

NARRATIVES OF OLDER MALE LATINO MIGRANT WORKERS
FROM A TEXAS BORDER TOWN

by

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DEDICATION

Esto fue por mis padres Mario y Alma, muchas gracias por todo.

¡Sí se pudo!

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ABSTRACT

The term *migrant worker* became popular in the early 1940s during the implementation of the Bracero Program and includes field workers, as well as workers in construction and factories. Currently, there is no research available on older male Latino migrant workers from Presidio, their families, work, and life stories. Therefore, the dissertation focuses on the motivations, challenges, resiliency, and legacy of older Latino migrant workers. To bring awareness to their stories, the research questions for the present study are: (1) What can we learn from the journeys of older male Latino migrant workers from a small border town in Texas? (2) What are their experiences, struggles, and achievements as migrant workers? (3) How does leaving for work impact their families and hometown?

Data for the study came from pláticas (conversations), documents, artifacts, field notes, and the researcher's journal. Deductive analysis as well as narrative analysis procedures were helpful to examine the data collected. The study framework, which consisted of anatomy of story and critical pedagogy, served as a guide to collect/analyze data and report study findings. Thus, study findings are presented in two chapters. Chapter III describes the history of Presidio through photographs, murals from the city, and newspaper clippings. This chapter also introduces the study participants, the navel of the story. Chapter IV presents family, work, and life stories of the five migrant workers who participated in the study. In this chapter, study findings are organized following the

structure of anatomy of story by discussing the heart, the mind, and the legs of the study. Finally, Chapter V concludes the dissertation and summarizes study highlights, study contributions, recommendations for Presidio City Officials, future research, tensions and challenges, and final thoughts.

I. INTRODUCTION AND RELEVANT LITERATURE

Migrant workers form 17.4% of all workers in the U.S. labor force; they are traveling employed individuals working away from their place of residence (Costa, 2020). The term *migrant worker* became popular during the Braceros Program (1942) and got public attention from activist Cesar Chavez. Chapter II discussed the Bracero Program and how it started and impacted the United States' economy. In this journey of writing this dissertation, I was quick to recognize the present insufficiency of stories and information known about this population. The stories have stayed among the people and are not often found in academia.

I was born in Chihuahua, Mexico, but my parents moved to Presidio, a Texas border town in the United States, when I was ten years old. I consider Presidio my hometown. Most young adults in Presidio are expected to graduate high school, find a job in the oil field, and start a family. Since Presidio does not have many jobs, my father often had to travel to a different state to find a job. My father's name is Mario Baeza Quiñonez; he was gone for long periods of time when I was growing up. There were times when I only saw him for a few weeks a year, and my mother became my only parent. In Presidio, having the father work away from home was common, and most of us were used to it. I am unable to recall a time when I witnessed my father having a full-time job in Presidio. Migrant workers from this town must travel an average of four hours to find employment.

My father was born in Cuchillo Parado, Chihuahua, which means *standing knife*. Cuchillo Parado is the village where the Mexican Revolution started, along with Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata. My great-grandfather, Felipe Quiñonez Lucero, fought in the

Mexican Revolution (see Figure 1); my father tells me that great-grand father Felipe did not like to speak about his time in the war.



Figure 1. Great-Grandfather Felipe with Mexican Revolution Soldiers

The picture above shows Pancho Villa sitting on a power chair and on the right is Emiliano Zapata, a Guerilla Leader in the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920). My great-grand father Felipe appears in the picture as well; he is the man identified in the white oval shape. My grandmother has this picture hanging in the dining room. Unfortunately, great-grand father Felipe did not like to tell stories about the war and most of this knowledge is gone with him.

My father lived all of his childhood in Cuchillo Parado where he grew up with no electricity or any basic comfort. His received his first toy truck when he was around eight years old. Hearing his stories made me realize how fortunate I was growing up. Attending school past elementary was a luxury in Cuchillo Parado. When my father finished his

elementary years, he helped hand-pick the cotton fields my grandfather would plant. Grocery store food, medicine, and education were considered a luxury. My father is one of ten children but due to the scarce resources and lack of living essentials, seven of his siblings passed away before the age of three. My grandmother still remembers all her children who passed away and she gets emotional. My grandmother decided she had to move away from Cuchillo Parado to a place where at least there was a clinic. The two youngest children were born in Ojinaga, Chihuahua, and they were fortunate to have medical attention when they got ill.

Ever since I could remember, my father has been vocal, regretting not being able to continue with his studies past elementary school. This is why, at an early age, I knew that I wanted to continue with my education past my high school diploma. You could say my father's lack of education opportunities motivated me to continue studying, and he is my inspiration to take on this dissertation journey. Family is a significant force for us. Since my grandparents lived in Ojinaga most of their lives, my father decided to have his permanent home in Presidio to be near them. Ojinaga is so small that there are not job opportunities for all. For this reason, my father became a migrant worker years before he got married. During his early 20s, he decided to cross the U.S. border and began to work as an undocumented immigrant. My father mentioned many times he wished he had a book of all the different places where he worked and the many different jobs he had. My mother has always admired my father's work ethic. He is not afraid of any kind of job, and he has worked in construction, bussing tables, factories, fields, and all types of physical labor jobs.

My father married my mother when he was 24 years old; two years later, he

became a father. When my brother was born, he realized that he needed to provide for three people, himself, my mother, and their first child. This life transition made him realize that more than ever he needed to continue to work as a migrant worker. Living in Ojinaga was challenging to find a good-paying job that could financially support his growing family. Our family got a Green Card when I was 6 years old, and we moved to the States when I was 10. Then, at the age of 12, I became a U.S. citizen. Up to now, my father continues to work as a migrant worker and my mother lives in Presidio. My siblings and I consider Presidio our hometown and we go there to have family reunions and holiday celebrations each year.

Looking back, I remember that I often asked my mother if my father had abandoned us since he was always away from home. Her eyes would get watery, but I never understood why. She would proceed to tell me that "...your dad loves us so much that he has to be away working to be able to buy food and toys." In October 1995, for the first time, my father was able to secure a job that was going to last for several months. He was tired of being away from home, so he told my mother that he wanted us to go for him. The plan was for us to go with him from October to the Christmas break. This trip was the longest road trip of my life, and we drove from Ojinaga all the way to Minnesota. During this trip, I saw snow for the first time. I recall my mother waking me up one morning, and she was so excited for me to see the snow. A coat of white snow was covering every inch of the ground. It was a great feeling, back home in the desert; snow is unheard of. During that time, Disney Pixar's first computer animation movie was scheduled to release in theaters in November 1995. I became a big fan of the movie and begged my dad to buy me a McDonald's Happy Meal, which he did! I got a Buzz

Lightyear toy that time (see Figure 2). That toy was my favorite toy for a long time. I would bring him everywhere and I would play with it every day. He was my beloved new toy. Buzz Lightyear had a special bond because my father took me to McDonald's to go get it. More than a toy it was a memory of time shared with my dad.

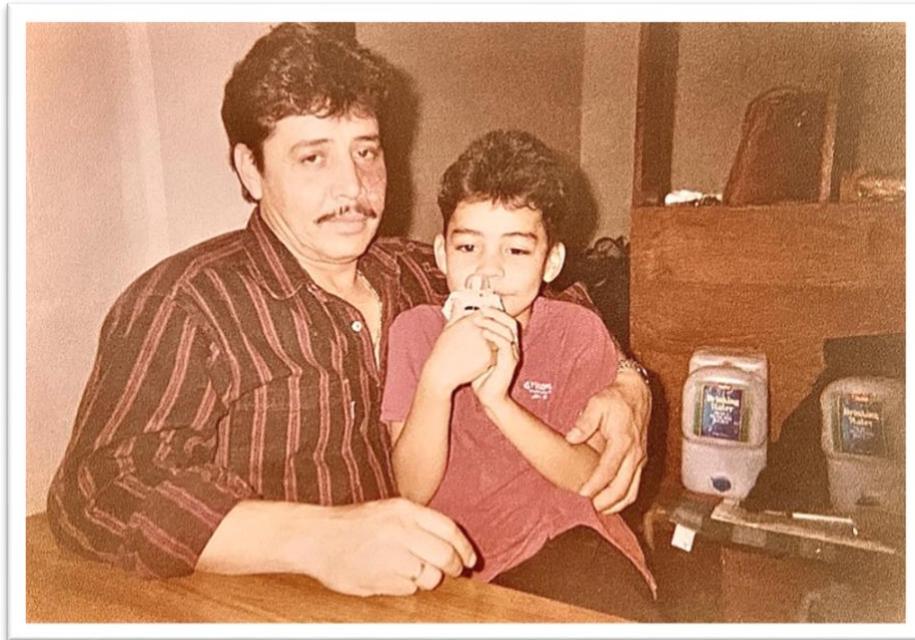


Figure 2. *My Father, Buzz Lightyear, and Me*

At an early age, I began to look up to my father a lot. I used to ask him to comb my hair like his because I wanted to look like him. The photograph above shows how accurate the hairdo was. In my eyes, if my father was doing it then it was cool. I felt calm and happy when I was sitting close to him. In the photograph, I look happy because I was wearing a red shirt with black pants to match the black shirt with the red stripes he was wearing. I would ask my mother to help me pick some clothes that would match my father's clothes. The drive back from Minnesota was a long trip and I experienced firsthand the tedious trip that my father had to do whenever he had to travel far to go to work. I was beginning to understand what his life was like traveling back and forth.

Statement of the Problem

Presidio is a small border town on the Texas's Southwest side, with an estimated population of 4,019 residents (Census, 2019). According to the Census (2019), only 47% of Presidio's population (five-year-old children and older) are fluent in English. This percentage includes elementary to high school students who are often the only bilingual member of the family and who serve as language translators (e.g., reading the mail, interpret at the doctor's appointment, and speak in English at border crossing). A third of the adult population in Presidio speaks English, and most adults have up to middle school level of education. In addition, finding a job in town is a struggle. According to Data USA (2021), the town's median income is \$24,593. Finding a good-paying job in Presidio might be also a struggle when only 358 out of 4,019 residents have a bachelor's degree (Census, 2019).

Latino migrant workers are constantly moving and may not feel at "home" each time they arrive at a new place to work. Social and psychological distance are factors affecting language acquisition and acculturation processes of ethnic minorities such as immigrants and migrant workers (Schumann, 1978). Social factors impacting the integration of immigrants to the host community include social dominance, integration pattern, enclosure, cohesiveness, size, cultural congruence, attitude, intended length of residence (Schumann, 1978). Often, migrant workers are the minority group, and their life goals, language, and customs can collide with those of the host community.

Similarly, psychological factors include language shock, culture shock, motivation, and ego permeability (Schumann, 1978). These are just some challenges identified in the literature; however, a study documenting the stories of migrant workers can shed light

into their unique circumstances. Another issue that needs to be taken into consideration is the language barrier. Often, these men are not fluent in English.

For Latino migrant workers with limited schooling and low English proficiency, having to communicate with others in the workplace can be a struggle. The communication constraint may be present when conversing with new coworkers and managers at the workplace. Aside from encountering communication issues, workers with low English proficiency may face some safety risks. “It is increasingly recognized that literacy and language problems affect health and safety training for limited English proficiency workers” (Hong, 2001, p. 25). Recently, there has been a 33% to 50% increase in workers whose native language is not English (Teboul & Yoon, 2019). Several settings with workers with low English proficiency skills are aware of the need for some type of training instruction in Spanish (Floud, 2010). Due to budget limitations, the workplaces cannot provide such training for these workers. The literature suggests that their struggles are major between communicating with others and adapting to everyday life situations (Zavodny, 2000). The daily struggles may be as simple as ordering food from a restaurant where no employee is bilingual or merely asking for assistance to find an item at the grocery store.

Presidio’s Latino migrant worker stories are not known but migrant working in Presidio has been happening for many decades. Due to the lack of job opportunities, men are forced to travel elsewhere to find employment. Having little formal education, they are limited on the job positions they can have. Typically, the job positions they end up working have physical labor involved. The temporary jobs these migrant workers accept are many miles away from Presidio. The mothers raise the children as if they were single

mothers. Children are raised seeing their fathers only a few times a year. It is essential to acknowledge the challenges that the families of migrant workers face while not being together.

Currently, there is no research available on older male Latino migrant workers from Presidio, their families, work, and life stories; this is the focus of the present study. In addition, the dissertation focuses on the motivations, challenges, resiliency, and legacy of migrant workers. Researchers have failed to address these topics, making it challenging to identify connections to existent literature. It is fundamental to bring awareness to the stories of Latino migrant workers. Little is known about the experiences and life journeys of this population.

Research Questions

Appendix A provides a list of relevant terms and definitions useful in understanding concepts related to the present dissertation. The research questions guiding the dissertation include:

1. What can we learn from the journeys of older male Latino migrant workers from a small border town in Texas?
2. What are their experiences, struggles, and achievements as migrant workers?
3. How does leaving for work impact their families and hometown?

The main purpose of the study is to amplify the voices and gain an understanding of the journeys and narratives of older male Latino migrant workers. People often do not take the necessary time to reflect on past experiences, but it is definitely important to tell these stories, analyze them, share them with others, and learn from them. It is time for these stories to be known beyond the migrant workers and their families. The many roadblocks

the migrant worker population has to overcome needs to be revealed to the public as well as their achievements. It is time to give them credit for their sacrifices and contributions.

Theoretical Framework

This dissertation builds on anatomy of story (Guajardo & Guajardo, 2010) and critical pedagogy (Freire, 1972) as the framework to support the study design (see Figure 3). The dandelion metaphor provides a visual representation of the study framework and came to the surface when I went for a walk to overcome writer's block. My house is located by many open green spaces and there was a bed of wildflowers. Brainstorming for an idea that could convey traveling and motion, a whirlwind formed in front of me and traveled to the greenspace. As my eyes followed the whirlwind, I noticed how the air was impacting the dandelions, the pappus head was losing the seeds while spinning in the air; the seeds traveled and landed in many different places.

Thus, the lifecycle of the dandelion plant became the metaphor to visually convey the study framework. To some, do not regard dandelions as beautiful and view them as bad weeds. For example, dandelion flowers are not even considered to form part of a bouquet of flowers for a gift. Other people know about their medicinal properties and view them as a beneficial plant. Dandelions are very much like migrant workers, they are beneficial but undervalued, and both travel for survival. The dandelion plant travels to different locations to ensure the survival of its species with the help of the air (Ogawa et al., n.d.). Similarly, migrant workers also leave their homes and travel to different places for work to support themselves and their families. The parts of the dandelion's plant represent the different components of anatomy of story. Guajardo and Guajardo's (2010, pp. 94-95) anatomy of story is broken into five components: The navel (people involved),

the heart (the passion, motivation, and values), the mind (the analytical), the hands (the creative force), the legs (the legacy left behind and strategies on moving forward).

Likewise, Freire (1972) describes critical pedagogy as a lens to examine power structures and patterns of inequality within the status quo. Freire's work allowed to examine the dissertation participants' stories and identify the challenges they have faced at the workplace as well as the strategies they implemented to overcome them.

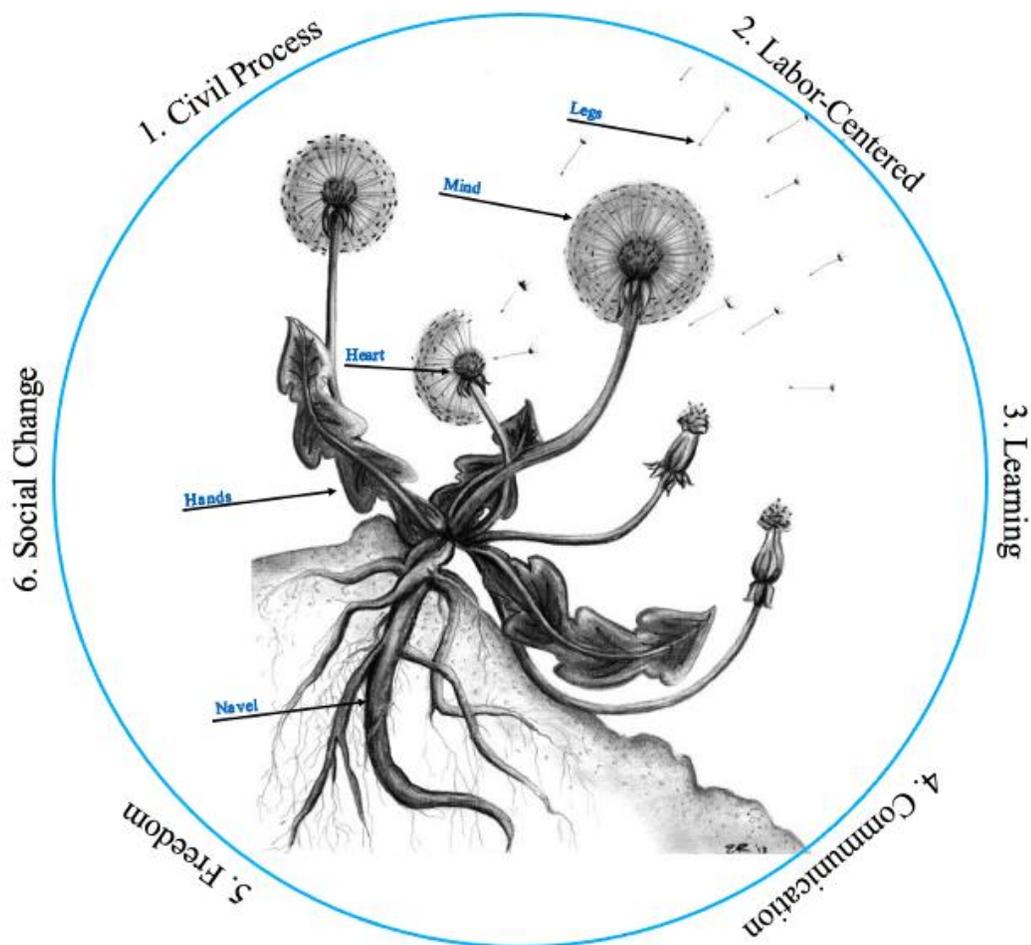
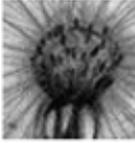


Figure 3. *Study Framework Representation*

Critical pedagogy principles were helpful to examine the stories shared by the study participants (Freire, 1972). These include: 1. Civil Process: looking at the experiences and previous challenges as migrant workers. 2. Labor-Centered: their work ethic at the workplace. 3. Learning: utilizing the different strategies they used to understand a new workplace task. 4. Communication: identifying the tone of the stories along with the chosen language. 5. Freedom: evaluating if they felt trapped in the migrant workers' lives. 6. Social Change: looking at the big picture and identifying how their past experiences have affected them and how they support this population.

In addition, making connections to the life cycle of a seasonal plant is an appropriate metaphor to illustrate the journeys and life stories of the study participants. Table 1 displays the components of anatomy of story, the metaphor including each part of the plant, and the reflection questions useful to interrogate the data. Alike Guajardo and Guajardo, "many others use story to celebrate, commemorate, romanticize, or struggle with issues of the past, present, and future" (Guajardo & Guajardo, 2010, p. 93). For the dissertation, incorporating storytelling was crucial to gather, analyze, and share the study participants' lived experiences. Likewise, "storytelling is the way we place ourselves in the middle of the text, as we engage as reflective practitioners" (Guajardo, Guajardo, & del Carmen Casaperalta, 2008, p. 4). To this end, storytelling serves as both a tool for collecting data and the means to analyzing data.

Table 1. *Anatomy of Story: The Dandelion Metaphor*

Anatomy of Story Component	Dandelion Plant Metaphor	Reflection Questions for the Study
The Navel		Who are the migrant workers? What are their stories?
The Heart		What are the values to continue to influence future generations?
The Mind		What are the challenges and changes that need to be done?
The Hands		What learning takes place though the participants' stories?
The Legs		What is the legacy left behind?

Researcher Roles

As Merriam (2009) reminds us, in qualitative research, the researcher is an important instrument and filter of information. As such, I played three different roles during the research process. They are (1) researcher as a participant, (2) researcher as a learner, and (3) researcher as a professional.

Researcher as a Participant

Since I am a child of a migrant worker, this study connects on a personal level. Chapman (2014) states that being a researcher-participant in a study helps to “gain firsthand knowledge to corroborate or refute interview responses” (p. 3). Having firsthand experience allowed me to provide context to the stories and a clear understanding of the stories told by the migrant workers. Since there is potential for bias, Chapman (2014) suggests some useful practices for addressing them: (1) examine your motives, (2) collect relevant data, (3) be careful with your methods, (4) anticipate challenges (pp. 6-7). These practices supported the study design and my performance as a researcher. One of the ways I was participating during the data collection process is through a researcher journal that included writings about my life growing up as a child of a migrant worker. I have several stories that I wrote about. These stories are experiences that I consider core memories. It was a variation of different situations, cheerful and gloomy stories, and some of them are woven into this study.

Researcher as a Learner and Professional

I made discoveries that helped me view the migrant worker experience from a different perspective (e.g., details about work shifts, on the job learning, their attitude about life, and their appreciation for family accomplishments, just to mention a few). According to Merriam (2009), there has been an increase in narrative research that accesses human activities and experiences. I realized the migrant workers’ stories needed to be told using their own words to communicate their original messages. In addition, through conducting the literature review the history of Latinos immigrants living in the United States. But I would like to continue learning about the Latino migrant worker

community, adopt this topic as my research agenda, and begin to publish focusing on this specific population. My ultimate goal is to continue to learn about this community and identify ways to contribute knowledge and bring awareness to this population, often neglected in the literature.

Relevant Literature

The Latino population keeps growing in the United States, and it is expected to keep growing in the following years (Ard et al., 2021). The Mexican American powerhouse is the community that is expected to continue to grow the most. Cesar Chavez was the first person to amplify their voice and bring to the surface the injustices that migrant workers were experiencing. This section on the literature review discusses research on Latinos and Latino migrant workers; it also examines a historical timeline illustrating events relevant to migrant workers. The discussion topics include (1) Latinos in the United States, (2) Mexican Americans, (3) relevant historical timeline, (4) Latino migrant workers, (5) migrant worker families, (6) challenges faced as migrant workers, (7) Latino migrant workers today, and (8) gap in the literature.

Latinos in the United States

The term Latino refers to people of Latin American descent. Latinos are now the biggest minority group in the United States. By the year 2050, one in three Americans will be Latino (Bordas, 2013). In the year 2021, Latinos were 18% (60.6 million) of the population in the United States (Miller et al., 2021). Latinos are not a monolithic group; depending on their country of origin, there are variations in their cultural identity and cultural heritage. The biggest Spanish-speaking group living in the United States are Mexicans, followed by Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Dominicans. Other Latino groups are

people from Ecuador, Colombia, and El Salvador, with a lower number of immigrant population (Tirado & Sequeira, 2018). Needless to say, Latino immigrants have contributed to the U.S. economy for many decades.

Among their contributions, *New American Economy* (2017) stated that Latinos living in the United States have contributed more than \$139 billion dollars in federal taxes and have paid around \$76 billion dollars in state and local taxes (p. 9). Latinos pay around \$215 billion dollars in taxes. These numbers are significant, and this proves that Latinos are contributing to the American economy. “Latinos will continue to have a profound impact on society, culture, relationships, consumerism, the workforce, the economy, and business” (Rodriguez, 2008, p. 4). Latinos continue to prove that they are a community that keeps helping society and helping the U.S. economy. Bordas (2013) shared that Latino’s purchase power in the United States surpasses \$1 trillion annually.

Mexican Americans

The United States’ work demand has been increasing, and employers are primarily looking to fill out positions with physical labor as the cities keep growing. These tend to be low-wage positions and popular jobs among Latinos with low education levels or those lacking professional credentials to obtain higher paying jobs (Adversario, 2021; Johnson-Webb, 2003). The geographical proximity has been a critical factor in the high number of people of Mexican descent to come to the United States to live and work. In addition, historically, the U.S. federal government has invited Mexican laborers to come to work through programs such as the Bracero Program in the 1940s. Mexico is neighbor with large states such as California, Arizona, and Texas; thus, the number of Mexican Americans keeps growing each year.

“The decision to migrate following months and, in some cases, years of frustration over continued poverty. Wages in Mexico ranged from \$4 to \$6 USD daily, an amount described as adequate for food but one that left no surplus for clothing, repairs, or purchase of tools for farming” (Cleaveland, 2010, p. 76). Also, some physical labor companies hire undocumented immigrants. In some cases, if the undocumented Latino migrant workers get hurt, they cannot see a doctor because they cannot afford it, nor do they have the luxury to take days off. “Latino migrant day laborers must continue to work to be able to pay for their rent and other expenses” (Negi & Iwamoto, 2014, p. 369). It is essential to pay attention to these situations.

The opportunity to work without having a social security number or a legal permit to work in the United States attracts immigrants to accept these jobs. They come to the United States for temporary jobs, to earn money, and return to their home country (Costa, 2019). “Latino migrant day laborers have also been qualitatively found to indicate that their primary purpose of being in the United States is to work and send remittances to support the family in the country of origin” (Negi & Iwamoto, 2014, p. 369). Traveling to the United States while being undocumented is a risk. A significant number of people have died attempting to cross the border (Lasky et al., 2011); however, this has not been a deterrent for certain immigrants searching for job opportunities and the *American Dream*.

The main factors people from Mexico cross the border while being undocumented include seeking jobs, trying to get a better life, and running away from violence (El Paso Times, 2021). However, in their journey searching for the American Dream, they also find violence. In August 2021, Mexican immigration reported 46 dead bodies of individuals trying to cross the border. El Paso, Texas Border Patrol, has documented over

190K apprehensions in 2021 (El Paso Times, 2021). Although these numbers are alarming, there is no sign of the numbers to decreasing anytime soon. It should be expected that the numbers will continue to grow or stay the same in the following years.

It is no surprise that Mexican Americans with low education and living in urban areas fall under the poverty line (Healey et al., 2019). The Mexican Americans that live in the United States as permanent residents tend to have the lowest education levels of the community of color (Healey et al., 2019). The number of Mexican Americans that are able to obtain a professional title is minimal due to inequities in the U.S. educational system and social disparities. These conditions tie them to their current living situation and not having the ability to break the cycle of poverty. With limited options on how to earn a living, due to low education, Mexican Americans are more likely to work in jobs doing physical labor or work in jobs that do not require a lot of skills (Menzel & Gutierrez, 2010). Thus, their education levels are tied to their financial growth.

Relevant Historical Timeline

The focus of this dissertation is the narratives of Latino migrant workers focusing on Mexican migrant workers, and it makes sense to discuss historical movements and programs connected to this population. Figure 4 displays a historical timeline of the Mexican workers as they were invited to work in the United States. When the United States joined World War II and sent U.S. men to war, there was a shortage of workers to work the fields (Cohen, 2011). To address this issue, in 1942, Mexico and the United States came to an agreement to create the Bracero Program.

