DETENTIONS & DEPORTATIONS IN GEORGIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR LATINA IMMIGRANT WOMEN, THEIR FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

by

YOLANDA MACHADO ESCUDERO

(Under the Direction of June Gary Hopps)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to describe and interpret the lived experiences of Latina immigrants in the aftermath of the detention and deportation of a loved one in a rural location in Georgia. This dissertation followed a qualitative heuristic methodology to analyze the essence of the phenomenon of deportation and its complex effects in the lives of Latina women, their families, and communities. Three main conceptual frameworks were employed to guide this heuristic process: borderland feminism, conflict theory, and risk and resilience theory. Among the findings derived from this study, collected data show that Latina women interpret their experiences with detentions and deportations as an ongoing source of violence and increased fear and trauma. Nonetheless, participants also identified the deportation crisis as a source of empowerment, resilience, resistance, and a source of knowledge about Immigration and Customs Enforcement's detention policies. Women are not only sharing this knowledge with other families, but they are becoming leaders and activists in their communities, helping other women to empower themselves by learning about community resources to address the ongoing crisis and fight their own potential deportation.

INDEX WORDS: Deportations, Undocumented migrant families, Latina immigrants, Borderland feminism, Conflict theory, Risk and resilience theory, Heuristic inquiry, Social work

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the migrant Latina women in this study, who shared with me their lived experiences of detentions and deportations of a loved one. They are eleven examples of resilience, hope, and resistance. I admire their strength and courage for crossing and living between borderlands to provide safety and well-being to their families and communities. Also, to my Mami María de los Angeles in heaven and my Papi Carlos Luis in Jauca, who overcame difficult times to successfully co-parent my siblings and me into adulthood. Somehow, they both made it work for all of us. I am grateful for their physical and spiritual presence in my life. Lastly, to my beloved son Jean-Esteban, who has made the greatest sacrifices to allow his Mom to get to the end of this doctoral journey. I love you more than words can tell. I am so lucky to be called your Mom.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Ongoing detentions and deportations across the U.S have greatly impacted the nation's Latino migrant community Silverman (2014). The fear of more deportations executed by Immigration and Customs Enforcement or ICE has become a major source of stress and despair, particularly among Latina immigrants, their children, and their communities. In most cases, these women have become the sole providers of emotional and financial support for their families. Anxiety escalates for these children at the possibility of losing their mothers in addition to their fathers and other loved family members (Dreby, 2014; Gordon, 2017; Sampaio, 2015). Enhanced emphasis on deportation as a deterrent for unauthorized immigration has framed the past and current political debate in the United States (Snyder, Bell, & Busch-Armendariz, 2015) and abroad (Estévez, 2012). The debate on migration in European countries like Great Britain, Spain, Italy, France, and Germany, among others, resonates with the American people's assumptions that migrants crossing borders unauthorized are becoming a safety and health burden for the hosting communities (Estévez, 2012; Forbes Martin & Tirman, 2009; Izcara Palacios & Andrade Rubio, 2015; López-Ceballos, 2014).

America's perception towards undocumented migration is divided between various groups who differ in regard to what needs to be done about this issue. Some see undocumented migration as a sociopolitical conflict, a humanitarian crisis, a health and safety burden, or an economic conundrum, among others. Many conservative groups tend to favor reducing the presence of unauthorized immigrants. Other groups are advocating for lenient and humane

migration policies to avoid trauma due to family separation practices (Cleaveland, 2013; Dreby, 2014; Sanders, Martinez, Harner, Harner, Horner, & Delva, 2013). Migration policies in the U.S. have been framed as a gendered, racial, ethnic, class conflict, and as a human rights violation (Donnelly, 2015), creating a 'second-class citizen' situation for families with mixed-status (Cleaveland, 2013; Johnson, 2003; Quesada, 2011; Valdez, Padilla & Valentine, 2013). A mixed-status family is a household where members have various levels of legal or undocumented presence in the country (Belliveau, 2011; Chomsky, 2014; Zayas & Bradlee, 2014). An example of a mixed-status family is two parents traveling from Guatemala with their 2-year old child, who entered the country without authorization by avoiding an official port of entry. Once in the United States, this family could become mixed-status if they give birth to more children on U.S. soil, who will automatically become citizens of the United States by birthright.

ICE Policy Changes on Detentions and Deportations

On January 25, 2017, President Trump issued Executive Order (EO) 13,768, *Enhancing Safety in the Interior of the United States* (Department of Homeland Security-DHS, 2017). This executive order gave ICE administrative instructions for determining new priorities on immigration enforcement and removal of unauthorized immigrants. These changes in priorities for arrests and removals impact aliens who (1) have been convicted of any criminal offense; (2) have been charged with any criminal offense that has not been resolved; (3) have committed any acts which constitute a chargeable criminal offense; (4) have engaged in fraud or willful misrepresentation in connection with any official matter before a governmental office; (5) have abused any program related to receipt of public services; (6) are subject to a final order of removal but have not complied with their legal obligation to abandon the United States; or (7) in

the judgment of an immigration officer, otherwise pose a risk to public safety or national security (DHS, 2017).

Following this Presidential Executive Order, national news media have reported on almost a daily basis compelling stories of Latino immigrant families adversely affected by the shift in migration policy and politics. Pro-immigrant grassroots' organizations have denounced abusive and inhumane tactics from ICE to arrest and deport unauthorized immigrants for a misdemeanor (Sanders et al., 2013). Sometimes ICE arrests and deport people even when they committed no offenses at all, such as in the case of victims of domestic violence, who happen to be undocumented (Blitzer, 2017). This recent strategy is a response from President Trump's administration to deport as many undocumented persons as possible, in the shortest amount of time (Yack, 2017). Considerable amounts of federal and state taxpayers' resources have been allocated to construct a wall at the U.S.-Mexico border to deter more persons from Mexico and Central American countries from entering the country without the proper authorization (McCarthy, 2017). Experts in U.S. migration policy have argued that the proposed wall and current militarization of the U.S. southern border will not impede immigrants to make the dangerous, and sometimes lethal journey to America (Kohn, 2015). Currently, crossing the U.S. border without documents is considered a misdemeanor Type 2. This type of misdemeanor is considered a civil, rather than a criminal violation (Sanders et al., 2013). Despite illegal entry into the country being considered a misdemeanor, reentering the U.S after a deportation carries possible incarceration and a ban to travel to the U.S. for 10 years, among other penalties (DHS, 2017).

Statistics on arrests and deportations. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of immigrants deported from the U.S. to Mexico nearly doubled (Izcara Palacios & Andrade Rubio,

2015). President Clinton's administration sought the deportation of 12.2 million unauthorized immigrants. President George Bush's administration removed 10.3 million undocumented immigrants. During President Obama's administration, deportations of unauthorized immigrants totaled 5.2 million immigrants (Chishti, Pierce & Bolter, Migration Policy Institute, 2017). Deportation priorities for ICE officers during President Obama's administration were concentrated on 1) national security threats, noncitizens apprehended immediately at the border, gang members, and noncitizens convicted of felonies or aggravated felonies as defined in migration law; 2) noncitizens convicted of three or more misdemeanors or one serious misdemeanor, those who entered or re-entered the United States unlawfully after January 1, 2014, and those who have significantly abused visa or visa waiver programs; 3) noncitizens subject to a final order of removal issued on or after January 1, 2014. Over 75 percent of ICE deportations during the Obama Administration pertained to priority number one (Chishti, Pierce, & Bolter, 2017).

ICE's fiscal report of 2017 provided aggregated statistical data about enforcement and removal operations activities, including what type of arrests were conducted for that year. The report indicated that ICE increased the number of detained and deported immigrants from the prior year of 2016. ICE conducted 143,470 arrests, an increase of 30 percent from 2016, and removed 226,119 unauthorized immigrants in 2017. The report does not explain why there were more deportations than arrests in 2017. However, it is probable that the higher number of deportations responded to pending removal cases from the prior year of 2016. Among those arrested during the FY2017, 26 percent or 37,734 had no known or pending criminal charges, meaning they were not convicted of a crime at the time of their arrests (DHS, 2017).

When an undocumented person is arrested by a county sheriff or a local police officer, Homeland Security's ICE officials require the cooperation from the local law enforcement agency to honor what is called a 'detainer.' A detainer requires the police agents to notify ICE within 48 hours about the arrest of a person with a presumable undocumented status. The detainer policy also requests local police maintain custody of such a person for 48 hours beyond the time anyone else would have otherwise been released, to allow ICE to assume custody to begin deportation proceedings (DHS, 2017). Detaining an undocumented person beyond the 48-hour period without pressing charges facilitates ICE agents to crosscheck the detainees' fingerprints with federal databases. One of these databases is called the Criminal Alien Program. The other national database is the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). Migration advocates have challenged the detainer policy with the argument that it is unconstitutional, and a human right violation for local authorities to detain a person without probable cause (Kerwin, Alulema & Nicholson, 2018; Linthicum, 2014).

Deportation is a traumatic experience for all immigrants. Izcara Palacios & Andrade Rubio accentuate that for Central American immigrants, it is even more devastating to be deported as they have a longer and costlier voyage to return to 'el norte', or the U.S. (p. 248). Having relatives and work opportunities in the United States, more than 40 percent of deported Central American immigrants plan or attempt to cross the U.S.-Mexico border once again (Ibid, p. 249). Deportations of Central Americans to Mexico instead of to their country of origin has created another layer of problems in Mexican border towns. It is known that gang members take advantage of deported people by kidnapping them and or forcing them into criminal activity (Arnson & Olson, 2011; Izcara Palacios & Andrade Rubio, 2015).

Secure communities program. The request from ICE for local authorities to cooperate with placing a detainer on an undocumented person under their jurisdiction was established as part of the Secure Communities Program and created by the Department of Homeland Security in 2008 under the Bush Administration. The original purpose was to provide additional funding to state and local law enforcement officers who complied with the detainer policy. The Obama Administration ended the Secure Communities Program in 2014 while asking the Department of Homeland Security to prioritize felons and not families (Linthicum, 2014). This program has been highly criticized by migration advocates due to its negative impact on the migrant community (Kerwin et al., 2018). Nonetheless, the Trump Administration reinstated the Secured Communities Program in January of 2017, as part of his stricter migration policy agenda to enforce expedited removals of unauthorized immigrants from the U.S.

Detention and deportation are among the most known migration policies used by Immigration and Customs Enforcement Bureau (ICE) to control and deter the incoming and permanence of individuals unauthorized to travel to the U.S. The effects of detentions and deportations in the lives of Latina immigrants is the primary topic of this study. In the coming sections I will introduce the rational and justification behind the selection of this phenomenon of detention and deportation as my dissertation study.

Background of the Study

My volunteer work with the Latino immigrant community in Georgia has been greatly impacted by the increased detention and deportation policy followed by ICE. Efforts to detain and deport unauthorized persons from the country have intensified since the creation of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act and The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRAIRA or IIRIRA) enacted during the Clinton Administration

(Sampaio, 2015). In March of 2015, a Latino community in rural Georgia awoke to a raid by ICE. Initially, nine families were left without their fathers, boyfriends, partners, brothers, uncles, other relatives, and neighbors, following the detainment of numerous men deemed to be undocumented. For nearly all of the families, the detained men were the primary breadwinners. Their arrest and eventual removal from the country left behind their wives, children, older parents, and other relatives to fend for themselves since they were most likely unable to engage in legal efforts to earn an income.

Grassroots efforts from local residents, immigrant rights' groups, and faith-based organizations have become the main financial and emotional source of support for these families (Ayón, & Ghosn Naddy, 2013; Sanders, Martinez, Harner, Harner, Horner, & Delva, 2013). Without these support groups, families that are undocumented and mixed-status have limited or no access to mainstream social services or social safety networks, otherwise available for citizens and some authorized immigrants (Ayón & Ghosn Naddy, 2013). The fate of those who remain in the U.S. amidst the deportation of a loved one is uncertain. Social work scholar Luis Zayas (2016), suggests that the forced destabilization and separation of entire Latino immigrant families represent an attack on an extremely vulnerable population.

Migration to the U.S. is increasingly attractive to migrants from Latin American countries other than Mexico, such as El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, or what is known as the Northern Triangle (Arnson & Olson, 2011). More women and family units are taking the dangerous risk to travel to *El Norte*. Or 'The North', or the 'United States'), shifting the traditional male-worker migration patterns. Scholars have called the shift in migrant gender the feminization of undocumented immigrants (Belliveau, 2011). This newer migration trend has

reignited the debate on whether these new immigrants present a safety hazard and economic burden for U.S. citizens.

More recently, immigrants are entering the country in larger numbers, especially from Central America (DHS, 2017). The Department of Homeland Security has expressed its concern relative to their ability to manage such a large number of undocumented immigrants, most of them seeking asylum in the U.S. (Lind, 2018). To make matters more complex, in October of 2018 a migrant caravan started their journey on foot from Honduras to the United States. Entire families with young children joined this human caravan that kept growing over time, soon reaching over 4,000 people. News networks from across the Globe covered the immigrants' walking during the day and sleeping on the streets at night or taking shelter and food from good Samaritans along the way. Immigrants make the trip in large groups, first because they could not afford a *coyote* or smuggler to guide them to cross the U.S south border, and second, because they may have a sense of safety traveling as a large group (Lind, 2018).

