative tools that are used to measure it. She argues that when researchers use quantitative standards alone to define immigrant farmworkers' limited access to food as "food insecurity," they make their food practices and coping mechanisms invisible. Instead, she proposes "food sovereignty" as a more encompassing term to define the food and agricultural practices that migrant farmworkers use to access food in the United States.

In sum, previous literature on farmworkers provides a panorama of the everyday living and working conditions that migrant farmworkers in the United States are forced to endure in an unequal food system. Most studies focus largely on (and often generalize based on) the experience of migrant farmworker men, who make up the majority of the migrant farmworker population coming from Mexico (Estabrook 2011, Gray 2014, Holmes 2013). In contrast, a handful of studies focus specifically on the experiences of women farmworkers. Research shows how issues of reproductive justice –like lack of access to adequate health care and hazardous

labor conditions during pregnancy and reproductive years— and sexual harassment are exacerbated by a consistent disregard of the existing regulations and a recurrent hostile male-dominated work environment (Golichenko and Sarang 2013, Jung-Eun Kim et al. 2016, Morales Waugh 2010, National Farmworker Ministry 2018). Domestic abuse is also prevalent within farmworker families, according to Van Hightower et al. (2000), and it shapes Latina women farmworkers’ expressions of fear of their intimate partners. Looking to highlight the agency of women farmworkers, Castañeda and Zavella (2008) examine expressions of Mexican farmworker women’s sexual identity and ideas of desire. They center on how women resist social norms related to gender as they experience a transborder life. Moreover, focusing on political resistance and women’s agency, Seif (2008) looks into the political activity and organizing strategies employed by undocumented Mexican farmworker women in the Salinas Valley, California. Across studies, research on migrant farmworker women show that their experiences are distinct from those of their male counterparts. Within a society guided by heteropatriarchal power dynamics, women farmworkers are not only distinct in terms of the intersectional oppression they experience, but also the ways they resist them.

This study focuses not just on farmworker women, but specifically on farmworker mothers. Of the existing studies that examine both immigrant farmwork and carework, most focus on the food providing strategies of farmworker mothers. In her analysis of dairy workers in Vermont, Mares (2019) discusses how farmworker mothers navigate resources to deal with food access in their households. Similarly, Meierotto and Som Castellano (2020) talk about the “caring labor” performed by Latinx farmworker families in Idaho through their food provision strategies. However, existing studies still tend to talk about farmwork (in the fields) and foodwork (in the kitchen) as separate spheres.

There is a need for research that highlights the importance of the interconnectedness between the farmworker mothers do in the fields with the foodwork they do at home. In her study on immigrant Mexican and Chicana mothers and their ideological constructions of employment, Segura (1994: 212) explains Mexican mothers see employment as “a workable domain of motherhood,” in stark contrast to the public-private life dichotomy that emerges from the experience of white upper and middle-class women (Segura 1994). By examining how immigrant farmworker mothers perceive their foodwork both in their job and at home, this study adds to our understanding of the complexity that exists in representations of motherhood among mothers of color (Hill Collins 1994, Nakano Glenn et al (ed.) 1994).

This study uniquely focuses on everyday forms of resistance. Previous research (Estabrook 201, Sbicca et al. 2020) examines how migrant farmworkers engage in active political resistance to improve their living and working conditions. Most studies focus on how farmworkers organize collectively through unions and social movements (Estabrook 2011, Gray 2014, Holmes 2013, Sbicca et al. 2020). For example, Estabrook (2011) shows how tomato farmworkers in Florida formed the Coalition of Immokalee Workers and organized a campaign that asked consumers to help them gain better working protections by boycotting major food chains like Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, KFC. Gray (2014) discusses the work of the Justice for Farmworkers coalition in the state of New York and their attempts to change working conditions for farmworkers through legislative campaigning and legal casework. She also highlights the work of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee in North Carolina and their success organizing foreign guest workers to gain union contracts from corporate owners. Sbicca et al. (2020) showcase the experience of Community-to-Community Development (C2C) in Washington state, a farmworker grassroots group that aims to confront the intersectional oppressive systems

that affect farmworkers—capitalism, racism, state violence, and patriarchy. Their collective actions include outreach with farmworkers through discussion vigils, engagement with broader coalitions, and advocacy work to target abusive growers. Holmes’s (2013) book is not primarily focused on farmworker movements, but he mentions how solidarity with farmworker organizations and more open immigration policies could improve the lives of the migrant farmworkers in his study.

These previous studies of farmworkers’ movements contribute to our understanding of how farmworkers have organized to improve their living and working conditions and what specific strategies have been most effective. However, by focusing on organized and collective strategies of resistance, we risk potentially ignoring other expressions of resistance that are enacted in everyday life. Perhaps because of this, Holmes (2020) calls for methodologies that look at the everyday practices of farmworkers as they demand better working and living conditions. One exception is Cohen and Hjalmarson’s (2020) study of Mexican and Jamaican migrant farmworkers in the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia. They discuss how migrant farmworkers use four specific acts of everyday resistance to fight against exploitative working conditions and harsh immigration policies: 1) secretly seeking additional work while on guest worker visas; 2) collectively pacing their work in the fields; 3) adding hours on their timesheets; and 4) reappropriating food produce. Mares (2019) also argues that migrant farmworkers in Vermont use gardening and cooking home recipes (e.g., cultivating ingredients at home and cooking recipes from their hometowns) as “small but significant acts of defiance” (2019: 88).

Resistance scholars have long argued that the everyday acts of resistance of disenfranchised and oppressed communities can contribute to transformative change (Hill Collins 2000, Hollander and Einhowler 2004, Johansson and Vinthagen 2016 and 2020, Ochoa

1999). Everyday acts of resistance are individual or group practices in which people that experience oppression exert agency in an attempt to undermine dominant power relations (Vinthagen and Johansson 2013, Johansson and Vinthagen 2016). In contrast to Hollander and Einwohner (2004), who argue that the pillars of resistance are recognition and intent— in other words, the resistor must recognize their own behavior and the target must react to it— Johansson and Vinthagen (2020, 2016) insist that the core of resistance is in its enactment. Everyday resistance is an intersectional interaction with power that is heterogenous and ever-changing and is inscribed in a specific historical context (Johansson and Vinthagen 2020, 2016). Furthermore, daily practices of resistance are generally *not* recognized by their direct target, by mainstream society and politics, and by people in positions of power (Johansson and Vinthagen 2020). Everyday resistance does not have to be overt, collective or organized (el-Khoury 2012), it does not have to prioritize political action, and it can involve emotions and desires (Johansson and Vinthagen 2020). Regardless, everyday acts of resistance are critiques of the existing power dynamics and they represent attempts at social and political change (Cohen and Hjalmarson 2018).

My work builds on and draws from previous work by feminist scholars of color on how Black and Indigenous People of Color, specifically, engage in acts of resistance to confront everyday oppressions (Hill Collins 2000). For example, by maintaining their culture and language as part of their identity (Ochoa 1999), or talking back when confronted with racist and xenophobic comments (bell hooks 2014), or even cooking a specific dish and enjoying it (Williams-Forsen 2006). These instances of empowerment and agency are often unplanned, and many times go unnoticed (Evans and Moore 2015). Yet, they allow the enactors to maintain and

value their human dignity and a sense of self, making these everyday resistance practices significant, meaningful and effective (bell hooks 2014, el-Khoury 2012).

Foodwork –acts of eating, cooking, preparing for meals, and finding joy in doing it—can also be a form of resistance. Williams-Forsen (2006) describes how, in the 1850’s, African-American women who called themselves “waiter carriers” sold chicken dishes to train passengers as a way to gain agency in a society that neglected their existence. Similarly, Abarca (2006) discusses the culinary practices of Mexican American women and the ways in which agency is inscribed in their daily food choices and cooking decisions. She describes cooking as a form of knowledge that provides women of color with the agency to resist misogynist oppression through a liberating and empowering practice. However, no study has analyzed farmworker mothers’ foodwork, at home and in the fields, as potential acts of everyday resistance.

In addition to contributing to the literature on farmwork and resistance, this study builds on the large body of literature on foodwork as a form of carework. This work highlights how foodwork is carried out mostly by mothers (DeVault 1991, Cairns and Johnston 2015) and reflects gendered expectations and assumptions. This uneven distribution of foodwork places specific pressures on women to feed their families in nourishing ways and create wholesome mealtime dynamics (MacKendrick 2014). Fulfilling these high expectations requires considerable time, money and mental energy that are rarely acknowledged (Cairns et al. 2013, MacKendrick 2014, MacKendrick 2018, MacKendrick and Cairns 2019). Moreover, mothers who cannot fulfill these societal expectations are subject to stigma and shame (Cairns et al. 2013). It is especially difficult for low-income women to live up to these expectations given inadequate resources and negative stereotypes that portray poor mothers and mothers of color as uncaring or uninformed (Elliot and Bowen 2018, Fielding-Singh 2017). However, researchers

find that low-income mothers of color do invest in nourishing food for their families and make choices based on health expectations but are generally limited by income and time constraints (Bowen et al. 2023, Bowen et al. 2019, Brenton 2017, Cairns et al. 2013, Elliott and Bowen 2018, Fielding-Singh 2017).

Existing literature on foodwork as a form of carework contributes to a better understanding of how gendered inequalities are reproduced within the US food system. Yet, the experiences of women of color—and in particular, Latina mothers—are less represented within the literature (for exceptions, see Bowen et al. 2023, Bowen et al. 2019, Elliott and Bowen 2018, and Fielding-Singh 2017). Tangentially, Mares (2019) examines how Latina dairy farmworker mothers and their male partners in Vermont reproduce recipes from their home communities by growing food in gardens, while simultaneously coping with food insecurity. Meierotto and Som Castellano (2020) examine Latin American farmworkers' food provisioning strategies, focusing mostly but not just on the experiences of farmworker women. However, these studies do not center on the significance of the foodwork of mothers of color. This is important because they make specific contributions to their loved ones through their foodwork.

By examining women farmworker's agricultural labor and foodwork, this study contributes to feminist of color scholars' argument that there is a historical and inextricable connection in women of color's work inside and outside the home (Hills Collins 2000, 1994). Hill Collins (1994, 2000) uses the term 'motherwork' to describe the particular way women of color experience mothering. Based on a class and race intersectional analysis, she argues that motherwork responds to feminist theories that point to an existing dichotomy between "private and public life, family and work, and the individual and the collective" (Hill Collins 1994: 47). According to Hill Collins, the motherhood experiences of women of color challenge these "rigid

distinctions” (1994: 47) between male and female gender roles that provide a social construction of work and family as separate and autonomous spheres of life. Segura (1994) expands on this argument to examine the particular experience of Mexican and Chicana immigrant mothers who work. The difference in ideas about employment from Chicana and Mexican respondents lead her to conclude that motherhood is shaped by culture. Dow (2019) shows that Black mothers continue to experience motherhood in the intersection of race, class, and gender, making it markedly different from that of their white middle-class counterparts. Adding to this argument, Nakano Glenn (1994) says that motherhood is not a monolithic experience. It is in fact, an experience shaped by context; and by the access women have to cultural and economic resources. Referring to the mothering experience of Mexican American Chicana women in the United States, Caballero et al. (ed.) (2019:4) use the term “Chicana Motherwork” to illustrate how Chicana mothers enact collective resistance through “various forms of feminized labor” (Caballero et al. (ed.) 2019: 4).

In short, existing literature shows that working-class women of color have a particular mothering experience. My examination of migrant farmworker women’s experiences will help deconstruct and complicate monolithic conceptions of motherhood. Furthermore, my focus on Mexican migrant farmworker mothers’ foodwork adds specificity to the cases discussed in the literature on migrant food practices. Literature on food and migration has examined how migrant women’s food practices reflect their transborder experiences –using ingredients from their home countries to cook place-specific dishes in new places, but also adapting to new norms to feed their families (Abarca 2006, Mares 2019, García et al. 2017). Similarly, Marte (2012) shows that migrant women transform the food system through their culinary traditions. They also do it through their agricultural practices, when they grow a specific chili in their back yard or keep a

small patch of herbs outside their window (García et al. (ed.) 2017, Mares 2019). By looking at Mexican migrant farmworker mothers' everyday experiences in the fields and at home we can observe how they bring these practices together and transform the food system within the spaces they inhabit and interact.

CHAPTER 3

Research Methods

I used interviews, photovoice, and autoethnography as the data collection methods to examine the everyday life experiences of Mexican migrant farmworker mothers in rural North Carolina. I based my data collection process on the methodological precepts of intersectionality, understanding it as a broad-based knowledge project (Hill Collins 2000), in order to center the experiences and reflections of women of color (Alexander-Floyd 2012). As a research methodology, intersectionality contributes to a paradigm shift concerning power and social inequity (Hill Collins 1994). Its key precepts—oppression, relationality, complexity, context, comparison, and deconstruction (Misra et al. 2021, Bilge 2013, Bowleg 2008, Carbado 2015)—are the base for the design of this study. Centering on the key precepts of intersectionality allowed me to present a grounded and nuanced description of Mexican migrant farmworker women’s experiences and reflections. Additionally, I focused on my positionality throughout the process of collecting and analyzing data. Being reflexive about my positionality allowed me to show how my perspective influences the way I relate to the participants I worked with in this study. Moreover, a reflexive research process allowed me to portray participants’ experiences in the most grounded way possible in my analysis. It helped me provide nuance to the insider/outsider dichotomy that takes place in qualitative research (Young 2012, Kang 2000, Mayorga-Gallo and Hodge-Freeman 2016, Beoku-Betts 1994). I did this by exploring the ways my own positionality shaped my interactions with participants, my interview questions and understanding of the responses, my analysis of the data I collected, and the relevance of my research findings.

Case

Migrant Farmworkers in Harnett County, North Carolina, USA

Each growing season there are approximately 150,000 migrant farmworkers and their dependents in North Carolina (Legal Aid NC-FWU 2017). This makes North Carolina the sixth-most-populous state in terms of the number of migrant farmworkers present each season, after California, Texas, Washington, Florida, and Oregon (Legal Aid NC-FWU 2017). Farmworkers in North Carolina may work in fields, nurseries, greenhouses, and processing plants. They plant, care for, and harvest fruit and vegetable crops, wild plants, and Christmas trees (NC Farmworker Health Program 2021). The agricultural sectors in North Carolina that hire the most farmworkers include tobacco, Christmas trees, sweet potatoes, cucumbers, apples and bell peppers (NC Council of Churches 2021). In total, agriculture contributes more than \$69.6 billion to North Carolina's economy annually, with each farmworker contributing over \$12,000 in profits per year (NC Council of Churches 2021).

Some migrant farmworkers come to North Carolina from other states, while others come from other countries. They may be U.S citizens, guest workers with H-2A or H-2B visas, legal residents, or undocumented (NC Farmworker Health Program 2021, Legal Aid NC-FWU 2017). Approximately 6-10% of migrant farmworkers in North Carolina are H-2A farmworkers or H-2B forestry workers from Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras, and around 53% are undocumented (Legal Aid NC-FWU 2017). Undocumented farmworkers are targets of immigration policies (Brown and Getz 2011) that make their essential work invisible (Mares et al. 2017).

Migrant women make up 28% of the agricultural workforce in the United States (NCFH 2018). Fifty-five percent of migrant farmworkers are parents (NAWS 2015-2016). Women farmworkers are at risk of sexual harassment in the fields and health problems during pregnancy

due to chemical poisoning and physically strenuous tasks (NCFHP 2017) and struggle to find reliable childcare (SPLC 2010) during their work hours. The average annual income for a farmworker family in North Carolina is \$14,000, well below the poverty line (NC Farmworkers 2012) and 35% less than the national average (Legal Aid NC-FWU 2017). Women earn substantially less money than their male counterparts; the gender wage gap for farmworkers is \$5,000 (Entralago 2021). Farmworkers and their family members sometimes suffer from a number of health problems, including tuberculosis, parasitic infections, and gastrointestinal illnesses because of substandard housing (NFCH 2018). In the fields, farmworkers are exposed to extreme heat temperatures, nicotine and pesticide poisoning, musculoskeletal pain, and injuries caused by hazardous equipment (NCFHP 2017). They have limited access to health care, few wage protections, no overtime provisions and lack of welfare assistance (NC Farmworkers 2012). Most of them do not speak out about human and worker rights abuses because they risk being deported or losing their jobs (NCFHP 2017).

Although migrant farmworkers experience substandard working and living conditions in the United States, for many, migration is the only way to provide for themselves and their families. After the implementation of the 1994 NAFTA agreement that introduced economic policies that disrupted subsistence farming communities in Mexico, migration from southern Mexico to the United States increased dramatically. North Carolina was among the top new “receiving communities” (Zuniga and Hernandez-Leon eds. 2005). My focus on farmworkers in North Carolina allows me to look at one of the largest migrant farmworker populations in the United States. It also allows me to contribute to research that moves beyond the traditional Mexico-United States migration pathways (e.g., between the west-central region in Mexico and California, Illinois, and Texas in the United States) and considers new migration destinations and

routes (Riosmena and Massey 2012). By focusing specifically on migrant farmworker mothers, my study provides a broader and deeper understanding of the experience of these migrant farmworkers in the United States.

The Group of Women in Action and Grace of the Episcopal Farmworker Ministry

I recruited interview participants from the Group of Women in Action and Grace of the Episcopal Farmworker Ministry in Dunn, North Carolina. This rural town, and the surrounding agricultural area— Harnett, Duplin and Sampson counties— houses a large seasonal and migrant farmworker population. Seasonal farmworkers are people who have settled in one place and do not move their permanent residence to seek agricultural work (NC Farmworker Health Program 2021). Several of the farmworker families that now reside in Dunn and the surrounding areas came mainly from Mexico, but also El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala (Episcopal Farmworker Ministry 2021). Prior to settling in North Carolina, they might have moved between states within the United States to find work. Farmworkers in this region generally labor in the tobacco and sweet potato fields or cultivate a variety of vegetables. The Episcopal Farmworker Ministry, a religiously affiliated organization, serves the migrant and seasonal farmworker community in the area. One of their initiatives is the Grupo de Mujeres en Gracia y Acción (Group of Women in Action and Grace), where women farmworkers come together to create community and support each other. They have monthly meetings in which they decide and organize the activities they will carry out. They also engage in a weekly virtual praying session where they reflect on the circumstances of their daily lives. In 2020, they put together a series of cooking and handcraft workshops on Zoom to stay in touch during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, they also met weekly at a virtual Women’s Circle to learn about feminism. Recently they started a sewing machine workshop, where they get together to develop their

skills. Additionally, women in the group participated in the Healing CommUnity Medicinal Herb Garden Project. Through this project they shared knowledge on medicinal herbs from their hometowns and received training on how to grow herbs and manufacture and sell medicinal herbal products (e.g., soaps, shampoos, tinctures, and teas) to help improve their family income and contribute to community wellbeing. The project has now become a cooperative named Tradiciones Enraizadas (Rooted Traditions) and is run by six of the original participants. Through the Grupo de Mujeres en Gracia y Acción, the women build community, support, and care for each other, and share their experiences as migrant women, mothers, and farmworkers.

Research Participants: Migrant Farmworker Mothers

I interviewed 15 participants who live and do farmwork in Duplin, Sampson and Harnett counties, North Carolina and who are women, mothers, and migrants. Interviews took place between March 2019 and March 2023. At the time of the interviews, participants were between the ages of 32 and 59 and had lived in the United States between 6 and 26 years. Their farmwork included growing and picking tobacco, sweet potato, cucumber, watermelon, radish, and blueberries in the fields, and working at packing plants, processing plants, and chicken farms. I initially contacted participants through the Group of Women in Action and Grace of the Episcopal Farmworker Ministry. I collaborated with the group for four years, from March 2019 to March 2023, regularly participating in meetings and planned activities, and supporting the Healing CommUnity Garden Project as well as the creation of the Rooted Traditions Cooperative. My history of contact with this group of women allowed me to personally share the intent of this study and ask those who were interested to participate. Fifteen of the women who I collaborated with agreed to be a part of this research. The group met my aim for variation in

participants' ages, ages and number of children, number of years living in the United States, and type of farmwork they do (see Appendix A).