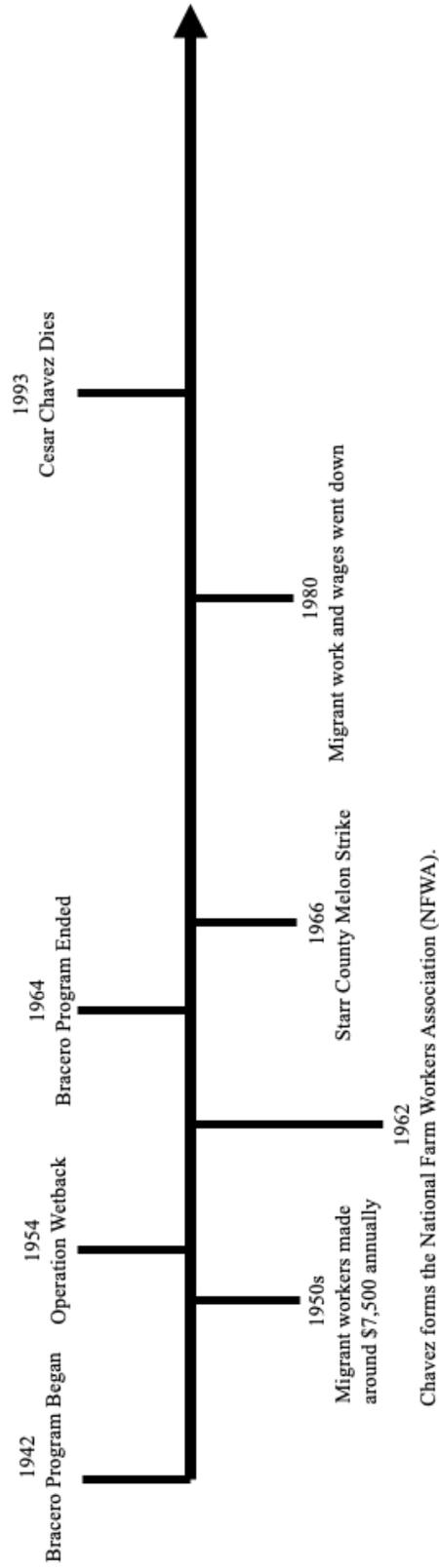


Figure 4. *Historical Timeline*

The term *bracero* comes from the Spanish word *brazo* meaning “arm” and symbolizing the physical labor required to participate in the program (Garcia, 2021). Mexican men were expected to do physical labor, work long hours, and leave once the job was finished (Schraff, 2008). Thus, the Bracero Program allowed Mexican men to travel to the United States as seasonal employees to do physical labor such as work the fields and build roads. Only men were invited, their women and children had to stay back in Mexico. This is one example of U.S. tactics to divide families and deter permanent migration (Hodges, 2019). Even in present times, the story has repeated with the Trump Administration separating families by placing children in detention camps.

It is estimated that more than 4.5 million Mexican men were granted a bracero contract. Around the 1950s, the Bracero Program helped the United States to increase agricultural production but still kept a low pay for the men working in the program. It is estimated that bracero workers only made around \$7,500 annually, working long hours and with very few days off (Schraff, 2008). The work conditions were harsh, and Cesar Chavez became the first major advocate to raise his voice and bring the bracero workers’ experience to light.

Despite the benefits that the labor of Mexican men brought to the U.S. economy, in 1954 Operation Wetback emerged as an immigration law enforcement initiative created by Joseph Swing, the Director of the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service. Local farmers and business groups were concerned with the effects of undocumented Mexican immigrants living in their communities. Thus, operation wetback aimed to deport Mexicans regardless of their immigration status and gave power to U.S. Border Patrol to arrest and deport millions of Mexican workers.

Advocating for Mexican workers, Cesar Chavez sought higher pay and better work conditions for them. In 1962 Chavez created the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA). The NFWA became nationally known, and because it spoke out and exposed the injustices that the bracero workers were facing. The Bracero Program was created to be a seasonal program, and unfortunately, it ended in 1964. Garcia (2021) mentions that some scholars argue that the Bracero Program influenced migration to the United States after 1964, when the Bracero Program ended.

In addition, Chavez participated in the Melon Strike of 1966; he was one of the speakers during the strike. For about three months 15,000 men, women, and children from Starr County began a strike. The workers from Starr County were experiencing harsh working conditions and low pay, 40-85 cents an hour. The strike demanded that the wages be raised to \$1.25. Thus, melon workers closed all the packaging facilities during the harvest season (Rivera, n.d). The strike was for better wages, better work conditions, and changed workers' rights in Texas.

Since the bracero workers were from many different Mexican states, Chavez (2007) argued that "Mexican northern border cities such as Tijuana, Mexicali, and Ciudad Juarez began to experience population growth as many of the returning bracero migrants no longer returned to the places of origin but rather settled in these strategic sites to be in close proximity to U.S. jobs" (p. 4). People that stayed in Mexico saw the benefits in financial opportunities were higher than the opportunities in their home country. In the early 1980s, the pay for fieldworkers still did not have a significant increase in their income. Cesar Chavez died on April 23, 1993; his legacy and social movements have been recognized nationwide.

Latino Migrant Workers

Although it has been more than fifty years since the Bracero Program officially ended, the United States' economy depends on labor migration (Cohen, 2011). Migrant workers, predominantly Latino migrant workers, tend to take positions that no other demographic accepts (Garcia, 2021). For the most part, the positions tend to have a type of physical labor involved. Also, those positions require traveling and relocation to a different place and leaving the family behind. Without going into detail on undocumented Latino workers, some companies that hire undocumented workers have the liberty to pay them below minimum wages. Since it is very likely that those undocumented workers will not speak out against their low pay for fear of being deported back to their home country.

It is estimated that 60% of the earnings of Latino migrant workers stay in the United States, and the 40% is saved or is sent back to their families to their country of origin (Garcia, 2011). Duquette-Rury (2020) mentions that in 2016 Mexican migrant workers sent around 27 billion dollars back to their home country during that year. Since they are spending more than half of their paychecks here in the United States, their money is staying in the country and aiding the economy in the United States and the economy in Mexico. Viveros-Guzmán and Gertler (2015) presented two ideas: (1) migrant workers who work in the fields help food prices stay steady (2) if there were no field migrant workers, the prices of vegetables and fruits could be expected to increase. The migrant worker term is not only limited to field workers, but it can also be associated with working in different areas, from construction and factories (Costa, 2020). The type of employment opportunities requires the workers to travel several miles away from their

hometown, and this results in seeing the family only a few times a year (Torres et al., 2018). Since Presidio is an isolated town, the migrant workers from there have to travel at least four hours to arrive at a city.

Migrant Worker Families

Migrant work presents challenges to the worker and impacts the whole family, especially if they are left behind in their home country (Taylor & Ruiz, 2017). Since the father cannot remain at home for a long time and unfortunately, he becomes an absent parent figure. The wife left behind with their children becomes a *married single mother* (Latvalla, 2011). The married single mother is the only parent in the household, and she is the one that learns the routines of each child. At the same time, maintaining the household alone when the husband is not present. Also, married single mothers must learn how to be independent and run the financials in their households. These married single mothers need to know to adapt how to switch from being a married single mother, to a married mother when the husband returns home from work. Typically, when the father returns home, the parenthood responsibilities are split between the two, making the decisions together. Once the husband leaves home to work, the parental responsibilities return to the mother, once again becoming a married single mother.

Families separate due to economic reasons; “decisions to migrate among parents of young children are most difficult yet are often undertaken by the desire to improve life prospects for those children” (McGuire & Martin, 2007, p. 178). Parents leave their homes to be able to provide for their children and create new life opportunities for them. Viera (2020) explains that being a child of a migrant worker may have a negative impact on school performance. The drastic change of having a parent absent for long periods of

time can affect the children, resulting in them being less focused on schoolwork. One way to help these children is to explain that working away from home will help the whole family financially (Viera, 2020). This is challenging because young children will not be able to understand that this sacrifice brings financial stability. More than likely, the children will understand this explanation as they grow older and become the consciousness of the home's financial needs.

In order to provide financially the migrant workers must be away from home for long periods, this result on not seeing the children grow up, missing milestones, and missing family functions (Vega, 2021). Some of the milestones that the Latino migrant workers could miss are a child's first steps, learning how to play loteria, attending their *fiesta de cumpleaños*, and breaking the piñata, just to name a few milestones. McGuire and Martin (2007) argued that there could be cases where migrant workers lose some of the family traditions due to being away from home for too long. It is essential to be aware that each family may have their own traditions and beliefs; in some families' religion can be a significant factor.

Depending on their religion, family members may have the rule to attend church every Sunday. Other families may have other traditions, such as getting together for dinner during the weekend, learning how to cook a family recipe, or learning how to play an instrument. Missing quality time with the family can negatively affect the children because they grow up without their fathers (Vega, 2021). The migrant workers miss out on their children's childhood and family time by being away from home. The Latino community is known to have traditional values of providing for the family, and Latino workers are willing to leave the family behind if they can support them financially

(Menzel & Gutierrez, 2010). These men sacrifice quality time, traditions, and milestones, to financially provide for their families.

Challenges Faced as Migrant Workers

Smith-Morris et al. (2013) mentioned that as a collective culture the Mexican community is driven by quality time and being close to the family. If a long period of time passes by without having family contact, the person can begin to feel isolated and homesick. Latino migrant workers are probably not able to see their families on a weekly basis, due to lack of funds, being too far away from home, not having transportation, or not having time off. This situation does not only affect just the migrant workers, but it affects their families that stayed behind.

Latino migrant workers with limited English skills do not let their little English proficiency stop them from performing in their jobs. They tend to rely on bilingual coworkers to explain a task that needs to be completed (Gerdes & Wilberschied, 2003). Often, when there is doubt or an explanation is required, workers with limited English seek help and guidance from their more fluent coworkers in English. They have to seek available resources within their reach to ensure adequate job performance. Viveros-Guzmán and Gertler (2015) argued that migrant workers from Mexico face language barriers if they do not have basic English proficiency. Viveros-Guzmán and Gertler (2015) mentioned that these workers use gestures and hand movements to try to explain a task to one another. There are cases when there is an interpreter during a work orientation or job training session, and that is helpful but not always the case.

The lack of training in Spanish for those individuals puts their safety in jeopardy (Hong, 2001). Some workplaces are aware of the need for proper Spanish training for

Latino workers with limited English skills. Unfortunately, the budget and cost of having a bilingual facilitator are not included in most of the workplaces' funds (Duval-Couetil & Mikulecky, 2011). Due to the budget, workplaces run the risk of suffering an accident or hurting others when operating a machine that requires training to be fully understood. In the United States, Latino workers form 10.7% of the workforce. Unfortunately, Latino workers account for 13.8% of workplace fatalities (Floud, 2010). Construction employment is a high-hazard and low pay position, and typically Latino workers work in those types of jobs (Menzel & Gutierrez, 2010). Ensuring the safety of their employees should be a priority at all times, especially when the employees need to fully understand a task, especially if there need to use machinery to complete a task. Most workplaces only offer training in English. The lack of workplace training other than the English language is definitely a concern. Spears et al. (2012) argued that migrant workers rely on one another to understand a task entirely, and they tend to ask each other rather than ask the supervisors if the supervisor only speaks English.

The Latino migrant population can also face some racial profiling. In 2010 Arizona's Senate approved a bill allowing police members to stop and search for proof of legal status based on "suspecting" someone may be undocumented (Quesada et al., 2011). This action opened the possibility of being racially profiled in the state of Arizona. The citizenship status is a significant factor if a migrant worker needs health care too. "Immigrants are often exposed to several disparities and inequalities, such as infringements on social justice, limited opportunities to obtain an education, find employment, participate in community and recreational programming, and live healthy and productive lives" (Suarez-Balcaza et al., 2020, p. 2774). Barajas (2021) stated that if

an undocumented migrant worker needs medical assistance, it is more likely that the undocumented migrant worker will refrain from seeking medical attention for fear of being deported.

Latino Migrant Workers Today

Migrant workers are also known to be much more likely than national workers to end up in what are often known as the “3D” (dirty, dangerous, and demeaning) jobs, such as construction, road work, mines, and mining (Ethical Trade, 2021, para 5). It is important to bring attention and give credit to this population. Within the found literature discussing this population, it can be determined that this population does not receive the recognition they deserve. Flores et al. (2011) argued that “research revealed that employers bank on Latino immigrants’ willingness to change locations and shifts, to work overtime, and to report to new jobs in a moments’ notice” (p. 522). A significant portion of Presidio’s migrant workers tend to work in the construction portion. The Presidio referred to this as working in *la insolación*, referring to working using fiberglass isolation. The Presidians use that term to refer to most migrant work.

When I still lived in Mexico, I learned that my father possessed a plethora of different skills. He could work in the fields, construction, carpentry, plumbing, painting, and more. I do remember seeing my dad bring his toolbox in. He would refer to his toolbox as “El que nos da de comer,” meaning *the one that feeds us all*. His toolbox, to this day, has a place in the house. Its location is behind the sofa in the living room. No one is allowed to put any item in that section because it belongs to the toolbox. I would say that, on average, the Presidio migrant workers travel at least five hours to work. Due to the distance, these men do not see their families that often. The locations these migrant

workers have visited during their migrant worker journeys, is extensive. If Presidio was a bigger city, I wonder if more attention and credit would have been given to Latino migrant workers.

Gap in Literature

According to Ethical Trade (2021), migrant workers are the nation's workers; they need to receive the recognition they deserve and be acknowledged for all of their work. Even though the Latino migrant workers are referred to as the nation's workers, significant pieces of their stories are unknown. "Future studies should assess long-distance contact with family, access to local culture, community, resources, and services utilization" (Organista et al., 2007, p. 96). There is a significant need to bring attention to this population and learn about their struggles and contributions.

In the literature search to gather information for this dissertation, some of the keywords used were *Latinos, migrant workers, Latino workforce, Hispanic labor, workplace Latinos, farmworkers, Bracero Program, Cesar Chavez, migrant working, and migrant families*. It was a challenge to find academic journal articles with information that could be used for the present literature review. Publications are scattered, and a lot of the information regarding the Latino migrant workers was found in non-academic journals as well as online resources. Having difficulty finding literature on this specific topic is another reason on pursuing this study. With this in mind, this dissertation hopes to fill in the literature gap related to the journeys of migrant workers.

Being away from home is not the only challenge migrant workers face; thus, it is imperative to document their experiences as migrant workers to look at different aspects such as the ones listed in the study framework. The pláticas conducted in this study

helped to identify the factors that move forward or hinder the success of this population. Study findings shed light on how Presidio's migrant workers learned to adapt to the migrant worker lifestyle. This study gives the opportunity for Presidio migrant workers to provide their personal perspectives on what is the entire experience in the migrant worker vocation.

Dissertation Overview

This is a qualitative dissertation focusing on older male Latino migrant workers from Presidio, their families, work, and life stories. In addition, this study describes the motivations, challenges, resiliency, and legacy of migrant workers. This dissertation is organized in five chapters. Chapter I presents the context of the study and gives direction to the problem statement, the research questions, and the review of the literature. Chapter II describes the methods and study design utilizing anatomy of story and critical pedagogy as foundational for data collection and analysis. Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) inform the data analysis process. Chapter III describes the history of Presidio through photographs, murals from the city, and newspaper clippings. This chapter also introduces the study participants, the navel of the story. Chapter IV presents the family, work, and life stories of the five migrant workers who participated in the study. In this chapter, study findings are organized following anatomy of story by discussing the heart, the mind, and the legs of the study. Finally, Chapter V concludes the dissertation and summarizes study highlights, study contributions, recommendations for Presidio City Officials, future research, tensions and challenges, and final thoughts.

II. METHODS AND STUDY DESIGN

The main goal of this study was to provide a space for the participating Latino migrant workers to share their family, work, and life experiences. “Narratives are fundamental to our lives: we dream, plan, complain, endorse, entertain, teach, learn, and reminisce through telling stories” (Schiffrin et al., 2010, p. 1). The study participants shared their journeys as migrant workers, their workplace experience, and the perceived impact that being migrant workers had on their families. Utilizing storytelling allows the readers to imagine the whole narrative (Schiffrin et al., 2019). Latino migrant workers from Presidio, Texas, are the focal population for the present dissertation. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a detail account of the data collection and analysis processes for the dissertation study. Therefore, the present chapter is organized by presenting the following topics: (1) narrative research, (2) Presidio, (3) participant selection, (4) data collection sources, (5) data analysis, (6) ethical considerations, and (7) building trustworthiness.

Narrative Research

According to Hendry (2009), a narrative is an old form of research that comes from the term “to account,” and its primary purpose is to provide “meaning to know” (p. 72). Having a conversation without understanding the meaning misses the point, and nothing can actually be learned from it. It is essential to take into consideration how narrative data can be construed. “Narrative research offers no overall rules about suitable materials or modes of investigation, or the best level at which to study stories” (Squire et al., 2013, p. 1). There is no right or wrong way to interpret narrative research, and this method was adapted accordingly to the research that was conducted. Riessman (2008)

describes narrative as a method that “carries many meanings and is used in a variety of ways by different disciplines, often synonymously with “story” (p. 19). The goal of this study was to capture the stories of Latino migrant workers. These stories captured the rawness, vulnerability, and success of their personal experiences.

Fierros and Delgado Bernal (2016) describe pláticas as family stories, advises, scolding, and communication through conversations (p. 98). In connection to having meaningful conversations, they explain plática methodology as following five principles (Fierros & Delgado Bernal, 2016, pp. 109-114). These are: (1) it draws upon Chicana/Latina feminist theory, (2) it is guided by a relational principle that honors participants as co-constructors of knowledge, (3) it makes connections between everyday lived experiences and the research inquiry, (4) it provides a potential space for healing, and (5) it relies on relations of reciprocity and vulnerability and researcher reflexivity.

Fierros and Delgado Bernal (2016) argue that “pláticas are a more appropriate methodology with Latin@ populations because of their focus on the cultural formalities of the interview process” (p. 101). Since this study focused on the Latino community, pláticas were used to engage in conversation and gather data. Likewise, Reyes et al. (2021, p. 288), referred to pláticas as lessons learned and strategies for survival. With this in mind, it can be argued that pláticas serves as knowledge passed from generation to generation.

Engaging in pláticas often results in storytelling which is an effective way of learning from the participants. Wheatley (2002) describes storytelling as a conversation between participants and researchers that helps them create knowledge together. Stories have beginning, middle, and end. Thus, Worth (2008, p. 43) argues that narrative is

typically the description of an experience or the order of these events. A narrative is not only a brief description of a memory, but it also holds the details that construct the story being told. It was essential that participants felt comfortable to engage in a meaningful conversation for storytelling to happen.

Researchers use storytelling to learn about the participants and have a conversation to reconstruct events and life stories. These types of conversations can create a bond between the person telling the story and the one listening to the story. “Stories draw us into an experience at more than at a cognitive level; they engage our spirit, our imagination, our heart, and this engagement is complex and holistic” (Clark & Rossiter, 2008, p. 63). Storytelling gave the participants the opportunity to relive their experiences as they recalled details about the specific story. The participants had the opportunity to reflect on their life choices and identify motivations and barriers that helped and challenged them to keep on going. Also, participation in this study allowed the Latino migrant workers to look back and reflect on how their workplace experiences and employment choices impacted their families and their adopted hometown, Presidio.

Study Framework

For this study, during the data collection process, the expectation was that the Latino migrant workers shared personal stories regarding their workplace experiences, struggles, and achievements and could reflect on how leaving for work impacted their families and their place of residence, Presidio. Thus, the study framework is built on anatomy of story and critical pedagogy to structure the data collection, analysis, and writing processes for this dissertation study findings. The conversations held with study participants encouraged them to critically think about their life choices, experiences, and

life goals.

For anatomy of story, Guajardo and Guajardo (2010) suggest looking at the story as having five components and utilizes the human anatomy to name them: navel, heart, mind, hands, and legs. The navel of the story refers to the study participants, the central characters in the story. Getting to know each participant as an individual and learning about their background is crucial to setting the foundations and context for the story. The heart relates to the passion and the values that move the study participants. Values include emotional, morals, and relational ways. The central inquiry here connects to the values that the participants would like to highlight in the stories. The mind focuses on analytical thinking, along with the state of story development, which fuels ideas, imagination, and action. This component of the story examines the story to point out inequities and issues as well as recommendations for change. The hands help mold the rhythm of the story. Word choice, nonverbal elements, and tone of the delivery of the story are taken into consideration. This component of the story also examines the learning that takes place. The legs focuses on ideas to move people into action, generates new questions for inquiry, and highlight the legacy left behind. A story that has legs can keep on going.

Similarly, critical pedagogy (Freire, 1972) helped develop questions for conversations with study participants and for analysis of the data generated for the study. Freire suggests examining learning from a critical point of view to develop a greater capacity for constructing and developing curiosity about learning. From this point of view, participants in research are encouraged to think critically and reflect on their lived experiences, actions, decisions, and the context informing these circumstances. The

questions asked in the conversations and other data collected related to past experiences, motives for life choices, and reflections to inform the main research questions for the dissertation study. The conversational style utilized to gather the participants' stories was helpful to examine the six principles of critical pedagogy as suggested by Freire (1972): Civil process, labor-centered, learning, communication, freedom, social change. *Civil Process* focused on the challenges faced by the older male Latino migrant workers. *Labor-Centered* and *Learning* principles examined workplace training, on the job learning, informal learning, and expectations for succeeding in each new job they took on each time they had to change jobs and location for employments. *Communication* looked at the migrant workers' disposition to share their stories as well as how they transmitted these messages. *Freedom* looked into life choices, the historical, social, economic, and cultural conditions surrounding the stories and life experiences of the migrant workers. *Social Change* examined the impact that migrant workers had on their place of residence, their families, and future generations.

Presidio as Study Setting

In 2019 Presidio's estimated population was around 3,894 residents (Texas Escapes, 2019). It is a rural small town located on the Rio Grande, Farm Road 170, and State Highway 67 (see Figure 5). Presidio opened its first post office in 1868 and the first public school in 1887 (Handbook of Texas, 2015). Presidio has one elementary, one middle school, and one high school. One of the good things about living in such a small place is the sense of community, and there is no such thing as a stranger if you are a local. You may not know everyone personally, but it is easy to know their name and if they are related to anyone else in Presidio.



Figure 5. Presidio Entrance

When Presidians try to explain the town’s location, they simply refer to it as “close to the Big Bend area” or simply explain that Presidio is one hour away from Marfa, Texas. Marfa is one of the small towns that many people know because of its artistic and influential environment. When I moved to Austin, I started to use the Marfa explanation. Marfa is a small town that is popular, and celebrities are known to visit that place, such as Beyoncé and Matthew McConaughey. Since Presidio is so small, Presidio’s economy is based on working at the United States Customs and Border Protection or working at Presidio’s Independent School District. There are a few local businesses, such as family-owned restaurants and some retail stores (PresidioTX.com, 2020). The only franchise restaurant Presidio has is a Subway Restaurant that opened back in 2005 and where I got my first paying job to buy my first computer.

Living in such a small town, you can say it is a blessing and a curse. People from

Presidio look out for each other, even if they are not related. I do remember one time that my vehicle's battery died. I was stuck on the side of the road, and someone quickly stopped to help me. I have seen such types of acts of kindness many times in Presidio. Aside from people helping each other living in such a small place, it is very safe. You can feel a sense of community as soon as you drive in. Speaking on how the sense of community is present, if you forget to lock your front door, the chances for someone to break in are slim to none. I do not know of any person their house was broken into.

Since there are not many places to go to have fun or spend time, Presidio's community members are big fans of the Presidio High School's sport. We are known to have the loudest cheering crowd on all home games. Presidio is known for its baseball team. They have been district champions many times. The homecoming festivities are important to the community, there is a theme each day of the week, and everyone shows their team spirit. On the day before the game, there is a parade, and the whole community attends. The parade goes through the main street and ends at an empty land close to the high school where a bonfire is burned after the parade.

There used to be an annual festival called Presidio's BiNational Arts Festival. It was called BiNational because it had artists from both sides of the border. It used to be a weekend event. Artists from all the areas would be invited to display their art. The people that participated were not only limited to art painters. All types of artists were invited, such as musicians, photographers, *folklorico* dancers, sculpting artists, poets, and everyone who wanted to display their art. It was a big event, and people from nearby towns would travel to this event. Unfortunately, 2015 was the last time this event took place.

Another festival that takes place in Presidio every October is the Santa Teresa Catholic Church Festival. Religion is at the heart of the community in Presidio, and most of the population is catholic. Each October, there is a two-day festival with music and food that raises money for the catholic church. This festival is more of a local event, and usually, members of the catholic church attend the festival. Presidio High School's band marches in the parade, the mariachi band plays, and the folklorico dancers do a performance for the attendees. This is a festival that has taken place for many years. The food is delicious, and they serve a lot of different Mexican dishes along with Mexican snacks.

Participant Selection

Five male Latino migrant workers, who are fathers, were recruited via referral and snowball sampling techniques (Patton, 2002) to participate in the study. These referrals were from the Presidio's migrant workers community. Study participants met the following criteria:

- Be at 60 years old or older.
- Have at least 15 years of experience working as a migrant worker.
- Be the father of at least two children.
- Be current residents of Presidio.

The snowball sampling method is used to recruit participants who are difficult to reach due to their characteristics (Sedgwick, 2013, p. 1). Migrant workers are a close community, and it helped to have referrals made by key informants like my father who is part of this community. In addition, this dissertation required the participants to have at least 15 years of experience working as a migrant worker, so that their participation is

relevant to the study. See Appendix B for a timeline implementation of the research study.

Data Collection Sources

In qualitative research it is important to collect different data sources to inform the participants’ experiences (Merriam, 2009). Therefore, data for the study came from pláticas, documents and artifacts, field notes, and researcher journal (see Table 2).

Table 2. *Data Collection Sources*

	Pláticas	Documents & Artifacts	Field Notes	Researcher Journal
What?	In-person pláticas with the 5 older male Latino Migrant workers. Pláticas, one 90-minute full pláticas and a 30-minute follow-up plática.	Items, pictures, and documents with a strong family bond.	Field notes served as recap observations and interactions for the analysis process.	Gathered my thoughts and stayed on track with the research focus.
Data Type	This research brought attention to their stories, where others can learn from them.	Documents and artifacts enhances conversation and triggered memories.	Evaluated deeper meaning beyond the told stories.	Personal experiences and past memories.
Purpose	Pláticas allowed an organic conversation that enabled the participants to express themselves freely.	Created a discussion on memories topics that mattered.	Collected descriptive and filed notes to go beyond observation and examining ideas.	Served as a diary reflect and be able to weave my own story.
Capture Method	In-person, pláticas were conducted, and the pláticas were recorded, and later transcribed.	Pictures of the selected documents and artifact were taken to add depth of their stories	Microsoft Word and Google Docs were used to record field notes.	A personal physical journal was used to record notes.