To decrease the influx of undocumented immigrants from Central America and Mexico, The U.S. government has instituted deportation as a punishment to deter immigrants from coming to the U.S. (Enriquez, 2015; Valdéz, 2016). Deportation is not a new phenomenon; it has been extensively used in the U.S. to establish a racialized migratory system that favors certain migrant groups while denying entry to other immigrants based on a racialized paradigm against immigrants of color (Estévez, 2012; Enríquez, 2015; Sampaio, 2015; Valdéz, 2016)**.**

Statement of the Problem

Migration to the U.S., particularly from Mexico and Central America, has taken a central place in U.S. policy and political debates. Many citizens have expressed concerns and fear of this large migration of undocumented persons. Two of the main concerns reported by

Americans in research studies related to the newer migration wave are related to 1) fear of higher criminal activity, and 2) disagreement over the use of taxpayers' money to pay for services and benefits for migrants (Cleaveland, 2013, 2011; Sampaio, 2015). The increasing hostility against immigrants, particularly those of Latino origin, has been documented by scholars in social work and other fields. Sampaio, for example, claimed that this sentiment against Latinos has been exacerbated in the post 9/11 attacks era, where the fear against people that appeared to be foreign-born was intersected by the fear of terrorism. When Portes and Salas (2015) conducted research on educational barriers experienced by Latino children in Georgia and North Carolina, they stated that:

> an increasingly corrosive rhetoric surrounds Latino migration, creating great obstacles to academic achievement, including the navigation of a post-colonial nativist American landscape, that continues to fail minoritized youth (p.426).

This anti-immigrant rhetoric is not new as I discussed earlier in this chapter. Notwithstanding, nativist discourse around migration has reignited since Mr. Donald Trump announced his presidential campaign in 2015. Back then, Mr. Trump verbalized racist and prejudiced views toward Mexicans/Latinos. CNN political commentator Sally Kohn reported on June 18, 2015:

> When Mexico sends its people," Trump said during his presidential announcement, "they're not sending the best. They're not sending you; they're sending people that have lots of problems and they're bringing those problems. They're bringing drugs, they're bringing crime. They're rapists and some, I assume, are good people, but I speak to border guards and they're telling us what we're getting (Kohn, 2015).

As discussed earlier, the migration policy is becoming more restrictive and punitive against those crossing into the U.S. without a valid visa or unable to establish a legal presence. In the coming section, examples of nativist rhetoric and the intensified government measures to remove undocumented immigrants will be explored. The current anti-immigrant discourse across the U.S. has precipitated the creation of policies at the state and local levels that have resulted in the oppression and marginalization of Latino families (Cleaveland, 2011; Valdez et al., 2013),

The Latino undocumented community in the U.S. has been impacted as a whole by these policies against migrant workers, provoking consequences such as financial struggle, community disengagement, and isolation. This, in turn, reduces Latinos' social capital as contributors to society and negatively affects their mental health (Cleaveland, 2011; D'Angelo, Llerena-Quinn, Shapiro, Colón, Rodriguez, Gallagher & Beardslee, 2009; González, 2011; Izcara Palacios & Andrade Rubio, 2015; Valdez et al., 2013).

Detention, incarceration, and eventual deportation is viewed by many scholars as an exertion of power from the government to punish immigrants while criminalizing migration to control borders (Enriquez, 2015, O'Carroll, 2017, Valdez, 2016). The dramatic growth of detentions by ICE has precipitated the agency to outsource privately operated facilities to house detainees. Detention centers operating as private prisons is an example of the parallelisms in the current treatment of immigrants and criminals in the U.S. Although unauthorized immigration is increasingly prosecuted as a criminal act, the detention of immigrants based on their citizenship status is civil or administrative detention and can be distinguished conceptually from a correction function.

Detention is also viewed as a form of inflicting fear among undocumented and mixed-status families (Valdéz, 2016). When an undocumented person is arrested by ICE agents, he or

she is sent to a detention facility, most likely in another state. This in itself poses a tremendous burden for relatives to visit their loved one, especially if they are undocumented themselves. Only persons with a government-issued identification can enter the facility. Hence, immigrants in detention are exposed not only to harsh physical conditions while deprived of their freedom, but their undocumented relatives are not allowed to visit them. (Kerwin et al., 2018).

Latinos by the Numbers in the U.S.

Latinos represent the fastest-growing minority group in the United States (Malavé & Giordani, 2015). The most recent U.S. Census of 2010 reported that Latinos represent 17 percent of the country's population. A report from Antonio Flores (2017a) published by the Pew Research Center found that there were 56.7 million Hispanics in the United States in 2015. According to another report for the Migration Policy Institute (MPI), Zong & Batalova (2015) indicated that approximately 11.4 million unauthorized immigrants are currently living in the U.S. More than half (54 percent) of migrants without authorized status reside in four states: California (27 percent), Texas (13 percent), New York (8 percent), and Florida (6 percent). Also, the vast majority of unauthorized migrants, about 7.9 million (71 percent of the total unauthorized population) are originally from Mexico and Central America. The Latino population growth projection by 2065 is about 29% of the total U.S. population or over 107 million people of Hispanic origin. The foreign-born Latino population has increased by nearly 20 times its size over the past half-century, from less than one million in 1960 to over 19.4 million in 2015 (Flores, 2017b). In another report from the Pew Research Center for the state of Georgia, the number of Latinos in 2016 was 923,000 (Lopez, G. & Stepler, R., 2016), which constitutes 9 percent of the total population of the state. Most Latinos in Georgia live and work in the Atlanta Metropolitan area, where the Latino population reached half a million people in 2010.

In Georgia, the surge in the newer Latino migration has promoted negative sentiments among residents and local and state institutions, resurrecting Jim Crow era-type laws to keep immigrants from being integrated as active participants in society (Pruitt, 2009; Weise, 2015). More recently, a controversial political argument against Latino immigrants resulted in one of the most draconian anti-immigrant and anti-Latino laws in the U.S. enacted in 2011, Georgia's Illegal Immigration and Enforcement Act. (Hishaw, 2013). This law, among other things, forces all employers in Georgia to verify the legal status of all hired employees through the federal E-Verify system. The aforementioned law also allows state and local law enforcement officials to ask for legal presence proof such as a valid passport, a tourist visa, or a similar official document when a person is stopped while driving without a license. This information is then shared with ICE and crosschecked with a list of pending deportation orders against the detained individuals by the local law enforcement authorities. Results of these laws provoked a massive defection of farmworkers who were overwhelmingly of Latino origin. Other regulatory attempts from Georgia lawmakers appeared to target the growing undocumented Latino population, such as proposed legislation to prevent undocumented residents from obtaining marriage licenses, attending state universities, and using public sewage and water services (Hishaw, 2013).

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to describe and interpret the lived experiences of Latina immigrants in the aftermath of the detention and deportation of a loved one in a rural location in Georgia. Two research questions guide this study:

RQ1) How do Latina immigrants describe and interpret their lived experiences after the detention and /or deportation of a loved one?

RQ2) What do Latina immigrants identify as strategies and mechanisms of coping, resilience, resistance, and knowledge in the aftermath of the detention and deportation phenomena?

Conceptual Frameworks

Three conceptual frameworks were employed to illuminate and analyze the phenomenon of deportation and its ramifications among Latino immigrant women and their families. The frameworks are borderland feminist theory, risk and resilience theory, and conflict theory.

Borderland feminism is a variant within the critical race feminist theory. Gloria Anzaldúa coined the term *conciencia de la mestiza*, to elaborate a theoretical framework that could highlight the experiences of Chicanas and indigenous women living in the U.S. south borderland. Chicanas' borderland experiences are embedded in a unique contextual reality framed by a hybrid identity resulting from living *aquí y allá*, or 'here and there'. This hybrid identity was viewed metaphorically by Anzaldúa as *una herida abierta*, an 'open wound'. This represents the physical borderland in the U.S. south, but also represents an internal frontier lived by people who cross borders but remain living and feeling as non-belonging to the host land nor to their former land (Anzaldúa, 2004).

The surge in female migration from Mexico and Central America is dramatically changing the Latino immigrant demographics in the U.S. Women are daring to migrate, primarily for work or family reunification. However, more recently, women are crossing on their own, or with their children, and applying for asylum to escape violence in their home countries. Anzaldúa's borderland feminist theory (2004) provides a vehicle to understand the reality of migrant women adjusting to a new life in a not-so-welcoming country. Anzaldúa's theoretical work responds to the systematic struggle of the 'borderland women', whose lives are a daily act of resistance. This resistance is a reaction of Chicana/Latina women against the cultural and

social oppression through their socialization at their countries of origin. Furthermore, this theory of resistance also encompasses the negotiations Latina immigrants make while living as foreigners in their own land or across the borderland (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 2015).

As Latina women are crossing the U.S. southern border from Mexico and other countries in larger amounts (Castañeda-Sound, Martinez, & Durán, 2016; Sampaio, 2015; Hurtado-Mendoza, Gonzalez, Serrano, & Kaltman, 2014) borderland feminist theory has found its way as a theory and as a methodology, to explore the lives of oppressed migrant women and other marginalized groups. Anzaldúa's untimely death in 2007 has ignited other Chicana/Latina feminist scholars to expand on what is now known as a borderland or Chicana/Latina feminism (BF) (Lucero-Liu & Hendrickson Christensen, 2009). Borderland feminism grew primarily as a response to the Chicanas' involvement within the Chicano movement. Lucero-Liu and Hendrickson Christensen (2009) stated that Chicana women on college campuses and community organizations started questioning the clashes between the values embraced by the mostly male-dominant Chicano movement and the locality and positionality of Chicana women's struggles. Lucero-Liu and Hendrickson Christensen stated, "As Chicanas began to speak out within the movement, they were ostracized or marginalized as they were seen as deviating from the true fight and breaking solidarity" (p. 97).

Chicana writers such as Cherríe Moraga, Chela Sandoval, Aida Hurtado, Ana Lucero-Liu, and many others have continued to expand the use of Chicana/Borderland/Latina feminist thought to other fields such as psychology and family science, with the aim of informing praxis with Latina women and their families in community contexts (Arredondo, Gallardo-Cooper, Delgado-Romero & Zapata, 2003; Gutiérrez & Lewis, 2012; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 2015).

Resilience has been a mainstream theoretical framework in social work research and practice since the 1980s (Ungar, 2012). Michael Ungar defined resilience as:

> the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the social, cultural, psychological, and physical resources that build and sustain their well-being, and their individual and collective capacity to negotiate for these resources to be provided and experienced in culturally meaningful ways" (p. 1).

Ungar, a social work researcher and scholar, studied resilience extensively in youth and families across the world. His work has shown that individuals growing up in challenging contexts or facing significant personal adversity can develop resilience and overcome risk behaviors and negative contextual factors. According to Ungar, resilience is a shared quality of the individual and its social ecology, meaning those external entities that surround individuals in vulnerable contexts. Ungar posits that social ecology (family relations, schools, community, government, etc.) is likely more important than individual factors in the development of resilient behaviors and sustainable well-being for populations under stress. These ecological resilient characteristics carry more weight to develop resilience than personal traits, cognitions, or talents, for example, Ungar reiterated the need of studying resilience from an ecological interpretation, where the importance of people's interactions with their environments is acknowledged.

Newer studies on immigrant families have postulated the need to develop resilience models that are culturally responsive to their particular lived experiences. Froma Walsh (2012) proposed a family resilience model to guide family therapy practitioners while working in vulnerable contexts. Walsh's approach focuses on the unique coping mechanisms of each family to overcome extreme adversity. Another family ecological resilience scholar, Celia J. Falicov (2012, 2014), developed an immigrant family resilience model called *Multidimensional,*

*ecosystemic, comparative approach (*MECA). The MECAmap model focuses on providing essential tools to mental health therapists and other practitioners working with immigrant families:

> to provide a framework for understanding the experiences of migration and acculturation, the changed ecological context, and issues related to family cycle and family organization (Falicov, 2012, p. 298).

A family resilience conceptual approach will guide the analysis and discussion of this study related to the lived experiences of Latina immigrants in the aftermath of the deportation of a loved one.

Robbins, Chatterjee, & Canda (2012) defined conflict as a clash of struggles between opposing forces or interests. Conflict has been selected as one of the main conceptual frameworks to guide this study. Rooted in the economic history and socio-political philosophy of Karl Marx's proletarian revolution, conflict theory addresses various aspects that vigorously impact the lives of Latino immigrants in the U.S.: 1) their unwanted, but necessary presence in the country as low-wage workforce to continue generating productivity and capital gains to industry owners; 2) the denial from taxpayers to provide immigrant workers and their families any protection or resources paid with government money; 3) the criminalization of undocumented migration and its ultimate punishment of family separation and deportation. A more in-depth analysis of Marx's conflict theory and its ramifications in regard to the lived experiences of Latino/a immigrants in the U.S. and the phenomenon of deportation will be further developed in Chapter 2-Literature Review.

Overview of the Methodology

This study focuses on the phenomenon of deportation in a rural setting in Georgia. It responds to the present gap in the literature pertaining to how Latina immigrant women, their families, and communities are experiencing and coping with the aftermath of the deportation crisis. This qualitative heuristic methodology will be used to describe and interpret the lived experiences of the participants in regard to the deportation phenomena. In the quest to find answers through a deep process of heuristic research, my role as the researcher enters in a dialogue with the data from the study with the aim of finding underlying meanings and knowledge of important human experiences (Moustakas, 1990; Sultan, 2019). The sources of these meanings take place within the individual through one's senses, perceptions, beliefs, and judgments. Heuristic research "involves self-search, self-dialogue, and self-discovery; the research question and the methodology flow out of inner awareness, meaning, and inspiration" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 11). Among the characteristics inherent to heuristic research, inquiry begins with a question or problem, which the researcher seeks to illuminate or answer, in order to understand the human experience. The contact of the researcher with the phenomenon investigated must be direct and personal.