Data Collection

Interviews

The interviews with participants are divided in two sets. The difference in sets is based on the time period in which I collaborated with the Episcopal Farmworker Ministry (EFWM), as well as the timing of the COVID-19 pandemic. The first set took place at the very beginning of my collaboration with the EFWM, in March 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic. The second set of interviews took place in November 2021, November 2022, and March 2023, after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. For the first set of interviews (n=5 participants), which took place in March 2019, I contacted two participants through the Episcopal Farmworker Ministry and, using snowball sampling, reached out to three of their acquaintances. I conducted one semi-structured, in-depth interview with each participant. Participants chose where to do the interview. Two interviews took place in participants' cars, parked in the premises of the Episcopal Farmworker Ministry. One interview took place in the conference room of the Ministry, and one interview took place at the participant's home. All interviews were conducted in Spanish, lasted 1-2 hrs., and were audio-recorded, and transcribed by me. Interview questions focused on women's work history, their agricultural knowledge and skills in Mexico and the United States, their food practices at work and at home, their work conditions, and their perspective on the US food system (see Appendix B, C, D and E). I provided a \$25 compensation to each participant as an act of appreciation and acknowledgement for the value of their time and labor. Although monetary compensation is contested by some social researchers (see Hondagneu-Sotelo 2014), in

this case, it represented an intentional contribution to participants' precarious household economy.

The second set of interviews (n=10) took place in November 2021, November 2022, and March 2023. I contacted all participants through the Herbal Community Garden Project of the Women's Group at the Episcopal Farmworker Ministry. I did 7 interviews in November 2021, 3 interviews in November 2022, and 4 interviews in March 2023, for a total of 14 interviews, including initial and some follow-up semi-structured photovoice interviews. The gaps between each subset of interviews was due to time availability and life limitations. Interviews and collecting photographs were done by cell phone per required data collection protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic. I did one initial semi-structured interview by phone with each participant and a follow-up photovoice interview with those participants who were available (n=4). Interviews lasted 1-2 hours on average. I did 10 initial semi-structured interviews, carried out follow-up semi-structured photovoice interviews with 4 of these participants, and collected photograph sets (5 photographs each) from 7 participants. All interviews were in Spanish and were transcribed by a transcription agency. I recorded phone interviews using Tape A Call, a recording cell phone application. Photograph sets were taken with participants' smartphone devices and collected via WhatsApp, a cell phone direct message application. Participants received \$100 in compensation through a Walmart gift card even if they only completed the initial interview. Funds for participant compensation came from a grant from the Rural Sociological Society.

Initial Semi-Structured Interview

The initial semi-structured interview centered on participants' food and agricultural practices at home and at work. I asked people about their migration stories, agricultural and

culinary knowledge and skills in Mexico and the United States, and food practices at home and work. Food practices included how women made decisions about what to eat throughout the day, where they ate, where they bought or obtained food, what they prioritized when buying and eating food, and their perspectives of their role in the food system. I paid particular attention to how gendered, racialized, and transnational experiences and practices, including those related to motherhood, shaped their food practices and perspectives at home and at work. After each interview, I wrote a thumbnail narrating the interview experience, reflecting on my positionality, and highlighting the most salient themes of the interview. This initial interview allowed me to get an understanding of the participant's experiences and their reflections on their roles as mothers, migrant women, and farmworkers.

Photovoice

In the second set of interviews, I collected photovoice data and conducted an interview about the photos. Photovoice is a qualitative methodology where participants are asked to take photographs of their everyday life and talk about them in the interview process. This method is effective because it connects participants to their narrative of their everyday life through images they produce themselves (Bell 2015, Harper et al. 2017). The photovoice interview was divided into two sets of questions. One focused on food and agricultural practices during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the other focused on gendered food and agricultural practices and meanings of motherhood and womanhood. I asked participants to take five non-identifying photographs of their everyday food and agricultural practices— for example, the contents of their refrigerator and of a kitchen cabinet, a special meal they prepared, their favorite dish, their herb garden, the chili harvest of the day. I asked participants to focus on photographs that illustrated changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. I asked them to also include photographs of the food labor they do

at home and in the fields— for example, cooking dinner for their family after a day at work, cleaning up after a meal, making lunch for kids and husband before heading to work, working in tobacco fields, or planting sweet potatoes. Participants took the photos using their smartphone devices and shared them with me via WhatsApp, a phone-based direct messaging service. I assured participants that all photos were confidential and would not be shared with anyone else without consent.

After receiving the photographs from each participant, I made notes on particular aspects I wanted to discuss pertaining to each image, and then I scheduled a photovoice follow-up interview (see Appendix D and E). I asked participants to describe the activities they were performing in each photograph or the activities surrounding the image they sent. In our conversation I asked probing questions related to their food and agricultural practices, their experience during the COVID-19 pandemic, and their experiences as migrants, as mothers and as women farmworkers.

I collected photographs from 7 of the 10 participants in the second set of interviews but conducted follow-up interviews with only four participants. I collected photograph sets from 3 participants who were not able to do the follow-up photovoice interview (see Appendix F for photovoice photograph examples). Although we could not discuss in detail what these photographs entailed, most of the images reflected the conversations and life experiences participants shared in the initial interview. Therefore, these images were valuable data that helped grasp the reality the women I interviewed shared with me.

I did not use any of the photographs I collected in my data analysis. This was because I did not collect enough photograph sets to be able to use them as data. However, using the photographs to conduct the follow-up semi structured interviews was very useful. It helped me

connect with my interviewees through the images they shared. I also perceived that it helped them understand and respond to my questions more easily. Thus, the images were a visual aid during the interview process.

Autoethnography and Lived Experience

I knew and hung out with the 15 women that participated in my research over a period of almost 4 years, from 2019 to 2023. Throughout this time, I observed and reflected on our interactions and the context we shared together. I made mental and physical notes of my reflections. The experiences we shared brought me to key moments that marked my understanding of the social dynamics I was trying to understand. I took short ethnographic notes in a Word document on these events that have helped me keep track of their significance throughout the years. During the interview process, I also recorded audio messages of my reflections to help me process my emotions. These recordings are also important data for my methodological analysis because they show the reflections that shaped the interview process. I recorded voice notes in WhatsApp, a cell phone direct message app. Finally, I have notes about the emotions and feelings I experienced during the interview process in the thumbnails I wrote after each interview. These notes provide data about my emotional process and labor throughout the data collection process. They are significant because they show how my emotions shaped this process and how I used them to connect to my participants. In all, using this autoethnographic data provides a deeper understanding of my own research process and of the everyday experiences of the women I interviewed.

Data Analysis

I used an intersectional approach to analyze the data I collected for this project. This means I applied the tenets of intersectionality—oppression, relationality, complexity, context, comparison, and deconstruction— to guide my data analysis (Misra et al. 2020). Through an intersectional lens, my data analysis shows that the oppression, resistance, and transformation that migrant farmworker women experience within the United States as low-wage workers who are mothers, and mostly undocumented migrants is relational. This oppression is complex because it exists at the same time that these women experience happiness, create community, care for their family and friends through their foodwork. Thus, an intersectional lens allowed me to observe that the experience of migrant farmworker mothers is not only that of an oppressed community, but also one where joy, dignity and transformation exist and interact with citizenship discrimination, racism, misogyny, and exploitation. My data analysis shows that not all migrant farmworkers have the same experiences, and that their experiences are shaped by context. Thus, the experiences of a group of migrant farmworker mothers, who are undocumented, but who have also settled in one place, differs from other groups of migrant farmworkers in the United States. Important differences among the women also create distinct experiences among those who are single mothers, those who do not have extended family in the United States, those who left children behind, and those who have strong ties to the communities they have built. Thus, the intersectional lens permits a deconstruction of the conceptualization of “migrant farmworker” in the United States. Allowing us to understand that migrant farmworkers in the United States have diverse lived experiences and context as they share the oppression they face from US society.

My approach is also informed by a grounded theory perspective. Grounded theory allows for research to be mainly guided by the participant’s experiences (Charmaz 2006). I used

thumbnails as an analytical tool to keep track of the main themes participants reference in each interview. Thumbnails allowed me to have a reflexive data analysis process because writing them helped me reflect on how to approach the next interview (i.e., question that did not get answered, modifications to my own perspective, specific themes to expand on). Similarly, thumbnails helped me keep track of my positionality throughout the interview process.

The semi-structured interviews allowed me to explore participants' perceptions of how their experiences as women who do farmwork and care for their families and loved ones helps them transform the food system and face intersectional oppression. I paid particular attention to participants' perceptions of how their experiences as women and mothers shape their food and agricultural practices and perspectives on the food system.

The photovoice follow-up interviews allowed me to ask participants about the ways the COVID-19 pandemic affected their lives and, specifically, their food and agricultural practices. It allowed me to ask about how their migration experience connects to their foodwork in the United States, and their experiences as women and mothers. Using photographs as an aid for the interview allowed me to guide the conversation more easily and participants to have precise reflections.

Finally, the autoethnography allowed me to reflect on my own perspectives and experiences throughout the research process. This helped me to analyze my methodology and reflect on the effects it had on me and my participants. It also allowed me to observe the context I shared with my participants and provide a data analysis that was based on first-hand knowledge of our shared experiences.

My analytical approach differs somewhat between chapters. In all three chapters, I analyze all of my interview data, which includes 19 interviews with 15 participants. For all three

chapters, I first coded interviews line by line, looking for experiences that participants had in common. For the first substantive chapter, I did two additional coding rounds. I started with broad codes that compared life in Mexico and the United States. The third round focused on more specific codes like “enjoyment”, “gendered practices” and “working conditions”. I structured the argument for this chapter through intersectional precepts of oppression and resistance. For the second substantive chapter, I also did two additional coding rounds. In the second round I used codes from the first general coding round like “migration story”, “gendered care tasks”, and “life in Mexico” and matched them up with the participant's personal context. And for the final coding round I matched interview codes with codes from my ethnographic observation. From this coding round I came up with 4 major codes: “care for coworkers”, “care for community”, “care for themselves”, and “care for family” that resulted in the section for this chapter. In the third and final substantive chapter I analyzed my methodology, therefore my data also included thumbnails, interview check-ins, and ethnographic observations. This data produced broad codes that included “identity”, “emotions”, and “power dynamics”. I used these codes to go over the interview data and find quotes that matched. I used relationality and complexity as the intersectional precepts that structure this chapter.

Positionality

As a collaborator of the Healing CommUnity Herbal Garden Project and the Rooted Traditions Cooperative, I participated in numerous activities with my interview participants. Together, we planted herbs, weeded beds, harvested plants, dried herbs, made soaps and shampoos, and sold the products. During the COVID-19 pandemic, I was also part of the Women’s Circle, where we talked about feminism, and the Women’s Group cooking and handcrafts online classes. Once we were able to meet in person again, I was invited to share

meals at women's houses and attend celebrations at the premises of the EFWM. Throughout this time, the women asked about my personal life and brought food from home to share with me. I checked on them and asked about their health issues and about their kids and family. These interactions led to a relationship of trust among us, and we felt free to ask and share vulnerable details about our lives. During this time, they learned that I was a student at NC State doing my PhD, that I was Mexican from Mexico City, and that all of my family lived back in Mexico. We communicated in Spanish, but they also knew I spoke English and asked me to be a translator in different situations to help them communicate with English speakers. Although I related closely and personally with the women and we had vulnerable conversations and interactions, my status as a university student, with a visa, who lived in Raleigh, marked a difference between us. Thus, we were close and friendly, but knew we did not share many life experiences. Understanding my positionality allowed me to look at the women's context from a "co-ethnic" (Kang 2000) but also an "outsider" (Best 2003) perspective. This helped create a complex narrative of the women's reality and my interpretation of it.

CHAPTER 4

***“Ya ve que es duro”*: Intersectional Oppression and Everyday Resistance in the Foodwork of Migrant Farmworker Women**

Introduction

Historically, women of color in the United States have blurred the line between home and work through their everyday labor while dealing with intersectional oppression (Hill Collins 1994, Nakano Glenn 1994, Segura 1994). This means, many have struggled with gender and ethnic discrimination while being working class women (Caballero et al. (ed.) 2019, Segura 1994, Segura and Zavella 2007). For migrant farmworker women, who do foodwork at home feeding their families but also in the fields feeding society, this means grappling with discrimination based on the low-wage work they do, their immigration status, and being women in a mostly-male work environment (Mares 2019, Ontiveros 2002, Sbicca et al. 2020, Som Castellano et al. 2022). Previous research has found that women of color use everyday food practices – for example, growing food in home gardens or cooking family recipes– to resist intersectional oppression and contribute to a sense of self-value (Abarca 2006, Beoku-Betts 1995, Williams-Forsen 2006). There is a need to look specifically at how migrant farmworker women resist intersectional oppression through their foodwork. To address this gap in the literature, I ask how migrant women farmworkers, who deal with everyday forms of discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, citizenship, and class, might gain a sense of dignity through their foodwork at home and in the fields.

To answer this question, I use interview data from 15 Mexican migrant farmworker mothers that live in Hartnett and Duplin County, North Carolina, collected from March 2019 to March 2023. I find that farmworker women exercise forms of resistance everyday –in ways that

are at times unconscious, unplanned, and unnoticed, but give them agency and empower them. Their food practices allow them to define, express, and value their cultural identities, and also provide them with feelings of joy that give meaning and dignity to their lives. I conclude that by using an intersectional lens (Hill Collins 2000), we can observe how foodwork, at home and at work, is shaped by women's everyday experiences and can provide agency in the face of oppression.

Literature Review

Migrant farmworker women engage in foodwork for their families at home and for society when they work in the fields. Many studies have documented the discrimination – tied to gender, ethnicity, citizenship and class– that farmworkers experience (Brown and Getz 2011, Morales Waugh 2010, Ontiveros 2002, Sbicca et al. 2020, Southern Poverty Law Center 2010). Although there are examples in the literature of how farmworkers organize to defend their rights as workers (Seif 2008), we know very little about the ways migrant farmworker women resist intersectional oppression through their everyday feeding and agricultural work by enacting “small but significant acts of defiance” (Mares 2019: 88). Separately, the literature on foodwork discusses how women of color manage to feed their families (Bowen et al. 2019, Bowen et al. 2023, Brenton 2017). However, it does not examine how foodwork– which migrant farmworker women do at home and in the fields– can be a way women of color resist intersectional oppression. Addressing these gaps in the literature matters because it has the potential to show how women who live in conditions of social oppression use their everyday foodwork to challenge the discrimination they experience in their lives.

Studies by feminist scholars of color focus on the ways Black, Indigenous and People of Color resist everyday oppressions (Hill Collins 2000). This can occur when people speak Spanish to signal their cultural identity (Ochoa 1999), talk back after a xenophobic comment (Hooks 2014), or even find joy in cooking (Avakian 2005, Blend 2001, Williams-Forsen 2006). Everyday resistance can be unplanned and go unnoticed (Evans and Moore 2015) and it is not overt, collective or organized (el-Khoury 2012), but it is still significant, meaningful, and effective (Hooks 2014, el-Khoury 2012). It allows people to express freedom (Counihan 2009: 114), empowerment, and agency (Avakian 2005), and helps them maintain and value their human dignity and sense of self and celebrate their self-value and self-definition (Beoku-Betts 1995, Williams-Forsen 2001). Focusing on working-class women of color specifically, Caballero et al. (ed. 2019: 10) also stress that these women navigate motherhood while resisting systemic and institutional oppression through “everyday tactics or acts”. By using this definition of everyday resistance, we can observe how women of color resist intersectional oppression in their everyday life.

Another body of literature focuses on foodwork as a gendered form of carework. Cairns and Johnston (2015) define “foodwork” as the labor of procuring and preparing food for yourself and others –like shopping, cooking, and cleaning-up— and the mental and emotional labor needed to carry it out. Although foodwork can be “burdensome and oppressive” for women (DeVault 1991: 232), it is simultaneously meaningful and rewarding and a “source of [...] power and identity” (Cairns and Johnston 2015: 20). Scholars associate the foodwork of women of color with burden, oppression, inequality, and subordination (Avakian 2005, Beoku-Betts 1995, Counihan 2009), but also with agency, empowerment, authority, control, and resistance (Abarca 2006, Avakian 2005, Beoku-Betts 1995, Counihan 2009, Williams-Forsen 2001). Moreover,

Beoku-Betts (1995) and Abarca (2006) discuss foodwork within communities of color as a necessary and transformative form of family and community care. Most research on foodwork centers on the foodwork women do at home for their families and communities. It is necessary to recognize that some women also do foodwork outside of the home – such as in the case of farmworker women, who provide food for others through their work in the fields.

Studies of foodwork find that women disproportionately perform foodwork and experience pressure around feeding their families (DeVault 1991, Cairns and Johnston 2015, MacKendrick 2014). Some studies find that poor women of color have more difficulty living up to these expectations because they cannot access basic resources and are often stereotyped as uncaring or uninformed (Brenton 2017, Elliot and Bowen 2018, Fielding-Singh 2017). But research shows that poor women also invest time and energy in preparing nourishing food for their families and make choices based on health expectations (Bowen et al. 2019, Cairns et al. 2013). At the same time, although these studies discuss women of color’s struggles to feed their families, they do not explicitly address how women of color use their foodwork to resist intersectional oppression.

In short, migrant farmworker women live at the intersection of multiple systems of oppression – cisheteropatriarchal, white supremacist, and capitalist—that create specific limiting circumstances for them (Hill Collins 2000, Misra et al. 2021, Sbicca et al. 2020). In the face of these intersecting oppressions, they engage in labor that feeds their own families and the rest of society (Brown and Getz 2011, Morales Waugh 2010, Ontiveros 2002, Sbicca et al. 2020, Seif 2008). Looking at the foodwork of migrant farmworker women through the lens of intersectional oppression allows us to understand the context in which they live and the ways they use foodwork to resist discrimination.

In this chapter, I consider whether doing foodwork, at home and in the fields, is a way for migrant farmworker women to gain dignity while living in intersectional oppression. I find that the women in my study do use their everyday foodwork to resist discrimination in the United States. This is significant because it shows that foodwork exists outside of the household, and also that foodwork can be a form of everyday resistance.

Methods

This study uses interview data collected from 15 participants between March 2019 and March 2023. All interviews were conducted in Spanish, lasted 1-2 hrs. and were voice recorded. The first set of interviews was done face-to-face, while the other three sets were done on the phone due to regulations during the COVID-19 pandemic. I transcribed the first set of interviews and the other three were transcribed by an agency. I used pseudonyms in all the transcriptions to protect participant's identities.

I used grounded theory to analyze my interview transcripts (Charmaz 2006), allowing themes to emerge from the data. I copied each interview transcription to a Word document and set up two columns, one for the interview, and the other one for coding themes and notes. First, I color coded the transcripts line-by-line, paying attention to the food-related experiences that women shared. Women shared experiences about farming in Mexico and the United States, about their migration to the United States, about their work experience there, and about their food practices. During the second round of coding, I identified broader themes like, "farmwork in Mexico", "farmwork in the United States", "food in Mexico", "food in the United States", "womanhood", "motherhood", "migration experience". In the third round of coding, I looked for analytic themes like "gendered practices", "eating in the fields", "enjoyment", "cooking",

“perception of gendered work”, and “working conditions”. After this final round of coding, I selected quotes that best represented women’s experiences across interviews. Finally, I organized these quotes in three separate sections for the themes they represented, “women’s foodwork at home and in the fields”, “women growing and cooking food”, and “women finding joy in farmwork”. I used the intersectional precepts of oppression and resistance to structure the argument for this chapter.

Findings

I adopt an intersectional lens, showing that migrant women, all of whom were mothers, experienced intersecting oppressions tied to gender, ethnicity, citizenship, and class, and enacted everyday resistance through their foodwork. At home and in the fields, their foodwork gave women a sense of dignity in their lives. Women exercised everyday resistance through their foodwork in three ways. They practiced resistance by showing pride for the foodwork they did for their families and society while also recognizing the struggle it entailed. They also practiced resistance when they reproduced foodwork that was culturally and ethnically significant and provided them with a sense of self-reliance. Finally, women practiced resistance when they acknowledged that working in the fields provided them with feelings of contentment and joy. In this chapter, I show that migrant women used their everyday foodwork to resist the oppression they faced as undocumented women of color working for low wages. These significant acts of resistance provided them with a sense of self-appreciation that allowed them to find fulfillment in their lives.

“Nuestro trabajo es importante”: Doing Foodwork at Home and in the Fields

Mexican migrant farmworker women struggled to manage foodwork at home and at work. However, they resisted gender oppression by expressing pride for what they did. Women discussed how their role as sole caregiver for their children affected their work performance. They also talked about how the exhaustion they experienced after a long workday impacted their caregiving. At the same time, the work they struggled to do in the fields and at home made them proud. The women practiced resistance by highlighting the significance of their food labor for their families and society and expressing agency and empowerment in their self-perception (Abarca 2006, Avakian 2005, Counihan 2009).