Pláticas

The main goal of narrative interviews is to capture the participant experiences and create meaning from them (Blödt et al., 2018). This research brought attention to their stories so that others can learn from them. The plan was to have fluid pláticas related to a series of conversation topics and to loop back to the guiding questions when the conversations went off-topic. The goal was to have at least two in-person pláticas to gather data and listen to the participants’ stories and experiences (see Appendix C). These pláticas took place in Spanish (see Appendix D) to allow the participants to express

themselves freely and with more confidence while telling their stories. The length of the conversations depended on the participant availability as each plática took up to 90 minutes to two hours. In addition, a follow-up 30-minute plática was conducted to provide the opportunity for the participants to add to their stories.

All the pláticas were conducted in Spanish since the target population is mostly fluent in Spanish. Spanish is my first language, so I felt confident in conducting these pláticas without a translator. The topics to be discussed through pláticas included getting to know the participants, the journey of migrant workers, workplace challenges and achievements, strategies for success, and other voluntary information and stories provided by the participants.

Documents and Artifacts

Newspaper clippings and photographs helped me document the history of the town. These documents helped recreate the historical context where the narratives of the study participants took place and provided a more complete picture of the conditions and context of the stories. In an effort to gather documents, Presidio's Public Library was contacted. The librarian mentioned that they used to hold archives on Presidio but when the library changed librarians, a vast number of archives was dumped into the trash by mistake. Since all the archives were kept as hard copies and not electronically, those archives have been permanently lost. While continue to search for documents, I was able to find newspaper clippings from Presidio in the Marfa's newspaper archived at Sul Ross State University. Marfa is another small city located 60 miles away from Presidio. The archives available to the public include news from 1921 to 2004 but not all of them relate to Presidio. My family moved to Presidio in 2000; therefore, I provide an account of

relevant news between the year 2000 and 2004.

Study participants were encouraged to share documents and artifacts as well. Thus, they brought their wallet size high school diplomas and family pictures. The goal was for the participants to share memories that mattered to them. They felt comfortable when talking about artifacts that had relevant meaning. They also discussed the history of the specific artifacts and why that object was important to them and to their family. “Artifacts in qualitative interviews function not only as aids for enhancing specificity but can also help informants access and structure their memories” (Abildgaard, 2018, p. 7). The artifacts facilitated the conversation and enhanced the stories told by the participating migrant workers.

Hocker (2010) discussed that artifacts could be considered items, pictures, and documents with a strong family bond. This author mentions that artifacts are objects that hold a substantial sentimental value, and they are considered “treasures” for the people that possess them (Hocker, 2010, p. 864). In order to build rapport, create a safe environment, and encourage the participants to share their stories, I was the first sharing memories related to my own artifact. I continued to remind the participants that I came from the same environment as them, and I have objects do have a sentimental value to me. Growing up as a child of a migrant worker makes me part of their community. Forming part of the same community served as a foundation to ensure trust in me.

My father began to work as a migrant worker before I was born. When I was born, my father joked that I was born with big balloon cheeks. I was about two months old when he was working in the Louisiana area, and he found a puppy stuffed animal that had the same cheeks (see Figure 6).



Figure 6. Perrito

This stuffed animal has been the only item that has been saved by my family since I was two months. I shared this item during my pláticas to entire the conversation on how this item has sentimental value, and it has been a “treasure” of mine. This puppy was later named “Perrito” little puppy in Spanish, served as a reciprocal conversation exchange starter, the participants understood what artifacts are. I continue by sharing a little history and sentimental value of the object. I shared that I consider it the first toy my father gave me, and I would sleep with Perrito when I would miss my dad. I do remember playing with Perrito growing up. It used to have a black collar, but somehow it tore, and Perrito has been collarless for several years. It is weird that although Perrito has been in my family for more than 32 years, it was never named. My mother has expressed her wishes for me to give Perrito to one of my children if I ever have some of my own.

During the first plática, I brought examples to illustrate the meaning of artifacts and clarify expectations for the participants. They were instructed to bring objects considered family treasures, items that hold sentimental value, and any memorable

artifact they would take during their long trips while working away from home, which reminded them of home and their family. The objects could have been family pictures, diplomas, pictures of their first home, and keys of their favorite vehicle. They decided what items are treasures to them.

Photography

Participants were encouraged to bring photographs to their pláticas. It was expected that the selected photographs have a strong connection to their lives and to their families. “Photography is a mode of engagement with participants in research and has been developed as a reflexive and collaborative mode of exploration, which can tell shared stories about everyday social experiences and realities” (Pink, 2021, p. 125). The participants had the opportunity to tell the stories behind each of the selected photographs and assign meaning to them. Latz (2017) discusses the advantages of utilizing photo elicitation in a research project: (1) values the vantage point of participants; (2) uses the visual image, a powerful means of communication; (c) affirms the perspective of the vulnerable; (4) samples a variety of settings; (5) sustains community participation; (6) allows flexibility in project goals; (7) encourages participants to share the stories of others within the community; (8) provides tangible benefits to participants; (9) depicts communities needs and assets; and (10) stimulates social action (p. 154). Photos selected by the participants aided in the telling of the story.

Mitchell (2011) mentions that there may be instances where the participants find it difficult to engage in conversation. Thus, photographs can help make the conversation more fluid. Pink (2021) explains that a photograph does have different meanings to different individuals. For example, a family group picture to an individual can represent

unity, and to someone else, it can describe the last time they saw each other in person. This is why conversing with the participants about the content and meaning of the photographs they provided was important. Thus, the visual representation of experience, as it occurred through photographs, enabled the participants how they saw and felt about certain experiences (Riessman, 2008, p. 301). In this sense, utilizing photographs provided by the study participants provided context and depth to the stories.

Field Notes

While conducting the study, field notes serve to recap observations and interactions to be used later during the analysis process. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) describe field notes as consisting of two different types of notes, descriptive field notes and reflective field notes. Descriptive field notes are observations of the setting, actions, participant behavior, and the conversation as a whole. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) mention that it is essential for the researcher when taking fieldnotes to be as descriptive as possible. The researcher needs to become aware and acknowledge what is important to take note and only *capture the slice of life* that is relevant to the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 120).

Reflective field notes tend to go beyond just observation to examine ideas, state concerns, and ask new questions. These fieldnotes contain sentences and paragraphs that reflect a more personal account of the course of the inquiry (Dogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 122) and the researcher's point of view may have an impact on these notes. With this in mind, the researcher needs to pay attention to the different feelings, ideas, and impressions that may surface during the study. It is essential that the researcher is careful while writing the reflective field notes as not to misconstrue what was observed.

I kept descriptive field notes and reflective field notes. It was essential paying attention to the whole picture while conducting the pláticas. Such as the tone of their voice, the word choice, and determining if there is a deeper meaning beyond the stories. By gathering all this information, the field notes enhanced the data collected through the conversations and artifacts.

Researcher Journal

I am the child of a Latino migrant worker; hence this journal provided the perfect opportunity to write about specific stories that made an impact in my life and my family. Journaling is a method that helps gather my thoughts and stay on track with the research focus (Borg, 2011). This journal served as a diary, where personal experiences and background knowledge were recorded, this served as an opportunity to allow me to reflect on my own story on aspects such as feelings when my father would come back from work, experiencing being raised by a single mother. An example of a researcher journal entry may describe how my brother created a family tradition among my siblings as follows.

When we graduated with our bachelor's degree, the universities gave us a card-sized diploma. My brother, sand I gave that small diploma to our father. He keeps the two diplomas in his wallet. He said it is a reminder of the accomplishments his children were able to achieve. My father says his reward for having to spend most of the year away from home is being able to financially provide for us to study and have the opportunity of work stability.

This is a story wrote in my journal. Writing these types of stories helped me to understand my memories on a deeper level. Later I evaluated all my journal entries and

identify how they were tied to this study to incorporate them to the report of study findings.

Data Analysis

Narratives are referred to as the sequence of events, how they are organized and delivered to bring meaning (Riessman, 2003). Narratives need to be deconstructed, analyzed, and put back together for them to make sense. “Narratives do not speak for themselves or have unanalyzed merit; they require interpretation when used as data in social research” (Riessman, 2003, p. 2). Narrative analysis pays close attention to different details, such as the tone of which the story is being told how different images help the story being told. The researcher pays close attention to all the portions of the story and is able to explain the story.

Drawing from the dandelion metaphor presented in chapter 1, this study used the principles outlined in anatomy of story and critical pedagogy to guide the data analysis process. Thus, through deductive analysis, the Microsoft Excel was used to sort and organize the data collected by using a priory category. My dissertation chair is also fluent in Spanish, and she served as a mentor when the data of the pláticas begins to be analyzed. In addition, 5 overarching steps proposed by Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) helped give a logical sequence to the data analysis process. These are: (1) Get to know the data, (2) Focus the analysis, (3) Categorize information, (4) Identify patterns and connections within and between categories, (5) Interpretation – Bring it all together. It is important to take into consideration that analyzing the data was not a linear process. Going back to previous steps was definitely an option for rigorous data analysis.

Step 1. *Get to know the data*, in this case, the transcription of the conversations,

field notes, and researcher journal constitute the data I needed to get to know at a deeper level. It is essential that the recordings were heard many times in case some details were missed the first time. Building individual profiles of the study participants was helpful to get to know the data. In order to get familiar with the data, I listened to data recordings multiple times. It was crucial to gain a deep understanding of the stories of the study participants.

Step 2. *Focus the analysis*, this step guided by the study framework, the research questions, and the dandelion metaphor. The data collected was analyzed looking at how they connected with the study's framework and how they provided answers to the main research questions formulated for the study. The transcriptions were transferred to Microsoft Excel and connections with the three research questions were created.

Step 3. *Categorize information*, priority codes were identified through the components of anatomy of story (e.g., navel, mind, heart, hands, and legs). In addition, the principles of critical pedagogy helped identify patterns in the data. Coding was done using Microsoft Excel; thus, initial categories were created by clustering similar codes together.

Step 4. *Identify patterns and connections within and between categories*, this step was essential for data reduction and only include meaningful data in the report of findings. Initially, twenty-five categories were identified for the report. However, a second round of analysis looking at how these categories related to each other, allowed to identify ten meaningful themes.

Step 5. *Interpretation – Bring it all together*, at this point, it is important to explain the significance of study findings. Data were collected in Spanish and responses

were translated into English. A good explanation of interpretation of the data relates to legacy or what was learned. Listing the key points of what was learned is another way of interpreting the data. It is important that the findings were synthesized and could bring meaning to the reader as well as suggesting additional future studies.

Ethical Consideration

Institutional Review Board (IRB) procedures guided the study. Due to the COVID19 pandemic, different measures were taken into consideration to ensure the safety of the participants (e.g., conducting pláticas in an open space, wearing a face mask, and sharing my vaccination card). The initial pláticas for data collection were scheduled to take place in early July 2022. I was infected with COVID19 the first week of July. For the safety of the participants, data collection was pushed to late July. This was challenging because I had the time off approved and I had to rearrange my work schedule to make sure I was not falling behind with my work responsibilities. Once I had the new plan, I contacted each of the participants to confirm their availability and to determine the best time for them to meet me at their Presidio homes. I then adjusted my travel as needed to ensure that I would have time with each of the participant for the pláticas.

As a researcher, I strove to create a safe space during the interaction with participants. They were able to tell me if they felt uncomfortable with any of the questions or any topics that they did not feel comfortable conversing. They were informed that they were able to stop participation at any time. Regarding consent to participate in the study, the participants provided informed verbal consent following the guidelines established by IRB (see Appendix E). The verbal consent was in Spanish (see Appendix F) to make it accessible to the study participants and so that they could feel

confident asking questions about the study.

On a more personal note, I constantly reminded the participants that the stories they shared during our pláticas were not to receive any judgment, and there was no wrong or right answer to the questions or the topics we discussed. It was my goal to have all five participants feel comfortable sharing their stories. Emphasizing the importance of sharing their experiences and feelings was essential. Providing a safe and non-judgmental space allowed them to feel comfortable and open to talk. It was important to ensure that all five Latino migrant workers felt respected and that their stories were relevant, so creating a space for encouraging open and honest communication was key.

Building Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness measures promote fairness of the study. Guba (1981) made note that there are four different elements that need to be included when ensuring trustworthiness. These are: (1) credibility, (2) transferability, (3) dependability, and (4) confirmability.

Credibility

Shenton (2004) mentions that credibility is one of the significant factors while trying to establish trustworthiness. As a child of a migrant worker, disclosing this information before beginning the pláticas took place was essential. It was also important to not get influenced by my personal experience as to be open to other points of view.

Thus, collecting different data sets allowed for the research findings to be believable. Triangulation or different methods of data collection such as interviews, artifacts, journaling, and archival data allowed for building trustworthiness. Transparency

in the description of data collection processes and collecting data through different data sources added to the credibility of the study.

Transferability

Shenton (2004) mentions that “it is the responsibility of the investigator to ensure that sufficient contextual information about the fieldwork is provided to enable the reader to make such a transfer” (p. 69). This study provided detailed information about the participants’ life and work stories as migrant workers so that other researchers and educators can transfer knowledge from study findings to their respective work settings. With this in mind, other researchers are able to decide what they want to adapt to their studies with similar populations.

Dependability

Dependability is when enough information is shared with the reader to duplicate the study and have similar results in a similar setting (Shenton, 2004). It is essential that to provide enough details for transferability purposes. In addition, it is important to be loyal to the participants’ stories to not change them and use verbatim data and stories they provide. Thus, the report of study findings includes stories from the participants in their native language, Spanish and translated to English for the readers to be able to understand them.

Confirmability

It is referred to as the protocol that was followed to ensure the data shared are the participants’ experiences, not the researcher’s (Shenton, 2004). “Here steps must be taken to help ensure as far as possible that the work’s findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the

researcher” (p. 72). Therefore, the study findings reported in the present dissertation come from different data sources and provide the original stories told by the Latino migrant workers. My dissertation chair and committee members helped me be accountable to confirm that the findings I am reporting come from actual data collected through the study.

III. PRESIDIO AND MIGRANT WORKERS

The present chapter aims to provide context to the stories shared by the participating Latino migrant workers and introduce them to the reader. Presidio and the migrant workers continue to experience unique circumstances even today in the time of globalization and technological advancements. The structure of the chapter includes the following two sections: (1) Presidio, Texas, and (2) migrant workers from Presidio. The first section provides a selection of photographs and newspaper clippings to provide the historical context for the city. The second section introduces the navel of the story, five Latino migrant workers. The participants narrated their stories in Spanish, and these appear in both Spanish and English throughout the dissertation to provide their original account and to benefit English speaking scholars.

Presidio, Texas



Figure 7. Presidio, Texas Location

Presidio is a border town in the southwest of Texas with Chihuahua as the closest neighboring Mexican state. It is an eight-hour drive from Austin, the capital of Texas, and over three hours north-west to El Paso (see Figure 7).



Figure 8. *Presidio and Ojinaga Borderline*



Figure 9. *Presidio Neighboring Cities*

Presidio (TX) and Ojinaga (Mexico) are neighboring cities (see Figures 8, 9)

separated by the Rio Bravo or Rio Grande (see Figures 10). The border patrol heavily guards the area. The river is shallow, and people could cross by foot if they were allowed. All of the migrant workers who participated in the study moved to Presidio from Ojinaga at some point in their lives.



Figure 10. *Rio Bravo or Rio Grande*

In Mexico the river is known as Rio Bravo and in the United States it is called Rio Grande (see Figure 10). Historically, this river became a landmark to establish a geographical separation between Mexico and Texas.

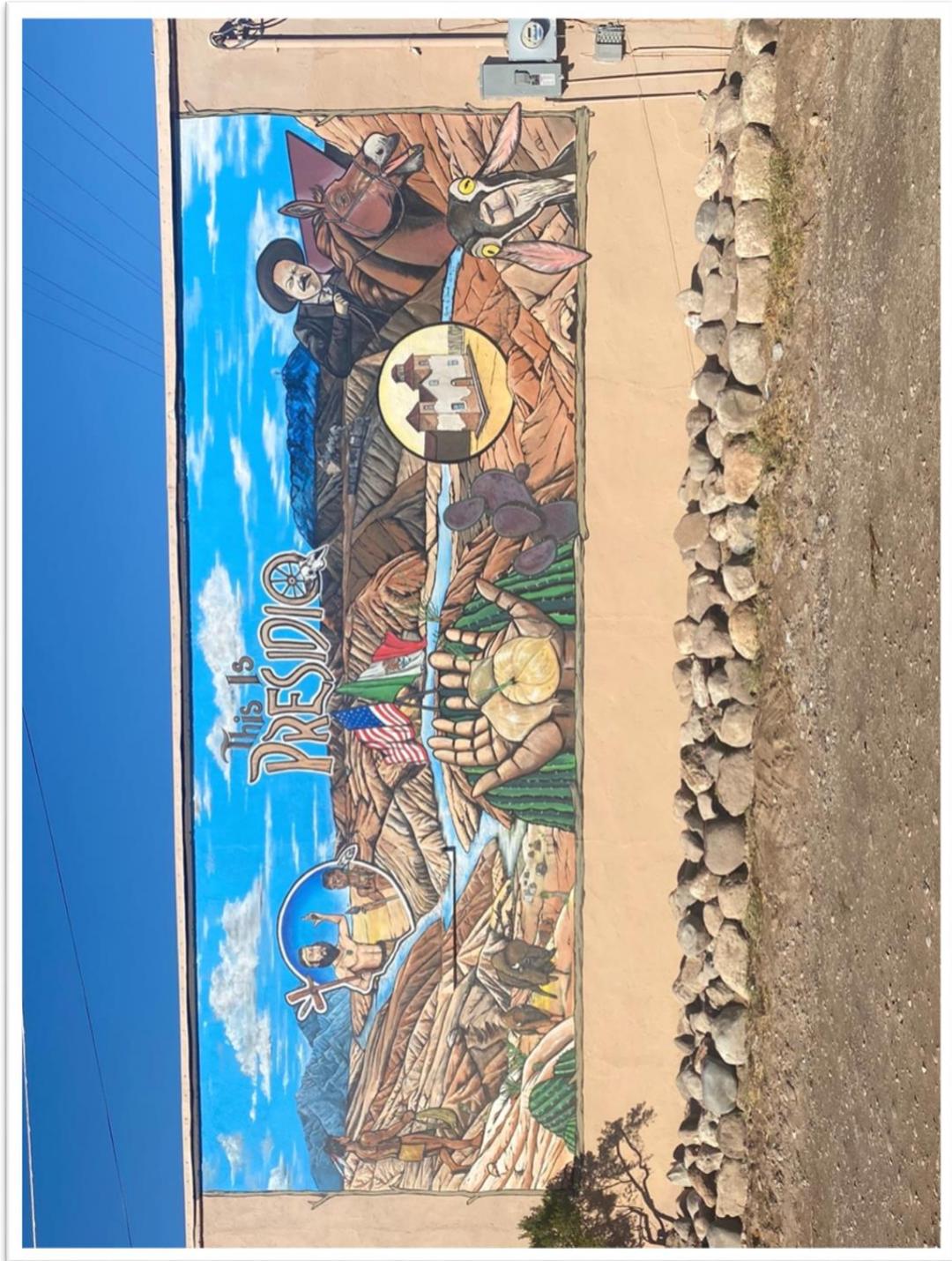


Figure 11. *This is Presidio Mural*

Finished in October 2022, a recently painted mural titled “This is Presidio” by local artist Ramón Deanda (Figure 11), displays some of its history. Ramón and I were

classmates in high school, and we were in Mariachi band together. The mural depicts the mountains along with natives from the region with wild buffalos running and different varieties of cacti. This was an open area where wild animals run freely, and the natives fed on the wild buffalo.

Also, on the upper left-hand side, there is an illustration of a native holding a spear and a Spaniard holding a wooden cross to signify the conversion to Christianity. The Chinati Mountains, the Rio Grande River, as well as the U.S. flag and the Mexican flag appear to symbolize the complex relationship between the two countries. Under the flags, two working hands represent the labor and harvest of the people. They are holding onions to also represent the Onion Festival that used to take place every year in May up to 2001.

On the bottom right-hand side, there a picture of Fort Leaton State Historic Site, which is located on Farm to Market Road 170, in Presidio. The original adobe structure was a private residence dating back to the early 19th century. It was purchased in 1848 by Benjamin Leaton, who adapted it as a fortress. Fort Leaton was the Presidio County original seat of government. In 1967, it was transferred to the state of Texas. In 1978, it became a historic site and opened to the public.

Farther away in the horizon, La Sierrita de la Santa Cruz appears on the far upper right-hand side of the mural. There is a big cross on top of the hill; La Sierrita is considered a place of worship for the Ojinaga people. As a child, I used to go on the weekend with my grandfather and cousins to climb La Sierrita. It was a really nice hike, and we would take sandwiches, chips, juice, and water with us. La Sierrita is known to have a cave named La Cueva del Diablo. I remember I would get really close to my

grandfather because I was scared of getting near the cave. There are stories about people getting lost in the cave and never seen again. They are just stories; I do not know of anyone that got lost in that cave. However, when I was seven years old, we stopped going up the hill because the cartel would go up La Sierrita and would shoot their guns to the open space.

On the upper right corner as well, Pancho Villa appears riding a horse. He is a historic figure in the Mexican Revolution, as discussed in chapter one. He is one of the generals that my great grandfather responded to. The elementary school that I attended in Ojinaga was named after him. There is also a street named after him in Ojinaga. Pancho Villa is a well-known figure in the region.

Lastly, there is a goat on the bottom right corner of the mural with piercing eyes. Since Presidio is a rural area, it is common for residents to keep goats in their backyards. Sometimes they are pets, but most of the time they are raised to be consumed at family and community events (see Figure 12).



Figure 12. *Chivito en el Disco*

For example, in 2012 President Barack Obama hosted The Second White House Science Fair. The High School's Rocketry Team qualified for the Science Fair and Presidio ISD (Independent School District) organized many fund raising events for the team to be able to make the trip to Washington, D.C. The fund-raising committee raffled a goat to raise money. In 2012, President Obama made a note of the goat raffle in his welcoming speech. The goat is also a symbol of family and friend reunions, and the popular saying is: "hay que preparar un chivito en el disco" [Let's prepare a goat in the disk skillet].



Figure 13. *Presidio Water Tower*

Another notable mural was painted on the town's water tower. This mural has a painting of Presidio's resident Linda Lujan (see Figure 13). The Water Tower is located on one of the hills that overlooks Presidio and Ojinaga. Before 2018 the water tower was just a white wall. I used to hike that hill with some of my friends at night and enjoy the view of Presidio and Ojinaga.

In 2018 the Mexican Consulate gifted Presidio with this mural, which was painted by Los Angeles' muralist Miles Mac, known as "El Mac." He is famous for painting murals in border towns and has done some work in El Paso and Juarez as well. Similar to these murals, there are iconic buildings in Presidio such as the Post Office and the Court House that provide important services to the residents.



Figure 14. *Presidio Post Office*

I remember going with my mother to the post office (see Figure 14) during

Saturday morning. Back in the day my father would send money to us via U.S. mail. This was before the time when direct deposit was available. My mother would ask me to get off and see if the greenlight that the post office would turn on notifying all the mail was place in their respective boxes. Since Presidio is so small the mail is strictly delivered to the post office. FedEx, and UPS deliver to the houses, but it is very rare. Presidio does not have street signs so delivery drivers that are not familiar with the area get lost. Several times they ended up returning the packages because they were unable to find the houses. Now, with smartphones and GPS, it has become easier to locate the houses. However, most houses still do not have a number to identify them.



Figure 15. *Presidio Court House*

Presidio's Court House (see Figure 15) is another building that is always busy. I remember, most mornings, there was a line that started way before they opened the building. It is the only place that the people of Preisdio were able to vote. Now, there may

be more locations to vote. I moved away to go to college when I was eighteen, so I did not have the opportunity to vote in the courthouse. I voted for the first time in the Alpine's (TX) courthouse.

In the following section, starting in 2000, several newspaper clippings contextualize relevant events in Presidio. The year 2000 is when my father moved from Ojinaga to Presidio, and around that same time, the rest of the migrant workers also relocated to Presidio. These newspaper clippings were gathered from The Big Bend Sentinel newspaper. I was able to search for relevant news through the Archives at Sul Ross State University (Alpine, TX), which is located 90 miles away from Presidio.

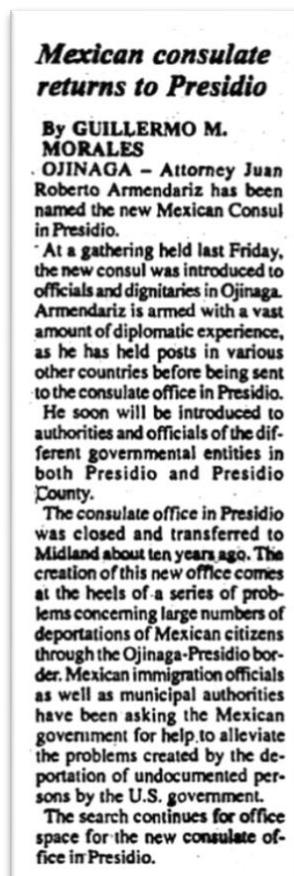


Figure 16. *The Big Bend Sentinel August 3, 2000*

We arrived in Presidio in August 2000. My father wanted to make sure we were

there on time for the start of the school year. I entered school in 4th grade. Thus, as the first week of August started, we were packing and moving from our Ojinaga house to a two-bedroom apartment in Presidio. The news was that a new Mexican consul has been named (see Figure 16) and the Mexican Consulate was back in Presidio. It was important for people to have access to the Mexican Consulate. Before people needed to drive over three hours to Midland (TX) to process any paperwork. With the new consulate in town, my mother was able to process her Mexican passport.



Figure 17. *The Big Bend Sentinel August 10, 2000*

The second week living in Presidio was not my favorite. I remember feeling lost

in a school where the teacher was trying to teach me English. I would get frustrated because I felt like I was never going to get to learn English. Within time, I was able to relax a bit and noticed that I was getting the hang of it. During this week, Snodgrass was named in charge of the Presidio's border patrol station (see Figure 17). Seeing border patrols driving the streets was normal to the residents. When I first moved there, I thought they were police officers. Later, I realized that they were not the same profession.