In addition, this study was guided by a feminist-informed qualitative design, provoking a dialogue between the researcher and the data, while recognizing that structural and systemic power differentials permeate this investigation. Hesse-Biber & Yaiser (2004) acknowledged this important point and encouraged feminist researchers to follow a "process of interlocking *method*, *methodology*, and *epistemology"* (p. 210). Sandra Harding (1987) and Joey Sprague (2016) made eloquent descriptions of these three concepts, and how they provide a robust framework for feminist-oriented research. A *method* is a technique for gathering evidence. Most techniques of

gathering evidence fall into one of three categories: listening or interrogating informants, observing behavior, or examining historical traces and records, including artifacts, photos, etc. A *methodology* is a theory and analysis of research on how the study does or should proceed. It includes accounts of how the general structure of theory finds its application in particular scientific disciplines. Lastly, *epistemology* is a theory of knowledge, it answers questions about who can be a 'knower.' In Sandra Harding's words, "feminists have argued that traditional epistemologies, whether intentionally or unintentionally, systematically exclude the possibility that women could be *knowers* or *agents of knowledge*; they claim the voice of science is a masculine one" (p. 3). Sprague (2016) gives particular attention to methodology in feminist research, as the point where philosophy and action meet, where the implications of what we believe and how we should proceed to get worked out. In summary, Harding and Sprague, among other feminist scholars, highlight the importance of feminist research to denounce a culture that systematically silences and devalues the voices of women.

Sampling Strategy. Eleven participants were selected for this study after an eligibility screening conducted over the phone. I recruited participants with the help of community leaders and activists involved with the Latino immigrant community in rural Georgia. In addition, I received referrals for potential participants from Latina immigrants that I met while volunteering with a community library branch in a mostly Latino enclave in Georgia since 2015. Only 3 participants were recruited from this particular neighborhood, however, knowing the community and many of its residents facilitated conducting a convenience purposive snowball sampling. Neighbors at this setting are regular patrons at the local library mentioned earlier, where they receive educational services such as English classes, GED courses, informative sessions from local resources, after-school tutoring for their children, etc. Although I originally intended to

provide the option to conduct the study interviews at this community library, however, all but one participant of the eleven chose to be interviewed at their homes. Due to the nature of the participants' potential undocumented status, no flyers were displayed in public spaces. Eligibility criteria included:

- Latina migrant women
- 18 years and older,
- residents of Georgia,
- affected by the deportation of a loved one.

Data Collection. The primary tool of data collection was a semi-structured one-on-one interview. In addition, I collected demographic information in a one-page survey to gather socioeconomic, de-identified data. Other methods I used for data collection were researcher-participant observations and memos, among others (Patton, 2015, Hudson, 2015). The participants were not asked to read or write any documentation, I read and wrote all the requested information, including the waived consent forms used for the study. The qualitative interviews were audio-recorded with a digital device.

Data Analysis. The study followed a heuristic process' analysis to organize the patterns and unique experiences of the participants in regard to migration and deportation. The derived themes from the data analyses were grouped in domains to facilitate the organization and categorization of the findings and the development of the discussion. Individual depictions of each participant's lived experience with the phenomenon of the deportation were created. Three exemplary portraits were identified, and a composite depiction was developed to showcase all patterns found in the participants' description of the deportation phenomenon. Lastly, a creative synthesis product summarized the essence of deportations as a whole.

A more in-depth discussion of the study design and the methodology used in this study will be provided in Chapter 3.

Significance of the Study

Research scholars have produced copious amounts of studies to understand the experiences of undocumented Latino and Latina immigrants in the United States. Examples of qualitative methodologies used to study Latinos are grounded theory (Belliveau, 2011), exploratory single case and group studies (Gates, 2017; Sweet, 2015), and legal studies (Hishaw, 2013; Pruitt, 2009). Quantitative research with undocumented Latinas, in particular, has focused on domestic violence (Villalón, 2010), segmented assimilation (Rumbaut, 1994), acculturative stress due to fear of deportation (Arbona, Olvera, Rodriguez, Hagan, Linares, & Wiesner, 2010), Latina mothers' resilience in rural settings (Enriquez, 2015; Rafaelli, Tran, Willey, Galarza-Heras & Lazarevic, 2012), and health status and access to health services (Marshall, Urrutia-Rojas, Soto Mas, & Coggin, 2005). Among the scholarly research reviewed for this study, only a few works in the social sciences have followed a heuristic qualitative analysis while studying immigrant families. Noteworthy is that the vast majority of the published research with Latino immigrants reviewed for this study has been largely done in U.S. regions with traditionally larger Latino populations. Hence, Georgia and the Deep South are in need of expanding social research with Latinos affected by immigration policies and its unwelcome consequences for these families and their communities.

The implementation of detention and deportation policy in the U.S. has resulted in significant adverse consequences, particularly for Latino unauthorized immigrants in rural Georgia. To mention a few examples, many school-aged children are affected by the absence of a parent who has been arrested and deported to their home country. Ms. Aida Quiñones, a branch

manager at the community library I volunteered for, has observed how the Latino immigrant families are staying in their homes, avoiding visiting the library for fear of migration agents patrolling around the neighborhood (personal communication with Aida Quiñones, December 4, 2016). She also noticed how children are not allowed to play outside as often as before in the aftermath of the deportation event in 2015. Ms. Quiñones believes that children are just as afraid as their parents of a potential separation from their families. Luis Zayas (2016) exemplified some of these outcomes as potential long-term traumatic experiences for such young children, who are most likely American citizens growing in mixed-status families. Zayas suggested that the U.S. government is, in fact, creating 'exiles' and 'orphan' American children. When deported parents are forced with the option of leaving their children with relatives in the U.S., these children are left behind as orphans without the care of their parents. If the parents have no choice other than to take them along to a country where the child was not born, the children are considered indeed U.S. exiles in a foreign country. Such consequences, amongst others, are detrimental not only for these families and their communities but for society at large.

Also important to this study is to emphasize the particular life experiences of Latino immigrants in the U.S. such as extreme hardship when trying to remain in the United States without the required documentation. Undocumented Latinos tend to be monolingual (Spanish-only or indigenous language speakers), illiterate or with limited formal education (Machado-Casas, 2012; Orozco Vargas, 2015). They are banned from federally funded welfare programs (Johnson, 2003), relying on family, friends, and faith-based and /or local grassroots organizations for help in the aftermath of the deportation of a family member (Ayón & Ghosn Naddy, 2013). These families suffer from isolation and marginalization, discrimination, and exclusion from participation in social life (Cleaveland, 2013; Valdez et al., 2013). This is due, in part, to the

migratory status and fear of deportation of said immigrants, but in as much due to the historical reality of double standards on determining citizenship status for white versus non-white immigrants (Chomsky, 2014).

Hence, immigration, particularly undocumented immigration, has become a major policy issue that is intersecting our social fabric at multiple levels. As a profession, social workers are at the forefront of enacting and protecting social justice and human rights issues for all populations, particularly those who have encounter oppression and marginalization. Immigrant families continue living forcible separations and deportations, which has provoked destabilizations of families and communities across the U.S. My aim in this study is to provide answers to social workers on what Latina immigrants, their families, and communities are experiencing in the aftermath and deportation, and how larger global forces are impacting the influx of immigrants into the U.S.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2 presents a compilation of literature relevant to the lived experiences of Latino and Latina migrants in the U.S., particularly those with an unauthorized status. The first section provides a discussion of the historical background of migratory groups in the United States, presenting the early introductions and evolution of legislation regarding immigration law over time. The second section features a broad description of today's Latino migrants' demographic cohort, and examples of scholarly literature describing the current socio-political climate towards this ethnic group. Thirdly, I will provide an in-depth look into issues affecting Latinx families in the U.S., particularly those with mixed legal migratory status affected by the phenomenon of detentions and deportations. The fourth section will discuss the three conceptual frameworks guiding this study: borderland feminist thought, risk and resilience theory, and conflict theory. Lastly, I will briefly introduce a heuristic inquiry as the methodology selected to guide this research.

Overview of Migration, its Causes, and Patterns

Migration is a relatively large-scale movement of people within or across borders. According to Nora Hamilton (2011), the phenomenon of migration occurs both as an internal movement (i.e., within a given country) and as an international movement of people (from one country to another). Immigrants who are crossing international borders refer to their country of emigration as the home country or country of origin, while the country of immigration may be referred as the host country, receiving country, or point of destination (Hamilton, 2011). When migration implies border crossing, it could be official, (i.e., with documents that legalize

immigration status) or unofficial (without documents). When migrants cross an international border without documents or have simply overstayed their visas, they are commonly referred to as undocumented or unauthorized. Legal or 'official' migration in the U.S. is the process by which noncitizens are granted legal permanent residence or a *green card* by the federal government. Immgrants who have legalized their migration status enjoy "the rights to remain in the country indefinitely, to be gainfully employed, and to seek benefits of the U.S. citizenship through naturalization" (Tourse, Hamilton -Mason and Wewiorsky, 2018, p. 40).

In her work *Human Rights, Migration, and Social Conflict,* Ariadna Estévez (2012) analyzed how international migration results in social conflict in Europe and the United States. She constructed her analysis by framing migration as a universal human right, which has been recognized internationally as such since 1948 by the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This human right of migration is violated by the denial of such right to migrants, who are dispossessed of their human condition in the host countries. Estévez affirmed that:

> The social relations constructed through the negation of human rights- can be described with precision using the "space of nonexistence". This space is the result of the disjunctive of physical and legal presence- denying them their rights, restricting access to services, and in a strict sense erase their legal identity (p. 105).

Migration patterns vary across migrant origins, reasons for migration, and destinations. Hamilton (2011) enumerates the following migration patterns: 1) cyclical migration, otherwise called seasonal, this migration pattern entails repeated journeys to the same location, which could be internal or international; 2) temporary migration, which infers a short-term migration, with a duration between six months to two years. Also called sojourners or target migrants, temporary migrants' main purpose is to earn money for a specific purpose, such as to buy land,

or build a house; 3) permanent migration, when some migrants leave their country with the goal of reaching and staying in the host country. Many migrants do not plan to remain permanently in the host country initially. However, their circumstances may change over time. For example, the situation in their country of origin turns for the worse in terms of poverty or violence, forcing them to reconsider their temporary status and deciding to stay in the host country instead. For many migrants, particularly Mexican and Central Americans, migration is a permanent state, despite their intentions of returning to their country of origin one day. In fact, most migrants in the U.S. remain in this country permanently (Flores, 2017a).

Estévez (2012) classified migrants into three categories: 1) elite or flexible migrants, who are able to migrate as individuals with privileged positions; 2) modern migrants, who are forced to leave their homes due to material or moral suffering or hardship, such as poverty and economic inequality, political persecution, discrimination, natural disasters, or wars; and 3) refugees, who are usually involuntary immigrants who are fleeing war, persecution, violence, or the aftermath of a natural disaster. As cited by Estévez (2012), the United Nations Refugee Act of 1990 defines a refugee as a person who leaves his or her country and is not able to return, due to a credible fear of persecution against religious beliefs, race, ethnicity, or belonging to a particular group condemned by their country of origin. Contrary to asylum seekers, refugees begin their admission process to the country outside the U.S. The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), established in 1980, is the government agency responsible for providing services to both refugees and asylees.

The main difference between elite and modern migrants is the ability of the former to establish their right to citizenship or the recognition of their human rights. In contrast, modern migrants are seen as non-deserving of protections or citizenship and are labeled as permanent

foreigners (Estévez, 2012). This differentiation among migrant categories encompasses the overall experiences of undocumented migrants in the U.S. and it is exacerbated by the ongoing anti-immigrant rhetoric.

It is noteworthy to mention that when migrants leave their countries to work elsewhere, they send remittances on a frequent basis to their families abroad. A remittance is a significant monetary contribution that makes a tremendous impact on the economic development of low-income countries. According to a 2017 report from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFDA), about 200 million migrants are currently living in countries different from those of their place of birth across the world. From those, about 30 to 40 million people are working without documents, almost half of them are women (Estévez, 2012; IFDA, 2017). For the year 2009, migrant workers worldwide send $232 million to their countries of origin in remittance money (Estévez, 2012IFDA, 2017). Millions of families depend on remittance money sent by their relatives working in developed countries to pay for food, shelter, clothing, education, fuel, transportation, and medical expenses (IFAD, 2017).

Historical Background of Migratory Groups in The U.S.

"Since its inception, the United States has been a nation of migrants" (Marks, McKenna & García-Coll, 2018, p.6). This phrase resonates across the sociopolitical fabric of this country, where more than 99 percent of the current population can trace its ancestry back to people who came here from elsewhere (Miler & Garran, 2017, Spickard, 2007). The positive construct of the 'nation of migrants' phrase in the U.S. used to infer a quintessential migrant welcoming society since its colonization by white European newcomers. Children in American schools learn about how the First Nation's Peoples welcomed the Pilgrim settlers, who arrived on the Mayflower and founded Plymouth in 1620. This cultural encounter is the most celebrated American holiday

today, in remembrance of that said first Thanksgiving celebration between the colonizers and the indigenous local inhabitants. We know now that this 'friendly' relationship between Europeans and First Nation's People turned sour soon after, once the colonization expanded, with the consequential decimation of the First Nation's People (Capture, Champagne & Jackson, 2007; Spickard, 2007).