Many of the women I interviewed had taken on the sole responsibility of doing foodwork and providing care for their children, which affected their performance as farmworkers. The women had to take on the sole responsibility of providing for their children and caring for them because they were single mothers, their husbands were deported, or their husbands refused to do carework. Cindy, whose husband had been deported two years previously, described how she was “as a father and as a mother with the obligation to take care of the household and everything else” (“quedar sola como padre y madre, con la obligación de la casa, con la obligación de todo”). Cindy explained how her role as a “father and mother” meant doing the work needed to feed and care for her children at home and also having to work in the fields. Thus, she was left in charge of all the work –foodwork and carework– that it took to sustain and care for her family. Although doing all this work on her own was burdensome, some women who lived with their partners expressed that “it was the same thing to be married to a man that does nothing, and to be alone, and [to] have to do everything [on your own]” (“es lo mismo estar casada con un hombre que no hace nada a estar sola, y yo tenga que hacer todo”). In other words, women who did not

feel supported by their partners felt it might be the same to be by themselves. In any case, they knew that they had to do the housework and farmwork to provide for their family on their own.

Specifically, women described how everyday cooking and carework tasks impacted their work in the fields. For most women, it was an issue of organizing their schedule to get everything done. Esperanza explained that she struggled finding time to do everything that needed to be done at home before going to work, but “if she got it together, [she] could go [to work]” (“pero si yo me acoplo a mis horarios sí me voy [a trabajar]”). Cooking for their children and husbands was a big responsibility that women took on; sometimes they prioritized cooking over their farmwork. For Alma, this meant having to be at home before 6 pm to have dinner ready. She said, “I had to be home to cook, [...] I had the obligation” (“Yo tenía que venir a cocinar, [...] tenía la obligación”). Alma felt that being home before 6 pm so that she could cook for her family took precedence over any other farmwork-related responsibilities she might have. This “obligation” to cook that she was solely responsible for shaped her perspective about her job. In the fields, men and women were expected to perform the same physical tasks, yet women were burdened by the added responsibility of caring for their family while also getting paid less for their work in the fields. Many women felt less committed to their farmwork because their foodwork at home was a priority. Thus, even though their job working in the fields represented a significant contribution to their household economy, many times they did not see it as their main responsibility.

Furthermore, women’s jobs were physically demanding, often leading to extreme exhaustion, making caring and feeding tasks at home difficult. María José described the hard labor she did working in the fields and what made her keep going, despite the strain:

Packing watermelon is very tough work, picking sweet potatoes. These are very tough jobs that you have to learn how to do, but I learned how to do them [...] and when people ask where I get the strength from, it's an internal force that tells you you can't lose that job because it's my only way out because if I don't work here where am I going to work. So that's the strength to keep going, and if you really do it, you struggle a lot. (Empacar sandía es súper pesadísimo, eh? Piscar camote es super pesado. Son trabajos muy muy rudos que tienes que aprender a hacer, pero los aprendí a hacer y creo que muchas veces cuando te preguntan de dónde sacas la fuerza, es una fuerza interna que te dice, no puedo quedarme sin ese trabajo, esta mi única salida porque si yo no trabajo aquí, dónde voy a trabajar. Entonces son esas ganas de salir adelante y si lo haces realmente batallas mucho.)

Here, María José emphasized how physically demanding her job was, and at the same time, how much she needed it and kept doing the work even when it was a struggle. Thus, even when she said, "it's [her] only way out" she also said, "it's the only work [she] can do". Meaning her undocumented immigrant status in the United States barely allowed her to work in anything else.

Women expressed a sense of extreme exhaustion caused by their farmwork and felt that this negatively affected how they cared for their families. Reflecting back on the physical burden she endured for four years working in the sweet potato fields, Arminda said, "I don't know how I endured it because I came home exhausted, my kids would tell me, 'Mami let's go for a walk', and, the last thing I want to do is walk, because we walk all day" ("No sé cómo los aguanté por que llegaba exhausta a mi casa, mis hijos me decían, Mami, vamos a caminar, lo que yo no

quiero es caminar, porque caminamos todo el día”). Here Arminda expressed how going for a walk with her children was not something she could endure after a day of working in the fields. Other women stated how the physical strain they endured at work affected their mental and physical condition and ability to adequately perform care tasks for their families. Their experience differed from that of farmworker men who do similar work in the fields, but generally do not perform care tasks at home.

Even though women described the struggle and strain they experienced in performing foodwork in the fields and at home, they expressed a sense that their work was important for their families and society in general. The women knew that they had the “double-burden” (Ontiveros 2002) of providing care through their foodwork at work and at home. Lorena highlighted the difference between how her work (as a mother and a worker) was perceived compared to her husband’s work:

As a woman, I have my kids, because the man, has nothing to do with that, the man works and gets home, and in my case, with my husband, he arrives, just eats, and then watches tv, on the other hand, as a woman, I go and work, cook, clean, wash, watch the kids, so I say, it is not [to be taken] for granted the responsibility of a woman (Una como mujer tiene uno sus hijos[...] por que el hombre, nada que ver con uno, [...] el hombre trabaja y llega a su casa, en mi caso, de mi esposo, él llega, no más come, a ver televisión, en cambio uno de mujer, va trabaja, que cocinar, que limpiar, que lavar, [...] que ver los niños, [...] entonces digo yo, no es para menos la responsabilidad de una mujer).

She firmly stated that her work as a mother included both working in the fields and caring for her family by cooking, cleaning, washing, and looking after the kids. This was work she did, but her husband did not. Lorena did not talk about changing the gendered dynamic of her home.

However, she resisted a submissive role by highlighting that her work mattered, sometimes even more than her husband's.

Women also described the twofold relevance of their foodwork at home and in the fields. For Isidra, her work as mother and farmworker was doubly important. On one hand, it provided a service to society, because "one's work contributes for others to have access to the products" ("al trabajar uno contribuye a que se llegue a los productos que uno trabaja"). On the other, it served her family at home. Isidra stated that "the work at home is important, because that is when one makes food for the kids" ("el trabajo en la casa, es importante por que es cuando uno hace de comer, a mis hijos"). By affirming the value of her work for her family and for society, Isidra recognized the value of her "double burden". Like Isidra, the women I interviewed recognized that their work was essential to keep society fed. Knowing the value of their work allowed them to feel proud of what they knew and did.

In sum, participants struggled with gender oppression when they confronted the double-burden of being mothers who were both providers and caregivers. Although migrant farmworker men faced oppression as underpaid workers, they generally did not face the double burden of also performing unpaid caring labor at home. Participants resisted by highlighting and affirming the value of their everyday work as mothers and farmworkers. Even if they did not have the agency and power to change the gendered dynamics they experienced at home, their awareness of their condition and the value they attributed to their food labor was a first step towards change.

“Echar tortillas”: Growing and Cooking Food to Rely on Themselves

Second, migrant women farmworkers resisted ethnic and racial oppression by doing foodwork that was culturally significant for them and provided them with a sense of self-reliance. They expressed everyday resistance by cooking staple dishes that had a personal and cultural connection to their hometowns. They also did it by growing ingredients at home that they used in their cooking. Finally, they expressed resistance by valuing the food they sourced from the fields where they worked. These everyday acts of resistance allowed them to value and express their cultural identity (Beoku-Betts 1995, Blend 2001, Williams-Forson 2001, Williams 1984). Thus, I argue that their everyday foodwork made them feel they could sustain themselves and uphold their culture in a country that told them they did not belong.

Women prioritized foodwork that included cooking foods they were used to eating in their hometowns. For all of them, this meant making important staple foods they ate with every meal. Part of Laura’s morning tasks was to “get the *masa* for the tortillas prepared for the day” (“dejar preparada la masa para las tortillas”). Preparing the *masa* in advance meant that when it was time to eat, she could just grab a small blob of *masa*, shape it with her hand, and put it on the *comal*. She added that “tortillas are a must have in every meal” (“las tortillas no pueden faltar en ninguna comida”). Laura expressed that tortillas were a staple food that must be prioritized; she managed to hand-make them every day. It was especially important that they be available at every meal because no meal is complete without tortillas. For Esperanza, it was equally important to make handmade tortillas that she took for her own lunch when she worked in the tobacco fields. Esperanza highlighted that she made her tortillas “handmade and fresh, so that they have a better flavor (“las tortillas de mano me gusta hacerlas frescas para que tengan mejor sabor”). Thus, it was not only a fact that this staple food fed her, it was also important that her

food be fresh and taste good. Tortillas, a Mexican staple, have long served as a symbol of resilience for migrants in the United States (Blend 2001). By making hand-made tortillas, the women self-valued and self-expressed their cultural food identity (Williams-Forsen 2001) and established how food can be a source of resistance for migrants in a new country (Espiritu 2001).

Women's foodwork also included cooking dishes that were personally and culturally significant for them. For Arminda, this meant making *aporreado*, a dry meat dish from her hometown in Guerrero, on special occasions. She hung the meat on a hook to dry, fried it, added an egg coating, and served it with red or green salsa. She had rarely eaten this dish in Mexico, because her mother could not afford to buy meat. She shared, "My aunt made it at her house when there were celebrations, but my mom couldn't make it for us because she couldn't afford it" ("Lo hacía mi tía en su casa cuando hacían festejos, pero mi mamá no le alcanzaba para hacerlo para nosotras"). In this sense, it was a dish she craved because it was special, and she didn't have access to it when she lived in Mexico. Thus, Arminda made it in order to connect to the cultural significance the dish had for her. Making *aporreado* also had personal meaning for Arminda, because she could now afford the special dish that she had been deprived of before. For many migrant women, food insecurity had been a constant threat in Mexico (Carney 2015), and in the United States, they could enjoy dishes that they could not access before. Cooking food from home did not represent an idyllic reproduction of their cultural heritage, but a complex connection to the life they left behind and a symbolic representation of the life they led in the present.

Women also expressed a sense of self-reliance and resistance by growing their own ingredients to cook for their families. Some women grew ingredients, like tomatoes and special chile peppers, that were more affordable to grow at home or not easily found in grocery stores.

For example, Estela had a small garden on the side of her trailer home where she grew tomatoes and chile peppers. She said, “It works better for me to have them here, then to [get] them from the store, they grow very easily (“Me sale mejor tenerlos aquí que de la tienda, se dan muy fácil”). For Estela, growing her own ingredients was about affordability and being practical. For her it meant she did not have to purchase them at the store. Esperanza had a garden because it gave her access to ingredients that were hard to find outside her hometown in Mexico. She grew *chiltepin* in her small garden – a special kind of chile she used in her cooking. This way, she ensured she had access to this special ingredient without needing to rely on what was available at stores. Having direct access to ingredients that were important in their cooking, like tomatoes and chiles, gave women a sense of self-reliance. They resisted and built a place for themselves by assuring they had the food they needed for the dishes they liked to cook and eat.

Most women had significant agricultural skills that allowed them to grow food at home. For example, Esperanza was very practical and threw rotting tomatoes on a patch of soil. She very easily grew tomatoes that lasted her through the growing season. Isidra's agricultural skills allowed her to grow strawberries, chile peppers, cucumbers, melons and tomatoes. She was happy to grow all of these fruits and vegetables, which she used to cook for her family and shared with neighbors. The skill required to grow quality vegetables was knowledge the women had acquired over the years from their families in Mexico and working in the fields in the United States. For example, Arminda saved seed from the previous harvests to improve her chile selection. She explained, “If we like a chile plant from the year before, we leave it there and tie them and hang them, then we open them and throw the seed and plant it” (“Si nos gustó un chilito del año pasado dejamos unos y los amarramos y los alzamos y echamos la semillita y la sembramos”). Here Arminda explained the process that she used to grow chile plants. It was

knowledge that she gained by working at her family plot in Morelos when she was young and over many years working in the fields and nurseries in North Carolina. By growing their own ingredients these farmworker women assured their access to culturally appropriate foods (Mares et al. 2017, Mares 2019) and put their agricultural knowledge into practice (Peña and Mares 2011) within their household.

Women also found valuable foods in the fields where they worked and brought them home. They found ingredients that were valuable to their culinary traditions. For example, Esperanza talked specifically about “flores de calabaza” (squash flowers), a delicacy in regional Mexican cuisines. Esperanza’s friends who worked in the squash fields had asked the growers for permission to harvest them. She explained, “The Americans don’t eat them, so there are fields full of them and the friends that work there ask permission to cut them” (“Los americanos no las comen y cuando hay un field lleno de flores las amigas que trabajan ahí piden permiso para cortar”). By emphasizing that “the Americans don’t eat them” Esperanza highlighted differences in the cooking and eating practices between herself and her coworkers and the American farmers they worked for. She emphasized that there was an “us” –Mexican migrant farmworkers– who valued a field full of squash flowers as a culinary delicacy that should be consumed, and a “them” –the American farmers that owned the land who could not see this value. By harvesting and cooking the squash flowers, Esperanza and other migrant women practiced resourcefulness and established their culinary and cultural identity.

Other women described how they valued food that the farmers regarded as waste. There were times in the agricultural season when there were leftover sweet potatoes, squash, and cucumbers from the day’s harvest. Women described how these vegetables generally did not look nice enough to sell or were about to go bad. Florencia explained, “When there is leftover,

we can take it home for free or sometimes for a very low price” (“Si queda algo del día, a veces nos dejan que lo llevemos o pagamos un poquito”). The “leftovers” had value for Florencia because she could feed her family with them. Conversely, farmers wasted them because the US food system makes them unprofitable for them. This exchange highlighted a cultural difference between the farmworkers and the farmers, as well as inequality. While the women regarded this leftover food as the fruit of their labor, the farmers saw it as waste. Feeding their families with the food they grew made the women proud, and that was what mattered. For the women, gleaning food from the fields was a way they connected back to the products of their work and accessed the cultural foods they valued most. Accessing culturally appropriate foods through alternative means was a direct way to resist a food system that did not cater to their needs (Peña and Mares 2011).

In sum, participants’ descriptions of their food labor at home –cooking specific recipes from their hometowns, growing certain ingredients at home, and sourcing food from the fields— were examples of everyday resistance against ethnic and racial oppression. These daily practices were ways in which the women connected back to their cultural heritage (García et al. ed. 2017). They allowed participants to reaffirm, define, and value their cultural identity in a US society that consistently dismissed their human worth as undocumented immigrants.

“A mi me encanta trabajar”: Finding Joy in Foodwork

Finally, migrant women resisted the class oppression they faced as farmworkers when they described the joy they felt working in the fields. They did this when they described feeling happy to share food with others during their lunch breaks and when they discussed how they enjoyed chatting with their coworkers and friends while doing farmwork tasks. They also practiced resistance when they explained how their work helped distract them from their daily

home routine and reduced stress. These moments were acts of everyday resistance because they allowed women to celebrate daily interactions and create meaning and foster dignity in their lives (Blend 2001, Counihan 2009, Williams 1984, Williams-Forson 2001). Although the literature discusses the strains of farmwork, it does not look at the everyday acts of resistance that women farmworkers enact to feel fulfilled while doing this work. I argue that farmwork is foodwork that provides meaning to women's lives.

Women created moments of celebration that made them feel happy when they shared food with each other during their lunch breaks. With no access to tables and chairs where to sit and eat, or a microwave to heat up their food, women were forced to find "a little tree somewhere that gives shade" ("un arbolito ahí no más que haiga sombra") explained Lorena. Isidra mentioned how they had to sit on the ground, "we sit there, but on the dirt" ("ahí nos sentamos, pero en la tierra"). With these descriptions, Lorena and Isidra expressed how they were forced to eat lunch in the heat, without a proper eating area. They understood that their employers were not giving them a proper space to take a break from physically exhausting work and eat their food in a sanitary and comfortable environment. Since they didn't have access to a place where to heat up their food, they adjusted to eating it cold. Esperanza made herself tacos for lunch because they tasted fine cold. Laura did the same thing. She preferred to take tortillas and taco fillings like scrambled eggs with green beans, Mexican beef stew, rice, or beans because they did not taste so bad cold. Thus, women adjusted to eating cold food while sitting on the ground under the bit of shade a tree could provide.

Even so, women described the times when they got together to rest and eat as moments of happiness. Mercedes described how the women shared food with each other, "We all get together and we make a circle and each one brings enough to share with others [...] And it's nice" ("Nos

juntamos todas y hacemos una rueda y cada quien llevamos lo suficiente como para convivir con los demás [...] Y es bonito”). Here Mercedes showed that lunchtime was not only about the act of eating. It was also about the act of being with each other and sharing food. Many times, women’s workdays were exhausting because the overseers did not provide enough breaks during the day or drinking water for the crew. That was why lunchtime was the most joyful part of the workday. Although they criticized the conditions in which they ate lunch as inadequate, they also perceived the act of eating together as pleasant. Moreover, by sharing food with each other they experienced joy, while simultaneously, creating community and bonds of conviviality (Williams 1984, De la Peña 1981).

Similarly, the agricultural tasks women performed during their workday were straining yet chatting while they did them made them bearable. Most women found the tasks they did at work to be physically difficult. Esperanza thought that getting paid \$8.50 an hour was not enough for the physically backbreaking work she was asked to perform,

You are crouching down all day long and have to carry the containers to a truck, and it’s very heavy, one gets very tired (Tiene que estar uno agachado todo el día cargar los botes hasta un carro [...]el bote está muy pesado y [...]se cansa uno mucho).

Here Esperanza described the straining physical work she had to perform to harvest sweet potatoes. It was hard work that caused her physical pain. Arminda said she worried about heat strokes – “you feel unwell, dizzy, you want to vomit, your head hurts” (“se siente uno mal, te mareas, sientes como que quieres devolver, te duele tu cabeza”). For Arminda, it was concerning

having to work in an environment where she felt physically ill and there was not much attention from the people in charge.

Thus, the women had a difficult time performing the tasks that were part of their workday, not only because they were physically difficult but also because they sometimes caused them harm. Yet, women chatted throughout their workday to alleviate the difficulty of their work tasks. Isidra's chats revolved around work activities and family: "whether the plant is looking nice or ugly, or if the chair [on the tractor] is wobbly [...], they ask me how my kids are, how they are doing at school" ("si la planta está bonita, si está feo, o que la silla se mueve, [...], me preguntan cómo están mis hijos, o cómo van en la escuela"). For Isidra, chatting during her workday helped her connect with the people she worked with. Women had specific people they liked chatting with. For example, Florencia especially liked to chat with coworkers she had known for some time. They talked about their kids and the upcoming birthday celebrations, "sometimes we talk about the kids, school, there are times you remember it's someone's birthday" ("a veces [hablamos] de los niños, de la escuela, te acuerdas que va a ser el cumpleaños de fulana"). Chatting during their workday allowed participants to engage with one another as they learned about each other's families and daily lives outside of work. This interaction provided their work with meaning and significance beyond the burden of strenuous tasks (Hooks 2014, el-Khoury 2012).

Participants expressed that enjoying their work also provided distraction and distance from their daily household routine. Women said that being at home, many times by themselves, taking care of household situations, made them feel stressed and lonely. Laura worried about "the bills they owe with her husband [and] the problems she's been having with her sister" ("las deudas de los *billes* que tenemos con mi esposo y unos problemas que he tenido con mi

hermana”). Being at home made Laura think about the debts she had and family problems. These situations stressed her out and being by herself at home exacerbated this feeling. For Alma, being home alone was isolating. Although she had a partner and children to care for, it was hard to connect with other people throughout her day. She said, “I am by myself during the day” (“Me quedo muy sola durante el día”). Being by herself at home during the day was not pleasant for her and she felt a need to be outside her house and be around other people. Thus, women did not like the feeling of being home all day, many times by themselves, with a sense of worry, stress, and isolation.

For this reason, most women liked being at work because it helped them to feel free from being at home. Lorena explained that at work she got distracted from being at home. “At least I get distracted, I’m earning [a wage] and I’m getting distracted, at the house I’m shut in, only thinking about the family” (“Por lo menos se distrae uno, estoy ganando y me estoy distrayendo, en la casa está encerrado, no más pensando en su familia”). Lorena felt good about being at work because it meant she was earning money and also helped distract her from thinking about her family back in Mexico. Participants shared feeling liberated when they were at work. For example, Isidra said that at work she could “breathe a little more” (“respir[ar] un poquito más”). Arminda said that “[she] loves to work” (“me encanta trabajar”) because it gets her out of the house. Participants expressed complex meanings of work by describing it as both joyful and physically burdensome. Although their farmwork involved strenuous tasks, it also provided them with an escape route from the daily worries of their home life. Thus, they acknowledged its positive significance and the human dignity it provided.

In sum, the women in this study were low wage workers doing physically straining work. They felt they were undervalued workers. Yet, by engaging in moments of pleasure and joy, they

resisted oppression. They expressed resistance by disengaging from their daily worries by working and by constructing meaning and building community in their workplaces

Conclusion

In this chapter, I look at three ways in which migrant farmworker women enact everyday resistance through their foodwork at home and in the fields. Acts of everyday resistance provide Mexican migrant farmworker women with agency, feelings of empowerment, a way to self-express and value their cultural identity, and with feelings of joy and celebration that foster their human dignity and give meaning to their existence. They also allow these women to confront the intersectional oppression they experience as working-class women of color and undocumented immigrants in the United States.