Figure 18. *The Big Bend Sentinel* October 5, 2000

Ojinaga made it to the news for the first time since I have memory. A camera shot of Ojinaga's main street was on national television as they announced the arrest of Francisco Javier Balderrama-Rios, aka Kiko, the cartel leader (see Figure 18). He attended the Olympics and was busted because he was on the wanted list. He appeared in the audience wearing flashy Mexican clothes and a big Mexican hat. His arrest was a topic everyone was talking about, I was very young around that time, but I remember it was a hot topic.



Figure 19. *The Big Bend Sentinel January 11, 2001*

This week marked the first time when my family and I spent the New Year in Presidio. My parents, aunts, uncles, and their friends attended the local dance. For me, it meant a sleepover with my cousins, eating junk food, and watching movies past midnight which became a tradition each New Year. This year, 2001, the news announced that Presidio was going to have a manufacturing company to bring 79-high paying jobs (see Figure 19). However, for some reason, it did not go as planned and the promised jobs never happened. Looking back at this, having 79 new jobs would have definitely helped the local people. A similar event happened in April of the same year (see Figure 20) below.



Figure 20. *The Big Bend Sentinel April 5, 2001*

This week was when the Easter planning for the family gathering would start. It became a tradition to spend Easter at my grandparents' house. My uncle bought a big frier and wanted to fry some fish for Easter. However, I am not a fan of seafood, so I remember not really being thrilled by my uncle's new frier. I ended up eating rice and the other sides from the putlock. During this time, as mentioned in the newspaper clipping above, a job fair was advertised. They hoped the firm would move to Presidio to create jobs but again the much-expected job opportunities did not come.

Onion Festival begins Friday

By DAN KEANE

PRESIDIO – The 2001 Onion Festival is finally here, and Presidio's biggest weekend of the year promises something for everyone. Listen to the music and kick up your heels at dances both Friday and Saturday night, and show your skills in the team roping competition, as well as tournaments in basketball and golf. Sample the delicious recipes presented at the bake-off Saturday morning, then thrill to the roar of the drag racers and thundering of horses' hooves during that

afternoon's races.

And if all these goodies weren't enough, the Lions Club has installed a new air conditioner this year. So bring a lawn chair, your family, and your appetite down to the Lions Club Park this weekend and enjoy the festival.

"We just want every body to come out and have a good time, and keep Junie in mind," said Presidio Chamber of Commerce Director Cindi Clarke, who encourages everyone to wear a yellow ribbon in support of Junie

(Continued on page 2)

Figure 21. *The Big Bend Sentinel May 17, 2001*

May 2001 marked the end of the school year and by this time I was starting to feel conformable living in Presidio. I had made friends, and I was used to the daily routine. Since I was very young, by the time I moved to Presidio, I did not stay in touch with my friends in Ojinaga. Social media was not available as it is today. This week the newspaper was advertising the annual Onion Festival (see Figure 21). Presidio used to celebrate the Onion Festival and it was a big event with sports, music, car races, horses, and of course, food.

Presidio county officials attempt to land airport grants

By STERRY BUTCHER
PRESIDIO COUNTY - The Marfa and Presidio airports will be in line for major improvements over the next several years if a series of grants currently in the works go as planned, according to Presidio County Judge Jerry Agan.

The county has been working closely with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDoT) on aviation grants that would total \$150,000 this year, \$150,000 next year and possibly a third installment the following year. "We're trying to get them to combine two years and give us \$300,000 so we can do the Marfa runway in one shot," Agan said this week.

It's the crosswind runway and the taxi way in Marfa that need attention. "It's in very bad shape."

Agan said.

The county applied for the TxDoT grant two years ago, but the money is only now wending its way out of the funding bureaucracy. In order to receive the funds, the county must come up with \$30,000 in September as match money for the \$300,000.

Agan also is eyeing a \$60,000 airport engineering grant for which the county must put together \$6,000 of matching funds in January 2002, plus a \$330,000 grant available the following year. The county's 10 percent match share for that grant is due January 2003.

"We've already improved the Marfa airport tremendously," Commissioner Danny Watts said. Watts' precinct covers the Marfa airport. "We've gotten it cleaned up, the grass is manageable and

we went in and patched the potholes."

Agan has a long ranging, optimistic vision for the Marfa facility. "I want to talk about feeder airlines with American Airlines and Southwest that will connect to Midland from here," the judge said. "This airport has better approaches than Alpine. Why not Marfa?"

The Presidio-Lely International Airport is long overdue for improvements, and commissioners are in the process of finding a satisfactory bid on a self-service fuel pump for the airport. "Commissioner Jaime Ramirez is really working to get that," Watts said. "The bids just came in higher than we thought. Also, we need a terminal in Presidio. We want to get plans together for that."

"We need a place for people to

be able to get out, stretch their legs, have a bathroom break," Agan added. "We've been promised assistance to build the terminal. We have to get estimates. We can't afford to lose our airports; we're going to need them more and more."



Figure 22. *The Big Bend Sentinel* June 21, 2001

In Presidio, all newcomer English learners were required to attend summer school to help them with language development. I was upset when I heard I still had six more weeks of school after the school year had ended. I was looking forward to sleeping in a little, but my hopes of sleeping in were shattered by the policy that Presidio ISD had in place. This same committee members were the town's officials hoping to receive funds to make improvements to the airport (see Figure 22). I have never been to the airport but have driven by. Sometimes air ambulances land and take patients to different cities in emergency situations. The hopes for the funds were unsuccessful, and unfortunately, no improvements for the airport happened.

After 55 years, Big Bend bids goodbye to 915 area code

By STERRY BUTCHER
FAR WEST TEXAS - In about a year, our area code is going to change. From El Paso to Brownwood, Dell City to Big Spring and Presidio to Snyder, the 915 area code has marked the telephonic boundaries of West Texas since 1947. That's going to change in April 2003, when the state's Public Utility Commission will split the 915 region into three separate areas. The greater El Paso area stays together and gets to keep the 915 code because of its population density and its international commerce. The other two sections of West Texas get new codes, though those numbers haven't yet been chosen. "This is due to an increased demand for more phone lines," said Ferry Hadley, a spokesman for

the PUC. "It reflects not just general growth in the region but also growth in cell phones, wireless phones, faxes, the Internet. It adds up to more demand for lines and we need more numbers. Our latest estimates show that 915 numbers would run out in early 2004."

The tri-county area will be part of a territory that goes west to Van Horn and north as far as Seminole, east to Midland-Odessa and south below Fort Stockton.

The other section of West Texas due for a new area code runs from Abilene down to Brady and over to San Angelo.

The PUC will consider possible area codes over the next several months. "We'll select the two that are the least confusing compared to 915, something you can

recognize as different," Hadley said.

The decision to create new codes came after a series of public meetings and a public comment period by the PUC. The PUC introduces the new codes in April 2003 and a recorded reminder to dial a new code will accompany all out-of-area calls starting in October 2003. Callers must dial the new codes without a reminder by December 2003.

The announcement of the change was met with a certain amount of relief from El Pasoans and an exasperated sigh from those who live outside that city. "Oh, I think it's just the pits," summed up Valda Livingston, a Marfa realtor. "I guess when you live in a little town, you don't have too much political clout and things

(Continued on page 13)

Figure 23. *The Big Bend Sentinel February 28, 2002*

There was only one cellphone company that had signal in Presidio. My father wanted a cell phone to use to call home when he was far away from home. We had to drive 90 miles to Alpine (TX) for him to purchase his first cellphone at a tech-department store. He has had the same phone number since. In 2002, a change of area code was announced (see Figure 23) and it took place in April 2003. Back in the day, the area code for the Big Bend was 915, and now the new area code is 432. However, El Paso (TX) still has the same 915 area code. My current cellphone number is still 432 even though I have lived in central Texas for several years. I like it because it reminds me of home, and I do not plan to change it.

Presidio consulate directors transfer to new posts

By DAN KEANE

PRESIDIO – Diplomatic service is by its very nature a transitory affair. Members of any nation's foreign service often spend their careers hopping around the globe in an international game of musical chairs, and the directors of the Mexican Consulate in Presidio are no different.

After two years of service here in Presidio, Consul General Juan Roberto Gonzalez will transfer to Denver, Colorado later this month to serve as deputy consul general there. Antonio Lomeli, currently in charge of the consulate's legal protection department, will transfer to the consulate in Miami. Francisco Marquez, head of documentation, will remain on the Texas-Mexico border as he transfers to the McAllen consulate.

A successor for Gonzalez has not yet been named. A consul will be selected from two or three final candidates sometime this week or next, Gonzalez said. At least one of the finalists is already serving in a consulate along the Texas-Mexico border.

Few diplomats get the chance to be present at the opening of a new consulate, and Gonzalez said he valued the opportunity Presidio gave him.

"Believe me, it was a great experience to reopen this office here," Gonzalez said, stressing the Presidio consulate's long history. "I'd like to thank all the people who helped us when we were trying to open this office. The city allowed us to stay in the library, people lent us tables...we received a lot of support and many friends. I had an excellent experience here."

Gonzalez' tenure saw the Presidio consulate reborn during



Consul General Juan Roberto Gonzalez

a time of intense transition in the Mexican government. "Two years ago, we had to deal with the last months of Zedillo administration and the first months of the Fox administration," Gonzalez said. Surviving the budget upheavals that came with the transition was not easy.

"We needed to make some magical movements here" to keep the Presidio post on track, Gonzalez said.

Unfortunately, the consulate's long-term future is still in doubt. "We are still on the list for possible closings, but at least this year and the next one we are going to be open," Gonzalez said.

The consul said that he strongly believes the Presidio post should remain open, as its importance

will only grow in the coming years. "We are sure that this area is going to play a key role in our new bilateral policy in regards to security," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez' promotion to Denver is not the only good news the consul received this month. On June 6, his wife Rosio gave birth to the couple's third child, a boy named Juan Esteban, at the hospital in Alpine. Though the child will grow up in Colorado and elsewhere, his folks will always remind him of his Presidio roots.

"We consider him a Texan," Gonzalez said.



Figure 24. *The Big Bend Sentinel* June 20, 2002

My brother, Iván, graduated high school in May 2002. This was the first summer that my brother spent away from home. He worked as a migrant worker with my father

that summer, right before his freshman year at college. Iván decided to work along with my father to save some money because he knew that finding employment as a freshman was not going to be easy since his university was small, and the work-study positions were limited. When he came back from work, he gave me a brand-new iPod. I was so grateful for that, but I was happier to have him back at home. During that week, the new Presidio's consulate member was transferred to a new location (see Figure 24). The person stayed only in the position for two years. Since Presidio is very small and does not have a lot of attractions, it is very common for non-locals who relocate for work to leave soon after.

Presidio's new doctor to open practice next month

By STERRY BUTCHER
PRESIDIO - Larry Dean Edmondson is the name of Presidio's new doctor, and his practice should be up and running by mid-November.

"I'm excited," Dr. Edmondson said recently. "I've put a lot of energy into making this happen. I'm committed to making this work."

The 45-year old doctor is a family practice physician who grew up in rural Indiana. He spent time in the Peace Corps, worked as a schoolteacher and ran a company that developed rehabilitation therapy skills for mentally disabled folks in Arizona.

Ten years ago, his interest in de-institutionalizing mentally challenged people grew into a desire to attend medical school. His dedication to medicine led him to a medical school called St. Georges University on the British commonwealth island of Grenada, then on to a year of training in England and a residency at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston.

He discovered Far West Texas about two years ago.

"Something was always pulling me toward this area," he explained. "I started my residency and that's when I decided that I'd probably end up in Texas. It just feels right. When I saw Presidio, I thought this is really where they need me."

Dr. Edmondson began the process to get board certified and licensed in Texas, and he eventually started a series of meetings with Jimmy Stuart, who is the administrator for the Big Bend Regional Medical Center.

"I can help recruit qualified physicians to come to an underserved area," Stuart said. "Getting a doctor in Presidio increases



Larry Dean Edmondson

the quality of care in the area and hopefully it will give people here a chance to try the hospital's services. We're losing some of the Presidio market to El Paso and Odessa, and hopefully having a doctor in Presidio will convince people to get those services in our area."

Stuart and Dr. Edmondson negotiated terms for a three-year contract, in which the hospital will help support the doctor's burgeoning practice for a certain period of time. The new doctor will take over the building that now houses the rural health clinic, which will close soon and re-open as Dr. Edmondson's practice.

"Dr. Edmondson doesn't work for the hospital, but he'll have privileges at the hospital," Stuart clarified. "This is his own practice and he can do what he wants."

Presidio's mayor is thrilled at the prospect of a doctor in town.

"It's a really good thing," Alcee Tavares said. "I introduced him to the council. I know that the community is excited about him coming here."

The city has been without a regular doctor for a long time. "The physician's assistants and rural health clinic staff we've had over the years have been excellent and we have appreciated them," Tavares said. "In the mid-1980s we had doctors who rotated through, but we haven't had a doctor since then. It's time. Hopefully this will open the door for other doctors to come in the future."

The effort to install Dr. Edmondson in his Presidio practice has taken months of waiting for the results of his board exams and licensure, plus he's had help working out the deal from folks like State Rep. Pete Gallego and John Poindexter.

"A lot of people have come together to make this happen," Stuart said. "It's been a community-wide effort."

Dr. Edmondson will be joined in Presidio by his fiancé, Carmen Williams, and her six-year old daughter. He's looking forward to establishing a home here.

"You don't train rural doctors, you raise them," he said. "That's why I want to raise my family in a rural setting. I like the countryside here, and people's attitudes. People wave at you and everyone is willing to help each other. I like that."



Figure 25. *The Big Bend Sentinel* October 3, 2002

During the fall 2002 semester, two years in the Presidio's school system, I was placed in all English courses. It was terrifying having teachers that only spoke English to me. I was still feeling uncomfortable with participating in English-only lessons and speaking in English in front of others. I do remember having an English Langue class where the teacher asked us to prepare a speech as one of the assignments. I was so anxious about public speaking. At this point, the good news was that Dr. Edmondson was going to open a medical practice in town (see Figure 25), but I do not remember how long that lasted or if he made it to Presidio. Currently, Presidio does not have a doctor for its residents. The closest medical hospital or clinic is located in Alpine (TX), 90 miles away.

Presidio council to consider toll on traffic bound for Mexico, solid waste tipping fees

By ROBERT HALPERN

PRESIDIO - The Presidio City Council will continue its effort to charge a toll on Mexico-bound traffic when elected public servants meet this evening at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.

The initiative would be in concert with Presidio County. Officials from both political subdivisions believe a toll on vehicles heading to Mexico represents an untapped revenue source - as it is with most Texas-Mexico border communities with ports of entry - increasing as the predicted traffic to and from Mexico burgeons over the years. The toll would be patterned after Mexico's toll on vehicles entering Presidio.

This evening, the council will review a professional services agreement for consulting services with Frank X Spencer & Associates, a proposed contract that was initiated at the county.

The meeting kicks off with a special recognition of the Presidio High School Blue Devils varsity baseball team, currently ranked fifth in the state among Class 3A schools, and this year's district champion. The team plays on Friday for the area championship.

Three items tabled for months get another look-see by the council: landfill rates for users outside the city limit, the location for the new library and issues relating to the administratively-troubled emergency medical service.

The Presidio landfill now is the repository for solid waste from Marfa, Valentine and Fort Davis, accounting for 60 percent of the volume. Presidio is seeking an increase in the 'tipping fee' from those communities to pay its share of the permitting process to expand the landfill and keep it open. The current tipping fee is \$30 per ton, the three entities have proposed a

tipping fee of \$33.50 per ton, while Presidio city Administrator Tom Nance is holding out for a \$38.50 per ton tipping fee.

In other business, the council likely will make a decision where to site the new library, currently to be located on a hill in Millington Addition next to the new senior center. Library board members want the library - currently located on O'Reilly Street near City Hall - to be located near Daly Park on land the city is hoping to acquire and site the new City Hall.

The EMS issue involves talks with the city of Marfa, initially to run Presidio EMS, and with Presidio County in a long-term plan to assess an emergency services retail sales tax in support of a countywide ambulance system. There isn't an issue with the professional services rendered by Presidio EMS, only the lackluster way it is being run administratively.

Figure 26. *The Big Bend Sentinel* May 13, 2004

In May 2004, I was getting ready to finish my last few days as a middle schooler, and I was getting ready to be a high school freshman. There were rumors that the seniors wanted to bully the upcoming freshmen, but that never happened. It was just gossip to spook the students. At this time, Presidio City Council was proposing to charge a toll for crossing from Presidio to Ojinaga (see Figure 26). Mexico placed a toll for using the bridge that connects Ojinaga to Presidio. Back in 2004, the toll price was around 12 Mexican pesos. Now that price has almost tripled and continues to increase each year. However, this money does not stay in Ojinaga, it goes to Mexico City where it is distributed to other Mexican states. The proposed toll from Presidio to Ojinaga never happened. It was never approved and was never finalized. I remember hearing about the proposed toll charges. There was an uproar because the people affected by this charge were going to be mainly people who coastally cross over to visit their families.

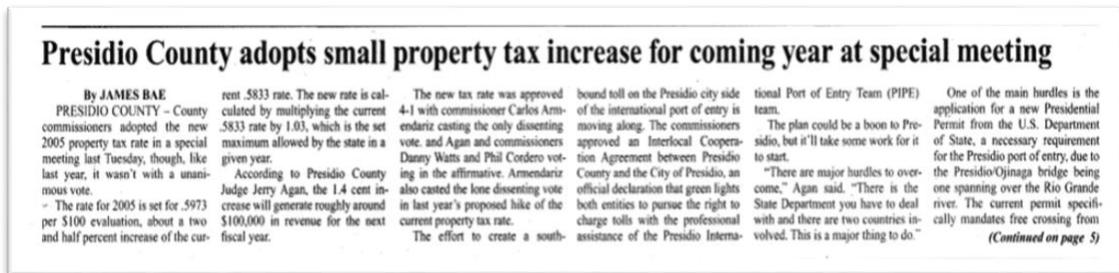


Figure 27. *The Big Bend Sentinel* September 30, 2004

In September 2004, I was a few weeks into my high school freshmen year. Being a freshman was a whole new experience, and I was excited to be a high schooler. The most exciting part for me was to stop wearing a school uniform. I became really involved in school activities, joined the student council, and became good friends with upperclassmen students. I still keep in touch with some of them. The newspapers made a note of the potential of Presidio County having a property tax increase (see Figure 27),

but this is a constant topic at such meetings. Thus, the cost of living continues to increase but job opportunities remain insufficient.

I graduated from high school in May 2008 and left town to go to study far away from my family for the first time. My father reminded me that I had to continue studying. Since I was a small kid, his question was “Where do you want to study,” not “if” I wanted to study. This was clear from the start; I was meant to go to college. My father had high hopes for all of his children to obtain an education and have a profession so that we did not have to continue the cycle of migrant work.

Migrant Workers from Presidio

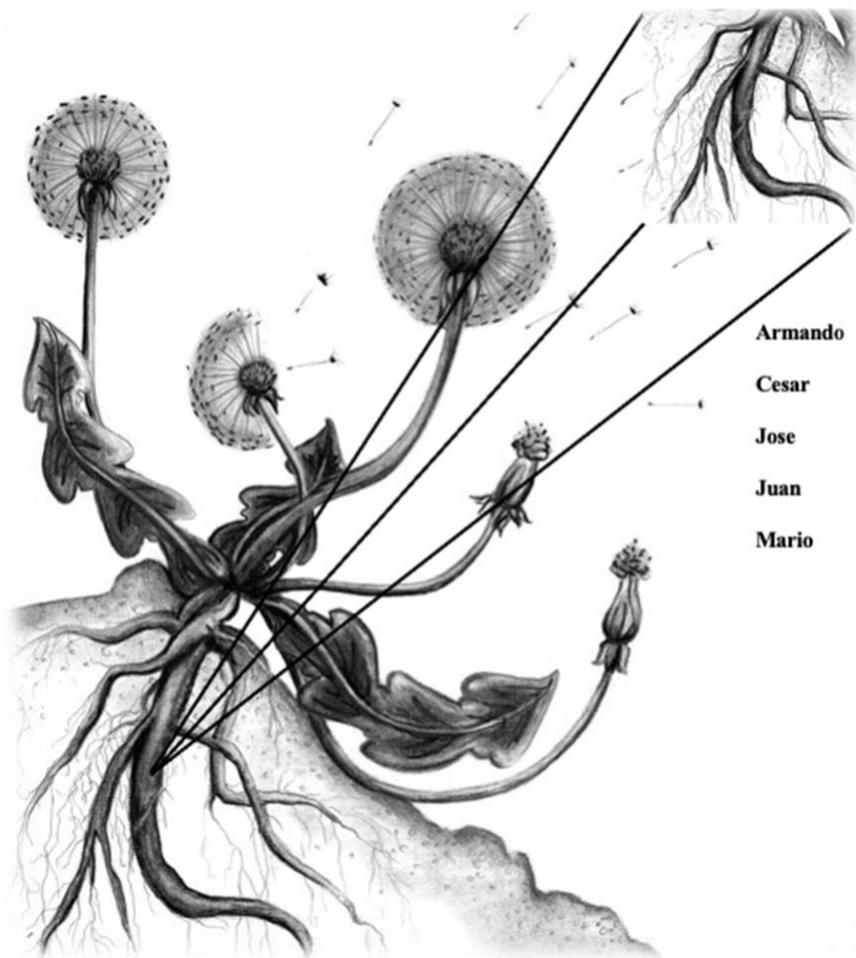


Figure 28. *The Navel of the Story*

The dandelion’s life cycle symbolizes the journeys and life stories of the study participants (see Table 3). The dandelion plant seeds travel to different locations for survival purposes. Similarly, migrant workers leave their homes and travel to different places for work to support their families. The first section of the chapter describes the navel of the story represented by the roots of the plant (see Figure 28). The roots are the foundation and anchor for the plant. Thus, the study participants constitute the older generation of migrant workers who have opened doors and created opportunities for future generations. The study participants were five Latino migrant workers who have lived in Presidio (TX) for more than 20 years. The age of these men ranged from 60-67 years. For privacy proposes, pseudo names were assigned to the participants. Three of them have up to middle school education, one has a high school diploma, and one has a bachelor’s degree in agricultural engineering.

Table 3. *Latino Migrant Workers Personal Chart*

Name	Age	Years as Migrant Workers	Work Status	Education
Armando	67	35+	Retired	Middle School
Cesar	64	35+	Retired	High School
José	63	30+	Retired	Middle School
Juan	60	30+	Working	Bachelors
Mario	65	35+	Working	Middle School

The main focus of the pláticas conducted with the study was to get to know each of the Latino migrant workers individually. These pláticas were conducted at their own homes. Armando and Cesar’s pláticas took place in the kitchen. Juan’s plática was conducted on his front porch. José completed his plática in the living room, sitting on his

favorite sofa. Mario decided for his plática to be in the dining room. He selected this place because “Aquí está mas bonito para nuestra charla [Here is prettier for our talk]” and he is proud of how my mother has decorated the whole house.

Armando

La primera vez que trabajé de migrante ya hace varios años. Yo fui invitado por un amigo para trabajar en agricultura. Allí estuve durante dos años y trabajaba por temporadas. Como no tenía mi propio vehículo, visitar a mi familia frecuentemente no era posible, como me hubiera gustado. Al principio fue algo nuevo para mí, fue muy difícil al imponerme a no ver a mi familia. Cuando trabajaba cerca de mi casa mi rutina era salir del trabajo y estar con mi esposa y mi hija. Lo veo como un sacrificio que valió la pena porque siendo trabajador migrante fue como arreglé mis papeles para estar aquí en Estados Unidos legalmente. Gracias a mi visa ya pude trabajar legalmente aquí en Estados Unidos he tenido más oportunidades de trabajo. Con mi trabajo he podido ser un proveedor para mi familia y le di a mis hijos lo necesario y hasta estudio. Se han mejorado en muchas cosas y estoy muy feliz de ello.

The first time I worked as a migrant was several years ago. I was invited by a friend to work in agriculture. I was there for two years and worked seasonally. Since I did not have my own vehicle, visiting my family was not possible as often as I would have liked. At first, it was something new for me, and it was very difficult getting used to not to see my family. When I worked close to home, my routine was to leave work and be with my wife and daughter. I see it as a sacrifice that was worth it because being a migrant worker was how I took care of my legal documents to be here in the United States. Thanks to my work visa, I was able to work legally here in the United States and obtained more job opportunities. With my work, I have been able to be a provider for my family, and I gave my children what they needed and even schooling. They have achieved many things and I am very happy about it.

Armando is 67 years old and the oldest of the participants. He grew up on a ranch named *Rancherías* in Mexico. Due to poverty and living in a rural area, he was only able to complete his first year of middle school. He later moved to Ojinaga, Chihuahua (Mexico) and then to Presidio, TX. He mainly worked in construction jobs while being a migrant worker. His favorite type of work was doing construction on the roads. He enjoyed driving the big trucks and other heavy machinery. Armando is retired and is the

father of two daughters and one son and has four grandchildren. He is happy to be at home watching his grandchildren grow since he could not do that with his own children.

Cesar

Yo trabajaba para una compañía de construcción en Ojinaga cuando termine la preparatoria. Me iba bien, no ganaba mucho, pero era un sueldo estable. Decidí trabajar allí porque mis padres no tuvieron los recursos para poderme ayudar a estudiar en la universidad. Después de ciertos años la compañía de construcción cerro y de un día para otro me quedé sin empleo. Necesitaba trabajo y en Ojinaga y Presidio no había trabajo. Hasta la fecha sigue sucediendo. Así que me invitaron a trabajar de migrante. Es algo bastante común aquí. Duré viviendo en Ojinaga y trabajando de migrante por varios años. La razón que me fui a Presidio fue para que estudiaran y aprendieran inglés mis hijos. Yo no hablo mucho inglés, así que aprender inglés lo veo como un beneficio. Porque sabiendo inglés, ellos pueden de allí ir a buscar trabajo en otras partes. Trabajar de migrante se extraña, todo, tu casa, mujer, hijos, etc. Pero fue algo necesario para poder sobresalir y darle mejor vida a mi familia. Yo también me pude dar mis lujos y comprar una troca.

I was working for a construction company in Ojinaga when I finished high school. I was doing well, I didn't earn much, but it was a stable salary. I decided to work there because my parents did not have the resources to help me study at the university. After a few years the construction company closed and from one day to the next I lost my job. I needed work and in Ojinaga and Presidio there was no work. Till this date, this still happens. So, they invited me to work as a migrant. It's pretty common here. I lived in Ojinaga and worked as a migrant for several years. The reason I moved to Presidio was so my children could study and learn English. I don't speak much English, so I see learning English as a benefit. Because knowing English, they can go look for work elsewhere. Working as a migrant you miss everything, your home, wife, children, etc. But it was something necessary to be able to get ahead and give my family a better life. I was able to have some luxuries and I bought a truck.