It has been theorized by archeology scholars that North America's first inhabitants "came from Asia via a land bridge sometime before 12,000 years ago" (Spickard, 2007, p.34). Among other theories in both the fields of archeology and anthropology, the first humans that entered North America could have traveled by sea from Japan or even from Norway. What the European colonizers found at their arrival to the North American continent was a vastly populated land. Historians and anthropologists calculated the First Nation's or indigenous people population between 5 million and 8 million people in North America, living in more than 600 autonomous and diverse societies (Miller & Garran, 2017).

Capture, Champagne & Jackson (2007) described that European conquerors brought their white ethnocentric paradigm which was evident in their inferior treatment of the First Nation's People. The newcomers chose to ignore the reality that the people they were meeting in the new world belong to thousands of distinct cultures (which Europeans dubbed as tribes) speaking hundreds of different languages (Capture et al., 2007).

Despite the First Nation's People being considered by historians and other scholars one of the most diverse and culturally rich regions in the world before the European colonization, by 1900, their number was estimated to be 250,000 (Capture et al., 2007; Spickard, 2007). Their virtual annihilation was mostly precipitated by the European colonizers' forced labor and dispossession of their land, acts of abuse and torture, killings, and imported illness (Miller &

Garran, 2017). Along with the slave trade from Africa, this is one of the most poignant stories of human displacement in this continent since its beginnings. From then onwards, and since the Removal Act of 1834, First Nation's People have been treated as an invisible minority in their land (Miller & Garran, 2017; Spickard, 2007). In 1924, the First Nation's People were finally granted full citizenship, "after losing more than 90 percent of their people, most of their lands, their capacity to hunt and farm, and much of their traditional cultures" (Miller & Garran, 2017, p.43).

Early into the colonization of the continental U.S., the demand for labor became so intense that the newly formed British colonies began importing and enslaving human labor from the continent of Africa. It is estimated that 11.7 million people were captured and sent by ships to the Americas between 1540 to 1870. About 9.6 million survived the Middle Passage, a dreadful voyage across the Atlantic Ocean, and over 3 million reached the coasts of the North American continent (Spickard, 2007). The African slave trade became not only a lucrative business for the traders, but also for the colonizers who treated these humans as profitable property. W.E.B. Du Bois wrote extensively on how slavery became the answer to develop the proper labor supply to create American wealth (Du Bois, 1994).

Slavery quickly became institutionalized among the American colonies. After the American Revolution, slavery was further cemented and normalized as the main economic system, particularly in the South (Miller & Garran, 2017). In the aftermath of the Civil War, oppression against African Americans was far from over. On his writings, Du Bois pointed at how the Slave Code, or the rules that kept black people enslaved, became later the Black Code, which in turn replaced a caste of condition by a caste of race (Foner, 1970). This Black Code and later the Jim Crow laws perpetuated the inability of African Americans to enjoy the same rights

and privileges white European settlers, now American citizens had been granted. The rejection and undermining of non-white migrants and First Nation's Peoples in America consequently defined [to this day] the meaning of who is deserving or non-deserving of the protections and benefits of citizenship. This citizenship was based primarily on skin color and ethnic origin. In *Racism in the United States*, Miller and Garran (2017) postulate that:

> from early on, the United States was settled with slave labor, which quickly evolved into the institution of chattel slavery, reserved exclusively for people seized from the African continent. Thus, the white race was "invented" in opposition to dark-skinned people who were shackled. This, along with the genocide of Native Americans, stands as the most extreme forms of racism associated with the United States (p.40).

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the U.S government encouraged immigration from Ireland, Germany, Sweden, Poland, Italy, and other European countries. This was a time of rapid industrialization across the country's main cities, and this fast growth required inexpensive labor (Miller & Garran, 2017; Spickard, 2007; Tourse et al., 2018). European ethnic migrant groups were not exempt from encountering a hostile environment as new migrants. Many ethnic white groups tried to assimilate by learning English and leaving their language and traditions behind. Miller and Garran (2017) called this process whiteness, "where oppressed groups begin to work toward racial assimilation, assuming that society will permit the group to be socially constructed as white" (p. 54).

During the European migration between the late 1800s and the beginning of the 1900s, cities became overcrowded with migrant workers living in unsanitary conditions. Jane Addams was a major leader of the settlement house movement, which established social reform programs to ameliorate the dire living conditions of new migrant workers. These social, economic, and

educational programs had an enduring impact on the well-being of the mostly European migrant workers and their families in cities such as Chicago and New York. The settlement movement eventually was a precursor to the inception of social work as a profession in the U.S (Wenocour & Reisch, 2001). Parallel to the initiation of social work as a profession in the northern U.S., Black social workers were paving the road for improving the lives of Black southerners impacted by the aftermath of slavery and later the Jim Crow laws. Atlanta School of Social Work and other historically black schools and colleges (HBCU's) in the southern U.S. prepared black social workers to address the needs of black families. The need for training black social workers was also felt in the northern U.S., as many black people migrated to escape segregation, to attain social mobility, access to education, and work opportunities (Gary & Gary, 1994).

Other migrant groups, such as the Chinese came to the U.S. in search of work. Chinese migrants were pivotal in the completion of the transcontinental railway line. Because of prejudiced views against them, the entire Chinese people were excluded from immigrating to the U.S. by the Chinese Exclusion act of 1882 (Miller & Garran, 2017). The anti-Chinese migration legislation during the 19th century marked the beginning of the use of the term 'illegal,' to refer to a migrant group (Chomsky, 2007; Tichenor, 2015).

Through the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907-1908, Japanese migrants were also prevented from entering the United States. Those already in the country were subjected to years of detention in concentration-like camps in the aftermath of the Pearl Harbor attack of 1941. Filipinos were also an important group of migrant workers in the U.S. early in the 20th century. The Philippines, in addition to Guam and Puerto Rico, became a U.S. unincorporated territory in 1901, after the Paris Treaty concluded the Spanish American War of 1898. Filipinos were already fighting for their independence from Spain before the U.S. occupation. Despite declaring

their independence in 1946, the United States and the Philippines continued as a post-colonial relationship, where Filipino migrant workers were still allowed and encouraged [as they are today] to come to the U.S. as labor supply (Chomsky, 2007; Spickard, 2007).

Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and other Caribbean workers also migrated to the U.S. mainland in large numbers throughout the beginning of the 20th century. The Puerto Rican migration was facilitated by the Jones Act of 1917, which granted U.S. citizenship to all inhabitants of the Island (Acevedo, 2004; Chomsky, 2007). Over 835,000 people, or one out of every two Puerto Ricans born on the Island at the time, migrated to the mainland between 1940 to 1970, encouraged by the United States government after the collapse of the sugar industry (Acevedo, 2004; Lee, 2014). Puerto Ricans worked as farmworkers and in factories under similar conditions to other migrants. Puerto Ricans, different from foreign-born Latin American origin migrants, can travel freely back and forth between the Island and the mainland, which transforms their migration into a circular, sometimes called a colonial one (Acevedo, 2004; Hinojosa, 2018; Silver & Vélez, 2017).

Cubans are the sixth-largest migration group in the United States. Cuban migrants relocated primarily to Miami, Florida. It is estimated that in the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution of 1959, more than 1.4 million Cubans have fled their Island to claim asylum in the U.S. (Duany, 2017). The Cold War between the former Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR) and the United States precipitated this Cuban migration. The U.S. government offered a protective migration status to Cubans escaping the communist regime largely established by Fidel Castro (Chomsky, 2007; Duany, 2017). In 1980, another 300,000 Cubans fled the island by boat as Castro opened the ports to allow those who disagreed with his ruling to leave for the U.S. Cuban exiles were received with hostility by Americans who felt threatened by their arrival

(McHugh, Miyares & Skop, 1997). Many perceived that Cuban asylum seekers were not going to acculturate into American society and would be a burden to U.S. taxpayers. Notwithstanding, the Cuban migration has settled and prospered financially in Florida, even more so than Puerto Ricans in the diaspora, who despite their U.S. citizenship status, are at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder of all Latino ethnic groups (Hinojosa, 2018).

In the coming section, I will broadly discuss the definitions of Latinos as a racialized group, and its ramifications regarding the current deportation policies as a form of punishment against undocumented immigrants of Latino origin.

The label *Hispanic* as a definition for this ethnic group was first coined on May 4, 1978 by the Office of Management and Budget, to define "a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race" (Diaz-McConnell & Delgado-Romero, 2004). The adoption of this definition as accepted usage merged a multiethnic, multiracial, and some argue, a multilingual group of people into a single ethnic category (Oboler, 1995). It is not surprising then, that it was not until 1970 that the U.S. census included a way for respondents to group themselves by a Latino ethnic self-identification label, despite the existing evidence of Latino presence from various origins in the United States for at least 200 years (Monforti, 2014; Oboler, 1995). Issues of ethno-racial identity and belonging have influenced the way Latinos categorize themselves in the United States (Feliciano, 2009; Golash-Boza, 2006; Itzigsohn & Dore-Cabral, 2000; Lee, 2014; Portes & Rumbaut, 2006; Roth, 2012; Rumbaut, 1994). Even the terms 'Latino' and 'Hispanic' have become a debate between academic scholars and sociopolitical forces alike, with the term Latino and more recently Latinx taking precedence over Hispanic, challenging the current government definition describing over 55 million Latino people in the U.S. (Acuña, 2015).

Latinos, particularly Mexican Americans[1] living in the United States' Southwest region have resisted discrimination, marginalization, and oppression throughout centuries. Following the Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty in 1853, the fate of the inhabitants of the U.S. southern border changed forever (Cisneros, 2013). The United States won the Mexican American War of 1848, taking a vast amount of land from the Mexican government as settlement. Mexico received 15 million dollars, or 450 million dollars in today's value (https://www.officialdata.org), as compensation for their lost northern territory, which was half of Mexico's total land. Today this land comprises the States of California, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, and Wyoming.

Mexican and indigenous people living in the territory at the time became subjects of the U.S. government (Cisneros, 2013; Chomsky, 2007). For the inhabitants of these former Mexican lands, the U.S. border crossed them, and not otherwise. After the treaty took place, people already living in the newly annexed territory had to declare their allegiance to the U.S. by becoming American citizens or decide to remain citizens of Mexico. If they chose the latter, they would be forced to live as foreigners in their own land, without the rights and protections of U.S. citizenship. Those who remained in the conquered territory as U.S. citizens did not necessarily enjoy better treatment afterward. Spickard (2007) described the incorporation/assimilation process as a "measure of Whiteness: legal citizenship, but social Brownness" (pp.129-130).

In essence, the then-new Mexican Americans were not only treated as second-class U.S. citizens; they were treated as an inferior class and racial aliens despite many of them being born or nationalized as Americans. This ethno-racialization of the former Native and Mexican

[1] Spickard (2007) makes a differentiation between Mexican Americans (individuals born in the U.S. of Mexican origin) and Mexicans (Mexican nationals crossing the border as seasonal workers). He posits that both groups were lumped into one ethno-racial category of 'Mexicans' and were targeted as foreigners and discriminated against by Anglo-Americans.

inhabitants has continued to this day as a way to establish a racial and class separation system between White Americans, African Americans, who were still enslaved in 1848 and brought as such to the new territory of Texas, and now Mexican and Native Americans living in the former northern Mexican lands (Acuña, 2015).

For people living in the U.S.-Mexico border back in the late 19th century, the borderland was a permeable line that allowed for the exchange of people and goods across the border without much oversight. In *How Immigration Became Illegal,* Aviva Chomsky (2014) explained that:

> Until 1924, the new border between the United States and Mexico was virtually unpoliced, and migration flowed openly. Mexicans were exempt from the immigration restrictions passed into law before 1965. Because they were not considered immigrants, Mexicans were also permanently deportable and were, in fact, singled out for mass deportations in the 1930s and 1950s. The nonimmigrant status of Mexican workers over time underlies the apparent paradox between the United States as a so-called country of immigrants and its xenophobia and restrictive immigration policies (p.10).

Migrant workers crossing the border from Mexico into the U.S. at the beginning of the 20th century were used to work in segregated and deplorable living conditions back in their country of origin (Chomsky, 2014; Spickard; 2007). As it turned out in the U.S. as well, many Mexican farmworkers faced similar working conditions such as those encountered in Mexico. For the new migrant workers, leaving the premises on their own was virtually impossible, as transportation and other mainstream services were controlled by the employer. Anglo American farmworkers not only had better accommodations and the ability to move freely from their workplace, they also had much better pay than Mexican workers. And, ultimately, for those

workers with undocumented status, complaining about the employers' abusive treatment meant secured deportation back to Mexico.

As Mexican workers decided to remain in the U.S. rather than crossing the border on a seasonal fashion, they began to establish themselves in self-made neighborhoods called *barrios* or colonias. Colonias were segregated residential areas around the U.S. Southwest border that Spickard (2007) described as "densely- populated slum with ramshackle housing, few sewers or paved streets, desperate crowding, and substandard schools" (p. 300). Many of these subpar living conditions persisted throughout the 1950s and 1960s, worsening the quality of life of the Mexican-origin workers and their families. The segregated work camps and colonias defined the life of many Mexican immigrants for most of the 20th century, keeping this demographic group from reaching social mobility and better life conditions (Cisneros, 2013).