These findings suggest that the Mexican migrant farmworker women in this case study enact everyday resistance to confront intersectional oppression. Their lived experiences move away from the generalized depiction of men's experiences in the farmworker struggle and add nuance to the portrayal of migrant farmworkers in the United States. My intersectional analysis highlights the existing relationality between resistance and oppression in these women's experience as food laborers. Moreover, it points to the complexity that exists in women's description of their lives as women who are mothers, migrants, and farmworkers. Their lives are not miserable or joyful; they are a complex combination of both. Finally, these findings point to the particularities that women of color experience in mothering and specifically in performing food labor, at home and work. This analysis suggests that Mexican migrant farmworker mothers enact intersectional resistance to gain agency in their everyday lives. As an action-oriented framework, intersectionality shows how these women can transform their reality in everyday

ways as they continue to feed their children and a mostly oblivious US society through their food labor.

CHAPTER 5

“*Comemos juntas*”: Foodwork and Relational Care in the Experience of Migrant Farmworker Women

Introduction

Foodwork is a gendered form of labor that women have traditionally performed to care for the people in their lives (DeVault 1991). For most women, this involves shopping for food, cooking it, and cleaning-up afterwards for themselves and the people they care for, while also doing the emotional and mental labor involved with feeding a family (Cairns and Johnston 2015). Through their foodwork, women connect with the people in their household (Cairns and Johnston 2015, DeVault 1991, Elliot and Bowen 2018). Particularly, migrant women and women of color also use their foodwork to connect with their extended family and their communities (Abarca 2006, Avakian 2005, Beoku-Betts 1995, Counihan 2009, Meierotto and Som Castellano 2019). Some mothers also use foodwork to improve the lives of their loved ones when they live in conditions of poverty and racial or ethnic discrimination (Abarca 2006, Beoku-Betts 2018, Williams-Forson 2001). Women foster a range of different relationships through their foodwork, but most of the literature focuses specifically on the relationship between mothers and their children (Brenton 2017, Fielding-Singh and Cooper 2023, MacKendrick 2014). There is a need for research that expands on the relationships of care women create through their foodwork. To address this gap in the literature, I examine the ways migrant women practice foodwork as a form of carework that fosters relationships with themselves and others.

To study this process, I draw on interview data with 15 migrant farmworker mothers collected between March 2019 and March 2023. I find that migrant farmworker women use foodwork to foster caring relationships with their children, their coworkers, and themselves.

Through their foodwork, these relationships transform people's everyday lives by creating a feeling of belonging with their children in an otherwise unwelcoming rural environment, by fostering a sense of support and friendship with their coworkers in a demeaning and isolating work environment, and by building a sense of self-appreciation through everyday experiences. By using a relational lens foodwork can be viewed as a loving act of labor that fosters transformative relationships in people's lives.

Literature Review

Women carry out foodwork to provide care for the people in their lives, from their children and family to their friends, coworkers, and broader community (Abarca 2006, Beoku-Betts 1995, Cairns and Johnston 2015, Counihan 2009, DeVault 1991, Elliot and Bowen 2018, Meierotto and Som Castellano 2020, Williams-Forson 2001). Their foodwork is a type of carework that enriches people's lives, especially those living under oppressive social conditions, like poverty, racial discrimination, and ethnic isolation (Abarca 2006, Beoku-Betts 1995, Williams-Forson 2001). Literature on foodwork has addressed the ways mothers use foodwork to care for their families, especially their children (Bowen et al. 2019, Bowen et al. 2023, Brenton 2017, Cairns and Johnston 2015, Cairns et al. 2013, DeVault 1991, Fielding-Sing and Cooper 2023, Mackendrick 2014). Yet, by focusing on foodwork within the household, the literature misses to address how women also perform foodwork for other relatives, friends, coworkers, and even themselves. Furthermore, many studies of foodwork and carework only tangentially address the significance of the relationships of care that foodwork builds. Thus, there is a need for research that centers on how mothers use foodwork to build relationships of care with the people in their lives, beyond their household.

Existing research shows how mothers care for their children by doing the work it takes to feed them (Bowen et al. 2019, Brenton 2017, Cairns and Johnston 2015, DeVault 1991, Fielding-Singh and Cooper 2023, Mackendrick 2014). Many of these studies focus on the experience of white middle-class women in the United States (Cairns and Johnston 2015, DeVault 1991, Mackendrick 2014). They find that middle-class white mothers struggle to feed their children while fulfilling societal expectations of how they should care for them. Other studies look into the experience of low-income mothers; they find that these mothers also struggle with similar societal expectations around feeding their children adequately, but they are limited by the resources they can access to do so (Brenton 2017, Bowen et al. 2019). Fewer studies center on the role of migrant mothers of color. Bowen et al. 2023's study of Latina migrant mothers shows how exclusionary environments in the United States impede mothers' efforts to feed their children. However, this literature does not directly address the foodwork of migrant mothers.

Some studies do look specifically at the ways migrant farmworker women feed their families through their foodwork. Many of these studies examine how farmworker families navigate food insecurity. For example, Minkoff-Zern (2014) looks at how migrant farmworkers in California use farmworker community gardens and food assistance programs to assure their access to food. Similarly, Mares (2019) discusses how farmworker families in Vermont feed themselves by growing food in backyard gardens and assuring familiar ingredients for traditional recipes from home by package mailing networks. Yet, neither of these studies focuses on women's feeding practices as carework. Meierotto and Som Castellano (2020) are an exception; they examine the role of women in farmworker families' food provisioning strategies and define it as "caring labor". Still, they do not discuss how women build and sustain relationships with other people in their lives through their foodwork.

In this study, I use a carework framework to investigate how women who are mothers build relationships through their foodwork. Like Doucet (2023), I argue that care is relational and transformational. This means that food work is both a form of “relational care,” or an act of loving consideration, as well as a form of labor. It also indicates that foodwork (and other forms of carework) occur through interactions between people, and with oneself. These interactions shape the relationships that are formed and transform the shared context. Thus, a relational care-based framework moves beyond only discussing tasks and labor. It looks at the additional symbolic benefits that come from care, like a sense of love and dignity. In short, Doucet states that care is “deeply relational, affective, responsive, sentient, moral, cross-temporal, and a spatial set of practices, processes, identities, and responsibilities” (2023: 23).

In this chapter, I examine how migrant women use foodwork as an expression of care to build relationships with the people in their lives and to transform the adverse social conditions they live in. This contributes to literature on foodwork by emphasizing that relational care builds transformative relationships among women and the people in their lives. Thus, foodwork is not only a form of love and labor, it can also be an act of transformation that improves people’s lives.

Methods

In this chapter, I used interview data collected from 15 participants between March 2019 and March 2023. All interviews were conducted in Spanish, lasted 1-2 hrs. and were voice recorded. The first set of interviews was done face-to-face, while the other three sets were done on the phone due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I transcribed the first set of interviews and the

other three were transcribed by an agency. I used pseudonyms in all the transcriptions to protect participant's identities.

I used grounded theory to analyze the interviews (Charmaz 2006) allowing themes to emerge. I coded each interview transcript manually. First, I coded each interview line by line. Themes that emerged during this round of coding included, "migration story", "life in Mexico", "care tasks", "cooking as care", "working conditions", "food dynamics", "traditional food", "cooking", "cleaning after a meal", "preparing food as care", "gendered care tasks", "my work matters", "being a woman", "my experience is important". I then did a second coding round, where I looked at the participant's context within the previous general codes. This provided details for participant's specific experiences. Finally, I did a third coding round that resulted in four broader themes: "care for coworkers", "care for community", "care for themselves", "care for family". These themes elucidated different ways in which the women provided care for the people around them, family, coworkers, community, and themselves. I selected quotes that represented the collective experience of the women I interviewed.

Findings

In this chapter, I use the concept of relational care to show how foodwork fosters space for relationships that transform and dignify people's shared experience even within hostile environments. Relational care expresses how carework is both an act of loving consideration and a form of labor, and how carework shapes the relationships that people have with others and with themselves (Doucet 2023). I identify three ways that migrant farmworker women used foodwork as a form of relational care. Migrant farmworker women engaged in relational care with their children when they built relationships through their foodwork to help them connect to their cultural roots and create a sense of pride in a rural US context. Second, they expressed relational

care by performing foodwork for their friends and coworkers in order to strengthen their networks and create a sense of support in a demeaning and isolating work environment. Third, they enacted relational care towards themselves by using foodwork to attend to their own needs.

“Yo no quiero que olviden su cultura”: How Relational Foodwork Provides a Sense of Belonging

Migrant mothers engaged in relational care for their children by using foodwork to not only nourish them, but also help them build connections to their cultural heritage and teach them values around cooking. This shaped how women and their children interacted with and expressed and understood their cultural identities within an unfamiliar rural US environment. Foodwork was not just something women did for their children; it was part of a reciprocal relationship. Women created a relationship of care with their children by feeding them home-cooked meals, but their children also introduced them to new foods. Women also cooked *with* their children as an act of relational care that allowed them to share cooking skills and responsibilities. Previous studies on foodwork frame cooking as a form of labor that falls mainly on mothers who invest their time, energy, and emotional capacity to provide an essential form of care. This was also the case for Mexican migrant farmworker mothers. However, I argue that migrant mothers engaged in relational care with their children in ways that were reciprocal and transformative.

Similar to previous research (Brenton 2017, Cairns and Johnston 2015, DeVault 1991, Mackendrick 2014), migrant mothers described cooking as both a duty and a way they loved and cared for their families. All of the mothers I interviewed said they cooked for their families from the moment they woke up to the time they went to bed. They acknowledged that this was detrimental to their own eating habits. Most agreed that between work and feeding their kids, there were times when they barely had a bite to eat. The relationships they had with their

children shaped how they related to and fed themselves. Caring for everyone else's food needs first sometimes meant completely disregarding their own, even though women were aware that this was not good for their health. However, although women acknowledged that cooking was time-consuming, they did not see it as merely labor. They also framed cooking food for their families and providing nourishing meals as a responsibility that was born out of love. Migrant mothers gained a sense of empowerment by building a relationship of care with their children through feeding them.

Mothers enacted relational care when they shared their cultural heritage with their children by making them home-cooked meals. Their children also shaped this relationship by introducing their mothers to new foods. Migrant mothers shaped their children's relationship with Mexican food flavors and fostered a sense of pride for their heritage when they cooked for them. All the women I interviewed described the importance of feeding their children home-cooked meals. Often this meant cooking staple dishes from their hometowns— like tortilla soup, meat in salsa stew, and zucchini in tomato sauce. Alma was proud to say that she had “made [her children] get used to it [her home-made food] since they were little” (“yo los acostumbré desde chiquititos”). Alma stressed the importance of making her children “get used to” Mexican food flavors. This was significant because they might not have access to these authentic flavors anywhere else. Mercedes similarly voiced a need expressed by most of the women I interviewed. She said, “It’s important to show them [their children] the foods we are used to” (“Es importante enseñarles comidas que nosotros estamos acostumbrados”). By using the collective “we”, Mercedes refers to both the foods and dishes that were staples in her family, and also the dishes and flavors that were part of a broader Mexican culture. Thus, “we” refers to both a Mexican family and a larger collective of migrant Mexican people living in the United States. Many

mothers expressed the importance of knowing that their kids liked to eat Mexican food. For example, Laura stated, “For me it is a joy to say that my kids are close to their roots and keep eating Mexican food” (“Para mí es una alegría poder decir que mis hijos siguen con sus raíces y siguen comiendo comida mexicana”). Laura made a connection between eating Mexican food and her children being close to their roots. Migrant mothers built a relationship with their children through their foodwork by teaching them to be proud of their culture. This cultural connection helped mothers and children together transform the way they see themselves as Mexican immigrants in the United States.

Children also participated in relational care for their mothers by introducing them to new foods. Most mothers were aware that, even when their children ate their home-cooked meals on an everyday basis, they also enjoyed eating other foods –specifically fast food– when they were out. “My daughter likes food from Mexico, broth with vegetables, *gorditas*, *sopes*, and *huaraches*,” said Cindy, “but she also likes junk food, hamburgers, french fries, chicken nuggets, all that too” (“Pues a mi hija le gusta la comida de México por ejemplo, los caldos con verduras, le gustan las gorditas, le gustan los sopes, le gustan los huaraches...pero igual y también le gusta también la comida chatarra por la hamburguesa, las papas, chicken nuggets y todo también”). Here, Cindy lists out two categories of the foods her daughter eats: 1) food from Mexico, and 2) food from the United States, which she judgmentally calls “junk food”. Cindy and other migrant mothers made a clear distinction between Mexican and American food, where the first was preferable over the second. To counterbalance the allure American foods had for her kids, Jacinta learned to cook dishes that her children liked but that she didn’t normally make for them. She said, “I’ve had to learn some new recipes because they didn’t like all of my food” (“Yo he tenido que aprender algunas otras comidas por lo mismo, porque a ellos no les gusta mucho”). Here

Jacinta noted that she had learned to cook new dishes—dishes like pasta, or special salads, but also *birria* (soup made of goat meat)—that her children requested because they were becoming interested in other food flavors. Thus, women’s children also shaped their mothers’ experiences by introducing them to new flavors and dishes they encountered in the United States. In turn, their mothers’ cooking changed. In this way, children and mothers together shaped their migrant experience through the food they liked and ate.

Mexican migrant mothers also passed on cooking knowledge and taught their children new values around cooking as an act of relational care. Women shared the kitchen space with their children while cooking as a way of bonding over food and transmitting cooking skills. Most of the mothers I interviewed mentioned how they welcomed the company of their children while cooking. Alma recalled a scene when her children were younger:

Since they were little [her children] they liked to watch what I did [in the kitchen]. They got up on a chair behind the stove, and they would lean over to see what I was doing, how I was frying the rice, how I was making the beans (Desde chiquitos ellos les ha gustado mirar qué hago, se subían a las sillas por el lado de atrás de la estufa y ahí recargaditos y mirando qué estoy haciendo yo, cómo estoy sofriendo el arroz, cómo estoy haciendo los frijoles).

Alma’s description explained how her kids were curious about her activities in the kitchen, literally “leaning over” to see what was cooking. Her children were aware of what was going on in the kitchen, and Alma was proud to say that she welcomed their company while cooking. Even now that her kids were older, they came to her when they had a craving, to ask “Mom, how

do I make this? Or, how do you make it?” (“Ma, y, ¿cómo hago esto?, ¿cómo haces para hacer esto?”). Alma expressed how the kitchen was a space where she and her children came together. Their relationship was shaped by her cooking knowledge and skill and her willingness to share these with her children, and by her children’s curiosity and interest.

For migrant mothers, cooking with their children also meant teaching them values around gendered cooking dynamics. Most of the mothers I interviewed said that they were teaching their sons to cook in order to transform the gendered dynamics that they had grown up with. They shared phrases like, “in this house” or “in this country” (“en esta casa”, “en este país”), and then added, “men and women are the same” (“así sea hombre y mujer es lo mismo”). In saying this, women expressed that they perceived a sense of “equity” among men and women in the United States that they had not had back in Mexico and were trying to reproduce in their household dynamics. For example, Florencia wanted her children to understand that taking care of the household was not solely a women’s responsibility. This was why she was teaching them to cook, defying the “*macho*” customs she learned growing up:

I have two sons that I want to prepare for the future. I want to prepare them for the time when they have wives, that they are not macho, like we have learned from our customs, that the woman has to cook and serve the man, no, I serve them food when I can and when I can’t, there is the stove and they know what to do (Yo tengo dos hombres que yo quiero preparar para un futuro, yo quiero preparar esos hombres para que cuando tengan sus esposas ellos no sean machistas como nosotros venimos en nuestras costumbres, que la mujer tiene que cocinar y tiene que servirle al hombre, no, yo les sirvo la comida cuando yo pueda, pero cuando no, está en la estufa y ellos ya saben).

Florencia clearly stated she didn't want her sons to be macho men who think women have to serve them. Instead, she prepared them for the future by teaching them to cook and to know their way around the kitchen. She pointed out this was different from the customs she had grown up with in Mexico. In teaching her sons to cook, Florencia defied customs she did not agree with anymore. Together, she and her sons shaped a new relationship around household responsibilities, possibly transforming the context in which her sons were growing up in the United States.

In sum, through the acts of cooking, eating, and sharing food migrant mothers and their children transformed each other's experiences living in the United States. Bonding through foodwork—an act of relational care—mothers and their children provided a better life experience for each other.

“Yo cocino y les convido”: How Relational Foodwork Provides a Sense of Support

Migrant farmworker women engaged in relational care with each other by using food and cooking to build community and solidarity while working in an isolating environment. This was important for them because it transformed how they experienced their time at work and fostered connections with coworkers and other migrants. The farmworker women built relationships of care with a wider migrant community by cooking and sharing food with them. They also forged caring relationships with other farmworker women when they shared food that helped them build a sense of gendered solidarity with each other. And finally, sharing meals allowed them to build a sense of friendship. The existing literature on foodwork does not look extensively into the ways women who cook and share food with others create a sense of belonging and community. I argue that cooking and sharing food is a way that women migrant farmworkers build a sense of

companionship, solidarity, and friendship that transforms their everyday life as migrant low wage workers.

Sharing food with others helped migrant farmworker women create relationships and build a sense of companionship with the broader Latin American migrant community. Women fought isolation by cooking and sharing food with people who had similar backgrounds to them. For example, Estela offered to cook for church events as a way to share time and space with other neighbors who migrated from Latin America. She said,

I offer to cook during the posadas, when they serenade the Virgin, when they have the walk as well, if they have a get-together and everyone offers to cook something, I will as well, when they welcome people at their house and ask for help, I say ‘If you want I’ll cook something’ (Cuando son las posadas, o a veces cuando le dan serenata a la virgen, cuando hacen la caminata también, entonces ahí hacen un convivio y cada quien lleva lo que quiera, y entonces yo ahí es donde cocino, a veces hay vecinas que reciben las posadas en sus casas y están pidiendo de que si alguien quiere colaborar, yo les digo, ‘si quieren, yo les cocino algo’).

By “offering to cook,” Estela became an active part of her Spanish-speaking church community. In general, building community in a different country was not easy for migrant women. Not speaking English made it hard to interact with people other than Spanish-speakers. Women who had come to the United States without a partner or family expressed an even greater sense of loneliness. Women described this sense of isolation by using phrases like “it was hard” or “it has been heavy” (“fue difícil”, “ha sido pesado”). Many shared food with neighbors or

acquaintances, especially on weekends or holidays, as a way of transforming the sense of isolation they felt.

By sharing food, women created relations of companionship where food traditions from different cultures came together. Isabel found it very gratifying to be part of a community that included Latin American cultures different from her own. She expressed the joy she felt at these Spanish-speaking community gatherings like this:

What I love about this country is that, thank God, I got to know all kinds of foods, I've had all kinds of foods—like *pupusas*. How was I going to hear about them in Mexico? Here I've had a variety of dishes. And it's nice to get together. For example, I have a lot of friends from Honduras, and they cook differently than in Mexico, and I like it. I've adopted yuca—yuca with chicharrón is a dish we love. My kids have all different kinds of friends and on Christmas or Thanksgiving we get together and other families come over and bring traditional dishes from their home countries and we all spend time together. (Yo lo que amo de este país es que gracias a Dios logré conocer la comida pues de todo tipo, he comido comida de todas -- o sea, tanto pues las pupusas, y pues, yo en México ¿cuándo iba a escuchar eso? Entonces aquí hay una variedad de platillos. Y es bonito convivir, por ejemplo, tengo muchos amigos hondureños, entonces ellos cocinan diferente a México, pero ya me gusta, ya adopté la yuca, la yuca con chicharrón es como un platillo que nos encanta, entonces mis hijos, sí, mis hijos tienen variedad de amistades, entonces, por ejemplo, en Navidad o Thanksgiving o algo así nos juntamos y pues vienen más familias y traen comida típica de sus países y convivimos todos).

In this quote, Isabel expressed gratitude for living in the United States because it was a place where she could interact with people from other cultures. She pointed out that she would not have known about these cultures and dishes back in Mexico. Isabel appreciated sharing food with other families and learning from their cultures. Clearly, this was something that enriched her life and brought joy to her and her children. As a single mother of four, Isabel had gone through hardship as a farmworker in rural North Carolina. However, these community relationships helped her connect with people who were migrants and farmworkers like herself. Together, Isabel and her friends transformed the context of their everyday lives by creating a sense of companionship.