Currently, Cesar lives at home with his wife. His mother now lives with them due to illness and they both take care of her. Cesar has three sons and eight grandchildren. He was retired early due to health issues. He did not pass the physical exams required for work and was forced to take early retirement due to disability. Cesar is one of the two participants that were able to finish high school. He wanted to go to college, but there

were too many roadblocks in the way for him. Thus, he began to do migrant work after the company where he worked closed and he lost his job.

José

Soy padre de dos hijos muy trabajadores y tengo dos nietas y un nieto. Estuve casado con mi mujer, pero ella ya tiene varios años de fallecida. Tengo viviendo en Presidio desde el 2001. Antes vivía en Ojinaga, pero mi esposa y yo nos vinimos a Presidio para que aprendieran inglés mis hijos. Fue muy triste que mis hijos no quisieron estudiar después de que se graduaron de la preparatoria, pero aprendieron buen inglés. Ahora ellos tienen la opción de poder tener más oportunidades de trabajo. Yo que no aprendí inglés estaba limitado a los trabajos donde podía aplicar. Ya estoy jubilado y vivo feliz con mi chequecito. No es mucho, pero no me falta nada. Una de las razones de que me jubile fue porque ya mi cuerpo está cansado y pues tengo la libertad de visitar a mis hijos y nietos en Houston. Houston está más o menos a diez horas de aquí. Así que es bastante pesado el viaje, pero vale la pena porque los puedo ver y estar con ellos sin tener el pendiente de descuidar el trabajo. Aunque pase varios días y veces hasta semanas en Houston, yo no me muevo de Presidio. Es un pueblo muy tranquilo, chiquito, pero todos nos conocemos. Yo vivo muy tranquilo y a gusto aquí.

I am the father of two hard-working sons, and I have two granddaughters and a grandson. I was married to my wife, but she passed away several years ago. I have lived in Presidio since 2001. Before, I lived in Ojinaga, my wife and I came to Presidio so my children could learn English. It was unfortunate that my children did not want to study after they graduated from high school, but they learned good English. Now they have the option of having more job opportunities. Since I don't speak, English I was limited to the jobs where I could apply. I am already retired, and I live happily with my little paycheck. It's not much, but I'm not missing anything. One of the reasons I retired was because my body is already tired, and I have the freedom to visit my children and grandchildren in Houston. Houston is about ten hours from here. So, the trip is quite heavy, but it's worth it because I can see them and be with them without having to worry about neglecting work. Although I spend several days and sometimes even weeks in Houston, I will not move from Presidio. It is a very quiet town, small, but we all know each other. I live very calm and at peace here.

José currently lives alone. He became a widow a few years ago. Both of his sons live in the Houston area, and he visits them and his three grandchildren. José is two of the participants that were born in raised in Cuchillo Parado. José owns a crop of pecan trees in Cuchillo Parado, Mexico, which ensures him extra income. He enjoys his time off and

begins each morning by walking around his block. The morning walks have become part of his daily routine. The daily walk routine is something he also does in Houston, visiting his sons and grandchildren. Staying healthy for himself and his family is a goal he has so he can continue to spend time with them.

Juan

Soy mexicano, nací en Ojinaga Chihuahua. Allí fue donde crecí, cuando terminé la preparatoria tuve la fortuna de poder estudiar. Algo que no es común en esa región y mucho menos que los hombres estudien. Es más común que las mujeres estudien y los hombres trabajen en un trabajo físico. Estudié para ingeniero agrónomo, en una escuela Tecnológica Gropecuaria. Desafortunadamente con una profesión en México se gana menos de lo que se gana alguien en un trabajo que no requiere estudio. Una licenciatura de Estados Unidos vale más que una licenciatura de México. Las credenciales de los profesiones Mexicanas no son válidas aquí en Estados Unidos desafortunadamente. Me casé y tuve hijos y decidí buscar trabajo de migrante. Me a los 26 años comencé a trabajar de migrante. Estoy feliz viviendo en Presidio, es un lugar seguro, y pequeño. Aquí fue donde crecieron mis hijos. Vivo bien, no tengo muchos lujos, pero aprecio lo que tengo. Siendo un lugar chico todos nos conocemos, nos echamos la mano unos a otros en lo que podemos. Y se puede decir que es un lugar barato en unas cosas y caro en otras. Pero pues aquí estamos.

I am Mexican, I was born in Ojinaga Chihuahua. That's where I grew up, when I finished high school, I was fortunate to be able to study. Something that is not common in that region, much less for men to study. It is more common for women to study and men to work in a physical job. I studied agricultural engineering at an Agricultural Technology School. Unfortunately, a profession in Mexico earns less than what someone earns in a job that does not require a degree. A bachelor's degree from the United States is valued over a bachelor's degree from Mexico. The credentials of Mexican professions are not valid here in the United States, unfortunately. I got married and had children and decided to look for migrant work. At the age of 26 I began migrant working. I am happy living in Presidio, it is a safe place, and small. This is where my children grew up. I live well, I don't have many luxuries, but I appreciate what I have. Since it is a small place, we all know each other, we help each other however we can. And it can be said that it is a cheap place in some things and expensive in others. But here we are.

Juan, the youngest of the participants, is currently working out of state, around 10-hours' drive, and travels to Presidio almost every week to see his wife. Juan and his

wife have three sons and are hoping to be grandparents soon. Although Juan has a bachelor's degree, he realized that his degree from Mexico was not going to be valid in the United States, and working as a migrant worker would help him earn more income than using his degree and earning Mexican pesos. It was an opportunity to bring income into the family, and Juan went forward with the migrant worker route.

Mario

En el año 2000 me mudé a Estados Unidos con mi familia. Sin embargo, ya tenía muchos años trabajando aquí. Antes del 2000, anduve de indocumentado trabajando. Cuando pude arreglar mis papeles fue cuando mi mujer y yo decidimos venirnos a Presidio, para que estudiaran mis hijos. Mis tres hijos han estudiado. Eso me llena de orgullo porque soy el único de mis amigos, familia y gente que conozco que todos los hijos han estudiado. Es triste que no haya un trabajo aquí donde pueda mantener a mi familia. Aquí la mayoría tenemos que salir. Porque en este pueblo no tenemos trabajo. No hay trabajos donde paguen bien, y poder sacar a la familia adelante. Pero no todo de Presidio es malo a mí lo que me gusta es que puedo cruzar a México las veces que yo quiera. Aún puedo ir a ver a mi familia de México, e ir a las tiendas de allá. Me gusta estar viviendo en Estados Unidos y estar pasando a México.

In the year 2000, I moved to the United States with my family. However, I had been working here for several years. Before 2000, I worked here undocumented. When I was able to get my legal papers, it was when my wife and I decided to come to Presidio so that our children could study. My three children have studied. It fills me with pride because I am the only one among friends, family, and acquaintances whose children have all studied. It's sad that there isn't a job here where I can support my family. Here most of us have to leave. Because in this town there are not jobs. There are no jobs where they pay well and to raise a family. But not everything about Presidio is bad. What I like is that I can cross into Mexico as many times as I want. I can still go see my family in Mexico and go to the stores there. I like living in the United States and crossing to Mexico.

Mario is my father, and he met my mother when he moved from Cuchillo Parado to Ojinaga. Coincidentally they lived right across the street from each other, across from the new house that my grandparents have bought. My father was only able to finish middle school and because of this he wanted to make sure that his children went to

college. Although he only completed middle school education my father is wise beyond his years. Similar to the narratives provided by Guajardo and Guajardo (2017), my parents brought us to the United States of America. My father is not as open to storytelling as Don José Angel, but he knows a little bit of everything when handy work is needed and would teach us about manual work.

We are three children, two sons, and one daughter. Looking at the stories of the other four research participants, my father is the only one whose all children earned at least a bachelor's degree. My older brother has a bachelor's and a master's. My sister has a bachelors and is currently working on her master's. I am the middle child and currently working on my doctoral degree. In February 2023, my parents became grandparents for the first time. My father shared that "being a grandparent is something that I was looking forward to. I am soon planning to retire and will be able to make the ten-hour drive to Houston to visit my first grandson, baby Alejandro, without having to worry about missing work."

IV. FAMILY, WORK, AND LIFE STORIES



Figure 29. *The Heart of the Story*

In anatomy of story, the heart (see Figure 29) relates to the values, passion, and motivations of the study participants. Analysis of the data collected suggest two themes in connection to the heart of the story. These are (1) Motivation to continue to migrant work, and (2) Worthy sacrifice to raise children. Table 4 below introduces these themes through a meaningful narrative provided by each participant and followed by a more detailed presentation of each theme.

Table 4. Themes related to the Heart of the Story

Theme	Participant Narratives
<p>Motivation to Continue to Migrant Work</p>	<p>Every time I went out of town, I went with a hole in my heart due to missing them and not living with them. But knowing that I am going to look for better opportunities and that type of work is better paid. You have to be aware that you have to raise your children and to educate them you have to go out of town, chase for a good life, well, that’s how the situation was. Armando</p> <p>The reason I worked as a migrant was to be able to improve their quality of life of my family. Unfortunately, living in Presidio forced me to go to work far away from them and be able to give my family what they didn’t have here. Cesar</p>
<p>Worthy Sacrifice to Raise Children</p>	<p>I’m not going to deny, it was difficult spending most of their childhood away. It was an enormous sadness, leaving them here and go out looking for work. It was very sad, we almost spent most of their young years outside, away from them. It was a very sad thing to be without them. The life of a migrant worker is constantly being away from home and the family alone. José</p> <p>Leaving them behind while I went to work was very hard. It was a feeling of both emotions, I felt good in the sense that I was going to work for one of them, because they inspired me to be a better person and father. Being able to give them what I lacked when I was a child. But I also felt bad because, well, I missed them so much when I left the Presidio. Juan</p>

Motivation to Continue to Migrant Work

Feeling guilty for leaving the family behind and missing major life events of their children was mentioned by all five participants. They are conscious that spending all that time away from home had a negative impact on family dynamics. For example, Armando

shared that it was not easy being away from home, job opportunities were limited, and he had no other option but to leave home to work.

Era bastante difícil al momento de separarnos, cuando yo me tenía que ir a trabajar. La distancia era muy difícil, sobre todo al principio. Pero era necesario por la cuestión de buscar mejores oportunidades de trabajo, económico. No era algo que le agradaba a nadie, pero teníamos que hacerlo para sobrevivir y poderlos sacar a delante.

It was quite difficult when we had to be separated, when I had to go to work. The distance was very difficult, especially at the beginning. But it was necessary because the reason was to go looking for better job opportunities, economically. It was not something that anyone liked, but we had to do it to survive and be able to get them ahead. –Armando

On the other hand, Mario explains that he was motivated to leave his family behind and work hard to provide for them. He is my father, and he is always saying how proud he feels because we all obtained an education and better opportunities for work and life.

El sacrificio de ser un trabajador migrante valió la pena cuando todos mis hijos se hicieron profesionistas, finalmente el ciclo se quebró. Soy el único de mis amigos que todos sus hijos estudiaron. Eso no es fácil, estoy muy satisfecho ellos son mi orgullo. Valió la pena todo el tiempo que estuve lejos de ellos.

The sacrifice of being a migrant worker paid off when all my children studied and became professionals, finally the cycle was broken. I am the only one of my friends that all the children studied. That is not easy, so I feel very satisfied because they are my pride. It was worth all that time I was away from them. –Mario

Although the participants shared that they regret spending long periods away from their families, they are conscious it was a necessary to provide for the household financially. Unfortunately, there is no way to recover the time that was missed being away from home. Four of the participants that are grandparents shared that they enjoy spending time with their grandchildren. This can be interpreted as making up for the time

they lost seeing their children grow. You can say that this is an opportunity to enjoy spending time with the family's little ones. Not all the participants are grandfathers, but it would be interesting if the remaining one Latino migrant worker does the same once he becomes a grandfather.

During the pláticas, all five participants mentioned that they had the responsibility of being fathers. This entailed they needed to be providers. The well-being of their families was their motivation to continue to work as migrant workers, no matter the situation. They understood that they were the individual that had the responsibility to support the family, which meant having to find job opportunities even if they did not enjoy what the job entailed. Cesar mentioned that his earnings in Mexico were low, and his family lacked essentials. So migrant working was a way to move forward.

Cuando vivíamos y trabajaba en México carecíamos de varias cosas. Por mi familia me vine a los Estados Unidos. Cada vez que me tenía que marchar a trabajar me iba con tristeza, y dolor. Por qué tenía que salir a trabajar lejos. Pero fue algo que los beneficiaba así que no había de otra.

When we lived and worked in Mexico, we lacked several things. Because of my family I came to the United States. Every time I had to go to work, I left with sadness and pain. Because I had to leave to go to work far away. But it was something that benefited them so there was no other way. –Cesar

All five participants had the exact same goal, to work hard and financially support the family. The children and wives became the motivation of all five Latino migrant workers to continue working in that type of job. Constantly those jobs were not pleasant, but it indicated that bills were going to get paid, and food would be on the table. They quickly realized that embarking on those types of jobs meant financial stability came attached to working those jobs. Becoming fathers meant that there was no time to double-guess how they were going to become financial providers. Their families became the

main reason for these men to go back and find more migrant work once their temporary job ended. These men have been on constant migrant work for most of their lives.

Worthy Sacrifice to Raise Children

Being away from home negatively impacted the participants. All of the participants shared how tough their journeys became, especially for being on the constant move. Melancholy became evident when they shared how difficult their living situations were. Mainly because they felt isolated from their immediate families. This sadness was not shared with their children to protect them. These men put on a brave face every time they had to leave their homes. Sure, they may have friends who were also working as migrant workers. José shared that he felt close to home by frequently looking at a photograph his older son gave him (see Figure 30). The picture was from a family trip to a water park when they camped out during Easter.

Los pocos días de descanso de trabajo procuraba venir a visitar y pasar tiempo con mi familia. Los viajes constantes de ida y vuelta eran algo fastidiosos porque no había trabajo seguro aquí en esta área. Es muy común al andar de un lugar a otro, pero así es la vida del trabajador migrante me imagino yo. Una de las formas que yo me sentía cercas de casa era con una foto que llevan en mi camioneta. Me la dio mi hijo porque él quería estar conmigo a donde yo fuera a trabajar.

The few days off work I tried to come visit and spend time with my family. The constant travel back and forth was annoying because there was no secure job here in this area. It is very common to go from one place to another, but that is the life of a migrant worker, I imagine. One of the ways I felt close to home was with a photo they carry in my truck. My son gave it to me because he wanted to be with me wherever I went to work. –José

The participants needed to become creative and find alternative ways on trying to cope with their desolation of being away from home. Since they were constantly moving, a few participants took pictures during their journeys to remind them of their loved ones.

Staring at those pictures served as a reminder of why they were working away from home for the benefit of their loved ones. Being apart from their loved ones is something that they may never get used to. But their families are what gave them the drive not to give up and continue to work for them no matter how difficult it was.



Figure 30. *José's Son Traveling Picture*

Becoming fathers meant that these Latino migrant workers felt responsible for educating and raising children that would eventually become model citizens. During the pláticas, they shared that good teaching morals, being respectful to others, and being responsible were the central values they imparted to their children. Juan mentioned that he really enjoys being a father, and teaching his three children the values he thinks are important from an early age is essential.

A mí me gusta ser mucho papá y esposo. Con el deber de ser un proveedor para mi familia hay sacrificios y responsabilidades. Con esto se tiene la tarea de educar a los hijos para que sean unos hombres de bien. Uno de los valores que les enseñe a mis hijos desde pequeños fue la moralidad. Fue muy importante que esta virtud fuera fundamental para su crecimiento. Criar unos hijos de buenos valores y principios fue algo que yo tenía en mente mucho antes de que ellos nacieran. Y estoy confiado en que lo logre. Mis hijos son unos hombres ejemplares.

I really like being a father and a husband. With the duty of being a provider for my family there are sacrifices and responsibilities. I had the task of educating my children to be good men. One of the values that I taught my children from an early age was morality. It was very important that this virtue was essential for their growth. Raising children of good values and principles was something that I had in mind long before they were born. And I am confident that it achieved it. My sons are exemplary men. –Juan

Similarly, with the other four participants, Juan mentioned that teaching the children good morals sets the foundation for the adults they become. During each plática, the participants mentioned how happy and proud they were of their children. Also, the participants said that they were satisfied with their children's achievements. The five participants' achievements ranged from becoming parents, graduating from a university, and being hard workers. The Latino migrant workers were all very proud of their children. There was not a single child that these men did not gloat about each of their children. Raising role model children can be viewed as a great accomplishment they all feel they achieved successfully.

The constant discomfort of always being on the move, suffering cold and hot weather, working long hours, and being away from their families, in the end, it was worth it for these men. The children of all five migrant workers benefited from the father's work and work journeys. Due to being in a better financial state than the fathers when they were young, these sons and daughters had a chance at getting an education. They

had the option to get an education and not have to migrant work like their fathers, something that these migrant workers were not lucky to do so. With the exception of José, as previously stated, his degree was from Mexico, so his degree is not accredited in the U.S. Mario is the only of the five participants who all of his children attended and graduated college.

Yo quería que mis tres hijos estudiaran una carrera. Para que anduvieran como yo de migrante para poder subsistir. El impacto que yo les di que yo pienso, que así le puedo llamar. Puede ser que los saque adelante y por eso estudiaron. Si no hubiera sido por mi oficio de trabajador migrante, y si me hubiese quedado a trabajar aquí en Presidio hubiera ganado muy poco. Yo no hubiera tenido la oportunidad de darles educación, ayudarles económicamente durante los años de la universidad. Quería que ellos estudiaran y no se repitiera la historia de papá a tener que trabajar lejos de la familia. Y criar a los hijos con solo la mamá en casa. El estar lejos de ellos por varios meses y a veces la mayoría del año se siente muy feo. Aparte de ese sentimiento de estar que se siente feo. Y cuando andanada lejos, también se batalla con muchas cosas. Se sufre al tener que acomodarse al nuevo estilo de vida, buscar donde vivir, donde rentar, y hasta donde comer. Porque andar en otras partes que se desconoce, es difícil.

I wanted all my three children to study and have career. So that they would not have to be migrant workers to survive, like me. The impact that I gave them, I think that's what I can call it. It may be that I got them ahead and that's why they studied. If it hadn't been for my job as a migrant worker, and if I had stayed to work here in Presidio, I would have earned very little. I would not have had the opportunity to give them an education, help them financially during their college years. I wanted them to study and avoid the repetition story of dad having to work away from the family. And raise children with only the mother at home. Being away from them for several months and sometimes most of the year feels horrible. Besides from that feeling, you feel horrible and when you leave, you also struggle with many things. You suffer from having to adjust to your new lifestyle, looking for a place to live, where to rent, and even where to eat. Because being away in other places that are unknown is difficult. –Mario

The sense of pride is a factor that was present when Mario was talking about the achievements my siblings and I have reached. He sees the time he spent away from home as a sacrifice that had its benefits. Mario, along with my mother, were successful in breaking the cycle. None of us will have limited job opportunities since they are more

marketable compared to mi father. Mario made the sacrifice of doing physical jobs, missing family time, and suffering extreme weather conditions, so my siblings and I would never have to embark on the migrant worker journey like he was forced to. This sacrifice came out of his love and the responsibility he felt he had as the head of the family.

In summary, the heart of the story was illustrated through discussing (1) Motivation to continue to migrant work, (2) Worthy sacrifice to raise children. Study participants were forced to go away from home to seek employment, since they saw themselves as the financial providers for the family. “Separation is a source of great hardship. Yet separation, and the sacrifice it entails, also reinforces parents’ and children’s commitments to each other, at the very least during the time that parents and children live apart” (Dreby, 2010, p. 33). Constant separation is a permanent scar that these families endure. However, study participants recognized the importance to go away to be able to provide financial support for their children and wives. Similarly, Palacios Cabrera (2014) mentions the importance of instilling family values and good morals; these factors set the foundations of children’s education and are carried throughout adulthood (p. 13). This is an aspect that all study participants mentioned in their narratives. They were proud of having raised good children.

Parra-Cardona et al. (2006) mentioned that migrant work was associated with the opportunity to improve their quality of life as well as to financially secure the future of their children (p. 372). The five participants were able to draw connections to their own lives and work experiences. They were aware of their realities and what was needed to help their family to get ahead. All five participants explained that their children are good

workers and great parents, and they are proud of who their children have become. Freire (1972) explains the importance of challenging the status quo and examine possibilities for change. All five participants aimed to break the cycle of migrant working. None of their children are forced to migrant work as a lifetime occupation.

The Mind



Figure 31. *The Mind of the Story*

The next section in anatomy of story the mind (see Figure 31). Figure 31 represent the focus point of all analytical thinking. During the analysis, the mind refers to the analytical, the imagination and ideas for improvement. Analysis of the data collected

suggests two themes in connection to the mind of the story. These are (1) Challenges of migrant work and (2) Survival of Presidio. Table 5 below introduces these themes through a meaningful narrative provided by each participant and followed by a more detailed presentation of each theme.

Table 5. *Themes related to the Mind of the Story*

Theme	Participant Narratives
<p>Challenges of Migrant Work</p>	<p>Something I don't like about being a migrant worker is not having a steady job. In this type of work, you never work the same hours. There are times when you have to have a good schedule, and other times not so much. Armando</p> <p>Being away from family is the biggest challenge for migrant workers. Because many times you don't know what can happen to you far from home. What kind of people are you going to meet or talk to? In some cases, they can treat you well because they can mistreat you. Another challenge is that you don't know what could happen while being away from Presidio. But then you have to risk it to progress financially and reach your goals. For example, it makes me happy to see my children have progressed and have moved forward in their studies. Family to me is what comes first, so I am glad they are healthy, and I get to spend time with them when I am not out of town. Mario</p> <p>The workdays were long, but it was nice to get up early. Around 4:30 in the morning, and by the time I was home, it was around 7:00 or around 8:00 at night. The work routine is heavy on the body. By the time I was home, I wanted to take a hot shower and sleep. I needed to rest and recover energy as much as possible for the other day of work. Migrant work is also burdensome, and sometimes I worked 10 hours or 12 hours a day. José</p>

<p>Survival of Presidio</p>	<p>Even though Presidio continues to grow, it is still relatively small and lacks several things. Something that I would like to change about Presidio would be that they have a hospital first of all. It is a town of people of advanced age. A hospital is needed and for it to have the necessary services for each person.</p> <p>Cesar</p> <p>I wouldn't trade Presidio for a bigger city with opportunities. I like it here, and I am glad my children grew up here. I feel that, despite everything Presidio lacks, I like Presidio, everything is fine. Of course, there are not many amenities, but it is quiet. It's nice to know that Presidio is slowly growing and prospering.</p> <p>José</p> <p>I think bringing money from other places is one of the ways I contribute. Because this little town continues to progress and is still active. Since most of the migrant workers bring money to this town, we contribute financially in that way, and I can consider that I contribute to that. Although I do not earn money here in Presidio, here it is spent on food, city taxes, and housing utility bills.</p> <p>Juan</p>
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Challenges of Migrant Work

The five participants shared their dislikes of migrant working. Being away from the family was their principal discomfort. Missing family time, being away from their small children, not seeing their immediate family. Working in extreme weather conditions was discussed too. Since migrant work is seasonal, this mean having temporary jobs. Armando mentioned that not having job security was a not unpleasant feeling. Not having a steady job may be a stressful situation specially when being the main or the only source of income in the household.

Armando

Las veces que me tocaba trabajar de noche no podía llamar a mi familia, porque en el día yo dormía y descansaba para tener energías en la noche. Y ellos en la noche ya dormían porque tenían que ir a la escuela y mi esposa también tenía que ir a trabajar. No poder convivir más con la familia, era algo bastante triste para mí. Perderme de la convivencia que hemos tenido a lo largo de los años. Algo de que si me arrepiento aparte de perder tiempo valioso con mi familia es no haber tenido mejores trabajos en los primeros años de mi vida aquí en Estados Unidos. Algo estresante de este trabajo es no saber cuándo se acababa el trabajo. Varias veces nos despedían del trabajo sin anticipación alguna.

The times I had to work at night I couldn't call my family because, during the day, I slept and rested to have energy at night. And they already slept at night because they had to go to school, and my wife also had to go to work. Not being able to live with the family anymore was something quite sad for me. Missing out on the coexistence we had over the years. One thing that I regret apart from losing valuable time with my family is not having had better jobs in the first years of my life here in the United States. One of the stressful things about this job is not knowing when the job ended. Several times we were fired from work without any advance notice.

The five participants shared that migrant work was not their dream job growing up. Migrant work was their primary source of financial support the family. The negative part of migrant working, aside from the challenges these men had to endure, was job security. Each of the participants mentioned that having a steady job was not something they felt they had. On average, their temporal job lasted no more than two years. There were times when the jobs only lasted a few months. Typically, the supervisors would notify them of being terminated with a few days in advance, and in some cases, they were let go the day of. Having utility bills, house/rent expenses, and car payments made things stressful for these men. In some cases, they were let go and had to dig into their savings accounts. Not all of these workers were fortunate enough to have savings. The financial hardship that they experience in these types of situations was unpleasant.

Another challenge that all the migrant workers discussed was the difficulty of

working in a country where English the primary language. As previously stated, none of the participants are fluent in English. Mario shared how he viewed having limited English skills as a significant challenge he faced as a migrant worker.

Mario

Me desafié a mí mismo con este tipo de trabajo y rutina diaria. Aunque he vivido en los Estados Unidos durante muchos años, nunca pude aprender inglés lo suficientemente bien. Puedo entenderlo un poco y escribirlo un poco. Pero para tener una conversación así, no puedo. Siento que hablar inglés en estos trabajos le ofrecería mejores puestos, horas y más paga. Sería un reto menos para la gente que trabaja como yo y batalla como trabajadores migrantes. El trabajo migrante no es fácil, no es solo trabajo duro es sentirse perdido en un nuevo lugar, acostumbrarse a la rutina y extrañar a la familia.

I challenged myself with this type of work and daily routine. Even though I have lived in the United States for many years, I could never learn English well enough. I can understand it some and write it a little. But to have a conversation like that, I can't. I feel that speaking English in these jobs would offer you better positions, hours, and more pay. It would be less of a hassle for people that work like me, and struggle as migrant workers. Migrant working is not easy, it is not only hard labor is feeling lost in a new place, getting used to the routine, and missing the family.

Feeling lost at every new job location was a sensation that was present for the participants. The five participants mentioned a sense of confusion and reliance on their migrant worker community to help each other. For the most part, there was not a single person in their group that spoke English. They had to manage to learn how to learn to order a meal at a restaurant or ask their supervisors for clarification ins a work task. It is evident that these migrant workers quickly learned how important speaking English was. It was discussed that some of them tried to learn English but unfortunately did not succeed. The long workdays, not having classes available, their bodies being tired, and not having time to study were some of the factors that restrained them from learning English. This experience is important to recognize because it demonstrates the resilience

and strength of the migrant worker community despite difficult circumstances.