These conditions of historic oppression for Latinos, especially those of Mexican and Mexican American origin, set a clear parallel to the segregation system suffered by black citizens in the Deep South during the Jim Crow era (Lovato, 2008; Salinas, Franquiz & Rodriguez, 2016; Weise, 2015). The Civil Rights Movement and the Chicano Movement occurred simultaneously in American history during the 1950s and 1960s. Both movements sought to encourage Black and Brown people, respectively, to join efforts against oppression by engaging in peaceful protests. Their common goal was the recognition of basic rights for workers of color, and for racial minorities' equal access to mainstream services such as education, housing, health care, transportation, and recreation, among others. Unfortunately, the quasi-parallel paths of these pivotal social justice movements become less evident today due to limited discussion among scholars and in educational settings (Salinas et al., 2016).

Undocumented Latino Migrant Workers

In 2000, the estimates for undocumented persons present in the country rose to 8 million and reached a peak of almost 12 million in 2007 (Chomsky, 2014, p. 47). Currently, the estimated undocumented population in the U.S. is 11.4 million (Radford & Budiman, MPI, 2018). The causes and consequences of migrant labor in the U.S have a great impact on the lives of millions of people trapped in their countries unable to migrate legally. Moving onwards, I will discuss how the U.S. has systemically utilized and disposed of undocumented migrant labor while trying to control the surplus of said labor with anti-immigrant legislation.

Due to the once-upon-a-time porous U.S.-Mexico border, Mexican nationals have historically been the largest group of migrants crossing the border in both directions in search of jobs, primarily in the agribusiness industry, meatpacking factories, poultry plants, and construction (Chomsky, 2014; Spickard, 2007; Weise, 2015;). The political struggles over unauthorized migrant workers in the U.S. can be traced to earlier historical eras (Chomsky, 2014, Tichenor, 2015), when the government decided to remove primarily Chinese, but also other migrants as well. As stated by Tichenor (2015), the origins and development of 'illegality' equaling 'Mexican' is a more recent phenomenon. Mexicans, contrary to the Chinese workers, were viewed back in the late 1900s as transient, non-migrant, disposable workers who were coming and going freely throughout the U.S. southern border, and therefore were not a permanent threat to the American social fabric. Chinese workers, on the other hand, were not returning to China, rather staying in the U.S. territory after the railroad work ended (Tichenor, 2015).

From the 1920s onward, illegal immigration began to be characterized "as a Mexican and later, a broader Latino, though still predominantly Mexican problem" (Tichenor, 2015, p. 290).

During the 1920s Congress made efforts to deter non-white migrants from becoming American citizens. One pivotal example is the 1924 Immigration Act, which established a quota migration system that implicitly excluded non-European and other 'non-desirable' persons from migrating to America (Acuña, 2015; Chomsky, 2014).

In the 19th century, it was customary for the U.S. government to reach for Mexican underpaid labor to supply the demand for workers. By the beginning of the 20th century, The Mexican American Leadership Fund and other human rights coalitions denounced the unfair treatment of Mexican national workers, demanding action from the United States' government. In response, to curtail some of the activists' demands, the U.S. and Mexico government signed an agreement that created the Bracero Program, which granted temporary immigrant workers with a permit to perform mostly farm labor (Chomsky, 2014; Spickard, 2007; Weise, 2015). The Bracero guest worker program cemented the U.S. agribusiness's reliance on migratory Mexican workers, which continues to exist (Cisneros, 2013; Chomsky, 2014; Weise, 2015). The bracero program fostered the conception of all Mexican laborers being in the country illegally, and therefore disposable via deportation. The guest worker program was terminated by a massive deportation program, Operation Wetback, which removed over 1 million Mexican and Mexican Americans from the country.

The undocumented migrant worker population in the U.S. increased rapidly from1965 onwards. As the demands for low-wage workers expanded, Congress passed laws such as the Immigration and Naturalization Act (INA) of 1965, the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986, and the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) of 1996, attempted without success to discourage illegal migration, particularly from Mexico and Central America (Chomsky, 2014).

The North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA) of 1996 established a common market between Mexico, the United States, and Canada. This new global capitalist development caused U.S. investors to establish themselves in Northern Mexico, with close access to the U.S. border (Spickard, 2007). The aforementioned arrangement has brought tremendous wealth to the American economy. These manufacturers and the largely mechanized foreign agribusiness provided low-wage jobs to workers in Mexico, maximizing the exporters' profits (Hishaw, 2013). As a major consequence of this treaty, over a million families lost their land and crops due to their inability to compete with the larger produce exporters (Chomsky, 2014). NAFTA's policies destabilized the economy across Mexico by forcing cheaper food imports from the U.S., creating increased costs of producing their crops (Ahn, 2003; Hamilton, 2011; Hishaw, 2013). In the aftermath of the NAFTA enactment, thousands of Mexican workers fled north unable to find living-wage jobs in their country.

None of the aforementioned laws were successful in deterring undocumented migrants from crossing the border. It is undeniable that migration in the U.S. and abroad is deeply rooted in the demands of the Global North for importing inexpensive labor and goods from the Global South (Noyori-Corbett & Moxley, 2016; Robinson, 2006). The open markets across the world have created the conditions for even more inequality worldwide, resulting in a complex division of the working class worldwide into citizens and non-citizens. Robinson (2006) claimed that there is "an apparent contradiction, where capital and goods move freely across national borders in the new global economy, but labor cannot, and its movement is subject to heightened state controls" (p. 83). Robinson (2006) and Wilson (2017) concur that American employers want to sustain an exploitable labor pool on demand. Employers benefit from the imposed illegality of undocumented migrant workers, who do not enjoy any labor, civil, or human rights. In the U.S.,

Latino migrants are the principal labor providers in farms, hotels, restaurants, construction sites, janitorial services, house cleaning, childcare, gardening and landscaping, delivery, meat and poultry packing, retail, and many more industries.

Over time, hiring undocumented and under-documented laborers has intersected the reality of Mexican, and later Latino migrants in the U.S. It is not surprising that employers continue recruiting undocumented workers while liberating themselves from any responsibility towards migrants' worker rights and fair wages (Wilson, 2017, Robinson, 2006).

In the previous section, I introduced a selection of legislation affecting different migrant groups in the U.S. For a more comprehensive list of these and other important migration laws, please see Appendix A: *Synopsis of U.S. Migration Legislation.*

Latina Migrant Women

As the number of Latina's crossing the border continues to rise the traditional male migration pattern is being outnumbered, both in the U.S. and internationally. Countries such as Mexico and El Salvador cap the list of female migration worldwide, according to the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking of 2006 (as cited by Noyori-Corbett & Moxley, 2016). In a scope review by Noyori-Corbett & Moxley, it was found that migrant women patterns can be traced from impoverished countries in the Global South toward wealthier countries in the Global North. The main reasons to migrate for these women are the lack of living-wage jobs, and the need to escape dire conditions related to extreme poverty. Another reason for migrant women to leave their homes is the ongoing oppression experienced in their households and societies-at-large, due in part to a culturally accepted *machismo,* or male-dominant behavior. In places like El Salvador, for example, domestic housework and childrearing are expected to be the woman's work, even if they work outside the home as well.

Other reasons to migrate include the precarious protection of women's rights, and the inhibited participation and representation of women in public life and political processes.

The feminization of poverty in the Global South has been linked with migration and human trafficking, to explain the greater risks female migration represents for Mexican and Central American immigrant women (Noyori-Corbett & Moxley, 2016). As it will be discussed throughout this study, the need for women to migrate is exacerbated by their genderized vulnerability in their countries of origin, during and after their migrant journey, and during their eventual relocation in the U.S.

Latinas are currently the largest ethnic group of color in the United States. According to Castañeda-Sound et al. (2016), Latinas represent 15 percent of the total U.S. population. There are more U.S. born Latinas (64.5 percent) than foreign-born (35.5 percent). In spite of these numbers, experiences of xenophobia, and fear or hatred of foreigners affects both native and foreign-born Latinas. Many of the lived experiences of Latinas in the U.S. can be understood through an intersectional lens, where ethnic and racial identity is still viewed as foreign or alien, despite most of the Latina population being U.S. citizens (Salinas et al., 2016). Racial and ethnic intolerance against Latinas has assisted in their development of a critical consciousness of their oppression.

Female immigration in the U.S. has an aggregated effect of role shifting for many Latina migrants (Bermúdez, Stinson, Zak-Hunter, & Abrams, 2011; Chávez, 2000). Transnational women are not only taking care of their homes and families in America, but they also need to sustain their relatives in their countries of origin. Becoming a breadwinner poses new venues for Latina women to navigate newly acquired opportunities for participation in social life, while developing their social capital abilities (Segura, 2000). For women migrating into places such as

rural Georgia, earning an income poses other challenges such as the need to learn English, find reliable transportation, and entrust children's care to neighbors or strangers and be able to afford it. When a spouse or partner is removed from the country due to deportation, working outside of the home is the only option existing for Latina migrants to survive and provide for their families (Hancock, 2007).

Unaccompanied Minors

Among those migrants crossing borders without documentation are unaccompanied minors, who are individuals under the legal age of 18 who have crossed the United States border without their parents or legal guardians (Crea, Lopez, Taylor & Underwood, 2017; Matthew & Smith, 2018; Pierce, 2015). Chappell Deckert (2016) added that an unaccompanied child has no lawful immigration status at his or her arrival to the United States. Due to Mexico being a contiguous country to the United States, children of Mexican origin are immediately sent back to Mexico once apprehended crossing the border. Children from Central American countries are processed by the Office of Refugee Resettlement or ORR, which belongs to the Department of Health and Human Services (Pierce, Migration Policy Institute, 2015). Between October 2013 and September 2014, 68,541 children were apprehended without their parents (Capps, Campatella, Perreira, Hooker & Pedroza, 2015; Chappell Deckert, 2016). This number represents a 77 percent increase from the previous year and a 330 percent increase compared to October 2010 to September 2011. A report from the Migration Policy Institute indicated that from the fiscal year of 2014 until August 2015, more than 102,000 unaccompanied children were apprehended at the U.S.-Mexico border.

About 95 percent of the detained children in 2014 were originally from Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala (Capps, Fix & Zong, 2017; Matthew & Smith, 2018). This

geographical region, known as The Northern Triangle, is plagued with criminal activity and gang violence (Chappell Deckert, 2016). Children in the care of ORR are primarily placed with a relative or youth homes until their day in migration court. Migration courts are overwhelmed with the number of cases to be seen. A typical unaccompanied minor waits up to 1,071 days for their first hearing (Pierce, Migration Policy Institute, 2015). Due to their migratory status, unaccompanied minors are disqualified for receiving services such as medical insurance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or any social service other than public education (Matthew & Smith, 2018; Pierce, Migration Policy Institute, 2015). Several unaccompanied minors may qualify for one of four visas to secure their legal migration status in the U.S.: 1) Special Immigrant Juvenile Status; 2) Asylum; 3) U non-migrant visa for victims of qualifying crimes; 4) Or a non-immigrant visa for victims of human trafficking (Matthew & Smith, 2018).

Unaccompanied minors arrive with great needs to the U.S. Some examples of these needs are educational, medical, and mental health services. Covering all these needs represents a cost for taxpayers. Schools are found with the need to hire bilingual and behavioral expert staff, an expense they may not have the financial resources to pay for. The ORR provides for the aforementioned needs as well as recreational opportunities and other supports.

Latino/a Migrants in Georgia and the South

The former British colony and later Confederate State of Georgia, located in the Southeast U.S. region, has experienced rapid growth in the Latino population over the past 20 years. This growth responded in part to the availability of low-wage manual labor jobs, particularly in rural areas (Davis, Deaton, Boyle, & Schick, 2009; Odem & Lacy, 2009; Weise, 2015). Examples of historically Latino hiring in Georgia are meat and poultry processing and

packaging plants, carpet manufacturing, construction, and agricultural industries (Neal & Bohon, 2003; Portes & Salas, 2015).

The Latino population in Georgia is the 10th largest in the nation and constitutes 1.7% of all Latinos in the U.S. (Flores, 2017b). In places like Georgia and the rural southern U.S., Latino immigrant farmworkers have been part of the agricultural fabric since the early 1940s. By the 1970s, Georgia's majority-white factory towns began recruiting Mexican labor (Weise, 2015).

Between the 1980s and 1990s, major events precipitated the rapid influx of Latinos into Georgia and the southeast U.S. One of these events was the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986. This act effectively legalized the migratory status of about 3 million aliens or undocumented people in the United States. The vast majority who benefited from this law came from Mexico (70 percent) and Central America (13 percent) (U.S. Department of Justice, 1992). Over 1.6 million migrant workers were initially granted the opportunity to work legally in the U.S. and eventually apply for lawful permanent residency or a 'green card', and eventually citizenship. Cities like Charlotte, North Carolina, and Atlanta, Georgia, attracted many Latino workers due to the large demand of blue-collar jobs available in the I-85 Interstate corridor (Portes & Salas, 2015). Another crucial event that drew a large Latino migrant influx to Georgia and the surrounding states was the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia. The games brought a massive investment in infrastructure, and the great demand for construction workers was supplied mostly by Mexican migrant workers, Mexican Americans, and other Latino workers (Portes & Salas, 2015).