Migrant farmworker women showed relational care for each other by providing food for their coworkers in vulnerable situations. Women found it important to show support and gendered solidarity for their women coworkers. Many agreed that working in a mostly male environment was hard because they were expected to perform in the same way while facing harassment and being responsible for their families at home. However, women agreed that they “had learned to defend themselves” (“hemos aprendido a defendernos”). This quote implied two important things: One, migrant farmworker women needed to “defend themselves” from abusive working conditions and aggression from male coworkers. Two, they did this collectively. Women acknowledged that they all shared the “double-burden” (Ontiveros 2002) of home and work life and expressed that they collectively supported each other when they could. Thus, through their foodwork in the fields and their collective experience women created relationships of gendered solidarity that helped them deal with the strain work entailed.

Women farmworkers cared for each other by bringing food and familial support for coworkers who had babies. Cindy was a single mother of three who had migrated to the United

States by herself and had no blood family to rely on for support. When she gave birth, her female coworkers cared for her by visiting and bringing her food. Cindy recalled feeling very lonely in the hospital, knowing she had no close family to support her, but expressed how her “woman coworkers would help [her] out” (“nada más a veces nos apoyaban mis compañeras así de trabajo porque como te digo familia no tengo”). Even though most of her friends worked long hours and had little time to visit her, they stopped by and brought “a plate of soup, or little things one might need, maybe some jello or a dessert” (“un platito así de sopa o unas cositas que necesita uno, verdad, como unas gelatinas o algún postrecito”). In this quote, Cindy specified that in lieu of family, it was her coworkers who provided support during this vulnerable time, by bringing simple dishes. Women built relationships of gendered support among themselves as a survival strategy and a way of collectively supporting each other during difficult times.

Finally, migrant farmworker women built friendships by sharing meals with each other and finding comfort together. Women saw friendship as a relationship where they could share difficult moments in life while sharing food. For Isabel, a single mother of two children, having friends was a way to deal with “a life of sadness here [in the United States]” (“por lo menos para sobrellevar la vida aquí de tristeza”). Although not all women spoke about their life as being sad, most did say they experienced “hardship” (“la vida es difícil”, “es dura”). Having intimate connections with other women could help soften the hardness they experienced in their everyday lives. And talking to each other about their problems while sharing a “little something” (“compartimos un alquito”) was a significant act of friendship. While sharing tamales, atole, sweet bread or coffee, a piece of cake, or jello leftover from the weekend, women got together to share a bit of food and talk about their lives. María José said these get-togethers with friends were significant to her because “you can talk with them, [her friends]” (“por que les puedes

platicar”). Having someone to talk to mattered for María José because it helped her deal with problematic situations in her life and this was what made friendship important. Having friends helped women deal with sadness and hardship in their lives, and food helped eased this relationship of comfort and support with each other.

Migrant women farmworkers also shared meals after a day in the fields to help each other deal with problems that came up at work. Several women said that when they had time and access to a bit of extra cash, they would get tacos with a friend or two after work. For Alma, making friends with her coworkers was about building strong and intimate relationships. “One has to make another family at work” (“Uno tiene que hacer otra familia en los trabajos”), she said when reflecting about her friendships at the poultry processing plant where she worked. This quote expressed the closeness and connection she felt with her coworkers; to her, they were family. For María José, being friends with coworkers also meant looking after each other. She recalled a chat with a friend over tacos where she realized her friend was getting paid less than everyone else while working the same number of hours. She told her, “You have to learn to defend yourself, you cannot live in fear” (“Tienes que aprender a defenderte, no, no puedes vivir con miedo”). María José’s advice for her friend to “defend herself” and “not live in fear” showed genuine concern for her situation. And her act of support created a strong connection of camaraderie between them. Thus, women built relationships of intimacy by sharing moments outside of work where they could sit down and relax over food. Building friendship among their coworkers helped women transform and improve a demeaning work environment.

In sum, migrant farmworker women built relationships of care by sharing food with each other and creating friendships and community in the rural towns where they live in the United States. Relating with other people in the migrant Latin American community, with their

coworkers, and friends, they built a sense of companionship, gendered solidarity, and connection through their foodwork. Thus, the relational care they built together transformed their experiences as migrant workers in the United States by creating significant ties of caring support.

***“Yo me hago mis antojos”:* How Relational Foodwork Provides a Sense of Self-Love**

Finally, migrant women built relationships of care with themselves when they cooked as a way of attending to their own needs. The women I interviewed built this relationship of care with themselves in three distinct ways. First, they engaged in relational care by cooking for themselves to acknowledge their self-worth. Second, they built a relationship of care with themselves by making favorite dishes in their alone time. Finally, they cared for themselves when they cooked themselves dishes from home. Previous literature has focused on how women cook to take care of others. However, I argue that migrant women also cooked to build a relationship of care with themselves and that this helped them transform their everyday life.

Migrant women related to themselves with care when they cooked their favorite dishes for themselves. Migrant women cooked for themselves to express consideration for themselves. Alma clearly expressed this when she said, “I cook for the love I have for myself, because I like to eat” (“Cocino por el amor que me tengo a mi misma, por que me gusta comer”). Here Alma clearly stated that cooking for herself was an act of love she showed herself because eating was something she enjoyed doing. Women made it clear that there were times when they made themselves a priority and used cooking as a way of treating themselves. For example, Mercedes described a moment of attention for herself when she said there were times she “bought a little something to eat for herself, and would tell [her children] ‘I bought that for myself, it’s for me’” (“o si compro cualquier otra cosita que sea de comer, así, les digo, no, eso yo lo compré y eso es para mí”). Here, Mercedes made herself a priority by explaining there were some foods that she

would buy only for herself, not to share with others. Other women expressed that cooking for themselves was a way they acknowledged their self-worth and provided themselves with loving consideration. This helped them transform their everyday life by showing intentional attention towards their own needs.

Women acknowledged their dedication to the dishes they made for themselves. In Mercedes's description of her favorite dish, fried carp, she used a diminutive to describe the ingredients in the setup of her dish. She said, "One of my favorite foods is a nicely fried carp fish, with its little fried potatoes, its little lettuce, and its little avocado" ("Una de mis comidas favoritas es la carpa, bien doradita con sus papitas fritas, su lechuguita, su aguacatito"). By talking about her favorite dish in this way, Mercedes implied a sense of endearment for the foods that she described. She connected to the food she cooked from a place of warmth and tenderness. Women also expressed admiration in describing the dishes they made for themselves. Laura shared that her favorite dish was "beef soup" ("caldo de res"). She stated, "Beef soup with rice and lemon is delicious, it is a delicacy" ("El caldo de res con arroz y con limón es una delicia para mí, es un manjar"). By calling her dish a "delicacy", Laura gave it a distinguished value. The dish she enjoyed was not only delicious, she was in fact cooking this dish for herself with all the needed expertise to make it outstanding. Isabel also acknowledged her dedication to the dishes she made for herself by saying, "Being a woman is not about wearing an apron to cook, but about doing what you are passionate about" (Ser mujer, no significa que tengas que tener un delantal para cocinar, sino que tienes que hacer algo que te apasione"). For Isabel, cooking was not necessarily what defined her as a woman, but something she was passionate about. In short, women talked about the dishes they made for themselves with endearment, admiration, and

acknowledging their own dedication. They knew the food they cooked for themselves was special and this gave them, as women, the same value as the dedication they put into their dishes.

Women created relationships of care with themselves when they found moments of alone time to pleurably cook for themselves, although this was not always possible. Migrant women enjoyed cooking for themselves especially when they were alone at home. Most women talked about this time as a moment to satisfy their “cravings” (“antojos”). A craving was not simply a favorite dish; it was specifically a food they had been yearning for. When Jacinta talked about her cravings, she specified that she did not go out to buy them, but instead she made them herself. She said,

When I am at home by myself, and I will have no visitors, or go out, if I crave a very simple meal, like *chilaquiles*, I will make them in no time (Cuando estoy aquí en la casa solita y que no voy a tener visitas, o no voy a salir, si se me antoja una comida bien sencilla, unos chilaquiles, uy, esos en un ratitito los tengo).

An essential aspect of this pleasurable ritual for Jacinta was being home by herself, with no plans to go out or have any visitors. These moments of care and pleasure shaped the way she lived her everyday life. The relationship she built with herself through food allowed her to create moments of enjoyment for herself.

However, women had little time to relate caringly to themselves by pleurably cooking their favorite dishes because their work was a priority. Women used expressions like “sometimes” (“a veces”) or “every once in a while” (“de vez en cuando”) to indicate how often they cooked their favorite dishes for themselves. Although it was something they enjoyed, it did

not happen regularly. Several of the migrant women had to prioritize their work schedule, like Cindy, who worked the night shift at a chicken processing plant, from Monday to Wednesday and only slept three hours per day. When I asked her how she took care of herself, she said, “I mostly don’t, I don’t have much time” (“Yo casi no, no tengo mucho tiempo”). Attending to her own needs, like cooking something she craved, was not a priority for Cindy because work came first. However, she knew she had to take care of herself to be able to work. She added,

I take vitamins, I make myself my green smoothies, I cook for myself to take some lunch [to work] to eat well because if I eat I have strength to work (Me tomo vitaminas, me hago mis licuados verdes, [...] tengo que cocinar para llevar el lonche para comer bien porque si como tengo fuerzas para trabajar).

Thus, for Cindy, cooking for herself, when she could, was not mainly about a pleasurable moment, it was mostly about caring for herself to make sure she could keep doing the hard, physical labor she was required to do at the chicken processing plant. Migrant women had few moments to dedicate solely to themselves. Cooking for themselves was one of these moments they cherished. However, this did not happen often because many times their farmwork schedules didn’t allow them much leisure time. In cases like Cindy’s, cooking for themselves, although an act of self-care, was also an act of survival rather than a moment of pleasure. For migrant farmworker women, building a relationship of care with themselves through cooking was not only about satisfying cravings. It was also about realizing that they needed to care for themselves to be able to care for others they loved.

Migrant women also cooked themselves dishes from back home as a way of reconnecting with nostalgic flavors and with their migration story. Through this act of relational care with themselves, they fostered a sense of resilience. Migrant women cooked dishes from back home to connect with themselves through memories from their past in a place they left behind. When she described the dishes she cooked for herself, Florencia ended by saying, “These are my traditional foods that I do not forget, I am always making myself something from my country” (“Son mis comidas típicas que no las olvido, que siempre estoy ahí, o sea, cocinándome algo para mí de mi país”). By restating that these were “traditional foods” she “does not forget”, Florencia referred to her life back home and the memories she had of that time. Her statement was significant because it showed that in the caring relationship she built with herself, she included cooking herself foods that connected her to her past and to her country. Women cooked dishes that they connected to memories of family members and their affection. For example, Jacinta remembered that when she was a small child, her mother would pamper her (“apapacharla”) by making her *atole de arroz* (a warm milk and rice breakfast drink) in the special way she liked it, without the rice grains. In this case, the “atole de arroz” was a direct representation of her mother’s love for her. For Jacinta, this breakfast drink brought back emotions and memories that went hand-in-hand. And now she made it for herself to reproduce that sense of affection. By making dishes that connected them to their memories of care and love and to an emotional connection to the culture and place they left behind, women gave themselves a piece of the affection they recalled. Thus, these nostalgic memories allowed them to feel care, reproduce it for themselves, and keep it with them in their day to day.

Migrant women also shaped their relationships with themselves and their migration stories by connecting to their memory of how they learned to cook. Several of the women said

they learned to cook in their hometowns following their mothers, sisters, or grandmothers' guide. Yet, most did not actually have to cook or felt confident cooking until they were in the United States because they were very young when they migrated. Women expressed how in the United States they had to learn how to cook to survive. They used phrases like the following: "Here [in the United States] if I don't cook, I don't eat" ("Aquí si no cocino, no como"), "The need made me learn [to cook]" ("La necesidad me fue haciendo aprender"), and "I have to do it [cook] because I have to do it" ("Tengo que hacerlo por que tengo que hacerlo"). Learning to cook was something they *had* to do to be able to feed themselves; there was no choice. And although they made dishes like the ones their mothers and grandmothers made back home, these dishes were also their own creations, a product of their own need and experience. Thus, when cooking their favorite dishes for themselves women connected to their migration story and recognized the effort it took them to get to where they were. Cooking for themselves made them aware of what they had gone through. It was a way in which they connected to their migration story and appreciated their own resilience.

In sum, women built a relationship of care with themselves through their cooking that allowed them to show consideration for their own needs, self-recognition, joy, and affection. By connecting to their own sense of self-worth through the food they made for themselves, they also found strength and resilience in their own stories of migration. Having a relationship of love and care with themselves allowed them to transform their day to day by recognizing their own value.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I discuss the ways in which Mexican migrant farmworker women build relationships of care with their children, coworkers, and themselves through their foodwork and

how this transforms the everyday lives of themselves and others. Relational care—like sharing flavors and dishes from their Mexican hometowns with their children, cooking for community and coworkers to create support, and making their favorite foods for themselves— allows women to create, foster, and alter relationships with the people in their lives and to transform the context in which they live. It provides them with a sense of empowerment, pride, companionship, solidarity and resilience. Thus, relationality allows migrant women to build relationships with themselves and others that positively impact their lives and counters the sense of discrimination they experience in the United States.

These findings show that women use their foodwork to build relationships of care with people beyond their household. The transformative effect women’s foodwork has on people who struggle with oppressive social conditions has not been addressed in the literature. Thus, this chapter provides a perspective on how foodwork is intrinsically relational because it builds relationships that shape people’s experiences. In addition, it shows that migrant women build relationships of care with themselves through their foodwork. This means that relational care also happens with oneself. In all, my analysis illustrates that foodwork is an act of relational care that expands beyond a woman’s household. Foodwork helps build community, friendship and self-love, and it is essentially transformative because it changes the way people experience their daily lives.

CHAPTER 6

***“Me siento útil así”*: Participants and Researchers Who Build a Reflexive Process through Research Methodology**

Introduction

Feminist methodologies prioritize the subjective realities of the people involved in the social dynamics that they study (Burt and Code eds.1995, Mauthner 2020, Mauthner and Doucet 2003). Intersectionality, a feminist research methodology, highlights how researchers need to observe these subjective realities with a lens of complexity in order to grasp their true structure (Hill Collins 2000, McCall 2005, Misra et al. 2020). Based on these precepts, feminist researchers have found it essential to have a reflexive process where they analyze their own interactions with their research and the people they study (Day 2012). Reflexive analysis includes observing one’s own positionality (Day 2012), recognizing the value of emotions within the research process (Hoffman 2007), and questioning relationships of power among researchers and research participants to build non-hierarchical relations (Mauthner 2020). Although numerous feminist methodological articles examine the role reflexivity plays in the data collection process, many discuss it only from the perspective of the researcher (Best 2003, Beoku-Betts 1994, DeVault 1990, Dickson-Swift et al. 2009, Hoffman 2007, Kang 2000, Kim 2012, Zavella 1993). Thus, we learn about the experience of the researcher dealing with her reflexive process separately from that of the participants. As a result, we know very little about the joint experience of researchers and participants when they share a reflexive process during the research process. To address this gap in the literature, I ask how researchers and participants who share the data collection process can transform each other's research experience and embrace complexity in their perspectives.

To examine this question, I closely analyze the methods employed in this study, including my own fieldnotes. My study included collecting interview data with 15 migrant farmworker women, doing ethnographic observations with this group of women in shared activities, writing thumbnails after each interview, and recording audio messages for interview check-ins. I analyzed the data collected, paying particular attention to instances of interaction between my participants and I and reflections based on those moments of connection. I found that researchers and participants built an interactive relationship throughout the data collection process. They did this by having an interactive reflexive process –which included looking at their positionality, sharing their emotional labor, and reshaping their power dynamic. I conclude that researchers and participants who interact during the methodological process together build a complex portrayal of reality.

Literature Review

Feminist researchers have expressed the importance of considering and discussing their own experiences in the research process as part of their methodologies; this is commonly referred to as reflexivity (Day 2012, Mauthner and Doucet 2003). In the reflexive process, researchers talk about their own identities, their own emotions, and their own power while interacting with the participants of their research (Day 2012, Hoffman 2007, Mauthner 2020). At the same time, intersectional feminists emphasize that putting themselves in the data collecting process involves understanding complex identities (Hill Collins 2002, McCall 2005, Misra et al. 2020). They define complexity as the simultaneous interaction of distinct characteristics within a subject (McCall 2005). However, little has been said about the collaborative reflexivity that researchers and participants engage in throughout the data collection stage of research (Day

2012). Acknowledging that collaborative reflexivity between researchers and participants is important because, as Mauthner states, “knowledge is an intersubjective coproduction between researcher and researched” (2020: 9).

Much of the feminist literature on positional reflexivity discusses the “insider-outsider” dilemma that researchers face in interacting with participants (Day 2012: 74). For Zavella (1993), this meant learning she had to respect her informant’s own construction of their identity even when she thought of herself as an “insider” because she was Chicana, like the group of working mothers she interviewed. Beoku-Betts (1994) also discussed her “insider status” when working with Gullah women in South Carolina and Georgia and found that there was fluidity in her multiple identities as a Black woman researcher. For Kang (2000) it was important to describe herself as a “co-ethnic researcher” in the process of “researching one’s own” (Kang 2000: 2). Yet, all of these authors discuss positionality from an individual perspective that reflects their own identity-seeking process. Feminist researchers can add to this literature by exploring a collective reflexivity that might allow researchers and participants to co-construct each other's identities throughout the data collection process.

Feminist researchers have also explored their subjectivity by reflecting on the emotions they feel and express during their fieldwork. Dickson-Swift et al. (2009) focus on the use of “emotion work” on public health researchers, emphasizing the need for self-care practices. Similarly, Hoffman (2007) pays particular attention to the “emotional labor” researchers perform when conducting interviews and the power shifts that this can create with participants. Both of these studies center on the researcher’s experience and the effect that emotional labor has on them. Other studies go beyond solely focusing on researchers’ experiences and describe the emotional dynamics within fieldwork as “relational” between researcher and participants. Blee

(1998) looks at her research with activists in contemporary US racist movements to argue that the emotional dynamics between researcher and participant during an interview can be analyzed to learn how that relationship influences the researcher's interpretation and analysis (382). Similarly, Mauthner and Doucet (1998) use a "voice-centered relational method" where both participants and researchers' voices work together to create an analytical narrative that centers their emotions. Yet, none of these studies offer methodological tools to show researchers how to take care of their emotions while conducting interviews and do the same for their participants. Researchers can contribute to this literature by providing methodological tools that create reciprocal dynamics of emotional care between researchers and participants.

Another significant discussion within the feminist literature on reflexivity is the power-dynamic that exists between the researcher and participants during fieldwork. Hoffman (2007) argues that researchers should analyze the power shifts between interviewer and interviewee during the interview process as data. Mayorga-Gallo and Hordge-Freeman (2017) discuss participants' power over them by using the categories of credibility and approachability—meaning how approachable participants perceived them to be. For Kim (2012), power-dynamics unfold between the researcher, the researched, and the reader when research is conducted in a foreign language, especially in English. Finally, Best (2003) observes that research participants engage in meaning-making processes of their symbolic world as much as the researcher does (896). All these authors reflect on the interactions and power dynamics that take place between researchers and participants during the data collection process. They do not discuss the ways in which researchers and participants can shape the interview process to construct a collaborative narrative. Thus, I ask how researchers can invite participants to reshape our methodologies in order to transcend interviewer-interviewee hierarchies.

In this chapter, I reflect on the methods I used in my dissertation to discuss how my participants and I built our reflexive process together in the data collection stage of the research. By analyzing my own methodology, I observe how reflexivity is a collaborative process between researchers and participants. I find that seeing it as a shared construction allowed me to produce an understanding of reality based on complexity.

Methods

I analyze the methods I used to collect interview and ethnographic data from Mexican migrant farmworker mothers in rural North Carolina. I use this data to look at the ways my participants and I co-created methodological dynamics throughout the data collection stage of the research process. I used interview data collected from 15 participants between March 2019 and March 2023. All interviews were conducted in Spanish, lasted 1-2 hours and were voice recorded. I conducted the first set of interviews face-to-face, while the other three sets were done on the phone due to regulations during the COVID-19 pandemic. I transcribed the first set of interviews and the other three were transcribed by an agency. I used pseudonyms in all the transcriptions to protect participant's identities. I also wrote analytical thumbnails for each interview, recorded interview check-in audio messages, and did ethnographic observations of shared activities.