Aside from the challenges these men have faced, they have a positive attitude about their journeys. The hardships they had to endure do not take over the happiness they feel about their achievements. During the pláticas, the participants shared they do not have any regrets about their migrant journeys because, with their decisions, they were able to support their families and help them move forward. Mario shared he is thankful for having a healthy family and is glad he was able to help his three children go to college. For all of my siblings and I to earn, education is one of the things that fills him with joy. Not having the migrant worker earnings would have been very challenging financially assisting his us in the university.

Mario

Estoy agradecido de mi familia, que contamos con salud. Por ellos trabajo y ellos son los que me motivan a ser mejor cada día. Y estoy feliz porque mis tres hijos se graduaron de la universidad. A pesar de días largos de trabajo y tiempo fuera de mi familia no tengo ningún arrepentimiento. Pienso que las decisiones que he tomado han sido muy propias en mi persona. Y que han sido las mejores. Si tuviera el poder de cambiar algo sería, que mis ingresos y necesidades los pudiera ganar aquí. No tener que salir tanto. Pero, en fin, no se puede, pero sería algo que sé que no solo me gustaría a mí, si no a la mayoría de los trabajadores migrantes de aquí de Presidio.

I am grateful for my family that we have health. I work for them, and they are the ones who motivate me to be better every day. I am happy that my three children graduated from the university. Despite long days at work and time away from my family, I have no regrets. I think that the decisions I have made have been very personal to me. And that they have been the best. If I had the power to change something, it would be that I could earn my income and needs here. Not having to go out as much. But, in the end, you can't, but it would be something that I know would be liked not only by me but also by the majority of migrant workers here in Presidio.

The Latino migrant workers embarked on a journey that was tough. For the most part, the labor was physical work that was demanding on their bodies. Their work routine

was monotonous, and they had the same routine every day. The participants shared that sometimes the work routine was tiring, and they hardly ever got a day off. Working every day was very exhausting, especially when these workers got older. There were times when the migrant workers had to endure and suffer working cold weather and sometimes in the heat. The work routine José mentioned during this plática was how he sometimes worked 10, 12, or even 16 hours a day. Working these number of hours with no day off can affect the body.

José

Los turnos de 12 horas eran muy duros, pero a veces pasaba la ocasión que se trabajaba hasta 16 horas. Eso era en los tiempos que estaba yo más joven. Pero ya últimamente eran 12 horas, seis días o siete de la semana sin descanso alguno. Estaba variable el trabajo, viaje casi a todos los estados de Estados Unidos. Aparte de ser un trabajo pesado por las levantadas muy temprano, de días largos, peligrar en el trabajo, estar lejos de la familia, también a veces vivíamos en unas condiciones medio críticas. El trabajo se podía aprender fácilmente, los desafíos era estar lejos de la familia. Los fríos y calores, muy duro el calor. Para mí era mejor el frío que el calor, en verdad. Y el estar fuera de la familia era lo más difícil, yo diría que es lo más difícil para todos los que trabajan de trabajadores migrantes.

The 12-hour shifts were very hard, but sometimes I had to work up to 16 hours. That was when I was younger. But lately, it was 12 hours, six or seven days a week, without any rest. The work was variable I traveled almost to all the states of the United States. Apart from being a heavy job due to waking up very early, having long days, being in danger at work, and being away from family, we also sometimes lived in semi-critical conditions. The job could be easily learned, and the challenges were being away from family. The cold and hot weather is very hard, especially the heat. For me, the cold was better than the heat. Being away from the family was the most difficult, and I would say it is the most difficult for all those who work as migrant workers.

The continual work routine became long days for these migrant workers. The same routine each day caused the workdays to seem longer for them. The Latino migrant workers mentioned that when they were given a day off, they would use it to go to the

laundromat and go grocery shopping. One of the essential errands for these men was going to the hardware store and buying tools needed to complete their job duties. The sense of doing the same thing every day became a mental stress for participants. Even though continuing routine may be helpful for some doing the same thing for over 12 hours a day became challenging for them. During the pláticas, it was mentioned that once they remembered they were working for their families and to give them a better life way, they coped with their daunting routines. The mental toll of the work was also difficult, as the participants had to focus on the task in front of them, often with little room for rest or breaks. The participants mentioned that they were able to cope with the mental and physical toll of the labor by focusing on the end goal of providing for their families. All five migrant workers also discussed the hardships and loneliness in their pláticas. During the pláticas, Juan shared the experience he went through when he migrant worked. Migrant work was not the journey he wished for when he was young, but it paid the bills, so he was happy about that.

Juan

Durante mi trayectoria como trabajador migrante, he trabajado en muchos tipos de trabajos. Por ejemplo, todos los tipos de empleo eran trabajos de mano de obra, la industria de la construcción, centrales eléctricas, refinerías y las minas. Mi cuerpo no se siente igual. Tengo que cuidarme y tratar de no aceptar trabajos que son duros para mi cuerpo. Antes, cuando era más joven, no tenía ningún problema. En este tipo de trabajo lo más importante es tener buena seguridad, y que no falte la comunicación. La vida de trabajador migrante es bastante dura. Especialmente en los primeros años. Te pueden decir de lo que te espera este tipo

During my journey as a migrant worker, I have worked in many types of jobs. For example, all kinds of employment were labor jobs, the construction industry, power plants, refineries, and mines. My body does not feel the same. I have to look out for myself and try not to accept jobs that are hard on my body. Back when I was younger, I had no problem. In this type of work, the most important thing is to have good security and that there is no lack of communication. The life of a migrant worker is hard enough. Especially in the early years. They can tell you what this kind of job has is instore for you, but you don't know how hard it is until you're

de trabajo, pero no sabes lo difícil que es hasta que estas en él. La mayoría del tiempo estas lejos de la familia y eso se extraña mucho. Los viajes buscar trabajo son lejos. La necesidad de trabajo hace que vayas a lugares que ni sabías que existían. He andado por la mayoría de los estados. El andar en varios lugares no se significa que puedes ir a explorar. Los días se te ocupan estando, trabajando de 10 a 12 horas diarias. El venir a casa se siente muy bien, llegas a Presidio muy contento y satisfecho.

in it. Most of the time, you are away from the family, and that is greatly missed. Job trips are far away. The need for work makes you go to places you didn't even know existed. I've been most states. Going to various places does not mean that you can go exploring. The days are occupied by working 10 to 12 hours a day. Coming home feels outstanding when you arrive at Presidio very happy and satisfied.

It is essential to take into account that even if the migrant working journey was not what these men wanted to do. But they are happy they were able to support their families. The journey of migrant workers has been a ride that has been challenging for them in many aspects. Traveling to unknown places, working long days, not having time to relax, missing the family, being absent from their children's major life events, and many more. The day-to-day journey was a repetitive experience that became a constant routine. Once one job ended, the participants went to Presidio during their time off. After a few days or weeks, they had to begin a job search to find a new job and embark on their next job once again. Looking for employment after one job ended has been the way they have managed to have a steady income for the household. There were times when the participants began to look for their next job opportunity, even if they were still employed. They learned how the job was and planned to get ahead whenever they could, especially when they had significant expenses such as their house mortgage and new car payments.

All five participants have a great attitude and do not have strong resentment for the kind of job they did. They shared it was not their favorite, but there were no strong

negative feelings. They are happy that with their work, their families had all the essentials, and some of the children even went to college. It fills them with pride that coming from Mexico, not speaking English, and struggling at work, they were able to raise their families. They are proud fathers, and providing for their families makes them happy. They are glad that migrant work has reached an end in their families. None of their children will have to struggle as they did. Also, their children will not have to experience having to be away from their loved ones constantly.

Survival of Presidio

During the pláticas on what changes these men wished for Presidio, all of them mentioned the need for more job opportunities. Having job openings in Presidio would mean that traveling out of town to work would be less necessary. In addition, Cesar has a health condition; he was quick to discuss about the need of a hospital or medical clinic for the residents. Also, city taxes were mentioned as an issue in need of attention.

Cesar

Otra cosa que cambiaría sería que los impuestos. Los impuestos aquí están bastante altos, sería bueno que no los pongan tan altos sobre todo a la gente de edad avanzada. Pagamos muchos impuestos como para que no haiga una clínica para la gente de aquí. Aquí en Presidio hay mucha gente que necesita de atención médica. Es triste que no haiga servicios aquí para nosotros. Como dije Presidio es un pueblo chico, así que no es justo que los impuestos y el costo de vida este tan caro. Ya no tenemos hijos viviendo aquí. Ellos ya están grandes y ya no viven aquí en Presidio. Mi esposa y yo nomás tenemos una pequeña traila para vivir.

Another thing that I would change would be the taxes. The taxes here are quite high. It would be good if they were not so high, especially for the elderly. We pay too many taxes for there not to be a clinic for the people here. Here in Presidio, there are many people who need medical attention. It is sad that there are no services here for us. Like I said, Presidio is a small town, so it's not fair that taxes and the cost of living are so expensive. We no longer have children living here. They are old and no longer live here in Presidio. My wife and I just have a small mobile home to live in.

The study participants identified several changes they would like to happen in Presidio. These men focused on issues that would benefit them as well as changes that would help all Presidio residents. These included having more job opportunities, lowering city taxes, and a building a hospital for residents as the main changes needed. It is evident that all five participants wished they had spent more time in Presidio close to their families. The participants that have retired still reside in Presidio. They feel comfortable with their daily routine and have no plans to move to a new place. Moving to a new place means that they must begin for zero. They would have to look for a house, make new friendships, and leave their parents away, just to name a few changes. The sense of familiarity with their hometown is something they enjoy and do not plan to disturb. Those who still have their parents alive, mentioned that they also live in Presidio. They plan to stay living close to them. José mentioned that remaining in Presidio after his retirement makes him feel free, and he enjoys having that feeling.

José

Quedarse a vivir aquí en esta región fue algo que se solía esperar, sobre todo para la generación mía. A pesar de estar atados a la vida de trabajar migrante me sentía libre. Cuando descansaba era bonito, pero casi nunca descansaba. Trabajaba la mayoría de los días cuando salía de aquí. Ahora me siento aún más libre. Agradecido que estamos libres y logramos documentos Americanos, y andar cómodos en Estados Unidos. Como ya estoy jubilado, mi trabajo ya lo dejé en paz. Ahora puedo disfrutar mi libertad todos los días y poder ver que no deja la jubilación, tratar de pasarla bien, por el tiempo perdido que pasamos lejos.

Staying here to live in this region was something that used to be expected, especially for my generation. Despite being tied to the life of migrant work, I felt free. When I got time off it was great, we hardly ever rested. I worked most days when I was away from here. Now I feel even more free. I am thankful that we are free and that we got American documents, and that we are comfortable in the United States. Since I'm already retired, I've already left my job alone. Now I can enjoy my freedom every day and be able to see what retirement has in store, trying to have a good time for the wasted time we spent away.

Having the same routine for many years has made all five migrant workers treasure their little hometown. Presidio has been the only place they have been able to call home. Since they were in a constant move from place to place for work, Presidio has been their safe space. Each of the participants shared that they do not plan to relocate to a different place. Presidio is where their family resides, where they were able to build their home, and where their children grew up. Armando, Cesar, and José, even after retirement, have no plans to move away. Remaining in their hometown gives them comfort. Juan and Mario also shared they plan to continue to be Presidio residents once they reach retirement.

Presidio has been able to survive economically through the constant amount of money that the migrant workers bring. The participants are aware that Presidio has benefited significantly from the income all migrant workers bring. The money is earned outside of town and is spent in town. With the earned income, these migrant workers pay city taxes, buy groceries at the only grocery store, pay city utilities, and spend money at local businesses. Juan discussed that he pays city taxes with money earned away from Presidio. Presidio remains a small growing town from sourcing money from elsewhere. That's how it has survived all past years and will remain growing from money earned elsewhere.

Juan

A pesar de la carencia de cosas en Presidio, yo como todos los trabajadores migrantes contribuimos a este pueblito. Bueno pienso que yo contribuyo trayendo recursos económicos para acá. Porque aquí se gasta dinero, aquí se pagan los impuestos, con dinero que viene de otras partes, de afuera. Este pueblito sigue

Despite the lack of things in Presidio, like all migrant workers, I contribute to this little town. Well, I think that I contribute by bringing economic resources over here. Because money is spent here, taxes are paid here, with money that comes from elsewhere, from outside. This little town is still alive because of all the money that

estando vivo por todo el dinero que viene de otros lugares y se queda aquí. Siento que si no llegaría dinero de otras partes, Presidio ya sería un pueblo deshabitado.

comes from other places and stays here. I feel that if money did not come from other places, Presidio would already be an uninhabited town.

Being aware that these migrant workers are the reason Presidio keeps being alive, which gives them pride. All five men shared that bringing money from outside of town gives them satisfaction because they are helping their hometown. They are happy to assist the place their children grew up and the place where they reside or will reside once they retire. This act is viewed as small progress because they are happy to continue and help a small-town grow. They are hopeful that outside income will keep helping Presidio. They also shared that they wish the town could eventually be self-sufficient and that the town could grow and provide jobs for the locals. The goal is to end migrant work and force men to be migrant workers and have to be away from their loved ones.

In summary, the mind of the story was illustrated through discussing two themes, (1) Challenges of migrant work, and (2) Survival of Presidio. All five men discussed the challenges of being migrant workers such as not having a steady job, not knowing what was happening at home, little time to spend with family, meeting new people and learning new rules each time in the new job, working 10-12 hour shifts, learning English, and work hazards. Quality family time is essential in the Latino culture (Smith-Morris et al., 2013; Spears et al., 2012), being close to the family and supporting each other is crucial to raising children. Being away from home was a heavy burden for the migrant workers. As explained in the literature (Viveros-Guzmán & Gertler, 2015), migrant workers face language barriers if they do not have basic English proficiency. The study participants asked their peers for help to communicate and get the job done. Likewise, the

literature explains that migrant workers rely on bilingual coworkers to explain a task that needs to be completed (Gerdes & Wilberschied, 2003). Thus, Viveros-Guzmán and Gertler (2015) mentioned that these workers use gestures and hand movements to try to explain a task to one another.

Being away from their families dented the family dynamics with their children and wives. They made note that they missed milestones from their families for having to work. Children do not understand that working away from home keeps the whole family financially stable (Vega, 2021; Viera, 2020). Also, the migrant workers reported putting their safety at risk, accepting dangerous jobs for the necessity of having to provide for their family financially. Although they were not bilingual, their determination and love for the family were the force that pushed them into this job that was the way to help their families.

Since Presidio remains a small town that lacks resources, the five participants shared their insights of changes needed in Presidio. The migrant workers help Presidio to remain growing little by little through the income that is brought into town by all migrant workers. They are proud of their contribution to the survival of the city, and they do not have plans to relocate to another place. To this effect, Artico (2003) mentioned that when a parent leaves far to work, the level of comfortableness in their hometown increases because their hometown is the only home, they become attached to (p. 158). All five participants had high aspirations for Presidio. They see it as a quiet, nice place that is slowly growing and prospering.

The Hands

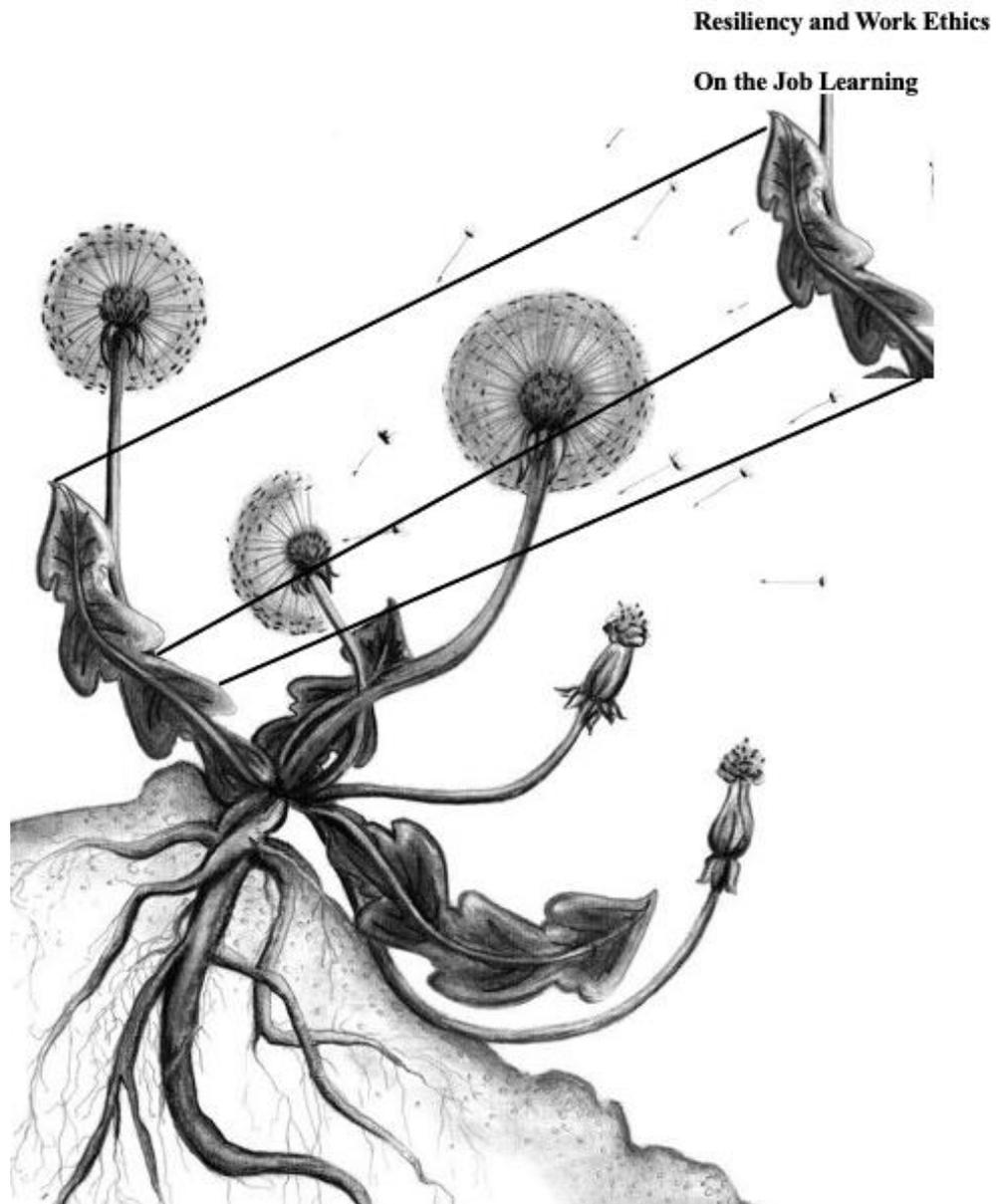


Figure 32. *The Hands of the Story*

The hands of the story (see Figure 32) allude to the creative force and to the telling and retelling of the story to transmit the message. Through analysis of the data collected, two themes in connection to the hands of the story were identified: (1)

Resiliency and work ethics and (2) On the job learning. Table 6 below introduces these themes through a meaningful narrative provided by each participant and followed by a more detailed presentation of each theme.

Table 6. *Themes related to the Hands of the Story*

Theme	Participant Narratives
<p>Resiliency and Work Ethics</p>	<p>I have had many types of work. At one time, I worked in road construction. Also, I have been a truck driver, a dump truck driver, and a driver of many other types of machinery. Later I went out to the refineries, working in different types of work: metal sheet installer, insulation, scaffolds, and much more. I am proud because of all kinds of work I have done, pick, shoveling cement, and construction. Let’s say I have worked a little bit of everything, labor-wise. Armando</p> <p>I have worked in many types of jobs. For example, in the construction industry, power plants, refineries, and mines, all kinds of jobs had physical labor involved. In this type of work, the most important thing is to have good security and no lack of communication. Feeling safe helped me stay calm and continue working in such places each day. Juan</p> <p>I’ve worked in construction, putting ducts in buildings. Also, as a dishwasher when I just started coming to work here in the United States. Later I worked in the insolation, nuclear, gas, and oil plants. For me, the most important factor in any job, but especially in the type of migrant worker, is knowing how to work as a cohesive team. We try to have good communication with colleagues when we are working. And follow the safety rules. Mario</p>

<p>On the Job Learning</p>	<p>In general, the same colleagues are the ones who help each other how to do the work. We all learned new things and different ways to work. I also have taught my coworkers how to do specific jobs. The bond that is created with colleagues is very rewarding in this type of work. Most of us come from similar backgrounds, being away from families and wanting to raise children. I have been lucky to work with people from different Mexican states and even countries in South America.</p> <p>Cesar</p> <p>In this type of work, you learn new things. Every work company has something fresh, new machinery, or they do something different. Usually, they gave us an instructor, and we learned quickly. This type of instruction or training very rarely is given to us in Spanish. We need to ask for help from colleagues who understand a little more English than us. There were times when I helped the rookies that entered the workplace. I shared my work knowledge with them to help them a bit. As the veterans in this type of work did with me when I was a rookie many years ago.</p> <p>José</p>
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Resiliency and Work Ethics

In order to continue to succeed as a migrant worker, tenacity and work ethic was needed. Migrant working has different kinds of jobs that these migrant workers had to endure. This asset is a virtue the children of migrant workers came to realize when they grew up. The children of migrant workers have shared with their fathers the importance that their work has impacted their lives. It can be seen how the constant hard work of these men has been recognized by their children. Armando shared how his son has said that he would pick Armando as a father if he was born again.

Armando

Mi hijo me ha dicho que yo soy el ejemplo de él. Y él me ha dicho que si tubería la oportunidad de volver a nacer, y le dieran a escoger que padre quisiera. Él dice que me escogería a mí para que fuera su padre una vez más. Me enorgullece saber que él me ve como un ejemplo a seguir y me siento contento porque yo siempre hice todo lo mejor posible por mis hijos. En los trabajos tuve la oportunidad de hacer muy buenos amigos, los conocí en los trabajos, y hasta la fecha, después de más de 20 años, me siguen procurando. Que me procuren mis compañeros de trabajo después de tanto tiempo me hace feliz.

My son has told me that I am his example. And he has said to me that if he had the opportunity to be born again, and if given a choice to pick the father he wanted. He says he would choose me to be his father again. I am proud to know that he sees me as an example to follow, and I am happy because I have always done the best possible for my children. At work, I had the opportunity to make very good friends, I met them at work, and to this day, after more than 20 years, they continue to be in touch with me. Having my coworkers to continue to reach out me after so long makes me happy.

The positive impact these fathers have been on their children has been great.

When the children were young, they were unaware of the sacrifice these men had done for their families. As time passed and the children matured, they became aware of how daunting the migrant worker journey was. These men have worked for more than 30 years, and they have managed to make a living as migrant workers. They created their community of friends while being away, and they still stay in touch with some people they met during their work. During the pláticas, all five men shared that they feel accomplished being appreciated by their children. They mentioned all of their children had shared the gratitude they have for the hard work these men have endured. Overall, these fathers have had a tremendous positive impact on their children and families. They have been able to provide emotional, financial, and educational support to their children, and have been a role model of perseverance and hard work. They have been able to instill a strong family culture and sense of belonging, providing guidance throughout the years.

Juan

Yo seguí trabajando con estas dos manos porque necesitaba darles de comer a mis hijos. Deje mi trabajo de profesionista en México, porque aquí en Estados Unidos se gana más. Yo no suelo viajar con objetos para qué me recuerdan en casa. Todos los recuerdos que necesito traer conmigo están aquí en mi cabeza. Asegurándome de hacer un buen trabajo en todo lo que hacía era una de las formas que yo cuidaba mi trabajo, y con cuidar mi trabajo sé que mi familia estaría segura. Mis actos como empleado le afectaban a mi familia, así que yo siempre me aseguraba se hiciera un buen trabajo. Porque eso se significaba que mi familia estaba segura, los biles se pagaran, y no iba a faltarles comida ni ropa.

I continued working with these two hands because I needed to feed my children. I left my job as a professional in Mexico, because here in the United States you earn more. I don't usually travel with objects so that they remind me at home. All the memories I need to bring with me are here in my head. Making sure I did a good job in everything I did was one of the ways I took care of my job, and by taking care of my job I knew my family would be safe. My actions as an employee affected my family, so I always made sure I was doing a good job. Because that meant that my family was safe, the bills would be paid, and they would not lack food or clothing.

Juan's decision to become a migrant worker is another example where he can be proud of what he was able to provide for his sons. Having to leave his professional career to downgrade to a carrier was probably not easy to do, but it has its benefits in the end. During the plática, Juan was asked to share and talk about an artifact. He mentioned he did not travel with any item that reminded him of his family. He spoke that all the memories he needed were ingrained in his head as he touched the side of his forehead. Juan was the only participant that did not share an item with a substantial sentimental value. This may be because he does not want to be traveling with items that have sentimental value and may be damaged or lost. Another reason may be because the constant moving from place to place means he would have to pack, unpack, and find a

spot in his temporarily home to display the item.

All five participants shared that their families were the reason why they kept working and did not give up as migrant workers. The well-being of their family was a result of their work ethic and constant dedication to their job. Juan mentioned that he worked with his two hands. This is a perfect example of all the types of jobs these five men did. All of the employment opportunities they had involved having to do physical work using their two hands. As previously stated, the types of jobs these men had were dishwashers, cooks, construction workers, mine workers, road workers, insulation workers, just to name a few. It is evident that these five migrant workers were ready to embark on any type of physical job and follow the job's regulations to take care of their jobs. It meant their families were going to be safe and be taken care of. Overall, the five participants shared how they were able to keep going as migrant workers despite all of the struggles they faced. Through their hard work and dedication to their family, they were able to keep going and provide for their families. Their stories are a testament to the strength and resilience of migrant workers.

On the Job Learning

With the constant jobs changes accepting a new job meant having to learn a new protocols and how to use machinery. During the pláticas the Latino migrant workers shared how they learned each job polices and ways to work. Often, they had orientation sessions where a supervisor or a team leader would explain the work. These instructions were always in English, there were no sessions in Spanish for who had low English proficiency. Cesar mentioned that most of the time the team would learn from each other, they learned as they went but the English orientation was not really beneficial for them.

They felt lost during those sessions. Cesar stated that in the migrant work journey speaking English would've been a major help to at the workplace.