The Latino presence in Georgia is particularly strong in rural communities. In an ethnographic study conducted by Beck (2003) the Georgia's Vidalia onion region, for example, Mexican and Mexican American women in South Georgia have found opportunities to positively

impact Latino children's education since the 1970s. As Latino children continue to fill Georgia's public-school systems (Portes & Salas, 2015), education has become a venue for Latina/Mexican American women to become educators and teach Mexican American children about their ethnic and cultural heritage.

The surge of Mexican and Central American migration in rural Georgia has brought both challenges and opportunities for small towns that have been traditionally white enclaves. Among these challenges, language and cultural differences seem to be at the top of the list when new Latino migrants settle in those areas. In the City of Dalton, Georgia, Latino newcomers experienced an initial rejection from long-time residents who felt threatened by a large number of Mexican families moving to their area. This demographic shift placed non-Latino residents in a difficult position of having to cope with a rapid ethno-racial and cultural change for a town of 20,000 mostly white people in the 1970s (Davis, Deaton, Boyle & Schick, 2009). In addition, school staff became overwhelmed by a large number of Spanish-only speaking children enrolled in their schools. Latino migrant workers and their families came to Dalton attracted by the abundant jobs in the carpet industry, and other factories. They settled in the area by the thousands over time, increasing the tension about overcrowded schools and overall xenophobia from white families (Davis et al., 2009; Odem & Lacy, 2009; Weise, 2015).

On a positive note, Dalton non-Latino residents slowly overcame nativist and antagonistic sentiments against the newcomers, thanks in part to the creation of social and educational initiatives led by religious groups and grassroots organizations (Davis et al., 2009). One successful initiative, the Georgia Project, became a national example for providing bilingual education and training in Georgia and Mexico. Dalton is an interesting example of a positive integration of Latino families in a predominantly white rural community. According to the U.S.

Census of 2010, Dalton's population is about 33,128, where 15,000 residents, or just about 50 percent, are of Hispanic origin (U.S. Census, 2010).

In 2000, over 3.2 million Latinos were living in rural American (Pruitt, 2009). This estimation from the U.S. 2000 Census assumed that unauthorized migrants are traditionally not counted accurately. Therefore, the number of Latino migrants already settled in the South, which was about 1 million between 2000 and 2004, could be considerably higher. For Georgians, increasing migration into their state appears to be related to fears of newcomers not following the established social rules. Georgia residents have also expressed concerns about new migrants bringing their traditions and languages, which they see as a threat to their traditions and English language. Other reasons for fearing the new Latino migration wave are that the economy will be affected by reducing wages and taking the existing jobs from locals. Lastly, Georgians believe that undocumented migrants will abuse access to welfare and other benefits intended for U.S. citizens (Hishaw, 2013; Lovato, 2008; Neal & Bohon, 2003; Odem & Lacy, 2009; Weise, 2015).

Despite the hardship of acculturation, isolation, and other limitations, Latinos seem to have found a niche in rural Georgia and the southern U.S., where they have settled to work and raise their families for decades (Weise, 2015). Their ongoing presence in the southeast region of the U.S. can be traced for at least 70 years. Nonetheless, Latinos still struggle to survive and thrive in this region. To learn from their lived experiences and develop programs and interventions culturally appropriate for this population, we need to acknowledge and study in-depth their presence and contributions to the southern U.S. in the economy and society.

Nativism and Migration Policy in the U.S.

Migration in all its forms is at the forefront of America's current political discourse. Furthermore, the public debate over unauthorized immigration has become dramatically more

conflictive over time. More so, over the past two decades, America has adopted an 'enforcement first' approach to immigration policy (Gates, 2017; Sampaio, 2015). The aforementioned approach has been exacerbated by the apparent increase in the entry of undocumented migrants through the U.S.-Mexico border. As discussed in Chapter 1, current and past presidential administrations reinforced efforts to remove undocumented migrants, primarily of Latin American origin, justified by the assumption of protecting the country against terrorism and other types of criminal activity (Sampaio, 2015).

The current anti-immigrant discourse across the U.S. has translated into pervasive policies at the state and local levels intended to oppress and marginalize Latino families. Examples of these anti-immigrant policies in Virginia (Cleaveland, 2011), and in Arizona (Valdez et al., 2013), have resulted in devastating consequences for undocumented Latino migrants, whose fears of detention and deportation hinder their open participation in public life and in the workforce.

In 2007, a Virginia local community in Prince William County was concerned about the loss of value of their homes and the increased presence of Latinos migrants in their neighborhood. Long-time neighbors in this community advocated for the creation of the Rule of Law Ordinance in 2007. This ordinance was the precursor of the Arizona SB 1070, one of the most restrictive anti-immigrant state laws in the U.S. explicitly prohibiting activities that neighbors ascribed to the newcomers, most likely Mexican and Central American migrant workers (Cleaveland, 2011). Examples of these activities as brought by the residents' complaints were noise, trash, vehicles parked on lawns, public drinking, poor unkept homes, using the yards for agriculture, overcrowded homes, and raising chickens in their backyards, among others. Migrants were initially attracted to settle in Prince William County following the explosion of

housing construction in the year 2000. Local residents started complaining to the authorities and elected officials about disorderly conduct. More so, their main complaint was the declining value of their homes, a condition they attributed to the new Latino immigrant neighbors (Cleaveland, 2011).

Cleaveland conducted an ethno-survey study to assess the perceptions and narratives of the residents regarding their discontent with the presence of Latino families in their neighborhood. The study found that residents' racialized narratives against Latino residents occurred after the crash of the housing market, when many neighbors could no longer afford their properties and lost their homes to foreclosure in that area.

In Arizona, restrictive immigration policies have intensified over the years. This, in turn, has increased rejection and social exclusion of unauthorized Mexican migrants. Valdez et al. (2013) explored the consequences of increasingly restrictive immigration policies in the social capital of Mexican mothers with unauthorized status in Arizona. One of these migration policies, SB 1070 in April of 2010, made it a misdemeanor for migrants not to present their documentation at the request of law enforcement. It also gave power to local police to determine an individual's migratory status when stopped or arrested at the mere suspicion of unauthorized status. Even more so, SB 1070 penalized those who assisted unauthorized migrants through employment, housing, or transportation (Valdez et al., 2013).

In their qualitative study, Valdez et al. (2013) interviewed mothers from a larger study involving schools. Fear of family separation due to potential detentions and deportations was mentioned by participants as the main reason for them to minimize getting involved in school and community activities. They also mentioned being discriminated against when seeking for health and educational services for their children, no matter that these children were U.S.

citizens. Valdez and colleagues stated that this form of social exclusion consequently hindered the economic, educational, health, and occupational prospects of Latino immigrant families and their children, and thereby limiting their human and social capital development and social mobility.

Anti-immigrant sentiment in the U.S. has operated in increasing waves across time, ignited by nativist ideals of a homogeneous white-Anglo-Eurocentric American society (Chomsky, 2014; Sampaio, 2105; Tichenor, 2015). These nativist narratives are framed by conservative institutions to determine who is and who is not welcome to remain in this country. Nativist narratives are becoming stronger; the intensity of this socioeconomic racialized and genderized conflict will continue to exacerbate as Latino migrants without papers are still utilized exclusively as inexpensive labor and later removal out of the country, with no major consequences for those who hire them (Sampaio, 2015; Tichenor, 2015; Wilson, 2017). The migration humanitarian crisis in the U.S. is attached to the needs of jobs and living wages, plus the fear of violence and criminal activity back in Mexico and Central America. Thousands of migrants will continue to attempt the sometimes-lethal journey daily, to claim their human right to migrate as written in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948).

Civil Rights and Chicano/a Movement(s).

The African American civil rights movement is one of the most influential political and historical periods in the United States and internationally. Its pivotal impact in other oppressed group movements across the world is undeniable. Its origins can be traced to the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909 (Spickard, 2007; Foner, 1970). The surge of the movement responded to the subjugating systemic conditions experienced by black citizens in the Post-reconstruction era, the historical period that

followed the abolition of slavery in the U.S., specifically in the south, white Americans established a powerful economic and social system intended to perpetuate the segregation of black people. This system, known as 'Jim Crow,' legitimized the creation and execution of racist laws and regulations in a purposively segregated society (Carson, 1998; Spickard, 2007).

These intentionally oppressive actions became cemented in the social fabric of white southerners, and effectively inhibited the socio-economic and political progress of black men and women in the south. Government institutions, such as the justice and education systems, for example, were in total control of white southerners, which impeded black citizens from receiving the recognition of their human rights and hindering access to educational opportunities.

At its core, the Jim Crow system operated to deny black citizens equal access to all aspects of social life, including access to quality housing, safe neighborhoods, and better health care services. Economically, this system limited the social mobility of black families by denying black men and women better working opportunities with higher wages and better job conditions. What this did was continue to perpetuate the systemic poverty experienced by many black families and communities today. But most importantly, the Jim Crow era laws legally infringed the electoral U.S. system, which in turn legitimized laws and rules to block the voting rights of thousands of black citizens.

Civil right leaders and activists in the black community challenged the Black Code laws that maintained the status quo of segregation and alienation of African Americans (Carson, 1998). Starting with Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois Niagara Movement of 1905, his lifetime work as an activist, researcher, professor, and writer, among other roles, lead the early efforts for educating and organizing at all levels of society to attain equal rights for African Americans. Subsequently, other iconic civil right leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, Rosa Parks, and many others,

took the task of weaponizing the movement through mass mobilization and protests across the nation. Bartos & Wehr (2002) studied the use of conflict theory during the historic period of the civil rights struggle in the United States. In their analysis they identified variables that they considered to be the main or root cause of this social, class, and economic conflict:

> An intensifying sense of injustice was molding a monumental grievance among African Americans and sympathetic white allies. The root causes of this conflict were largely cemented by the unequal treatment of African Americans, despite their ongoing efforts to earn racial and class equality and dignity. This grievance soon transformed into overt conflict action in what is commonly known as the civil rights movement (p. 51).

Bartos and Wehr (2002) pointed at this overall unequal treatment as an *incompatible goal* between blacks and whites. The legal and social mobilization mentioned earlier attracted masses in support of the demands of African Americans for the dismantling of segregation laws and practices. Their needs included resources such as money, education, legal representation, and other support mechanisms to develop and maintain the pressure against the status quo. The Montgomery Bus Boycott led by Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Ed Nixon, and others, is a classic example of how an entire community united to attain the goal of desegregating the public transportation system. All these elements were necessary to address this racial conflict and dismantle the oppressive Jim Crow system and desegregate the southern U.S.

The American Civil Rights Movement will remain in U.S. history as the most relevant example of how the development of incompatible goals becomes a central issue in the growth of social conflict. Dr. King's peaceful tactics proved pivotal in the success of attaining tangible results for African Americans. Furthermore, movements such as the Civil Rights Movement have

unequivocally served as the action model for many other movements, including the Chicano/a Movement in the southwestern U.S. states.

The Mexican/Latino presence and their socioeconomic and ethno-racial struggle in the southwestern U.S. are vastly documented in literary works, art, history books, and academic research. As briefly mentioned in Chapter 1 and earlier in this chapter, the lives of Mexicans and Mexican Americans, as well as other Latinos, in the U.S. have been historically intersected by the antagonist rhetoric of their legitimized or non-legitimized presence in the country. The Chicano and Chicana Movement of the 1960s and 1970s has its roots in earlier movements from the 1920s and 1930s such as *El Congreso de los Pueblos de Habla Español*. This movement was initially led by Luisa Moreno and other women, who sought the recognition of the Mexican identity heritage and cultural values of Mexican Americans in the U.S. (Acuña, 2015).

During the 1960s and 1970s, Chicano students at Los Angeles schools and universities initiated large protests and walkouts to denounce oppressive treatment against Mexican Americans (Acuña, 2015; Cisneros, 2013; Hamilton, 2011). Among the students' demands were the recognition of the presence and contributions of Mexican Americans as part of the U.S. history courses, and the need to recruit bilingual teachers that were of Mexican American origin. Mexican Americans across the U.S. were historically denied basic services from schools, businesses, and government offices, simply because of their apparent foreignness, framed by their language, culture, or ethnic background.

Chicano students were also opposed to the abusive practices in agricultural and industrial labor and the inhumane treatment of undocumented migrants. Other concerns of Chicano student activists were the lack of political representation and public participation, the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, and the denial of benefits for some Chicano veterans. Lastly, students in the

Chicano Movement echoed the demands of First Nations Peoples, who were reclaiming the land taken by the U.S. In summary, the Chicano Movement pursued to dismantle the perpetuated and ongoing systemic oppression against Mexican Americans (Acuña, 2015; Arredondo, Hurtado, Klahn, Nájera-Ramire &, Zavella, 2003; Cisneros, 2013). The first National Chicano Youth Liberation Conference was held in 1969 in Denver, Colorado, where the term Chicano was formally adopted to replace that of Mexican American and to make a distinction between them and white Americans and Mexicans. Chicanismo became a synonym of various social action and mobilization strategies and demonstrations, where the Chicano identity was at the epicenter of said phenomenon (Acuña, 2015).

Another cause of Mexican American and Chicano Movement activism was the increasing number of undocumented Mexican migrant workers entering the U.S. Approximately one-tenth of Mexico's population migrated to the United States during the first half of the twentieth century seeking work in the fields (Acuña, 2015; Cisneros, 2013). Mexican American activists and union leaders resisted the arrival of new Mexican migrant workers, and many unions ignored the poor working and living conditions of those without an authorized working status. Cisneros (2013) attributed this resistance to the:

> fear that Mexican migration would weaken their already tenuous position as second-class members of the nation. Mexican Americans saw opposition to Mexican migration as a way to express their patriotic Americanism and assimilation. In essence, the exclusion of Mexican migrants (and other Latin American migrants) became a venue for Mexican Americans to perform Americanness (p. 57).