To analyze this methodological data, I coded interviews, thumbnails, interview check-ins, and ethnographic observations. I first coded for broad codes that included "positionality", "emotional labor", and "power dynamics". Afterwards, I analyzed the data within those codes, looking for specific patterns within them. Within the "positionality" code, I looked for quotes where my participants or I discussed identity categories like, "Mexican", "Hispanic", "woman",

“mothers”, “migrant”, “undocumented”, “farmworker”, “student”. Then I used these codes to observe the categories that women used to define their identities. In the “emotional labor” code, I looked for discussions of emotions between me and participants. These led to codes for specific emotions like, “anger”, “fear”, “frustration”, “loneliness”, “happy”, “joyful”, “liberated”. Finally, for the “power dynamics” code, I looked for instances where women transformed their role as interviewees and became inquisitive. These were mainly situations where the women asked me questions or described how they perceived me. I used the intersectional precepts of relationality and complexity to build my argument in this chapter.

Findings

I argue that I was able to transform the research experience and produce a more complex portrayal of social dynamics by reflecting on the interactions I had with my participants during the data collection process. The precept of complexity, from an intersectional perspective, refers to the understanding that a subject of study has more than one characteristic and that their conjunction produces a “complex” reality. To achieve a complex portrayal of reality through my research methodology, I show that having everyday interactions with participants helped us understand each other's identities and build trust among us. I also show that participants and I shared the emotional labor that took place during the data collection process and this strengthened my data analysis. And finally, I show that participants and I partially transcended the interview power dynamic and came up with a collaborative narrative. My findings contribute to the literature on reflexivity by arguing that subjectivity is not necessarily an individual perspective. Instead, it can be constructed in the interactions between researchers and

participants. This allows us to have a better understanding of reality as a complex construction of perspectives.

We Are Each Other's Mirror: Co-Constructing Identity to Build Trust

My participants and I reflected on each other's identities through everyday interactions and this built trust between us. This identity co-construction happened when my participants and I learned about each other's context and identities by sharing everyday interactions, and also when we shared vulnerable moments that helped us build trust with each other. I add to the literature on positional reflexivity by arguing that as researchers, we build our identities together with our participants. We define our positionality through our interactions with each other.

My participants and I co-constructed each other's identities when we learned about each other's contexts and lives. We shared an intimate space through a Woman's Circle, a set of weekly online meetings where we talked about our experiences as women. Most women in the Women's Circle said they were mothers. However, when I spoke about myself, I said I was not a mother. The women in the group were intrigued that I was not a mother at my age and asked if I was married. Thus, through our conversation they understood I was a "woman who was not a mother" and that we had experienced womanhood differently at this point in our lives. These conversations also helped me see how participants defined themselves as "migrant mothers". For example, Estela self-identified as a "migrant mother" when she shared a story about being hurt to see her daughter discriminated against at a grocery store for being Mexican. Dealing with racial discrimination towards her children was part of the mothering work migrant mothers do. Understanding this as part of Estela's identity made me see that being a "migrant mother" was different from being only a "mother" or a "mother of color" in the United States (Nakano Glenn et al. eds. 1994). Although we did not relate through our experiences with motherhood, we were

all “migrant women”. For me, being a migrant woman meant being away from my country of origin and from my family and missing that part of my life and identity while I was away. The women shared that they connected with this experience, especially our shared experience of being away from our own mothers and missing our family. Thus, the Woman’s Circle allowed us to share personal narratives that shaped our identities and to understand that even when these were different for each of us, they also contributed to a bigger picture of what it meant to be a “woman”, a “mother”, and a “migrant”.

The participants in my study and I learned about each other’s identities as immigrants by sharing everyday interactions. I became aware of how the women perceived themselves as “farmworkers” and “undocumented” and they learned that I was a “student” with “a visa” during a retreat with the Episcopal Farmworker Ministry community outreach groups. For example, during a sensibility workshop, Mercedes shared how she felt it unfair that H2A farmworkers were temporary workers who had rights while she, who had been living in the United States for more than 20 years, could not get resident status. She referred to herself as a “farmworker” (“trabajadora del campo”) and also as “undocumented” (“sin documentos”). Mercedes established her identity as an “undocumented farmworker” as she explained how she had had a different migration experience than the H2A workers who had temporary work permits. This conversation illustrated the importance of the categories of “farmworker” and “undocumented” in women’s descriptions of themselves and their immigrant status in the United States. It also showed me that the term “farmworker” was not homogenous, since there were clear differences among farmworkers based on their documentation status. During these conversations, I shared my immigration status in the United States with the group. I said I was a student at the university and that I had a student visa. People asked how someone from Mexico had ended up studying in

the United States and seemed surprised that I was doing a PhD. They appreciated the fact that I had a visa that allowed me to go back to Mexico if I wanted to, especially to see my family. Thus, although we did not share the same identities as Mexican migrants to the United States, as a result of why we were there and our immigration status, we shared a space where we listened to each other and tried to understand what these identities meant for us. Through these conversations we co-constructed our identities and came to a shared understanding of the complexity of our everyday lives.

My participants and I built mutual trust with each other when we shared moments of vulnerability. We shared personal details about each other's lives in intimate spaces we created together. The women were subtle about the ways they shared personal information, especially when it came to sharing their migration status and asking about mine. With Florencia, this conversation took place while we were weeding a garden bed together. She asked where I lived and how I got to the EFWM. I shared that I drove there, and she said she did too. She asked if I liked to “correr” (speed) on the highway and I said no. She said she didn’t either because she didn’t have a license and then asked if I had one. In North Carolina, people without migration documents are not allowed to have a driving license. Being stopped by a highway patrol is a sure way to get deported and this is why going over the speed limit on the highway is very risky. By striking up this conversation and asking this question, Florencia told me she was undocumented without saying it explicitly and also found out that I was not. I contributed to this vulnerable exchange by providing the information Florencia requested and by acknowledging the value of what she shared with me. This created a bond of trust among us that allowed for a more intimate communication afterwards. By having intimate spaces to share details about each other’s lives

the women and I built an open channel of horizontal communication that allowed us to understand who we were— to rely on each other to build our identities.

Participants and I also built a safe space during moments of celebration as a way of expressing our identities collectively. The Women’s Group put together a baby shower for Roberta, who was pregnant. After sharing food and cake, opening the gifts we brought, and giving a short thank-you speech, Roberta said she had received a letter from ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) letting her know her deportation process would begin in a month. She cried and said she was scared. The women expressed their empathy warmly by hugging her and brainstorming solutions. Several of them had been through the same situation and knew what to do. The fact that I did not share an undocumented migration status, like the other women in the group, meant that my reaction was different. I could not provide assistance because I did not know how to proceed in a situation like this. Yet, I was able to offer support and a caring embrace. Roberta perceived that this moment of celebration was a safe space to share her desperation and that she would find support from all of us. Being allowed to share this moment of collective vulnerability with this group of women made me know they trusted me. It also made me realize that we could share parts of our identity that we did not experience in the same way, like being immigrants in the United States. By building this space of mutual trust, my participants and I shared intimate details about our lives and identities we would not have done otherwise. This meant we created a safe space to share who we were together, like this, reshaping the research dynamic.

In sum, the participants and I co-constructed the identity categories that we used to refer to ourselves through our everyday interactions. These personal interactions allowed me to better understand how women referred to themselves and what that meant for them, and to share how I

perceived my own identity. I did not impose my perspective on their identity. Instead I listened to how women defined their own identities and we created a mutual narrative of who we were. This collective construction of our positionality provided a more precise and complex grasp of each other's realities.

Emotions Are Data Too: Centering Our Shared Emotional Reactions to Transform the Interview Experience

When researchers reflect on the emotions we and our participants experience during the data collection process, this can strengthen our analysis. I used reflexive tools to identify the emotions participants and I had during an interview. I applied care-based methods to transform the data collection experience for my participants and me. Like Hoffman (2007), I argue that researchers' and participants' emotions play a key role in the research process and need to be considered and analyzed. But I add these emotions must be analyzed as interactions between participants and researchers, not only as individual expressions.

I reflected on the emotions that I and my participants experienced during the data collection process and found that they were interconnected and shaped the interview. I used "thumbnails" to identify my emotions and those of my participants during the interview and to guide it. My thumbnails were a space where I could identify and explore the emotions I felt and perceived in my participants while doing interviews. I perceived our emotions as physical body reactions such as feeling heat throughout my body and sweating, feeling tightening in my chest, and tensing my shoulders. Several of the women cried during the interview. Sometimes their voices broke, they went silent, or they laughed. Some women directly named their emotions—, sad, angry, frustrated, and happy. I tried to perceive participants' emotions and allow them to shape the interview; thus, we shaped the interviews together. At times this meant the women

kept talking on the topic that produced the emotion. At other times, it meant that I offered supportive words. At other times, I respected the silence they created to soothe themselves, and in other instances I asked a question that moved the interview in a different direction.

During the interviews, I dealt with emotions in two ways. I perceived my own emotions and reacted to soothe myself. I also perceived the emotions of the woman I was interviewing and tried to soothe her as well. At the same time, participants were dealing with their own emotions, soothing themselves, and perceiving mine. We were both dealing with this emotional labor while simultaneously asking and answering questions. This reciprocal emotional labor meant that by perceiving each other's emotions and reacting to them together we shaped the structure of the interview.

I also used thumbnails to identify how my emotional reactions and those of my participants were connected. My thumbnails included a section where I answered the question: “How did I feel during the interview?” In this section I described the emotions I had through particular parts of the interview. This reflexive practice helped me track the emotional reactions I had throughout the data collection process and the way participants responded. A particular response to this question looked like this:

It was hard for me to listen to Aurora’s story about her abusive relationship. I felt frustrated and helpless. I provided some supportive words. She also spoke about her health problems and the difficulty in dealing with them. At this moment I just felt very connected to her own feeling of despair. At the end of the interview I felt a heavy uneasy feeling that was hard to disconnect from.

Here I show a description of the emotional response I had to a particularly overwhelming interview. Helplessness, frustration, and despair were prevalent feelings throughout. Going through my thumbnails I observed that my emotions were very much connected to the emotions that my participants were sharing with me. This gave me a clearer sense of how women felt about different episodes in their lives. For example, this is an excerpt from the thumbnail I wrote after interviewing Mercedes:

Mercedes describes a complex relationship with motherhood. She feels joy and fulfillment to be able to take care of her 9-year-old son who lives with her in North Carolina, but she also feels remorse and shame for having left her oldest daughter behind in Mexico.

In this quote I am able to identify several emotions Mercedes expressed about her relationship to motherhood: joy, fulfillment, remorse, and shame. This was possible in part because I had used the thumbnails to identify my own emotions during the interview process. This connection to my emotions and those of my participant's allowed me to portray a complex analysis of the data I collected through the interviews.

As part of my commitment to being reflexive about the emotions of myself and my participants, a group of two other researchers and I created a care method to reflect on the effects of our shared emotions with our participants. The research collective called ETQ (Everyday Transformative Queries) formed by two other PhD student colleagues and I, created a check-in system to reflect on our emotions before and after doing interviews. My interview check-ins with

the members of ETQ consisted of an initial cell phone text message on WhatsApp where I stated my emotional situation going into the interview:

I'm about to start an interview. I'm feeling excited about it but also somewhat anxious.

We touched on some difficult life situations with Aurora last time and I am not sure how to deal with them, how to support her when she is sharing. They also left me a bit emotionally drained.

Here, I let them know I felt excited about doing the interview, but also anxious because there were themes that were particularly hard for me to go through with this particular participant. Supporting her through these moments was difficult because it was one of the first interviews I did. However, sharing these emotions with my colleagues allowed me to get them off of my chest and receive support from them. Like in the following text, "Hi Emilia! I hope you have a good interview. I'm sure it will go well and I'm looking forward to listening to your voice message when you are done. Let us know if you need any additional support." This message made me feel I was not alone going into the interview and if there were any issues throughout, I knew I had someone to help me process them. This was a very helpful exercise in observing my emotions with the help of a fellow researcher who understood what I was going through.

The other researchers and I also checked-in after the interviews. The check-in included a description of how we felt and a reflection of any particular situation that stood out. For example, in one message, I said, "The interview went well. I'm happy about it. This was someone who didn't expand on their responses that much, so I had to intervene a little bit more, it made me a little bit more active in that sense, mentally it was a little bit more tiring". Here, I expressed my

initial reaction to the interview and how the interaction was mentally taxing because I had to be much more involved in guiding the conversation. However, I also expressed being happy about how the interview went. Thus, interview check-ins helped me process my emotions and they also allowed me to help my participants hold and process their own emotions. In this sense, I observed how our shared emotional labor shaped the narrative we were building through the interview.

My participants and I transformed the interview process by responding to each other's emotions and offering care and support. For example, in the following quote from my interview check-in voice message, I describe a participant sharing a particularly difficult story and how I showed emotional support:

Mercedes mentioned this episode in her life that she doesn't like to talk about [...] there was a moment where her voice cracked, she started crying talking about a daughter that she has in Mexico that she has not seen since she was very young, there was a lot of providing comfort on my side, understanding words, letting her know I understood why she did some of the things she had to do throughout her life that were hard for her to share.

Here I explained that I "provided comfort" and said "understanding words" to help Mercedes soothe her emotions after she shared a difficult situation in her life. This was significant because it created a bond of vulnerability between Mercedes and me. However, at the time of the interview, I was not certain if I had adequately offered support or helped her process her

emotions. This led me to include a final question in the interview guide which asked “How do you feel?”. This was my reflection:

I should be asking them how they feel at the end of the interview, whether they felt comfortable or weird or strange. I’m gonna do it from now on. I feel that interviews can be therapeutic in a way, where people are talking about things that maybe they wouldn’t share with other people, or that they need to talk about at the moment [...] if the conversation is actually a conversation where people are actually caring for each other and there is some connection, [there is] trust among the people.

This quote shows the moment I realized it was important to ask my participants how they were feeling after each interview. I reflected on how interviews can have a therapeutic effect if there is trust, care, and connection among the people involved in the conversation. This led me to think about the ways in which interviews could be helpful for participants as well. For example, after an interview with Alma, I reflected:

After I asked how she felt at the end of the interview she said “this was very helpful for me because it allows me to talk about all these things that I have inside that I don’t share with anyone else”, and she actually said that this was “therapeutic” for her, being able to spill out things that she thinks about, reflections on her own life, that was helpful for her [...] What I really liked hearing was that the interview made her feel better, to get these things off her chest.

Here I paraphrased what my participant responded to my question: How do you feel after this interview? Alma had shared it was “helpful”, “therapeutic”, and “it made [her] feel better”. She also explained that the interview had allowed her to talk about her life and share things she does not generally share with people. Thus, Alma found the interview helpful not only because she shared things she needed to, but also because it made her feel better. This indicated that Alma felt she was an active agent in the interview process. If I had not asked this question, I would have based my analysis only on my perception of her emotions and would have not learned about her emotional experience from her own perspective. My reflections on my own and my participants’ emotions led me to revise my interview structure in order to better help participants process their own emotions.

In sum, as a researcher, I recognized the reciprocal emotional labor that was happening in my interviews. By using reflexive tools and care-based methods, I noticed how my emotions affected and shaped my interviews and analysis. Importantly, I recognized how the shared emotional labor taking place between me and my participants contributed to a co-constructed conversation throughout the interview. Thus, we reshaped the interview process by acknowledging our emotional labor and bringing together our mutual perspectives.

Participants Also Build the Narrative: Acknowledging the Voices of our Participants When they Transform the Research Process

Finally, my participants and I partially transformed the interviewer-interviewee power dynamic by building a collaborative narrative about their experiences. This happened when, during interviews, participants talked about the value of their everyday experiences and their social significance, as well as when they asked me questions during the interview and shared with me their perspectives of who I was. I add to the literature on reflexivity and power

dynamics by arguing that researchers and participants can build the interview narrative together. Doing so provides participants with agency to shape the data the researcher analyzes.

During interviews, I asked participants about the value of their everyday experiences to help them reflect on the significance of these experiences within social research. I recognized that the women valued their everyday experiences when they acknowledged that they could be useful for someone else. For example, when I asked the question: “Do you think your everyday experiences are important?” (¿Tu crees que tus experiencias cotidianas son importantes?) Most women said that their experiences were important because “someone else could learn from them”. This made me understand that they knew their stories could get to someone else beyond me. For Mercedes this meant that “by sharing [her] bad experiences, at least maybe someone else will not repeat them, I feel useful like this” (“aunque sea contando mis malas experiencias, pero por lo menos para que no se repitan en otras personas, me siento útil así”). Mercedes was sharing her experiences to bring a lesson to other people and make them useful to others— in order to have a social impact. Women also expressed that they saw the value in sharing their stories because they had already learned from someone else’s experiences. For example, Alma stated: “I talk about this because I have learned to see certain things from other mothers, from other people who have talked about their everyday experiences” (“Yo lo cuento porque porque yo también he aprendido a ver ciertas cosas de otras madres o de otras personas que me han comentado sus vivencias”). Alma pointed out that she had learned from the experiences of other mothers. By asking women about the significance of their everyday experiences, research participants and I built a narrative about how they transmitted knowledge in their everyday lives together. This showed a change in the interview power dynamic because it helped them realize that the data they provided had value.

I observed that the act of giving an interview was significant to women and that they perceived it as a contribution to society. Most women expressed how they had “never imagined giving an interview” (“nunca imaginé que me entrevistarían”). Jacinta said, “It has been nice. I never thought that I was going to get interviewed [...] but I like doing new things, it gives me other goals and other dreams maybe for my children” (“Nunca pensé que me hubieran a estar haciendo una entrevista [...] ha sido bonito [...] Me gusta hacer otras cosas, me da como otras metas o los sueños quizás para mis hijos”). This statement helped me realize that for Jacinta, giving an interview was a transformative experience that she shared with her children. However, she did not mention how her experiences might be significant for society. Mercedes, on the other hand, said, “I think that somehow it is something that would contribute something to the community or society” (“Yo pienso que en cierto modo sí es algo que aportaría algo a la comunidad o a la sociedad”). Through this quote, I realized that Mercedes understood the direct impact her interview responses had on her “community” and “society”. These responses allowed me to see how women perceived their own contributions to society and the effect it had on the value they saw in their everyday experiences. The women valued the act of giving an interview and understood the social power it had. This changed the interview power dynamic because it gave them agency over their role as interviewees.

Participants also transformed the interview dynamic by asking me questions about my experiences and by sharing with me their perspective of who I was. Participants became active contributors to the interview dynamic when they asked me questions about myself. For example, at the end of each interview I asked participants: Do you have any questions for me? All of the participants inquired about my everyday life. The questions included things like: “What is your life like?”, “How long have you been away from your family”, “When you do these interviews

do you enjoy them?”, “Do you want to help people?”, “How old are you?”, “Where are you from?”, “Where do you live?”, “Do you have a family here and where are they?”, “How long have you been studying” (“¿Y tu vida cómo es, Emi?”, “¿Cuánto tiempo tienes alejada de ellos [tu familia]?”, “¿Tú lo disfrutas o en realidad tú buscas ayudar a los demás?”, “¿Cuántos años tienes?”, “¿Y tienes mucho estudiando?”, “¿Y de dónde eres?”, “¿Y estás solita por acá tú? ¿O tienes aquí familia?”, “¿Y dónde vives aquí?”). These questions allowed me to see that the women wanted to ask me introspective questions like the ones I had been asking them. None of the women denied the opportunity to ask me questions about myself. They all took the space to become interviewers in the conversation we were having. Some of the women even had follow up questions, like in this conversation with Mercedes:

Researcher: But I miss my family too. I like it when I can go back to Mexico and be with them. (Pero extraño a mi familia también. Me gusta cuando puedo regresar a México y estar allá con ellos).

Participant: How long have you been away from them? (¿Cuánto tiempo tienes alejada de ellos?).

Here, I shared with Mercedes some of the things that happened in my everyday life and how I felt about them, and she asked me a follow up question to help me expand on my response. This instance allowed me to see how participants were actively guiding the conversation and playing the part of the interviewer. In the questions that participants asked, they offered insight on what they thought was important to know. Their questions centered on my everyday life because that provided essential information about who I was, just like the questions I asked them. Therefore,

by asking each other questions, my participants and I reshaped the interviewer-interviewee power dynamic.

Participants changed the interviewer-interviewee dynamic when they provided their perspective about me during the interview. Some of the women I interviewed shared, out of their own accord, an opinion about me at the end of the interview. This meant that as I was building a narrative of who they were during our interview, they were doing that for me as well. The women's perspectives on me centered around what they thought about my age and my personality. For example, Jacinta remarked about how young I looked:

You are very young, I don't know, I see as if you were my daughter's age, because like I said, I thought you were very young [...] so it was kind of like I saw things about my own daughter in you, and I said "oh, she's so young". But you look good, like you are good working like me with the shovel, and all that. (Y tú eres bien jovencita, no sé, te veo como de la edad de mi hija, porque te digo, yo te hacía bien jovencita. O sea, y estás jovencita. Que, no sé, este, pues tienes más años, pero pues allá eso nada más están en el número, porque la verdad te ves muy jovencita. Entonces, como que yo vi parte de cositas como de mi hija, y yo dije, "ay, qué jovencita". Pero se ve, o sea, bien así, te ves así pues buena para trabajar como yo así como [inaudible] la pala y todo).