Cesar

Lo más importante en este tipo de trabajos es la seguridad, y estar consiente en el trabajo. Respetar las órdenes de los patrones, con medida claro. Por lo general en un trabajo nuevo se aprende las cosas de seguridad en un taller que lo administra un supervisor. Es difícil de entender, si no hablas inglés. Yo les preguntaba a mis compañeros que me explicaran cuando no sabía hacer algo. A mí también me toco ayudarle a mis compañeros nuevos. Mi consejo para los nuevos trabajadores migrantes sería que aprendieran inglés, yo si batalle al no hablar inglés. Sería menos complicado si se habla inglés para poder entender el trabajo bien. Y pues se facilitaría todo fuera del trabajo también. De esa forma se puede aprender cuando hacen los talleres para aprender cosas nuevas.

The most important thing in this type of work is safety and being aware at work. Respect the orders of the bosses, with clear measures. Typically, on a new job, you learn safety things in a shop run by a supervisor. It is difficult to understand if you do not speak English. I asked my coworkers to explain to me when I didn't know how to do something. Also, I had to help my new coworkers. My advice to new migrant workers would be to learn English, I did struggle not speaking English. It would be less complicated if you speak English to be able to understand the job well. And then everything would be easier outside of work too. That way they can learn when they do the workshops to learn new things.

Becoming familiar with the job duties and expectations when not speaking English was challenging. The Latino migrant workers shared that their job duties were completed every time as expected. For the most part, job duties had to be explained by a coworker that was bilingual and explained what needed to be done in Spanish. There were times when they became familiar with the work duties and became the mentors of the new migrant workers who only spoke Spanish. A sense of community was created during all job sites among migrant workers. They would help each other because they know what feeling lost at a workplace feels like. All five participants mentioned that learning English in this type of work is crucial. Speaking English would have avoided the

confusion and stress of not knowing to complete a work task.

For safety postposes all five migrant workers discuss that they needed to be trained by their peers or supervisors when they needed to use heavy machinery. A type of workshop is given to them so they can learn how to properly use the machinery. Mario mentioned the type of training given when the workplace depended on the place. There were times where an instructional workshop was given. Other times it was up to the workers to show initiative and do hands on learning and learn how to use the heavy machinery by themselves. The workplace does have a licensure exam that allows the workers to use the heavy machinery only if they pass the license exam.

Mario

Regularmente cuando vamos a usar una máquina de esas te van a dar un entrenamiento. Te dicen lo básico, hay veces que te ponen un video de cómo usarlo. Y claro esos videos están en inglés. Ya después del entrenamiento luego ya tú mismo si te interesa aprender, vas y usas la maquinaria. A veces te dan la oportunidad de que las manejes tú, para que le vayas aprendiendo. Después te hacen una prueba y te dan una licencia para usar esa maquinaria. Y también te hacen una prueba de física y te dan todas las reglas que tienes que seguir. En este tipo de trabajo hay muchas reglas de seguridad que se tiene que seguir. Esas reglas se aprenden con el trabajo.

Regularly when we are going to use one of those machines, they will give you a training. They tell you the basics, sometimes they put a video on how to use the machines. Of course, those videos are in English. After the training then, if you are interested in learning, you go and use the machine. Sometimes they give you the opportunity to drive them yourself, so you can learn. Later they test you and give you a license to use that machinery. And they also give you a physical exam and they give you all the rules you have to follow. In this type of work there are many safety rules that must be followed. Those rules are learned within the job.

In summary, the hands of the story were illustrated by discussing two themes; these are (1) Resiliency and work ethics, and (2) On the job learning. No matter the working situation, all five participants kept working to help their families. The majority

of their children took advantage of attending college and helped end the cycle of having to migrate work. As one work opportunity ended, the participants mentioned that they had to be active and find their new place to work.

Resiliency was a powerful source for the migrant workers to endure. Masten (2008) mentioned that parents transmit resiliency by ensuring to contribute to their families, either through beliefs, values, routines, rituals, religion, and other traditions influenced by culture (p. 21). A labor centered principle is suggested by Freire (1972) as a form of work ethics and was clearly found in the narratives of the five migrant workers. They discussed how even though the work was not what they wanted, they endured in that job profession for the benefit of their families.

Regarding on the job learning, the participants mentioned learning on the job every day and for performing at every new job. There was a need to learn quickly and apply the new knowledge. A bond was created when they shared knowledge with each other, also learning about safety rules was important. There were also opportunities for obtaining training and getting a license to drive machinery. Thus, three principles of adult learning were observed in the actions of the migrant workers adapting to the new work environment (Merriam, 2006). These are: (a) the ability to draw on life experience to assist with learning, (b) a tendency to be internally motivated, and (c) a willingness to learn when transitioning into new roles. The migrant workers used their prior work experience to help them understand their new roles. They drew on the skills they had previously acquired and applied them to the new context. They took initiative to understand and learn about new tasks. They accepted the challenge of learning new skills, despite the unfamiliarity of the environment. This willingness to learn was essential for

the migrant workers to successfully adjust to new work settings.

The Legs



Figure 33. *The Legs of the Story*

In legs is where the legacy lives. If a story moves and lives on, it has legs. In this case, the legacy can be left to their family members, other Latino migrant workers, and Presidio community members (see Figure 33). During the analysis of the data collected

two themes were identified in connection to the legs of the story: (1) Achievements and (2) Life satisfaction. Table 7 below presents these themes through a meaningful narrative provided by each participant and followed by a more detailed presentation of each theme.

Table 7. *Themes related to the Legs of the Story*

Theme	Participant Narratives
<p>Achievements</p>	<p>My great pride is having achieved the goals I had. First, in my employment and at home as a father, educating my family. Educating my children was the most important thing. I am proud of my children because they are professionals. And above all, they know how to defend themselves and everyone. That was the goal that eventually, they no longer needed me. Armando</p> <p>I thank God that my children were able to learn English and were able to learn to weld. They are very hard workers, and being a worker was one of the principles that I gave them. I'm glad they could learn to weld. Welding is one of the best-paying jobs in the area where they live. I am very pleased that they can stand up for themselves. I hope that my three children give their children adequate principles and that they give their children study. Cesar</p>
<p>Life Satisfaction</p>	<p>My legacy to my children is that they have studied, now they have financial security, and have a better chance in everything they do, compared to me. However, working as a migrant worker is difficult. I feel proud because my salary is well paid. I have been able to manage my income, and it was worth it. I have built a house, bought cars and trucks to move around, and educated my children. I wish my three sons will educate and be providers for my grandchildren once I become a grandpa. Juan</p> <p>It makes me happy to see my children have progressed and have moved forward in their studies; that makes me very happy. And I am also happy because I have my wife, I have my mother, I have my father, my brothers, which makes me happy. Family to me is what comes first, so I am glad they are healthy, and I get to spend time with them when I am not working outside of town. Mario</p>

Achievements

During the pláticas with each of the participants, a sense of pride was present. The satisfaction they feel when they speak about their family is noticeable. The constant conversation revolved around their children. All five participants spoke highly of their children, and they mentioned their children are their most valued accomplishment. The Latino migrant workers also talked about how proud they were of their accomplishments. Thanks to their hard work and determination, they were able to be providers for their families. Armando spoke about working as a migrant worker gave him pride in his job, but mainly how his children have been successful by earning an education. Through his migrant life journey, he took with him a picture his son gave him for Father's Day (Figure 34).

Armando

Mi hijo menor es un ingeniero, mi hija mayor es asistente principal de una primaria y mi hija del medio es una gran madre de mis cuatro nietos. Me enorgullece a ver la familia que he podido criar. Mi trabajo como migrante me ayudo a criarlos y asegurarme que no les faltara nada. Mi hijo me dice que soy muy buen padre. La foto que me regalo me la llevaba a mis trabajos allí mi hijo estaba en kínder. Ahora ya es un adulto con buenos principios.

My youngest son is an engineer, my oldest daughter is an assistant principal in an elementary, and my middle daughter is a great mom to my four grandchildren. It makes me proud to see the family I have been able to raise. My work as a migrant helped me raise them and make sure they didn't lack for anything. My son tells me that I am a very good father. The photo that he gave me was taken to my jobs where my son was in kindergarten. Now he is an adult with great principles.

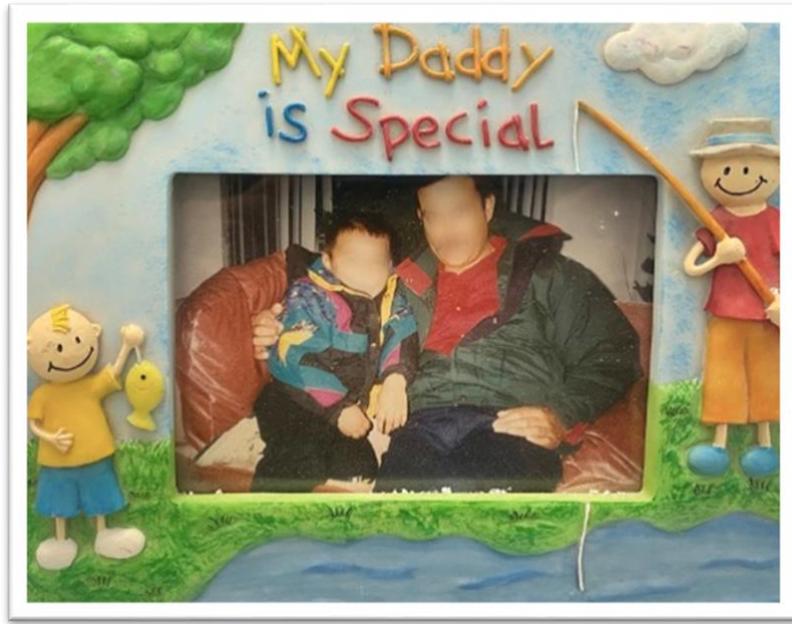


Figure 34. *Armando's Father's Day Gift Picture*

It is evident that the success and accomplishments of each of the children of these migrant workers had a positive impact on the migrant workers. When discussing how proud they are of their children, the participants went into depth on why they feel proud of each of their children. They motioned that being successful in their careers, graduating college, and becoming a parent. The Latino migrant workers feel pride because their children are what drove them to keep them working. Viewing their children as they go, they now realize that their sacrifice of being away from home for all those years finally had its rewards. These men are aware that they are the reason their children have been able to reach certain milestones in life.

Even with the discussion of how unpleasant and challenging the life of a migrant worker has been, all five participants are grateful for their jobs. Having a job that was able to help them become the financial provider for their families is something that they appreciate no matter the cons of that job. The deleterious parts of migrant working that

were discussed are spending long periods of time away from home, the constant move from place to place, being absent family milestone events, and missing their families. Cesar shared that those two negative aspects of migrant workers are two of the main factors he disliked, but at the same time, he is grateful for the job that helped him, and his family move forward.

Cesar

Sería muy bonito que todos mis nietos estudiaran, pero pues faltan muchos años para eso. El tiempo lo dirá si eso va a suceder. No voy a negar trabajar de trabajador migrante no es fácil. Duras mucho tiempo para imponerte si a eso le puedes llamar. Extrañas, tu esposa, tus hijos, tu casa, tu cama, la buena comida, se extraña todo. Estoy agradecido de todo lo que pude hacer con mi trabajo. Mis hijos me han dado las gracias por sacarlos adelante.

It would be very nice if all my grandchildren studied, but that is many years away. Time will tell if that happens. I am not going to deny working as a migrant worker is not easy. It takes a long time to get used it, if that's what you can call it. You miss your wife, your children, your house, your bed, good food, everything is missed. I am grateful for everything I was able to do with my work. My children have thanked me for taking care of them.

It is essential to make a note of how these migrant workers are not bitter about resourcing to migrant work. It has been discussed that migrant work was not their favorite occupation due to the challenges they faced. None of the five Latino migrant workers mentioned they have significant resentment in this type of employment. This is because working as migrant workers was the way they supported their families. The family has been a factor in this study, so it is to be expected that the participants have respect for this profession. And are grateful they were able to be able to sustain their families. The three retired participants are now thankful to be home and are trying to recover some of the lost time by spending time with their grandchildren. The children have also displayed gratitude to their fathers. The children are aware of the significant

sacrifice the fathers made for them. It is worth mentioning the children have said “thank you” to the fathers in some shape or form. Most of the participants thanked God then they were grateful for their achievements. Presidio is known to have a big catholic community. The only catholic church is Santa Teresa de Jesús Church (Figure 35), located on the main street.



Figure 35. *Santa Teresa de Jesús Church*

The participants resorted to migrant workers because they had no other way of employment. During the pláticas, it was mentioned that before embarking on the migrant worker journey, they had nothing of financial value. Beginning to work as migrant workers it opened the opportunity to achieve a few goals. All five participants mentioned that one of their first goals, when they started working, was saving money to buy or build a house. Each of the participants mentioned that they are homeowners are they were able to become homeowners because they worked as migrant workers. José shared that he

started from zero, not having anything of financial value and he was able to achieve different things for being a migrant worker.

José

Estoy orgulloso de lo que he logrado con respecto a mi familia y mi trabajo. Mi mayor meta en esta vida fue criar a mi familia. Me complace haber apoyado a mi familia y a mis hijos. Gracias a Dios mis dos hijos son exitosos. Siento que son mejores hombres que yo cuando tenía su edad. Mis dos hijos lo son todo para mí. Con mi trabajo, pude mantener a mi familia y proporcionar una casa y lo esencial. Mis hijos están educando a sus hijos con los principios que yo les di. Les han enseñado que tienen que estudiar y que sean respetuosos. Si fue difícil estar lejos de mis hijos cuando estaban chicos, así que me da gusto que mis hijos tengan trabajos donde pueden estar cerca de sus hijos. Yo pude comprar casa, carro, darles de comer y más. Me siento muy feliz de los logros que he podido llegar a tener siento un trabajador migrante. Hice mi casita, compré carros y trocas, y sostuve a mis hijos y esposa. Comencé de cero y pude hacer varias cosas con mis ingresos.

I am proud of what I have achieved regarding my family and my work. My biggest goal in this life was to raise my family. I am pleased to have supported my family and my children. Thank God my two sons are successful. I feel they are better men than me when I was their age. My two sons are everything for me. With my work, I was able to sustain my family and provide a house and essentials. My children are educating their children with the principles that I gave them. They are teaching them to study and to be respectful. Being away from my kids was hard when they were little, so I'm glad my children have jobs where they can be close to their kids. I was able to buy a house, a car, feed them, and much more. I feel very happy with the goals that I have been able to achieve as a migrant worker. I built my little house, I bought cars and trucks and I supported my children and wife. I started from zero and was able to do several things with my income.

The achievements discussed by the Latino migrant working were not only revolving around financial achievements. Each of the participants also mentioned that they achieved raising great children. Children that they feel proud of the way they behave and the accomplishments they have achieved to this point. Educating their children with good values and morals is seen as a great achievement too. It is important that these participants do not only view success and meaning it with the number of material things

they own. Having children that are respectful and are hard workers is considered as the ultimate achievement for these five Latino migrant workers. The participants also spoke about the importance of being able to provide for their families. They discussed the importance of being able to send money back home to support their families. Having the ability to provide for their families and give them a better life is seen as a great achievement. They also discussed being able to save money for their own future and for their children's future. These participants understand the importance of saving money in order to secure their future. This can be seen as another achievement in their life.

Life Satisfaction

During the pláticas, all five Latino migrant workers referred to their legacy left behind is, their children. The five participants mentioned that even though they managed to buy valuables with their work, they are not millionaires to leave behind an inheritance. Raising children that are good people is the way they feel their own legacy will live on. Children that are able to fend for themselves and not have to rely on their parents are a way these men feel like their legacy as parents have been successful. Juan describes that his legacy is his children, for being good people and being studious. He gave them the advice to study hard and work harder to be able to move forward in life.

Juan

Mis hijos han logrado ser unas buenas personas y bastante estudiosos. Gracias a sus principios, y dedicación ellos pueden valerse por sí mismos. Y pues en cuanto preparación académica ellos pudieron estar mucho más superior que yo. Y eso para mí es un orgullo, y es un avance, es un paso adelante en la escalera. Mis hijos han podido aprovechar los recursos que han tenido, de una forma muy

My children have managed to be good people and quite studious. Thanks to their principles and dedication, they can fend for themselves. And well, in terms of academic preparation, they are much more superior to me. And that for me, is a source of pride, and it is progress and a step up the ladder. My children have been able to take advantage of the resources they have had in a very considerable way.

considerable. En educación, en todo lo que se pueda, para poder seguir adelante. Mis hijos son mi legado que dejo en esta vida. Ellos serán quienes con los principios que les instruí seguirán siendo hombres de bien.

In education, in everything possible, to be able to move forward. My children are the legacy that I leave in this life. They were the ones who, with the principles that I instructed them, continue to be good men.

The legacy that these five Latino migrant workers feel they will leave behind is their children. They have high hopes that their children will impact society later on. Either by mentioning that their children will be good people since they were raised to have good values, being academically successful, being great parents, and by being great workers. It is evident that the legacy these men leave behind is their children. Some of the children already have children, so the values and guidance the fathers gave their children will likely be passed on to their grandchildren. A sense of pride, gratefulness, and satisfaction was felt when the participants spoke about how their legacy will leave on and be carried by their children. The legacy these five Latino migrant workers leave behind is a powerful one. They are a testament to the hard work and resilience of the Latino migrant worker population, and the strength of their families. The fathers have worked hard to provide for their children and have instilled important values in their children.

The pláticas were filled with stories of how difficult the journey was to arrive in the United States, yet the participants shared how they were able to make the best of it with hard work and resilience. They also shared stories of how the work has helped them build a better life for their families and the future generations. These pláticas have revealed that the Latino migrant workers are satisfied with the life they have managed to build in the United States. They have worked hard to provide for their families and have come out of their struggles with resilience. They are now in a better place than they were

before. Mario mentioned how satisfied he is with my siblings and me, also my mother which he praises for being a major source in raising us and helping us become the professionals we are now. My father shared one of his many artifacts. Figure 36 has the wallet size high school diplomas that have been traveling in his wallet since 2002 when my older brother graduated high school, and my diploma when I graduated in 2008. Unfortunately, by the time my sister graduated high school, they had stopped making the wallet-size diplomas. He mentioned he is very proud and happy about all the accomplishments we have been able to achieve. It has to be mentioned that significant credit for such achievements of having respectful children, academic and well-rounded have to be given to my mother. He mentioned that although he was financially present for them, my mother was the parent that was with them 24/7 raising them. She was the one with us when they were sick, during every birthday celebration and school function. He mentioned that it was a partnership effort to have children with such great morals and values.

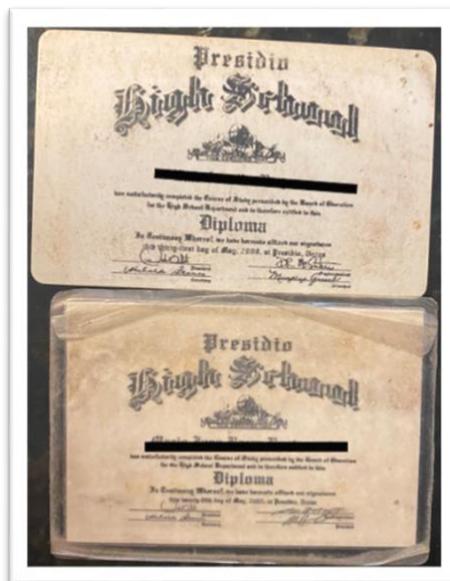


Figure 36. Mario's Sons Wallet Diplomas

Mario

Me satisface el saber que mi trabajo, aprendí un poco de todo. Pero me siento orgulloso de saber desarrollar mi trabajo que hago. Me siento orgulloso de todo lo que he aprendido y todo lo que he logrado. Y hablando de mi vida personal me siento orgulloso de mi mujer, ella es una gran mujer. Me siento orgulloso de mi hija, que es maestra de kínder. Me siento orgulloso de mis dos hijos que también tienen unas carreras muy bonitas, y ante todo les gusta lo que hacen. Eso me hace sentir muy feliz. Me satisface que ellos son felices en sus carreras y no tendrán que trabajar como yo lo hice.

It satisfies me to know that in my work, I learned a little of everything. But I feel proud of knowing how to develop the work that I do. I am proud of everything I have learned and everything I have achieved. And speaking of my personal life, I feel proud of my wife, she is a great woman. I feel proud of mi hija [my daughter], who is a kindergarten teacher. I am proud of my two sons, who also have very nice careers, and above all, they like what they do. That makes me feel very happy. I am pleased that they are happy in their careers and will not have to work as I did.

The participants are pleased that their children are happy in their careers, life accomplishments, or by becoming parents. The five Latino migrant workers feel satisfied because they were able to be financial supporters for their families. But most importantly, the participants are satisfied that, thanks to them, their children have more job opportunities compared to themselves. Since all of the children are able to speak English, and most of them earned an education. These children will not have to resort to migrant work to try to support their families. This is the greatest satisfaction these men feel, and the migrant working cycle has reached an end. The story of papa will not have to repeat itself. Their children will be able to work close to their children and will not be forced to split the family for the majority of the year.

In summary, the legs of the story was illustrated by discussing two themes (1) Achievements, and (2) Life satisfaction. Major achievements for the migrant workers included educating their children, children learning English and learning an occupation,

children becoming self-sufficient and being able to fend for themselves. This finding is congruent with existent literature. For example, Gomez (2016) mentioned that Latino men take much pride in the kind of jobs they do and how they educate their children (p. 17). The migrant workers' children, some are parents, and some earned a college degree. The legacy these men leave behind is their aspirations that their grandchildren also obtain an education and that the new generations have freedom to choose the life they want to have. Migrant work and their high aspirations for raising their family made possible for these men to interrupt the status quo and the cycle of hardships due to lack of options to start to create social change (Freire, 1972). The participants set a positive example for their children and grandchildren, showing that hard work, dedication, and a positive attitude can lead to achieving one's goals.

One of the principles of lifelong learning speaks to finding pleasure in life and being able to enjoy a personally rewarding life (Chapman et al., 2006). Study findings suggest that life satisfaction for the participants included acquiring material possessions, becoming grandparents, raising good children, and leaving a legacy of good men. After many years in migrant work, the study participants have been able to find pleasure in life to enjoy the product of their labor and the satisfaction of having a family that loves them and that keeps on going. In paving the road for the next generation, the migrant workers' children have been provided with opportunities to leave Presidio to obtain a career, work in different occupations, raise a family in other places, not just to continue to migrant work as the only option.

V. CONCLUSION



Figure 37. *Alejandro and Abuelo*

Alejandro is Mario's first grandchild, my first nephew as well. The photograph above (see Figure 37) shows him holding his grandchild for the first time, only being a few minutes old. I only wonder what my father was thinking meeting Alejandro who will carry his legacy forward. Alejandro is already loved by all the members of his immediate family. My father's hard work and dedication gave all my siblings and I the opportunity to earn an education. My brother Iván and Ana my sister-in-law (Alejandro's parents) are both petroleum chemists with very successful careers. Alejandro will be a lucky baby boy, and he will not have to experience spending long times without seeing his father like my siblings and I had to experience because our father was a migrant worker. I only saw my father a few times a year. One of my little cousins, whose father was also a migrant

worker, would ask me: “¿Dónde está tu papá? ¿Si tienes papá?” [Where is your dad? Do you have a father?] Because he never saw my dad around. I do remember a few times when my father would come back from work and my sister Marilyn was a toddler. She would forget who my father was, so she would not recognize him. If my dad went near her to try to hug her or give her a kiss, she would start crying. My mother, brother, or I would have to grab her and calm her down. It usually took about 30 minutes for her to remember who he was, and then she would go with him. Oshoone Davis and Gibson (2022) mentioned that the father’s involvement is essential, but the financial role is important since the family will need money to buy the necessary resources for the family’s well-being (p. 15). Many of the children from my generation experienced having their fathers away most of the year. It is the common for this to happen in Presidio, till this day, there are many fathers that have to leave to work in other far way cities.

My father, Mario, has already been vocal about trying to be present for Alejandro as much as possible. Later this year, he will be retiring after migrant working for over 35 years. The trip from Presidio to Houston, where my brother lives, is almost a ten-hour drive. My father explained that he has driven more than that distance for work, so driving ten hours to see his *mijo* [grandchild] will be easy. Mario’s life has been coming full circle. After many years of hard labor, he is ready to settle down and relax. Baby Alejandro has brought a new side to my father. I heard him telling Alejandro, “*Lo quiero mucho a mi niño*” [I love you so much my child] as he held him and caressed his right cheek. I grew up in a family where men do not tend to speak freely about their feelings. I do remember the words *I love you* only came from my mother’s lips. My father is known to be short with his words. Even though him not verbally saying he loved us, I never

doubted his love for me and my siblings. My father tends to express his love for us with actions. His signature action that shows affection to us is, him squeezing the back of our necks. I knew a neck squeeze would happen each morning I sat down to have breakfast. So, seeing my father saying those words to Alejandro felt great. Alejandro, in less than a week born, changed my father, he sparked something in him. He was able to bring a side of my father that I always knew was there, but now I was able to witness firsthand.

Study findings confirm that migrant workers put their families before their own health, safety, and personal goals. The sacrifice of being away from home and working long shifts was all for the love and well-being of their families and in hopes of a better future. A future for better job opportunities for their children so that they did not have to become migrant workers.

Study Highlights

The main goal of this dissertation study was to contribute to an existing gap in the literature documenting the narratives of older male Latino migrant workers, especially Latino migrant workers from Presidio, Texas. This study provided an opportunity for the participating Latino migrant workers to share their life and work experiences. Data USA (2021) shows the town's median income is \$24,593. Finding a good-paying job in Presidio is a struggle when only 358 out of 4,019 residents have a bachelor's degree (Census, 2019). As previously stated, the temporary jobs these migrant workers accept are many miles away from Presidio. Mothers raise children as if they were single mothers. Children see their fathers only a limited number of times a year. It is essential to acknowledge the challenges that the families of migrant workers face while not being together. Currently, no research is available on older male Latino migrant workers from

Presidio and the challenges they face working away from home.

Chapters III and IV provided insights about study findings. Chapter III described the history of Presidio and introduced the study participants, the navel of the story. Chapter IV presented family, work, and life stories of the five migrant workers who participated in the study. In Chapter IV, study findings were organized following anatomy of story by discussing the heart, the mind, and the legs of the study. Next, the following section highlights important findings by approaching the research questions that drove the dissertation.

Research Question #1

What can we learn from the journeys of older male Latino migrant workers from a small border town in Texas?

The Latino migrant workers provided narratives depicting their resilience and determination to pursue a better life for themselves and their families. Migrant working is a lifetime occupation; all five participants worked 30+ years as migrant workers. They have been able to keep the family unity and still want to continue to enjoy family time and celebrate family events. Their motivations to migrant work included raising good children who could have better education and life opportunities. They showed strength when having to be away from home for long periods of time and saw this as a necessary sacrifice. The well-being of their families was the driving force for these five men to continue to migrant work. The wages earned in their small border town would not have been enough to live comfortably, build a home, provide for their families, or have income to be able to send their children to college. In order to support their families, all of the participants left their home country and relocated to Presidio (TX) to ensure that their

children had better job opportunities.