Nonetheless, other Chicano activist groups like the *Hermandad Mexicana Nacional* remained committed to providing support services to foreign-born Mexican and Central

American workers. This organization opened self-help centers called *Centro de Acción Social Autónoma* (CASA), intending to protect undocumented migrants from the growing nativist rhetoric against them. CASA was fundamental in nurturing the Chicana Movement by incorporating women's activism in the provision of supportive services to undocumented migrants (Acuña, 2015; Chávez, 2010).

Cesar Chávez and Dolores Huerta are intrinsically associated with the Chicano Movement as the leaders of the farmworkers' union efforts that sought better working conditions in California and all the southwestern U.S. (García, 1997; Heindenreich, Gordillo, & Castañeda, 2014). Described by Jorge Mariscal (2004) as short in stature, soft-spoken, and quiet demeanor man, César Chávez was born in Yuma, Arizona in 1927. He never finished high school, moving to California at a young age where he became a farmworker. The son of a Mexican American farmer himself, Chávez was the co-founder, along with Dolores Huerta, of United Farm Workers (UFW) in California (Acuña, 2015; Hamilton, 2011). In 1965, this union's predecessor, the National Farm Workers Association, voted to join the Filipino workers in Delano, California, who started a strike in the grape fields for better wages. The grape strike became a 5-year national boycott, attracting supporters from across the U.S. and abroad (Acuña, 2015; Hamilton, 2011; Mariscal, 2004). The union's work during the 1960s and 1970s was pivotal in pressuring agribusiness to sign contracts with laborers, among other demands. Dolores Huerta, a school teacher by training, became Chávez's right hand in organizing the community with Chicanos and other minority farm laborers, educating them about their rights as workers while recruiting them as union members (Acuña, 2015; Chomsky, 2007).

Chávez was influenced early on in his life by the nonviolence philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Mariscal, 2004; Stavans, 2010). Dr. King's non-

violence activism ideas, along with Chavez's Catholic religion, became seminal in the development of the Chicano Movement as a "radical identity project, that critiqued the entire structure of U.S. capitalism at home and abroad" (Mariscal, 2004, p. 24). Chávez held long hunger strikes which he viewed as a penance, a form of sacrifice, grief, and pain for the farmworkers' suffering. Chavez organized workers' campaigns around important issues related to their work but also related to their reality as a racialized and oppressed demographic group. Chávez led rallies and marches across the Southwest, to unite the people under the fight for equality and justice for all Chicanos, including other Latino and minority workers. The confluence of the Chicano students' and the farmworkers protests succeeded in raising the Chicano consciousness and awareness of the Mexican ancestry population and its struggles in the U.S.

Many Chicana/Latina women who were activists and community workers remained invisible on both sides of the border during the Chicano Movement (Arriola, 2003; Chávez, 2000; Few, 2007; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 2015; Mummert, 2012; Roth, 2006). This situation made Chicanas feel excluded as equal partners and community leaders in the fight for equal rights and representation for both Chicanos and Chicanas. To highlight the work of Chicanas linking their consciousness-raising ideology to the historical tradition of women activism in community movements, Chicana scholars and activists founded *Las Hijas de Cuauhtémoc*, a Chicana feminist newspaper in the 1960's (Arredondo et al., 2003; García, 1997; Heindenreich, et al., 2014; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 2015). Chicana scholars continue the efforts to create safe spaces for Chicanas/Latinas and other women of color where they can develop scholarship using decolonizing and emancipatory theoretical frameworks such as borderland feminism.

Learning the historic context of the Chicana struggles in the physical and metaphoric borderlands gave Mexican American women the knowledge and power to challenge oppressive politics against Latinas/Chicanas (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 2015; Roth, 2006). Chicana feminists became writers and scholars, with a mission of challenging patriarchic forms of oppression, while showcasing the resistance of Chicana, indigenous, Mexican American, Latina and other minoritized groups of color. Although there have been improvements over issues of social inequality affecting Latinos/as, the struggle to attain social mobility and better quality of life continue for this demographic group, particularly for those *sin papeles* or 'without papers'.

Hence, the Chicano and Chicana Movement in the 1960s and 1970s emerged as a community-based economic, political, and social action movement seeking justice and equality for Chicanos/as and other Latinos. These movements, eventually known as *La Causa* (The Struggle), were certainly a large-scale organizing and mobilizing effort, which ran quasi-parallel or right in the aftermath of the Civil Rights Movement era. The Chicano Movement and César Chávez benefitted from many of Dr. King's peaceful ideology and protest strategies that allowed African Americans to attain significant socio-economic and political advances in the 1950s and 1960s.

Issues Affecting Latina/o Migrants and their Families

The stigma that comes with being a Latino/a immigrant in the U.S. has long-term negative consequences to the self-esteem and general wellbeing of these individuals (Cleaveland, 2011, 2013; Marks, A.M., McKenna, J., & García Coll, C., 2018; Valdez et al., 2013). Latino families, as a group of color, suffer negative experiences related to rejection, prejudice, and racism. The exposure to these experiences are associated with risk for depression (D'Angelo et al., 2009; Zayas & Bradlee, 2014), and other health-related problems related to their migratory

status (Green, Perez, Ornelas, Tran, Blumenthal, Lyn & Corbie-Smith, 2012; Marshall, Urrutia-Rojas, Soto Mas & Coggin, 2005). Disparities in access to health care and mental health services are more significant for Latino migrants, who face greater limitations due in part to lack of health insurance and limited Spanish-speaking service providers (Green et al., 2012; Marshall et al., 2005). Tran, Ornelas, and colleagues (2014) observed that Latina women often neglect their own physical and mental health, due in part to lack of culturally appropriate services available, or simply the services are out of reach due to lack of insurance and or reliable transportation.

Other examples of research with Latina migrants suggest that they may be at a higher risk for domestic violence than whites (Edelson, Hokoda, & Ramos-Lira, 2007). Given the myriad stressors placed on Latino families due to racism, classism, etc., violence may become a natural outlet (Vidales, 2010). Moreover, Edelson and colleagues (2007) found that Latinas who had been victims of domestic violence had significantly greater trauma-related symptoms, such as depression and lower social and personal self-esteem than non-Latina women. Despite greater symptoms, Latinas are less likely than other ethnicities to pursue formal support services due to language barriers and lack of knowledge about laws and services (Vidales, 2010). These findings suggest the need for more comprehensive support services for Latina migrant women that include bilingual and bicultural professionals trained to provide culturally responsive services.

Poverty is a central factor contributing to poor health and mental illness in Latino migrants (Cleaveland, 2013; D'Angelo et al., 2009; Leon & Dziegielewski, 1999). The primary reason given for migration to the U.S. by Mexican women is to escape poverty in their country of origin (Cleaveland, 2013, 2011; Contreras, 2005; Hancock, 2007; Noyori-Corbett & Moxley, 2016). However, Latina migrants face great obstacles to insert themselves in the workforce, such as lack of affordable childcare and transportation. Also, those who are undocumented are banned

from applying for federal assistance for needy families such as Medicaid and Food Stamps (Johnson, 2003; Quesada, 2011). Too many women are paid below the minimum wage in jobs, such as caring for children and or cleaning houses, leaving women dealing with the negative consequences of been isolated from their social support networks, and unable to reach for resources available to other low-income families to supplement their income (Cleaveland, 2013). Poverty is also a precursor of poor health, as Latino families without a migratory status become unable to afford health care or medication (Otiniano, Carroll-Scot, Toy, Wallace, 2012; Sternberg, & Barry, 2011; Yaros, Roberts, Powers & Steiner, 2015).

Current migration laws are seen by many scholars as a form of legal violence against undocumented Latinas and their families. Abrego & Menjivar (2011) described that restrictive migration laws are impeding mother and children, not only from migrating together but remaining together in the U.S. The increase in migratory restrictive laws in the U.S. is adversely shaping the overall experiences of Latina migrants, particularly mothers. In a study with Latino immigrant parents, Enriquez (2015) found that migration laws work as a multigenerational punishment, especially for mixed-status families. Harsh migration laws are intended to target undocumented parents by narrowing their possibilities of working, driving, and providing a safe environment for their children. The punishment intended to target the undocumented parent negatively affects the typical day-to-day life of their U.S. born children, who are not the direct objective of such laws. Multigenerational punishment can further the reproduction of inequality within families over generations (Enriquez, 2015, p.939). Other legal issues affecting this population cohort are the lack of access to legal aid when they face situations such as domestic violence, and the deportation of a loved one (Hancock, 2007; Zayas & Bradlee, 2014).

In summary, scholarly research has documented multiple issues affecting undocumented migrants, both in their countries of origin and in the United States (Drachman, & Paulino, 2004). At their countries of origin, Latina migrants are escaping gruesome conditions including poverty (Sternberg & Barry, 2011), domestic violence (Abrego & Menjivar, 2011; Reina & Lohman, 2015; Vidales, 2010), and safety threats due to gang and drug-related criminal activity (Androff & Tavassoli, 2012; Arnson, & Olson, 2011; Cleaveland, 2013, 2011). Unfortunately, immigrant women face similar forms of oppression once they reach the U.S. (Hancock, 2007). Latina migrants are subjected to poor and exploitative working conditions (Arriola, 2003; Noyori-Corbett, & Moxley, 2016;), discrimination (Allexsaht-Snider, Buxton, & Harman, 2013; Quesada, 2011), microaggressions (Villenas, 2005; Villenas, & Dehyle, 1999), isolation, and depression (Ornelas, & Perreira, 2011).

These and other cumbersome experiences result in incremental and mostly unattended trauma for Latino migrants (Buckingham & Brodski, 2015; Caminero-Santangelo, 2016; Cancel-Tirado, Greder & Wilkes, 2018). In order to address the almost inevitable mental health impact of the U.S. migrant experience in Latinas/os, behavioral and community practice researchers have proposed for decades the use of culturally sensitive practice frameworks (Bermúdez, Stintson, & Abrams, 2011; D'Angelo et al., 2009; Falicov, 2012, 2014; Leon & Dziegielewski, 1999). Furthermore, Chicana and transnational feminist scholarly works are focusing on exploring how Latino/a experiences in the U.S are intersected by their race, gender, sexual identity, class, and migrant status (Arredondo et al., 2003; Bejarano, 2014;). Lastly, research within community settings has consistently pointed toward the need for scholars to recognize and include the wisdom and strength of local knowledge and indigenous women leaders in the

development of interventions and social projects in their neighborhoods (Albarrán, Heilemann & Koniak- Griffin, 2014; Ayón & Ghosn Naddy, 2013; Gonzalez-Arizmendi & Faver, 2010).

Conceptual Frameworks

Studying immigrant women in the United States requires a multilevel and multifocal framework that could address the complexities lived by this vulnerable population cohort. As women continue increasing their numbers crossing borderlands worldwide, the use of critical-feminist-transnational theoretical approaches become more urgent than ever. Both from a postcolonial standpoint and a human rights and social justice framework, large-scale migration and geopolitical displacement toward former imperialist countries has been an escape from poverty and lack of opportunities for migrants across the globe (Mohanty, 2003). Transdisciplinary global feminist researchers are developing new conceptual frameworks and perspectives to focus on making links across social relations and places on multiple scales-such as neighborhood, community, city, region, and nation (Kim, 2007; Mahalingam, Balan, & Molina, 2009).

Borderland Feminism (BF) Thought

Chicana and Black feminist thought share common paradigms where women of color are constantly resisting dominant narratives that minimize, to the point of erasing, the multiple contributions of these women to academic scholarly writing and research (Few, 2009 Roth, 2006). Both schools of racial-ethnic feminisms assess, in parallel ways, discourses of identity and difference, and how they create knowledge about the ways minoritized groups ‘speak back’ to create new bodies of knowledge (Bryant-Davis & Comas-Díaz, 2016; Few, 2009; hooks, 1984). In *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza,* Gloria Anzaldúa (2012, 2004) established the border between two countries as a metaphor for all types of crossings- between geopolitical

boundaries, sexual transgressions, social dislocations, and the crossings necessary to exist in multiple linguistic and cultural contexts (Cantú & Hurtado, 2012, p.6). Anzaldúa used the geographical location of her birth as the source for theorizing, "how the mestiza woman is able to juggle between cultures, developing a dualistic thinking, while keeping together her collective racial identity" (p. 13).

Borderlands theory provides the use of experiential documentation to address how women may survive carrying the burden of their social and political stigma when they have no control over how others categorize them into social groups. Anzaldúa developed the term *conciencia de la mestiza* or mestiza consciousness, which posits similar threads with the *double consciousness* concept coined by W.E.B. Du Bois. As a body of knowledge, la mestiza living in *la frontera* or the border, is embedded in the tolerance for ambiguity. The personal narrative of the mestiza allows Chicana and other Latina women to resist both the male and white dominance (Anzaldúa, 2004; Cantú & Hurtado, 2012).

Anzaldúa captured in her writing the border crossing as physical and emotional. Her narrative of comparing the lives of Latinas/Chicanas in the U.S. with an open wound, *una herida abierta*, is a powerful metaphor of resistance. This open wound is a constant reminder of the Latina immigrant as a woman of color in this land. Anzaldúa theorized how language and embodied experiences for women become a way of knowing, a way of interpreting, and a way of living. She called this way of knowing *conocimiento* (Cantú & Hurtado, 2012).