Here Jacinta described two things about me that she related to: 1) That I looked "young" like her daughter and reminded her of her; and 2) that I was "good" at working with a shovel like she was. Thus, her perception of me came directly from her own experience and aspects of me that she could relate to. This helped me to understand that I too built an image of my participants

based on my own life experience, like Jacinta did with me. Other participants added to their perception of me by telling me how I made them feel. In this sense Alma told me:

I see you as a calm person, serious, but at the same time the way that you are inspires trust in me and like tranquility. (Te veo como una persona tranquila, seria, pero también a la misma vez como que tu forma de ser inspira como confianza y como tranquilidad. Entonces, me siento cómoda.)

In this quote Alma described how she perceived my personality by saying I was “calm” and “serious”. The perceptions of me that the women shared were not necessarily the ways I perceive myself, but they allowed them to connect with me through their own narrative of who I was. Thus, the fact that they felt comfortable enough with me to willingly share their perspective of who I was, meant that they perceived a sense of agency in our relationship. They knew me and connected with me based on their perspectives and this went beyond the interviewer-interviewee power dynamic.

In sum, I show that participants are active co-creators of the interviewer-interviewee dynamic. They shape their own narrative by acknowledging that their experiences are useful for other people. Furthermore, they transformed the interviewer power dynamic by asking me questions and providing their own perspective of who I was. Thus, they actively shaped the narrative they constructed about themselves, the significance of their everyday experiences, and their own perception of the researcher herself.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I analyzed my research methodology. I examined three ways in which researchers and participants work together to transform the data collection process and embrace complexity in their narratives of everyday life. I did this by looking at the reflexive process I had with my participants, which included learning about each other's identities through everyday interactions, sharing emotional labor during the data collection stage, and changing power dynamics in the interview process. Building an interactive relationship with my participants during the data collection process provided me with a better sense of my own positionality. It also gave me reflexive tools to work with our shared emotions and interview questions to have insight on their own narrative. My observations of these interactions with participants contributed to a more complex portrayal of their everyday experiences.

My findings illustrate how having an interactive reflexive process with participants can transform our shared research experience. It also allows researchers to embrace complexity when we interact with the subjective reality we are studying. By talking about reflexivity as a shared experience between researchers and participants, I expand on the idea of subjectivity as an individual construction. I show that reflexivity can be a collective understanding between researchers and participants. By sharing a reflexive process with my participants, I took into account their perspectives and mine to explain social dynamics, thus embracing complexity in my data collection process. Finally, these findings suggest that researchers can create methodological tools that help us build an interactive reflexive process with our participants. My experiences illustrate the need for researchers to build relationships of connection and interaction with their participants.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusions

My dissertation examined how migrant farmworker mothers used their foodwork, at home and in the fields, to care for their families and communities. As they faced intersectional oppression tied to gender, ethnicity, immigration status, and class, women cooked and cared for themselves, their children, and each other to build a suitable and dignified environment to live in.

First, they built a welcoming environment for themselves and their loved ones by using foodwork to enact everyday acts of resistance that provided them with a sense of agency, self-value, and dignity. These acts might be unplanned and could go unnoticed, but they provided women with a sense of empowerment over their condition as undocumented migrant farmworkers. For example, women enacted resistance when they recognized the value of the labor they did as farmworkers and mothers who were simultaneously feeding society and their families. This is significant because even when they experienced the “double burden” of working in the fields under straining conditions and doing unremunerated carework at home, they recognized the value this had for people in society and for their children and partners. Women explained that they had little support from their partners and felt the burden of being responsible for doing physically hard work in the fields within a male-dominated environment and still being responsible for the bulk of the carework at home. They resisted gendered oppression when they acknowledged that their foodwork in both spheres was essential. Although their resistance did not change the gendered dynamics they faced at work and at home, it did provide them with a sense of agency.

Women also enacted resistance by cooking dishes from their hometowns and procuring the necessary ingredients to cook them. In a country that consistently made them feel like they did not belong, cooking was a way to connect back with their cultural roots. By cooking the food that reminded them of home, they built a place for themselves as Mexican migrants and resisted a sense of alienation in rural United States. Women also grew tomatoes, chiles, and other ingredients that were essential to everyday meals. Growing their own food gave them a sense of self-reliance and allowed them to eat the foods they were familiar with. By making sure they could cook the dishes they liked, women expressed their cultural identity and resisted the racial and ethnic discrimination they experienced as migrants.

A second major finding of my dissertation was how migrant women used their foodwork to build relationships of care with their families and communities. These relationships, built through cooking and sharing food, helped women feel cared for, valued, and less isolated. The women built significant relationships with people outside their household, like other Latin American migrants and coworkers. This allowed them to build community beyond their immediate family and feel a sense of belonging and companionship. Women were also able to build a sense of gendered solidarity with the other women they worked with. By showing support for their coworkers, women built relationships that made them feel protected and supported within male-dominated work environments. Thus, women built community, solidarity and friendship through their foodwork and this made them feel companionship in an isolating rural and work environment.

Finally, women used food to care for themselves. This allowed them to feel a sense of self-value. It also connected them to their own story of migration and a sense of resilience. Women showed care for themselves by preparing their favorite dishes and recognizing the value

of their own cooking. When they reconnected with dishes from their hometowns that their mothers had cooked for them, they felt a sense of care and love that they were reproducing for themselves. As they recalled their first time cooking and what making food had meant for them being young women in the United States, they appreciated their own resilience as migrants. In general, through these acts of care enacted in their foodwork, women built transformative relationships that improved the ways they experienced their daily lives.

My research also offers insights into research methods. Together with my participants, I built a reflexive process that involved recognizing and defining our positionalities through interactions with each other. My participants and I began to see who we were through each other's eyes when we had everyday interactions. Individually, each person used categories to define themselves, like “woman”, “migrant”, “mother”, “undocumented.” We experienced and understood these categories differently. However, by sharing spaces where we could talk about these identities, we learned to understand them from the other’s perspective. Thus, instead of imposing definitions of who my participants were, I used their own definitions of who they were while also sharing who I was with them.

Participants and I also practiced emotional labor that helped us manage our emotions during the interview and shaped how the interview unfolded. Two other colleagues and I built and used a care-based tool to process our emotions before and after doing an interview. This grew out of conversations about supporting each other as we each conducted our dissertation fieldwork. This tool helped my colleagues and I recognize the emotional effects the interviews were having on us. Recognizing and processing these emotions for ourselves also helped us recognize our participant’s emotions. By connecting to my participant’s emotions during the interview process, I was able to adapt my interviewing procedures to provide a supportive

interview experience for them. This tool helped me develop new questions that allowed participants to talk about their emotions while doing the interview. By being reflexive about our emotions, the participants and I turned the interview process into a caring conversation.

Contributions to the Literature

My dissertation makes two key contributions to the literature. First, I argue that foodwork is a form of carework that is relational. Although most of the literature on foodwork understands foodwork as a form of carework, previous research tends to focus more on the labor of cooking. Studies highlight how foodwork is unremunerated labor that is essential for the well-being of a family (DeVault 1991, Cairns and Johnston 2015). Even more, researchers find that mothers experience distinct pressures around feeding children, and they invest substantial emotional, mental, and physical labor in feeding their children healthy foods, which is sometimes detrimental to their well-being (Bowen et al. 2019, Cairns and Johnston 2015, Cairns et al. 2013, MacKendrick 2014, Fielding-Singh & Cooper 2023). By understanding food as a form of carework, I argue that foodwork is relational because women build and shape relationships of care with others, and themselves, through the acts of procuring and cooking food. This means that foodwork is not an isolated act of labor where a woman offers care by providing food for someone else. Instead, it is an interactive connection where a woman cooking for another person has an effect on that person's physical wellbeing and their life in general. The woman is also affected by this interaction, it shapes her well-being, her life experiences, and the foodwork itself. Similarly, Doucet (2023) argues that carework is relational, meaning that it happens in the interaction between people, it is simultaneously an act of labor and love, and it shapes the ways people live their lives. By looking at foodwork through a relational carework lens, we can see

that it is not only an act of care a woman provides for others but also a complex relationship that shapes people's lives.

To highlight a specific example of my contributions, previous literature mostly discusses the relationships mothers build with their children by feeding them (Bowen et al. 2019, Cairns and Johnston 2015, Cairns et al. 2013, MacKendrick 2014, Fielding-Singh & Cooper 2023). The literature tends to frame these relationships as relatively uni-directional; mothers cook *for* children and offer care *to* children. In contrast, I show how the relationship that a mother and child build through food is interactive. This means that while a mother provides nourishment for her child, the child also provides a significant contribution to her foodwork. For example, women learned to make new recipes when their children introduced them to the new food flavors they experienced by eating meals that were not made at home. Women also built relationships with themselves through their foodwork. They cooked their favorite dishes with dedication and love in order to reproduce those feelings within themselves. In short, my research demonstrates foodwork is not merely labor that women perform for others; it is also a constructive act that builds relationships among people. This insight contributes to the literature on care and foodwork by moving beyond framing women's engagement as exhausting and showing that this work can also be regenerative and connective.

Second, I argue that foodwork is a form of carework that is transformational. The literature discusses the ways foodwork shapes the lives of working-class mothers and mothers of color by describing how it affects them emotionally, mentally, and physically—for example, by showing how mothers feel stressed about not feeding their child adequately and how mothers skip meals in order to save more food for their kids (Bowen et al. 2019, MacKendrick 2014). It also shows how mothers use their foodwork to make up for material lack in their kids' lives. For

example, a working-class mother might be more forgiving in letting her children eat a piece of candy than a middle or upper-class mother who tries to tightly control what her children eat (Fielding-Singh 2017). I argue that mothers who are working-class, women of color, and immigrants in the United States use their foodwork to shape, improve, and change the environments where they interact with others through food and care. In other words, women use their foodwork to improve their life and that of the people around them—their families, their friends, their coworkers—specifically when they live under conditions of oppression. Women use their foodwork, the everyday practice of connecting with others through food, as a way to stand against the discrimination they experience and provide themselves and their loved ones with a sense of dignity. In this way, foodwork is an act of care that brings people together and has the potential to transform and improve their interactions with oppression. The literature explains that people can use everyday acts of their daily life to express disagreement with the conditions that oppress them (Cohen and Hjalmarson 2020, Hollander and Einhowler 2004, Johansson and Vinthegen 2016 and 2020, Ochoa 1999). By understanding that foodwork can be an everyday act of resistance, we can observe that working-class, migrant mothers of color not only see the labor that food entails as a burden or a reward for their children, but also as a way to improve their everyday lives and provide dignity to their existence.

The literature discusses certain food practices of migrant farmworkers as “small, but significant acts of defiance” (Mares 2019:88), such as growing food gardens in their backyards or reproducing traditional dishes from their hometowns (Counihan 2009, García et al. 2017, Mares 2019). I add to this literature by showing that migrant women farmworkers use their foodwork, at home and in the fields, to improve their everyday lives. They do this when they acknowledge the value of the “double burden” they have as women and recognize that their work

in the fields is significant to society because it provides them with food and that their work at home is also important because it feeds and provides care for their children. They also do it when they cook staple foods, like hand-made tortillas, for their daily meals in an attempt to establish their cultural food identity in a place that repeatedly made them feel like they did not belong. These examples show that working-class migrant women also use their foodwork to reproduce their culture and build a sense of pride towards their heritage.

Broader Implications and Directions for Future Research

My research has real-world implications that can be used by organizations that serve the undocumented migrant community. These organizations could benefit from learning about the ways migrant farmworker mothers deal with the intersectional oppression they face in their everyday lives and how they use their foodwork to do this. My dissertation shows that migrant women who are mothers use their cooking to create safe and dignified environments for themselves and the people around them. They find ways to change the limiting social conditions they live in as undocumented migrants. Organizations that serve migrant families can use this finding to create community-building programs that use sharing food as a way to bring women together to talk about the social transformations that are needed in their communities in order for them to have a better life. They could call these gatherings “*Almuerzos Comunitarios por una Vida Digna*” (“Community Lunches for a Dignified Life”) and make them a monthly get-together where the interested migrant women can bring food to share and discuss issues they face and how to solve them. In this sense, my findings can be applied to a real-life situation.

Organizations serving migrant families can also use the lens of complexity to help migrant women transform their everyday lives in the United States. Many of my findings are tied

to the concept of complexity. I show that migrant farmworker women are not just victims of an oppressive system; they also resist it and enjoy the lives they have built within it. By acknowledging that this is a reality, social justice organizations can better serve the needs of this community. Their programs and final-end goals can be based on this understanding. For example, a program that looks to address issues of gender inequality within the migrant community can use the women's real-life experiences to highlight gender dynamics that are positive for everyone. Even when women are harmed by or disagree with gender-based inequalities, they may also experience positive gendered dynamics that they would like to reproduce. A complexity lens shows that both of these situations can happen simultaneously. This perspective would help social justice organizations stay away from binary interpretations of social dynamics as only positive or only negative.

My dissertation also opened space for further research. One important theme is about the ways migrant women transform their food practices and conceptions about foodwork when they move from one place to another. For example, my dissertation shows that women changed their ideas about gendered cooking responsibilities after they moved to the United States. Their experiences in a new country allowed them to understand but also question ideas they grew up with about carework and femininity. Further research could continue to explore how women's ideas about foodwork and gendered care change as they migrate from one place to another. This is a relevant question because it can show food sociologists how conceptions about food, care, and foodwork are not static and that they change over time and place. Delving further into this topic can contribute to the literature at the intersection of migration and food practices, which looks at the ways migrant communities hang on to their traditional food practices but also adapt to new ways of connecting to food in new environments (García et al. eds. 2017). Research on

this topic would also contribute to the literature on care and foodwork because it could add to discussions the meanings women attribute to foodwork by focusing on the case of migrant mothers (see Bowen et al. 2023 for another example). By looking at the effect of migration on mothers' ideas about foodwork, future research can show how carework simultaneously shapes and is shaped by a woman's life.

Another important finding, which I would like to explore further, is how women's experiences in the kitchen connect them to their sense of self. For example, I found that women learned to cook to survive on their own in the United States and that this connected them to a narrative about their own resilience. I would like to expand on this idea by examining how women's foodwork might provide them narratives that shape their self-value. This is an important research question because it allows food researchers to see how foodwork can be deeply ingrained in women's identities. Research using a woman of color perspective has expanded the literature on foodwork by showing that women perceive it not only as a burden but also a form of empowerment (Abarca 2006, Avakian 2005, Beoku-Betts 1995, Counihan 2009, Williams-Forson 2001). However, existing research has not looked deeply into the ways a woman of color's relationship with foodwork can contribute to her sense of self. Research on this topic could expand on our understanding on the connection between foodwork, gender, and identity as expressed by Cairns and Johnston (2015) and look deeper into the ways women of color define their self-value through their relationship with cooking.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Descriptive Characteristics of the Migrant Farmworker Women in this Study

Pseudonym	Age	Years in the USA	Number of children	Ages of children	Type of farmwork she has done
Mercedes Noriega	59	26	5	died in childbirth, 29, 25, 18, 9	planting, harvesting, and packing a variety of vegetables
Aurora Castro	52	26	3	20, 23	harvesting sweet potato, green peppers, and blueberries
Alma Juárez Solís	42	24	3	21, 19, 15	chicken processing plant, chicken farm
Jacinta Juárez	45	24	3	25, 21, 19	manages a chicken farm
Estela Sánchez	52	19	3	30, 10, 13	turkey processing plant, harvesting tobacco, sweet potato, soy, blueberry, pig farm, turkey farm, cow farm
Laura Dominguéz	34	12	3	13, 12, 9	cucumber processing plant
Isabel Castellón	50	6	2	19, 12	meat packing plant
María José Regil	40	18	3	14, 12, 9	planting and harvesting sweet potato and tobacco, packing cucumber and watermelon
Cindy Herralde	48	23	3	19, 9, 7	harvesting sweet potato, radish, cucumber, blueberry, meat processing plant
Florencia Jiménez	55	22	2	18, 25	harvesting sweet potato and tobacco, chicken processing plant
Esperanza Ortega	39	14	2	4, 6	planting sweet potato, pruning and harvesting tobacco, harvesting zucchini, grapes, and other vegetables
Arminda López Nájera	56	15	3	30, 33, 19	planting and harvesting sweet potato and tobacco, a plant nursery
Lorena Oropeza	40	18	2	18, newborn	harvesting sweet potato, green peppers, and blueberries
Vanessa Oropeza	18	18	NA	NA	harvesting blueberry

Appendix B

Initial Interview Guide

Semi-structured Interview: English Version

1. Let's talk about your job. What do you call the type of work you do? How did you start doing farm work?
 - Probe: decision, reasons, training, other jobs, getting the job
 - Probe: get a bit of the history - how long, locations
 - Probe: Why do you do it?
2. Tell me what it's like to be a farmworker. Let's start with a specific day: yesterday/the last time you worked.
 - Probes: When do you start/when do you end? What kinds of activities do you do, and why? Do you take breaks? When do you get to eat (and what do you usually eat)? Was that a typical day? Why/why not?
 - Probes: How do you relate to other people at work?
 - Probe: What is it like to be a woman farmworker? Do you think your experiences are different from men's? Is there anything that specifically affects you because you are a woman?
3. How did you learn to do what you do at work? Tell me something you had to learn (to be good at this job).
 - Probe: experiences, skills, instincts
 - Probe: Are some people better than others? (Why/how?)
 - Probe: Are there other things you had to learn?

- Probe: When did you learn? Did anyone teach you? Did you know how to do this work before starting your job?
 - Probe: Did you do this kind of work in Mexico? How was it different/the same?
4. Tell me about one time/tell me a story...
- When you felt proud or fulfilled/like you were doing work that was good/important or like you made an impact/a difference/when you felt like “everything’s worth it.”
 - When you faced a specific challenge/ when things went wrong/when things were going badly.
 - For each: What happened? How did you respond? Does this happen often or was this sort of unusual?
 - Follow-up: What makes it easier or harder to do your job?
 - Probes: What aspects do you enjoy? What aspects do you dislike?
5. How does your work as a farmworker matter? Who does it matter to?
- Probe in terms of how the participant feels in terms of size of impact, who they are affecting, what type of impact they have.
 - Probe: Is your work important to other people? To US society?
 - Probe: How do other people show they value/not value your work?
 - Probe: Do you think of yourself as an immigrant?
6. Tell me about your daily food activities. What do you have for breakfast, lunch, dinner during a day when you go to work/ a day when you do not go to work? On the weekend?
- Probe: What do you do to prepare for this, for example, grocery list, buying food, cooking, etc.

- Probe: Where do you buy food? Why? How do you get there?
 - Probe: Do you grow your own food?
 - Probe: What do you cook? Why? How did you learn to cook? When? Do you enjoy it?
 - Probe: Is this hard/easy labor? Shopping, cooking, cleaning? Do you do it yourself, do you get help?
 - Probe: What does your family/children like to eat? What are their favorite dishes? What do they dislike?
 - Do you share food with your community, cook together with family/community members?
7. Tell me about your daily food activities in Mexico. What did you have for breakfast, lunch, dinner during a weekday? During the weekend?
- Probe: How were you involved?
 - Probe: How did you prepare for this? for example, grocery list, buying food, cooking, etc.
 - Probe: Where did you buy/get food? What types of food did you eat?
 - Probe: Did your family grow their own food? Did you participate? What did you do? Was this hard/easy labor?
 - Did you share food with your community, cook together with family/community members?
8. Tell me about the food you eat/the dishes you cook in the US and what you ate/cooked in Mexico.

- Probe: A dish you remember eating/cooking. Who made it? How? A dish you prepare in the US, how do you make it?
 - Probe: What things do you need to cook in the US/ in Mexico? (ie. implements?)
 - Probe: What do you like/dislike to eat in the US/ in Mexico?
 - Probe: What do you like/dislike about food in US/in Mexico?
9. As someone who works with food, when you think about all of the things that affect how we eat, buy, sell, and distribute food in the United States, what is working and what needs to change?
- How do we go about solving these problems? What changes are most important – at home, in your workplace, in your community, in our country, and beyond?
10. What does it mean to be a woman for you? What are the differences/similarities of being a woman in Mexico and being a woman in the US?
- Follow-up: What about being a mother? What are the differences/similarities between Mexico and the US?