Freire's (1972) critical pedagogy principles aided when examining the older Latino migrant workers' stories: Civil process, labor-centered, learning, communication, freedom, social change. *Civil Process* focused on the challenges faced by the older male Latino migrant workers. *Labor-Centered* and *Learning* principles examined workplace training, on the job learning, informal learning, and expectations for succeeding in each new job relocating for employment. *Communication* looked at the migrant workers' disposition to share their stories as well as how they transmitted these messages. *Freedom* looked into life choices, the historical, social, economic, and cultural conditions surrounding the stories and life experiences of the migrant workers. *Social Change* examined the impact that migrant workers had on their place of residence, their families, and future generations. Thus, the dissertation participants discussed their challenges as migrant workers, such as being away from home, not speaking English, and working in hazardous conditions. They did their best to comply with workplace learning, training, and new job expectations. Learning occurred at the workplace through informal learning from coworkers and learning how to use heavy machinery. Typically, the job training was in English, so they relied on colleagues to explain the process. The conversations to collect data with the study participants was not always smooth; they were reserved at first. As the conversation flowed, they began to be more descriptive. A sense of pride was present when they spoke about their children and achievements. Freedom principle did appear in the pláticas when they mentioned they felt free once they retired. Being migrant workers made them feel trapped in the same daily routine and limited job opportunities. Additionally, Presidio's economy would suffer without the

income generated by migrant workers. Study findings provided insight into the ways that migrant workers support their families and community. Presidio has survived as a city due to their economic contribution. The Latino migrant workers also mentioned they have worked all over the United States of America and in different areas, agriculture, construction, and factories.

Research Question #2

What are their experiences, struggles, and achievements as migrant workers?

A major experience to highlight relates to the learning that took place while obtaining a new job every season. Every job was different, there were new rules and policies, new roles, new co-workers, new supervisors, new equipment and machinery, and a new environment. The migrant workers were willing to learn and share their knowledge with each other, participate in new training, and transition into new duties at work. However, the study participants faced several challenges as migrant workers such as not having a steady job, little communication with home and limited family time, working in extreme weather conditions and long hour shifts, experiencing language barriers, work hazards, and loneliness. Despite the hardships, they all showed remarkable resilience, determination, and commitment to their families. The daily routine was something they learned to deal with. Each day was repetitive, and this repetition made the days seem longer.

Schiffrin et al. (2010) stated that narratives are fundamental to our lives; narratives let us dream, plan, complain, and reminisce through telling stories (p. 1). The study participants shared their journeys as migrant workers, their workplace experience, and the perceived impact that being migrant workers have had on their families. Using

storytelling allows the reader to imagine the whole narrative (Schiffrin et al., 2010).

Based on the data presented, the study participants have indicated they have faced many challenges, such as feeling lonely, language barrier, and working in hazardous weather, but the most significant challenge they faced was being away from their families.

The income sent back to Presidio meant that families could be more financially secure. This allowed them to pay for basic needs such as food and housing, but also opened up opportunities for education. Four of the five migrant workers did not have the option to go to college. Thus, migrant working allowed them to build a better future for themselves and their families. Raising children that have become hard workers, great parents, and academically successful have been their main accomplishments as fathers. All of the Latino migrant workers discussed how they were able to purchase vehicles and buy or build a house with their earnings. Some of them described that they started from zero when they began migrant working. As time passed and the constant working outside of Presidio, they were able to save money and purchase possessions. Their children had a chance of landing better jobs than their parents. With educational opportunities, access to economic resources, and speaking the English language, children gained skills needed to find higher-paying jobs and break the cycle of migrant working in which their parents found themselves trapped, living in Presidio.

Research Question #3

How does leaving for work impact their families and hometown?

The family left behind in Presidio also had to cope with the economic and social effects due to the migrant workers leaving he home. It was expected for the wives to stay home and take care of the house and the children. However, no substantial data were

collected on the roles of the wives. The migrant workers' narratives suggest that as the children grew older, they became aware of the necessity for the fathers to leave town and work elsewhere. Despite these hardships, the migrant workers were able to provide a better quality of life for their families, which was the primary goal of their migration.

Presidio benefits from the income that is brought into town. This includes improvements to roads, sidewalks, and buildings. These factors have led to an increase in property values and an overall improvement in the quality of life in Presidio allowing for steady growth and progress. Receiving the external money earned by the male Latino migrant workers is a main source of income to guarantee the survival of Presidio. Also, the small businesses, such as the only grocery store and a few gas stations, benefit from this income and the support provided by the migrant workers and their families who continue to live there. The migrant workers are essential to the local economy. Without them, Presidio would suffer, leading to a decrease in economic activity.

Study Contribution

The figure below makes note of three major study contributions (see Figure 38). These are: (1) Presidio's survival, (2) Adult learning connections, and (3) Migrant workers' life satisfaction. First, a significant contribution of this study includes putting Presidio in the spotlight.

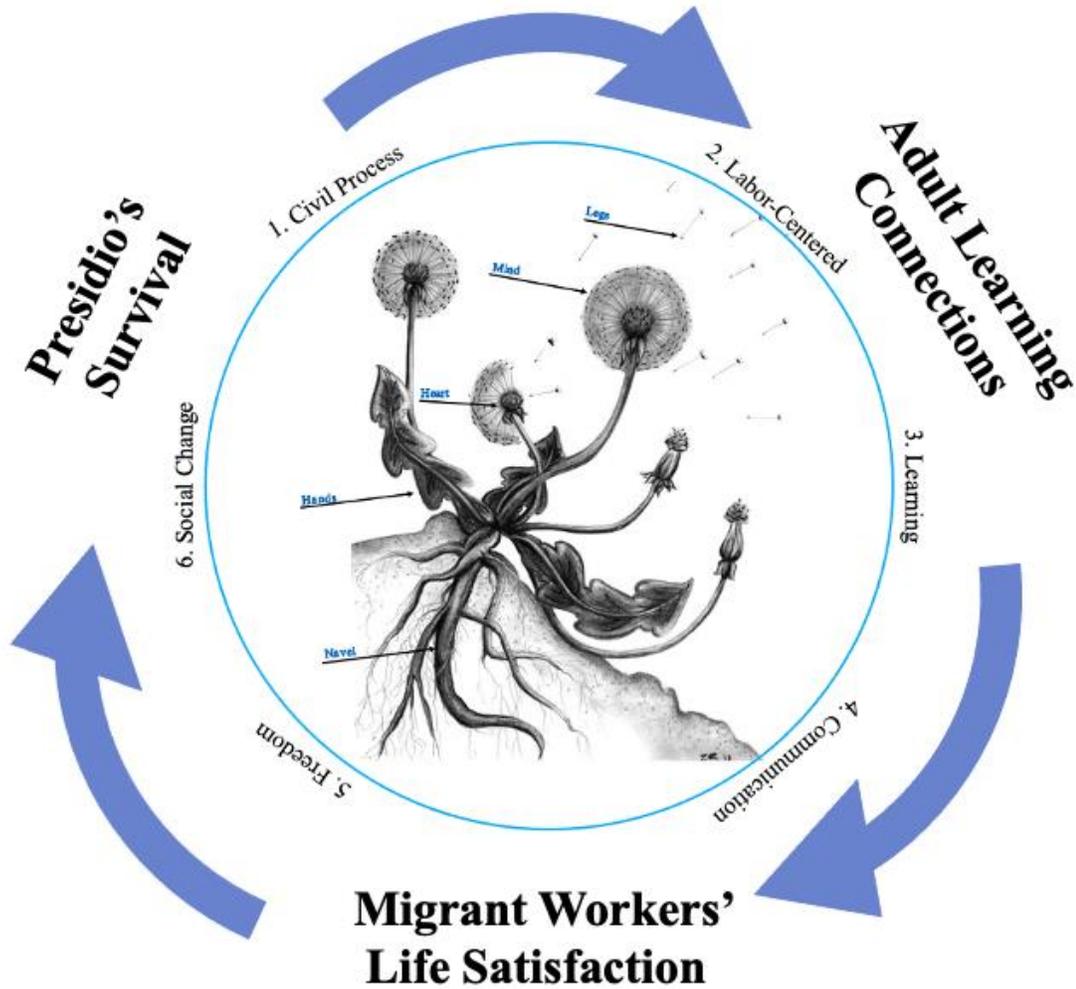


Figure 38. *Study Framework and Contributions*

The dissertation describes several important events, as shown in the newspaper clippings discussed in Chapter III that are related to the life of the town and the history of the place. The newspaper clippings add to the historical context of Presidio and are connected to the lives of the study participants. Public records were found through the newspaper but there is no literature about the town or its history. There is a new campaign creating murals with meaningful paintings to promote the culture of place and attract visitors, but this is so recent that no publications were found. However, so far there is not a mural depicting the migrant workers, their contribution, and acknowledge their

important role in making sure that Presidio continues to exist on the map. Presidio's economy is driven by the migrant workers' lifestyle. They help the city to stay alive with their financial contributions; however, city officials do not seem to acknowledge the important role of migrant workers.

Second, regarding adult learning connections, the migrant workers had a need to learn quickly and apply the new knowledge immediately as part of their adaptation to a new work environment. "Informal learning recognizes that the acquisition of knowledge and skills in the work setting does not occur from organized programs alone" (Jacobs & Parks, 2009, p. 141). Lifelong learning and adult learning principles were observed in the stories shared by the study participants. Learning should take place at all stages of the life cycle, from the cradle to the grave, and in all life contexts (Laal, 2011, p. 472). In other words, lifelong learning means learning for life. Within this approach, adults should have opportunities to update their skills and for obtaining more advanced levels of knowledge. All study participants mentioned the need to learn on the job and adapt to new roles and work responsibilities.

Merriam (2009) explained adult learning principles to include (a) the ability to draw on life experience to assist with learning, (b) a tendency to be internally motivated, and (c) a willingness to learn when transitioning into new roles. The study participants had to be resilient in order to ensure they would be successful at their next job. The learned skills were able to be used on the following job site. This included having a strong sense of their abilities and confidence in themselves, which at times meant supporting each other in the new learning. Motivation to learn new work procedures was an essential factor in the migrant work occupation. Having an open mind and a positive

attitude was crucial when they needed to learn new skills depending on the recent work role they had transitioned into. They also needed to be able to adapt to different work environments and be willing to accept different working styles. Jacobs and Park (2009) mentioned that informal learning occurs in the actual work setting and is based on a sense of self-directedness and self-efficacy (p. 141). The migrant workers kept learning and made sure to be qualified to take on the next job.

Third, study findings highlight life satisfaction as an outcome of 30+ years of labor as migrant workers. According to the participants the benefits outweigh the challenges of migrant working. These men are satisfied with their achievements. They manage to have optimistic attitude and look at the bright side of their vocation and work retirement. Focusing on the positive is what helped them to keep going. This study has shown that although migrant working is difficult, the participants found satisfaction in their lives due to their achievements and resilience. Lastly, the study participants mentioned that they learned to become happy with their life. They were happy with the goals they were able to reach, the children they raised, and their life after retirement.

As explained by UNESCO (1996), there four relevant pillars of education, (a) learning to know, (b) learning to do, (c) learning to live together, and (d) learning to be. There were instances in the data where these pillars were observed. Learning was an essential part of the job requirements to survive as a migrant worker. Overall, the study participants expressed how work learning experiences had a positive impact on their lives. They mentioned that training was required for them to complete the job duties. There were cases when the training provided by the workplace gave them a license to operate heavy machinery. They were able to learn new skills and become certified in

various areas. The learned skills were implemented in their daily tasks, and the skills were able to be used in future job positions. The participants shared their knowledge and skills with their colleagues, helping to foster a camaraderie. Similar to what Flores et al. (2021) explained, pláticas allowed the sharing of knowledge among themselves in the workplace. They shared the same language and at times culture, which promoted knowledge building in a nontraditional way. Fierros and Delgado Bernal (2016) further explain that pláticas are a mode of interaction and respectful of many ways of knowing and learning in Brown communities. Using pláticas for this population was a way that their raw story were kept. To summarize, life satisfaction was connected to the pillars of education (UNESCO, 1996), learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be. As the study participants acquired and shared knowledge, they were able to support each other and be resilient to endure 30+ years of work as migrant workers.

Recommendations for Presidio City Official

Study findings point to the need of designing a plan of action that city officials at Presidio can implement to help current and upcoming families cope with the challenges of being a migrant working family. For example, providing free of cost family counseling and mental health therapy programs, as well as providing English literacy programs for adults and specifically for migrant workers.

Beyond providing appropriate services for migrant workers and their families, city officials should brainstorm for positive ways to acknowledge the work and contributions of migrant workers. For example, murals around the city have been planned on several topics but none of them pay tribute to migrant workers.

City officials should consider funding community-based adult learning centers to address the various learning needs of Latino migrant workers. For example, teaching basic skills needed to be successful at their workplace such as communication skills, soft skills, and problem-solving skills.

Lastly, it is crucial to work with local organizations to support and empower migrant workers. Their stories are important not only to the individual participants but also to a larger community. Recognizing their struggles, celebrating their successes, and learning from their experiences is important. It is essential to capture these stories to ensure that they are not forgotten.

Future Research

This research focused on a very specific population, older Latino migrant workers residing in Presidio. It would be interesting to identify similarities and differences with migrant workers from other Texas border cities. There is a need for research to get to know the stories of this community. A natural progression to this research would be to expand the scope of the study to include other immigrant population who also do migrant work. Similarly, it would be beneficial to include the voices of younger or novice migrant workers. By comparing the experiences of the two groups, it would be possible to identify if the needs of migrant workers are changing with the generations.

Overall, this research provides valuable insight into the lives of older Latino migrant workers in Presidio, Texas. However, there is still more that can be done to understand the experiences of these and other migrant workers. This could be accomplished through collecting a different set of data or a longitudinal study.

Additionally, it is important to understand the macro level factors that impact the

lives of older Latino migrant workers. This could include researching the economy that limits their access to resources and opportunities. There is also a need to examine in detail the history of migrant workers in the United States of America and how it has shaped the lives of this population.

A study could explore the impact of family separation on the mental health of family members and identify any potential interventions or coping strategies that could help them manage their emotions.

Another suggested research idea is to focus on the wives of migrant workers to tell their stories. This could be a qualitative research project interviewing them to document their experiences. It could also explore how the wives of migrant workers are able to cope and what support is available to them.

Tensions and Challenges

Since two of the participances still work away from Presidio, I had to work with their schedule to do the eight-hour drive to Presidio when they were available. This added further stress on my work as a full-time employee and driving time for data collection. By planning ahead and taking the time to organize my route, I was able to make the eight-hour drive to Presidio and have successful meetings with all five of the participants.

Initially, I was planning to do this study with four participants. When conducting the first plática, it did not go as I had anticipated. The participant was short with his answers, and not much data were gathered. I contacted my dissertation Chair worried about not having enough data for the study. She advised to add another participant and collect more data through different venues when possible (e.g., journaling, collecting artifacts, and searching in archival data). I took her advice and added a new participant to

the study.

At the beginning, it was challenging for the participants to open up and share their stories. They took the questions as factual and their answers were brief. They answered the questions with little to no detail. I had to ask many follow-up questions about their experiences. With time, the participants let their guard down and began to answer the questions more spontaneously, and they provided more details about their experiences. When talking about their personal feelings, they were reserved at first. Later on they shared some photographs and got involved in storytelling.

Another challenge worth mentioning relates to the way that my father and I communicate. This was the first time I had an in-depth conversation with him about his experiences as a migrant worker. In my family, we do not talk about our feelings, so this was a whole new experience for both of us. The fact that we are both men did not help either. It was awkward for both of us at the beginning. As time went by, both of us got more relaxed, and we were able to engage fully.

Final Thoughts

The stories I heard during this study have moved me in so many ways and I am forever grateful to the men who shared their stories with me. The stories of triumph, love, and hard work that were shared will always be with me. I am humbled and privileged to have been a part of this experience and I am proud to have had the opportunity to share these stories with others. This study has given me a deeper understanding of the importance of migrant working in Presidio and its impact on the family and the community.

This study has also inspired more respect for my father and the Latino migrant

workers. I am moved by the strength, courage, and determination of these men, and I am grateful for the opportunity to learn from them. Embarking on this study has given me a whole different meaning of migrant working. I was aware that being a migrant worker was difficult. As I conducted each plática, it became evident that the stories of these men were driven by their families and the necessity to be financial providers for them.

Completing this study and continuing with my education is the only way I can see it as repayment to my father's efforts and sacrifice.

The stories narrated in this dissertation have allowed me to reflect on my privilege in life and how this privilege has been given to me by my family. I am blessed to have been given the opportunity to attend college and receive a quality education. Being a migrant worker is not easy, and it takes strength and courage to leave your family behind. It is a sacrifice that these men have taken on for the betterment of their families

It is essential to keep telling their stories and to give Latino migrant workers the recognition they deserve. It is also crucial to document their stories as they might get lost. More research focusing on migrant workers from Presidio and other border towns is needed as well as documentaries to spread awareness. The stories such as the ones shared through this dissertation, highlight the importance of migrant workers and how they contribute to society. Their contributions are often underappreciated, and it is vital to bring them to light. Furthermore, these stories must be shared to ensure that the next generation is aware of the struggles of their fathers and grandfathers and the importance of their contributions and legacies.

For many generations, the migrant working community has struggled, and their stories have been undervalued. For two of the study participants who are still working as

migrant workers, the struggle is not over yet. Similar to their journeys, other migrant workers are experiencing harsh work conditions and isolation from their families while away from home. Conducting this study is just a small step to learning about the stories of Latino migrant workers. The struggle is hardly over.

APPENDIX A RELEVANT TERMS

Anatomy of Story: a complex story and organic process that has the core of human activity (Guajardo & Guajardo, 2010).

Cesar Chavez: A United States labor leader who organized farm workers and labor movement (Schraff, 2008).

Critical Pedagogy: philosophy of education that has developed and applied concepts from critical theory” (Kincheloe, 1997).

Bracero Program: An agreement between Mexico and the United States that began in 1942, during World War II, the program brought Mexican men to the United States for temporary work in agricultural fields and then sent them home again (Cohen, 2011).

English Proficiency: the ability of individual to use the English language to make and communicate meaning in spoken and written contexts (USQ, 2021).

Immigrant: An individual who permanently relocates to another country not being the country of origin (Ewing, 2018). A person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country.

Informal Learning: learning without intending to learn, this learning can happen at any place (Hager & Halliday, 2006).

Latino: a native or inhabitant of Latin America, or a person of Latin American origin living in the U.S. (Meriam-Webster, 2021).

Migrant Worker: An individual that travels to a different location to work in a place away from their residence (Costa, 2020).

On-the-Job Training: two people working closely together so one person can

learn from the other (Levine, 1997).

Undocumented Immigrant: an immigrant who resides in the United States without legal status (Immigrants Rising, 2021).

Workplace Learning: is the processes and outcomes of learning that individual employees and groups of employees undertake under the auspices of a particular workplace (Holliday & Retallick, 1995).

Workplace Safety: The process of protecting employees from work related illness and injury (Ferris & Murphy, 2015).

APPENDIX B
PROPOSED SCHEDULE AND TIMELINES
YEAR 2022

May	Defend Study Proposal.
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June-July	Obtain IRB approval. Invite study participants. Schedule pláticas with participants.
July-August	Have all Data gathered.

September	Analyze data & meet with Chair.
October-November	Write participant profiles. Begin writing findings chapters. Meet with Chair.
December	Continue writing findings chapters.

YEAR 2023

January	Continue writing findings chapters. Meet with Chair.
February	Revise entire dissertation. Meet with Chair.
March	Send Dissertation to Committee. Apply for Graduation.
April	Defend Dissertation. Complete edits requested by committee Obtain Chair's approval. Submit to Grad College.
May	Graduate!

APPENDIX C

FIRST PLÁTICA (ENGLISH VERSION)

Getting to know the Participants

Please tell me about your immigration story

What does it mean to be a migrant worker?

Tell me about your life in Presidio

What do you like about Presidio?

What would you change about Presidio?

Describe your immediate family members

What values were important as you raised your children?

Describe how being a migrant worker has impacted you

How has it impacted your family?

How does it feel to leave your family behind?

How do you adjust to a new place when you leave Presidio for work?

The Journey of Migrant Workers

How has being a migrant worker impacted Presidio?

How do you think you contribute to Presidio?

Tell me about your motivation to continue to be a migrant worker through the years

Describe the different jobs have you had as migrant worker

In your opinion, what are important values to observe at the workplace?

What of these values would you teach your children?

What is freedom to you?

Describe a typical day as a migrant worker

What are the conditions that migrant workers live and work due to their jobs?

What would you change about that?

What type of learning took place when you got a new job?

Workplace Challenges and Achievements

What are some of the challenges you have faced as a migrant worker?

Was English a challenge to obtain or keep a job as a migrant worker?

How did you communicate with people at work when they did not speak Spanish?

How important was it to know how to speak English?

When did you use English at work?

Strategies for Success/Other

What are you most proud of regarding your work as a migrant worker?
Regarding your family?

Describe your achievements as a migrant worker in relation to
your job, family, children, and life

What makes you happy?
Any regrets?

What is something you wish you could change as migrant worker?

Tell me about your current job.

Describe your plans for retirement.

What do you think is your legacy for family and hometown?

What advice do you have for upcoming migrant workers?

APPENDIX D

FIRST PLÁTICA (SPANISH VERSION)

Conociendo a los participantes

Cuénteme sobre su historia de inmigración.

¿Qué significa ser un trabajador migrante?

Cuéntame sobre tu vida en Presidio

¿Qué le gusta de Presidio?

¿Qué cambiaría de Presidio?

Describe a los miembros de su familia inmediata

¿Qué valores fueron importantes al criar a sus hijos?

Describe cómo le ha impactado ser un trabajador migrante

¿Cómo ha impactado a su familia?

¿Cómo se siente dejar a tu familia atrás?

¿Cómo se adapta a un nuevo lugar cuando deja Presidio por trabajo?

La trayectoria de los trabajadores migrantes

¿Cómo ha afectado a Presidio ser un trabajador migrante?

¿Cómo crees que contribuyes a Presidio?

Cuénteme sobre su motivación para continuar siendo un trabajador migrante a través de los años.

Describe los diferentes trabajos que ha tenido como trabajador migrante

En su opinión, ¿cuáles son los valores importantes en el lugar de trabajo?

¿Cuáles de estos valores les enseñaría a sus hijos?

¿Qué es la libertad para usted?

Describe un día típico como trabajador migrante

¿Cuáles son las condiciones en que viven y trabajan los trabajadores migrantes debido a sus puestos de trabajo?

¿Qué cambiaría de eso?

¿Qué tipo de aprendizaje tuvo cuando consiguió un nuevo trabajo?

Desafíos y logros en el lugar de trabajo

¿Cuáles son algunos de los desafíos que ha enfrentado como trabajador migrante?

¿Fue el inglés un desafío para obtener o mantener un trabajo como trabajador migrante?

¿Cómo se comunica con las personas en el trabajo cuando no hablaban español?

¿Qué tan importante era saber hablar inglés?

¿Cuándo usa usted el inglés en el trabajo?

Estrategias para el éxito/otras cosas

¿De qué se siente más orgulloso de su trabajo como trabajador migrante?

¿Respecto a tu familia?

Describa sus logros como trabajador migrante en relación con su trabajo, su familia, sus hijos y su vida

¿Qué le hace feliz?

¿Algún arrepentimiento?

¿Qué es algo que le gustaría poder cambiar como trabajador migrante?

Hablé de tu trabajo actual

Describa sus planes para la jubilación.

¿Cuál cree que es su legado para la familia y el pueblo natal?

¿Qué consejo tiene para los próximos trabajadores migrantes?

APPENDIX E

VERBAL CONSENT (ENGLISH VERSION)



Study Title:

NARRATIVES OF OLDER MALE LATINO MIGRANT WORKERS FROM A
TEXAS BORDER TOWN

Principal Investigator:

Luis Baeza

Email: luis.baeza@txstate.edu

Co-Investigator/Faculty Advisor:

Clarena Larrotta

Email: CL24@txstate.edu

My name is Luis Baeza and I am a graduate student at Texas State University. I am doing this study because I want to learn about Latino migrant workers from Presidio, Texas. I grew up in Presidio, and my father has been a migrant worker for over 40 years. I want to explore the stories of this population. I will be gathering information on their achievements, challenges, struggles, and ways of living. With this research, I am planning to bright the stories to light and be able to share them. I am asking you to take part because are a Latino migrant worker from Presidio.

If you want to be in this study, you will participate in two, 90-minute to 2-hours long pláticas and a third 30-minute conversation to clarify doubts.

The types of questions I will be asking will be regarding

- Your personal story
- Your family story
- Experience as a migrant worker
- Work experiences
- Life in Presidio

If you agree to form part of this study, you do not have to answer any question you do not want to, your participation is voluntary, and you can stop your participation at any time. Your name will not be mentioned in any publication and your information will be kept confidential.

Do you have any questions for me?

Do you understand what was said to you?

Do you want to be in the study?

APPENDIX F

VERBAL CONSENT (SPANISH VERSION)



Título de estudio:

NARRATIVES OF OLDER MALE LATINO MIGRANT WORKERS FROM A
TEXAS BORDER TOWN

Investigador Principal:

Luis Baeza

Email: luis.baeza@txstate.edu

Co-Investigadora:

Clarena Larrotta

Email: CL24@txstate.edu

Mi nombre es Luis Baeza y soy un estudiante doctoral en la Universidad Estatal de Texas. Estoy haciendo este estudio porque quiero aprender acerca de trabajadores migrantes latinos de Presidio, Texas. Crecí en Presidio y mi padre ha sido trabajador migrante durante más de 40 años. Quiero explorar las historias de esta población. Estaré recopilando información sobre sus logros, desafíos, luchas y experiencias de vida. Con esta investigación, planeo sacar a la luz las historias de los trabajadores migrantes y poder compartirlas. Le pido que participe porque es un trabajador migrante latino de Presidio.

Si desea tomar parte de este estudio, participará en dos pláticas de 90 minutos a 2-horas de duración y una tercera conversación de 30 minutos para aclarar dudas.

Los tipos de preguntas que le haré serán sobre

- Su historia personal
- Su familia
- Experiencia como trabajador migrante
- Su trabajo
- La vida en Presidio

Si acepta formar parte de este estudio, no tiene que responder ninguna pregunta que no quiera, su participación es voluntaria y podrá dejar de participar en cualquier momento. Su nombre no será publicado en ningún lugar y su información será confidencial.

¿Tiene alguna pregunta?

¿Pudo entender lo que le expliqué?

¿Le gustaría participar en el estudio?

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