Appendix C

Guía Inicial de Entrevista

Entrevista semi-estructurada: Versión en Español

1. Platíqueme de su trabajo. ¿Cómo le dice usted al tipo de trabajo que hace? ¿En qué trabaja usted?
 - ¿Cómo decidió hacer este tipo de trabajo?
 - ¿Por qué hace este trabajo?
 - ¿Desde cuándo hace este trabajo, en qué lugares ha trabajado, etc.?
2. Cuénteme cómo es hacer su trabajo. Cuénteme de un día en específico, por ejemplo, ayer, o la última vez que trabajó.
 - ¿A qué hora empieza, termina? ¿Qué tipos de actividades hace y por qué? ¿Toma descansos? ¿Qué come y a qué horas durante su día de trabajo?
 - ¿Cómo se relaciona con otras personas en el trabajo?
 - ¿Cómo es ser una mujer que hace su trabajo? ¿Cree que su experiencia es diferente a la de los hombres? ¿Por qué? ¿Hay alguna cosa que le afecta específicamente a usted por que es mujer?
3. ¿Cómo aprendió a hacer lo que hace en el trabajo? Cuénteme sobre algo que tuvo que aprender para hacer bien su trabajo.
 - Experiencias, habilidades, aprendizaje
 - ¿Hay algunas personas que son mejores que otras? ¿Por qué o por que no?
 - ¿Qué otras cosas tuvo que aprender?
 - ¿Cuándo aprendió a hacer este tipo de trabajo? ¿Alguien le enseñó? ¿Ya sabía hacer este tipo de trabajo antes de empezar?

4. Cuénteme sobre algún momento en el que usted...
 - Se sintió orgullosa del trabajo que hace/que hace un trabajo importante⁷ que su trabajo tiene impacto/que vale la pena
 - Se enfrento a alguna dificultad/algo salió mal
 - Para cada una: ¿Qué pasó? ¿Cómo respondió? ¿Fue algo inusual o recurrente?
 - Seguimiento: ¿Qué hace que su trabajo sea más fácil o difícil?
 - ¿Qué cosas disfruta de su trabajo? ¿Qué cosas le desagradan de su trabajo?
 - ¿Hacía este tipo de trabajo en México? ¿Qué cosas eran igual y qué cosas eran diferentes?
5. ¿Por qué es importante su trabajo? ¿Para quién es importante?
 - Hacer preguntas de seguimiento sobre qué piensa la participante sobre el tamaño del impacto, a quien impacta, qué tipo de impacto
 - ¿Su trabajo es importante para otras personas? ¿Para la sociedad en Estados Unidos?
 - ¿Cómo muestran otras personas que valoran/no valoran su trabajo?
 - ¿Usted se piensa a sí misma como inmigrante?
6. Cuénteme sobre sus actividades alimentarias cotidianas. ¿Qué come en el desayuno, la comida, la cena en un día de trabajo/en un día que no trabaja? ¿En el fin de semana?
 - ¿Qué hace para preparar la comida? Por ejemplo, lista de mandado, comprar comida, cocinar
 - ¿Dónde compra la comida? ¿Por qué? ¿Cómo llega ahí?
 - ¿Usted cultiva su propia comida?
 - ¿Qué tipo de cosas cocina? ¿Cómo aprendió a cocinar? ¿Cuándo? ¿Lo disfruta?

- ¿Es fácil/difícil hacer esta labor, cocinar, ir de compras, limpiar? ¿Lo hace usted o le ayudan?
 - ¿Qué le gusta comer a su familia/sus hijas/os? ¿Cuáles son sus platillos favoritos? ¿Qué cosas no les gustan?
 - ¿Comparte comida con su comunidad, cocina junto con miembros de su familia o de la comunidad?
7. Cuénteme sobre sus actividades alimentarias cotidianas en México. ¿Qué comía en el desayuno, la comida, la cena entre semana? ¿En el fin de semana?
- ¿Qué tipo de cosas hacía usted?
 - ¿Cómo se preparaba para hacer esto? Por ejemplo, lista del mandado, comprar comida, cocinar
 - ¿Dónde compraba/conseguía comida? ¿Qué cosas comía?
 - ¿Su familia cultivaba su propia comida? ¿Usted participaba? ¿Qué hacía? ¿Era un trabajo fácil o difícil?
 - ¿Compartía comida con su comunidad, cocina junto con miembros de su familia o de la comunidad?
8. Cuénteme sobre la comida que come/cocina en EUA y lo que comía/cocinaba en México.
- Se acuerda de un platillo que comía, cocinaba en México. ¿Quién lo preparaba, cómo lo preparaba? Un platillo en EUA, ¿cómo lo prepara?
 - ¿Qué cosas necesita para cocinar en México, en EUA?
 - ¿Qué le gusta/no le gusta comer en EUA, en México?
 - ¿Qué le gusta/no le gusta de la comida en EUA, en México?

9. Como alguien que trabaja con alimentos, cuando piensa en la manera en que compramos, vendemos y distribuimos comida en Estados Unidos/en México, ¿Qué funciona y qué tiene que cambiar?

- ¿Cómo podemos resolver estos problemas? ¿Qué cambios son necesarios en su hogar, su trabajo, su comunidad, el país?

10. Para usted ¿qué significa ser mujer? ¿Qué diferencias/similitudes hay entre ser mujer en México y ser mujer en EUA?

- Y ser madre ¿Qué significa para usted? ¿Qué diferencias hay entre México y EUA?

Appendix D

Follow-up Interview Guide

Based on photovoice: English version

Phase 1: Changes in food practices during COVID-19

1. In general, how have things changed for your family since the COVID-19 pandemic began? (Get participant to give approximate dates/timelines, i.e., “Schools closed in the middle of March and that’s when everything changed”).
 - Employment? (How has your job/work changed? What about other people in your family?).
 - How have your finances changed (e.g., amount of money, spending/saving)?
 - What about things at home (caregiving/domestic work)? (Probes: amount of work/types of work/division of labor, having kids home all day, kids’ schooling).
 - What is the biggest challenge you have faced?
2. TRANSITION TO DISCUSSION OF FOOD, IF IT HASN’T COME UP YET. What about with food/cooking/eating—what has changed? Let’s take a look at your pictures.
 - Discussion should be guided by the photos, but interview should probe around the following topics (as part of the photo discussion, or separately, if it doesn’t come up).
 - How have your eating habits/your children’s food habits changed? (Are there foods you’re appreciating more/eating more or less of?)
 - Meal traditions: Do you have any regular meal traditions – i.e., eating (or not eating) certain things on certain days? (possible examples: big or shared lunches/dinners on Sundays, pizza or junk food on Fridays, no meat on certain

days, special breakfasts on Saturdays or Sundays). How have these changed? Has your family developed any new traditions around food?

- What has shopping been like?
 - Probes: Locations, frequency, budget, what you're buying, method (i.e., using delivery options).
- Foodwork: Who does the work of cooking/cleaning/shopping for food? How has this changed (amount of work, type of work, nature of work)? How do you decide how to divide this up? How do you feel about this arrangement?
- Cooking: How has this changed (the way you cook, how often you cook, how you feel about it)? Are you spending more or less time cooking? Are you cooking differently (making new recipes, not making certain things, incorporating new ingredients)? Do you enjoy cooking these days? Why/why not?
 - How often do you make meals “from scratch”? (What does this mean? How has it changed?).
 - What kinds of meals do you eat the rest of the time? [e.g. frozen prepared foods, take-out, eating out]
 - How long does it usually take you to make dinner? (Can differentiate between different types of meals, if applicable).
- Shopping: What has grocery shopping been like during COVID-19? How has it changed?
 - Probes: Locations, frequency, budget, what you're buying, method (i.e., using delivery or pickup options).

- Are certain foods easier/harder to get or more expensive? (Ask about shortages of things like meat, but also about whether it is harder to get certain ingredients -- e.g., ingredients from their home country).
 - Are there other ways you're getting food (e.g., school meal programs, food pantries, familial networks, community, gardens, SNAP, WIC)?
 - Eating out: How did your eating out/take-out habits change during COVID-19? How often do you eat out? Why do you eat out? How often do you eat fast food? PROBE: What do you like about fast food? Don't like?
 - Eating together: Do you eat more or less as a family (with others in your household) than you used to? How has this changed? What about eating with others (going to other people's houses, having people over, meeting in outdoor/public spaces, going out to eat)? What does this look like?
3. How have other people (family/friends/neighbors/faith community members) helped you during the pandemic? Have you supported other people (family/friends/community members) during COVID-19?
- Can you tell me about a recent time when this happened?
 - Probe for specifics: sharing food or money, helping with childcare, caring for people when they are sick, etc.
4. What do you think about your county's/state response to COVID-19? What is working? What is not working? What else would you like to see? What about the people in your community?

5. What resources (e.g., governmental programs or resources, family networks, nonprofit organizations) have helped you in this crisis? What resources have helped you the most? Why/how? What other resources would help?

Phase 2: Food practices and womanhood and motherhood

1. What does it mean to be a woman for you?
2. Tell me about your everyday activities at home during a week (this week for example)? What do they include? What about on the weekend? Are you able to do everything you want to do?
 - Probe: childcare, cooking, shopping for food, cleaning, other activities (ie. with community/family, church)
 - Probe: Do these home activities interact with work activities? (We've discussed work activities before but ask about how they fit together). What do you do to make it work? Can you think of a specific time when this happened?
3. Tell me about when you first started working. What did you do? How old were you? Where were you? Why did you do it?
 - Probe: Was it work at home or outside the home?
 - Probe: How do you define work?
 - Probe: Was this a positive/negative/both experience?
 - Probe: Did you learn anything you consider valuable?
4. Tell me about how you became a mother. When did it happen? Where were you?
 - Probe: Did you have negative/positive/both feelings about it?
 - Probe: Did you have support from family/community?
 - Follow up: What is it like being a mother? Did you always want to be a mother?

- Follow up: Were you working throughout your pregnancy? Where? Doing what? What was this experience like? Did you have any positive/negative experiences working while pregnant?
5. Tell me what it is like to be a mother who works. Can you think of a specific moment at work where being a mother was a problem/ was an advantage? Can you think of a specific moment at home where working was a problem/ was an advantage?
- Probe: Was this a choice? Is it a positive/negative/both experience? Is it easy/hard? Tell me something you like/ something you dislike.
 - Probe: What changes would make it easier/better/more enjoyable for you at home and at work?
 - Probe: Have you ever asked for/talked to someone about having these changes, at home, at work?
 - Probe: Does being a mother who works affect the way you eat/the way your family eats? The way you cook, shop for food, share food with family and/or community?
6. Tell me about the foodwork (planning, shopping for food, cooking, cleaning, gardening) you do.
- Probe: Do you enjoy doing this work? Do you get any help doing this work (i.e. from family members, older children)? Is it easy/hard work?
 - Probe: Is there anything you would change? Have you talked to your family/children/husband/partner about making these changes?
 - Note: When cooking/gardening comes up, probe based on first interview, get more details if necessary. Ask about learning process/acquired knowledge.

7. Tell me about what happens during mealtime. Can you think of a specific moment when you ate together with your children/your family/your partner during the last week? What about during the weekend?
 - Probe: Can you describe what takes place? What role do different people have?
What do you talk about?
 - Probe: Is this a common occurrence? If not, what happens the other times?
8. Tell me about your experience being a person that comes from another country. Can you think of a specific moment when you had a positive/negative experience?
 - Probe: Can you tell me about a specific time when this affected/influenced your work in the fields?
 - Probe: Can you tell me about a specific time when this affected/influenced your work at home?
 - Probe: What does this experience make you feel like/think about as a mother/ as a woman?
9. Think about the hard things of being a woman/ a mother that you told me about. What would you like to change? What can you do to change them?
10. What would you like other people to know about the work you do in the fields and the work you do at home?

Appendix E

Guía de Segunda Entrevista

Basada en Fotovoz: Versión en Español

1. En general, ¿Cómo han cambiado las cosas para su familia desde que comenzó la pandemia de COVID-19? (En la conversación, intente que la participante de fechas/ tiempos aproximados, i.e., “Las escuelas cerraron a mitad de marzo y en ese momento fue cuando todo cambió”).
 - ¿Empleo? (¿Cómo ha cambiado su trabajo/empleo? ¿El de otras personas de su familia?).
 - ¿Cómo han cambiado sus finanzas? (e.g., cantidad de dinero, gastos/ahorros)?
 - ¿Cómo han sido las cosas en casa?(cuidados y tareas domésticas)? (Indagar: Cantidad de trabajo/tipos de trabajo, tener a los hijos/as en casa todo el día, educación de los hijos/as)
 - ¿Cuál es el conflicto más grande que ha enfrentado su familia?
2. TRANSICIÓN A LA DISCUSIÓN SOBRE LA ALIMENTACIÓN, SI NO HA SURGIDO. ¿Qué hay de la alimentación/cocinar/comer--que ha cambiado? Veámos sus fotos.
 - La discusión se debe basar en las fotos, pero la entrevista debe indagar sobre los siguientes temas (como parte de la discusión sobre las fotos, o por separado, si no surge en la conversación)
 - ¿Cómo han cambiado sus hábitos alimentarios/los de sus hijos? (¿Hay alimentos que aprecia más/que está comiendo más o que está comiendo menos?)

- Tradiciones de la comida: ¿Tiene tradiciones de la comida recurrentes --i.e. Comer o no comer ciertas cosas en ciertos días? (ejemplos: comida o almuerzos grandes/compartidos los domingos, pizza o comida chatarra los viernes, no carne en ciertos días, desayuno especial los sábados o domingos) ¿Cómo han cambiado estas tradiciones? ¿Hay alguna nueva tradición que su familia haya inventado/desarrollado?
- ¿Cómo han sido las compras?
 - Exploración: lugares, frecuencia, presupuesto, qué está comprando, método (ie. usando opciones de entrega a domicilio)
- Trabajo alimentario: ¿Quién hace el trabajo de cocinar/limpiar/ comprar la comida? ¿Cómo ha cambiado esto? (carga de trabajo, tipo de trabajo) ¿Cómo deciden cómo se divide el trabajo? ¿Cómo se siente con este arreglo?
- Compras: ¿Cómo han sido las compras de comida durante COVID-19? ¿Cómo han cambiado?
 - Probes: Lugares, frecuencia, presupuesto, qué cosas compra, formas de comprar (servicios de pedido y de entrega)
 - ¿Hay cosas más caras y cosas más difíciles de obtener (preguntar sobre escasez en cosas como carne, pero también sobre ciertos ingredientes, ingredientes de su país)
 - ¿Hay algunas otras formas en que está obteniendo comida? (programas escolares, depensas de comida, conexiones familiares, comunidad, huertos, SANAP, WIC).

- Cocinar: ¿Cómo ha cambiado esto (la manera en que cocina, qué tan frecuente cocina, cómo se siente al respecto) ¿Le toma más tiempo o menos tiempo cocinar? ¿Está cocinando de manera diferente (haciendo nuevas recetas, no cocinar ciertas cosas, usando nuevos ingredientes)? ¿Disfruta cocinar últimamente? ¿Por qué sí, o por qué no?
 - ¿Qué tan frecuentemente hace comidas desde cero? (qué significa esto? ¿Cómo ha cambiado esto?)
 - ¿Qué tipos de comidas come cuando no hace comidas desde cero? [e.g. comidas congeladas preparadas, servicio a domicilio, comer fuera]
 - ¿Cuánto tiempo le toma hacer la comida usualmente? (puede diferenciar entre tipos diferentes de comida, si aplica)
 - Comer fuera: ¿Cómo han cambiado sus hábitos de comer fuera/pedir comida para llevar durante COVID 19? ¿Con qué frecuencia come fuera? ¿Por qué come fuera? ¿Con qué frecuencia come comida rápida? Exploración: ¿Qué le gusta de la comida rápida? ¿Qué no le gusta?
 - Comer juntas/os: ¿Come en familia (con otras personas en su casa) con más o menos frecuencia que antes? ¿cómo ha cambiado esto? ¿Qué hay de comer con otras personas (ir de visita, tener visitas, juntarse en lugares públicos/ afuera, salir a comer)? ¿Cómo es esto?
 - ¿Hay otras formas en las que consigue comida? (e.g. programas escolares de alimentos, despensas de comida, familiares, comunidad, huertas)
3. ¿Cómo le han ayudado otras personas durante la pandemia (familia, amigos, vecinos, miembros de la iglesia)? ¿Cómo ha sido eso? ¿Cómo ha ayudado usted?

- Me puede hablar de alguna situación reciente
 - Indagar: comparten comida/dinero, ayuda con cuidado de niños, cuidados durante enfermedad.
4. ¿Qué hay de la respuesta de su ciudad/pueblo/municipalidad a COVID 19? ¿Qué está funcionando? ¿Qué no está funcionando? ¿Qué le gustaría ver? ¿Y la respuesta de la gente en su comunidad?
 5. ¿Qué recursos (e.g. programas o recursos gubernamentales, redes familiares, organizaciones no gubernamentales) le han ayudado en esta crisis? ¿Qué recursos le han ayudado más? ¿Por qué? ¿Cómo? ¿Qué otros recursos le ayudarían?

Fase 2: Practicas alimentarias, ser mujer, ser madre

1. Qué significa ser mujer para usted?
2. Cuénteme sobre sus actividades diarias en casa durante la semana (en esta semana por ejemplo)? En el fin de semana? Puede hacer todo lo que quiere hacer?
 - Indagar: cuidado de hijas/es, compras de comida, limpieza, otras cosas (comunidad, familia, iglesia)
 - Indagar: estas actividades interfieren/interactúan con otras actividades (hemos hablado de actividades del trabajo antes, cómo encajan). Cómo hace para poder hacer todo? Me puede contar de algo en específico?
3. Cuénteme sobre cuándo empezó a trabajar por primera vez. Qué hacía? Cuántos años tenía? Dónde estaba? Por qué empezó a trabajar?
 - Indagar: era trabajo en casa o fuera de casa?
 - Indagar: Cómo define usted trabajo?
 - Indagar: Fue una experiencia positiva/negativa/ ambas?

- Indagar: Cómo es su experiencia diferente a la de un hombre?
 - Indagar: Aprendió algo que considere valioso?
4. Cuénteme sobre cuando se hizo mamá por primera vez. Cuando fue? Dónde estaba?
- Cuántos años tenía?
- Indagar: Tenía sentimientos negativo/positivos al respecto?
 - Indagar: Tuvo apoyo/ayuda de su familia/comunidad?
 - Follow-up: Que es lo más importante de ser madre? Cómo es esa experiencia para usted? Siempre quiso ser madre?
 - Indagar AGENCY/RESISTANCE: Tiene valor/ importancia ser madre? Cómo expresa ese valor?
 - Follow-up: Trabajaba mientras estaba embarazada? Si sí, Dónde? Qué hacía? Cómo fue esa experiencia? Tuvo alguna experiencia positiva/negativa cuando trabajó estando embarazada?
5. Cuénteme sobre el trabajo que hace en casa relacionado a la comida (planear, comprar, cocinar, limpiar, huerta).
- Indagar: Lo considera como un trabajo? Le gusta hacer este trabajo? Alguien le ayuda haciendo este trabajo (familia, hijos)? Es fácil difícil?
 - Indagar: Hay algo que le gustaría cambiar? Ha hablado con familia/hijos/ pareja/esposo sobre estos cambios? Por que sí o no?
 - Note: Cuando salga el tema de cocinar/sembrar en casa, indaga basado en primer entrevista, más detalle si es necesario. Preguntar sobre el proceso de aprendizaje/adquisición de conocimiento.

6. Cuénteme sobre la hora de comer/desayunar/cenar. Puede pensar en un momento específico en que comió con sus hijos/esposo/pareja durante la última semana? En el fin de semana?
7. Indagar: Puede describir lo que sucede? Qué hace cada persona/Qué papel juega? De qué hablan? Puede pensar un momento específico? (ayer?)
 - Indagar: Esto sucede a menudo? Si no, cómo es las otras veces?
8. Cuénteme sobre su experiencia siendo una persona que viene de otro país. Puede pensar en un momento específico en que tuvo una experiencia positiva negativa?
 - Indagar: Me puede contar sobre alguna momento en que esto afecto su trabajo?
 - Indagar: Afecto su trabajo en casa?
 - Indagar: Cómo la hace sentir esta experiencia como madre, como mujer?
9. De las cosas difíciles de ser mujer/madre que me contó, qué le gustaría cambiar? Qué puede hacer para cambiarlas?
10. Qué le gustaría que otras personas supieran sobre el trabajo que hace en el campo y en su casa?

Appendix F

Photovoice Photograph Examples



Photo of ECO 1 cooking mole



Photo of ECO 2 harvesting rosemary



Photo of ECO 3 baking sweet potato bread



Photo of ECO 6 making handmade tortillas