Saavedra & Nymark (2008) built upon Anzaldúa and other Chicana and Latina feminists to describe borderland feminism or BF. BF was originally conceived as a theoretical framework that defies the traditional Western way of doing research and developing knowledge.

Borderlands theorizing seeks social transformation not only for Chicanas but also for Latinas/os and other minoritized groups who have been oppressed by having their bodies and voices silenced by colonial forces. In one example of a qualitative study using Chicana/ borderland theory, Curiel (2016) highlighted the lived experiences of young Mexican American men as they navigated the world in between two realities as Mexican men but also as American men. In another qualitative study, Perez-Huber & Maria Cueva (2012) employed critical race theory and Chicana/borderland feminist thought together to reveal complexities on the relationship of racial nativist microaggressions and its effects on Mexican American adolescent females.

Borderland feminism is a tool, a methodology, as well as an epistemology. In essence, BF is a paradigm of transcultural experience. Elenes (2013) expanded the use of philosophical and epistemological feminist ideology of Gloria Anzaldúa as tools for social justice and human rights' education and theory. She provided a conceptual discussion on Anzaldúa's borderland theory and its seven developmental stages toward *conocimiento*, a personal and epistemological path based on awareness or reflective consciousness.

The first stage in the path to conocimiento is like a jolt; something that propels one from the safe and familiar to the second stage called *nepantla*, where one is in a transitional in-between space. Elenes described this stage as one of "critical awareness, when someone starts to see things from different and new perspectives" (p. 135). The third stage of conocimiento is called *coatlicue*. This stage of hopelessness, distress, discomfort, and sometimes paralysis, inhibits the ability to act. At the fourth stage, individuals begin to act and leave behind paralysis and despair. The fifth stage invites one's exploration of different meanings and attempts to create new forms of thinking. The sixth stage involves the development, sharing, and testing of these

new narratives, or *testimonios*, into a collective form. Lastly, the seventh stage is spiritual activism, a space for cooperation, negotiation of conflict and difference, and building alliances with others (Elenes, 2013).

For Chicana and other Latina migrants, borderland theory provides a context for women to navigate different social contexts and develop knowledge on what it means to reside in these dissimilar social and political *bocacalles* or interstices. Chicana borderland feminism represents a new paradigm in qualitative social work research and practice (Hudson, 2015), particularly in the study of Latina women in the rural southern U.S. This study proposes to develop theoretical, epistemological, and practice-based perspectives, to gain knowledge from experiences of Latina migrants, to guide current and future social work praxis towards a culturally responsive, macro-level community intervention. Borderland feminist theory intrinsically responds to Latina individuals who are intersected by various sources of oppression simultaneously, which are shaped by the social context of unauthorized immigration, low socioeconomic status, ethno-racial and gender identities, motherhood, and so on. In essence, borderland feminist thought shares similar views with Black feminist thought and critical and transnational feminisms, in regard to denouncing the life conditions of oppressed people living at the margins of society.

Risk and Resilience Theory

In *Resiliency, an Integrated Approach to Practice, Policy and Research*, Roberta Greene and Ann P. Conrad (2002), presented a basic history, assumptions, and terms related to resilience. Historically speaking, resilience research and theory has evolved from the strengths' perspective (Saleebey, 1996). Two important authors cited by Greene and Conrad are Doll and Lyon (1998), who described two generations of risk and resilience studies. The first generation of resilience studies dedicated its focus on disadvantaged children and their risks. Some studies

during this period addressed the multiple influences and interactions of risk and protective factors on child adjustment. Researchers at this stage started to move away from the use of the word 'risk,' as it has been viewed as pejorative, while mostly referring to young people in major urban cities with high rates of unemployment and poverty (Greene & Conrad, 2002).

Risk is defined by Greene and Conrad as "any influence that increases the probability of onset, digression to a more serious state, or maintenance of a problem condition" (p. 32). According to Greene and Conrad (2002), risk as a statistical concept originated in epidemiology. Researchers in the epidemiology field create risk variables to measure how specific factors change or modify on that particular interaction, and how these changes or modifications could be expected or observed in future outcomes. Researchers in epidemiology and human and family sciences also try to assess how cumulative risk is influenced by additive risk, to determine trajectories for long-term outcomes in human development and behavioral change (De Andrade Seidi & Pereira de Cruz Benetti, 2011).

The second generation of resilience studies has contributed to emphasize the successful coping mechanisms, or the ability to overcome risk and adversity. It is understood that for people to overcome adversity, risk must be present. To successfully overcome risk and or adversity, people may count on multisystemic, sometimes called ecological, protective factors. Traditionally, resilience was viewed as something individuals have, instead of a process that families, schools, communities, and the government facilitate. An emerging perspective provides ample examination of ecological resilience in understanding how these external factors operate in the development of resilience in individuals. Ecological resilience, or social ecology, is a factor that interacts with vulnerable populations facing adversity. Examples of these ecological protective factors are family, schools, neighborhoods, community resources, and cultural

practices. These factors can be as influential as psychological aspects of positive development when individuals are under stress. This is what Ungar (2012) and others called the ecological context. Hence, social ecologies are protective processes associated with resilience. These factors are said to interact with the individual to promote or refrain resilience. This ecological interpretation of resilience varies among scholars, families, and societies (De Andrade & Pereira de Cruz Benetti, 2011; Ungar, 2012).

Relative to a newer perspective of resilience, scholars in this field are still ambiguous about how to determine which variables to consider in their studies that involve ecological resilience. For instance, variables such as neighborhood context and cultural values are more complicated to measure, as they take a different shape with each social group studied (Ungar, 2012).

Family and migrant resilience models. Jean C. Falicov (2012, 2014) and Froma Walsh (2012) have proposed variations of a family resilience framework to guide community-based and family practices. Froma Walsh (2012), a social work scholar, researcher, and therapist has written extensively about resilience development in vulnerable families. She defined family resilience as the ability of a family to withstand and rebound from disruptive life challenges. For Walsh, the concept of family resilience focuses on risk and resilience in the family as a functional unit. Walsh's (2012) family resilience framework is based on various assumptions: 1) there is no such thing as a single approach to family functioning, as modern families are more diverse in today's society. Each family must be assessed for its unique composition, values, interaction patterns, stressors, resources, etc.; 2) family resilience focuses on strengths forged under stress, in response to a crisis, and under prolonged adversity; and, 3) family processes for optimal functioning and well-being varies among and across families and over time. Walsh

posits that all families have the potential for positive growth and gaining resilience out of adversity, healing, and transformation.

In Walsh's (2012) model, hope and optimism are key factors for the functioning of a family unit. Recognizing the inner strengths and potential of each member of the family unit also contributes to overcoming difficult times. Families that communicate and stay connected will be in better shape to overcome adversity as well. Walsh recommends community and clinical practitioners to engage in creating resilience-oriented assessments, to guide families on their development of strengths techniques for coping with stressful dynamics. A list of the practice guidelines suggested by Froma Walsh for practitioners working with families and communities is provided in Appendix C.

Falicov (2012, 2014), on the other hand, proposed an intervention model to work with the specific needs she observed in migrant families in her clinical practice. Her model, *Multidimensional, Ecological, Comparative Framework* or MECA, provides a framework for understanding the experiences of migration and acculturation. This model takes into account the continuous evolvement of the ecological context components such as school, work, poverty, neighborhood, community ties, church and religion, anti-immigrant climate, other dangers (drugs, violence, gangs), and other protections (language, social networks).

MECA also addresses the exploration of issues related to each family's unique life cycle, and how family members organize themselves as a unit (Falicov, 2012, 2014). This model proposes that each migrant family develop an ecological niche, as they have diverse experiences and acquire different meanings in their lived phenomena. These ecological niches operate for each family in relation to their cultural dimensions such as "ethnicity, race, language, social class, education, geography, climate, religion, nationality, occupation, and political ideology."

Hence, the present study highlighted that each participant had different interpretations of their migration and deportation experiences.

The MECAmap model assesses how migrant families overcome adversity at various stages in the life course. However, these families operate in different ecological contexts than non-migrant families. The MECAmap model is inserted in a social justice and cultural diversity framework, where various ecological dimensions are nested. The four dimensions encompassed by MECA are 1) migration and acculturation; 2) ecological context; 3) family life cycle; and 4) family organization. Within each dimension, Falicov positions a list of social ecologies, or niches. Each family will have created a niche, according to the protective and risk factors operating in their lives as migrants. (Please see Appendix B presenting the MECAmap).

Resilience studies in Latino families. In response to the multidimensional life course issues immigrant families experience, research scholars are now studying Latino immigrant families' dynamics from a family resilience perspective (Falicov, 2012, 2014; Raffaelli, Tran, Wiley, Galarza-Heras &Lazarevic, 2012). Latinos' strong ties to their countries of origin have been studied in mental health research as a protective factor of resilience, and also as a positive acculturation process for youth and newcomers. However, this protective factor tends to fade for the second and third generations (Rumbaut, 1994; Stein, González, Cupito, Kiang & Supple, 2015). This fading effect is called by Rumbaut segmented assimilation, where children of migrants tend to drop their parents' traditions and values while at the same time trying to acculturate to American mainstream values.

In Mexican American families, for example, research has shown that values such as *familismo and respeto* (respect) are associated with higher family cohesion and lower family conflict. *Familismo* promotes family closeness and interdependence while emphasizing trust,

loyalty, and a general orientation between family members (Lorenzo-Blanco, Unger, Baezconde-Garbanati, Ritt-Olson & Soto, 2012). The importance of neighborhood cohesion in Latino enclaves seems to enhance the protective or resilient values mentioned earlier (Alba, Deane, Denton, Disha, Mckenzie & Napierala, 2014). A gap still exists in the research literature regarding whether living in a mostly Latino neighborhood could be a protective factor for mental health, trauma, and other adverse conditions on families with mixed and undocumented legal status. The shift in family roles represents a challenge for immigrant families in the host country, particularly for those facing a deportation threat due to their undocumented status.

González-Arizmendi & Faver (2010) observed that when Latinas take leadership roles as community organizers, they act as 'natural problem solvers' and 'cultural brokers' to other families in their neighborhoods. This is intrinsically tied to their role as members of their communities. Community activism seems to be a personal source of empowerment for Latina leaders (Gates, 2017; Sweet, 2015). Working collectively, which Latina leaders tend to do, to achieve problem-solving could also be considered a protective factor in the aftermath of a deportation crisis in a community (González-Arizmendi and Faver, 2010).

Particularly significant for this study was to explore how poverty, education, and race intersects the lives of Latinas in the U.S. and whether resilience factors had an impact in their overall response to the deportation of a loved one. Despite the limited culturally responsive resources available to Latino families, especially in rural areas, Latina women still manage to address their unmet needs through informal support, mainly composed of family, friends, neighbors, religious groups, and community entities (Sanders et al., 2013; Zuñiga, 2004). These informal supports provide emotional, moral, instrumental, and financial resources on a regular basis (Ayón & Ghosn Naddy, 2013). A number of studies with Latino families have discussed

existing gaps in access to formal resources of support for undocumented individuals and families, such as access to health care and mental health services (D'Angelo et al., 2009; Green, Perez, Ornelas, Tran, Blumenthal, Lyn, & Corbie-Smith, 2012; Tran, Ornelas, Kim, Perez, Green, Lyn, & Corbie-Smith, 2014).

Lastly, Latino communities in the U.S. are known for cultivating, maintaining, and transferring their cultural values and traditions from their countries of origin over generations. A sense of pride about ethnic identity seems to permeate among families of Latino origin, foremost in first-generation migrants (Pew Hispanic Research Center, 2012). This expression of *Latinidad* also appears to encompass feelings of solidarity and resistance among Latinos in the U.S. (Monforti, 2014). These cultural and family values are also explored in this study as mechanisms of coping used by Latina migrants to address life crises and to overcome adversity.

Other resilience scholars have made important contributions on how Latino and other rural immigrant families develop resilience in response to ecological variables such as access to human, economic, and social capital (Raffaelli et al., 2012). Rural communities, for example, are typically ill-equipped to welcome and integrate newly arrived Latino migrants. Many rural communities lack public transportation, affordable housing, Spanish-speaking professionals, and ethnic enclaves that may facilitate the adaptation and integration of immigrant families. This puts migrants at risk. There is also the challenge of living in a hostile rural environment as opposed to a welcoming and supportive one.

Researchers studying vulnerable populations highly emphasize the importance of recognizing the influence of the 'self-insertion' of the researcher in the studied environment. This is particularly relevant while studying people living in vulnerable contexts, such as Latino immigrant families. De Andrade Seidi & Pereira de Cruz Benetti (2011) made recommendations

on negotiations of how researchers should be careful of not abusing their privilege and power in their work with communities where residents appear to have a less privileged socioeconomic status. In addition, it is necessary for the researcher not to make assumptions about the vulnerability of the study participants at any stage of the research. Balancing the researcher's role as an insider/outsider while observing participants was a great concern on Reina's (2014) study with Latina migrants and their sources of resilience. Ethical dilemmas must be discussed and worked on throughout the study. Continuous reflective exercises are important to highlight the meanings and challenges of her intersectionalities as a bicultural researcher, sometimes entangled within her respondents' realities, and her research. Reina's scholarly work is consistent with feminist values that nurture a more balanced relationship between the researcher and participants.

Conflict Theory

Latino migrant workers and their families in the U.S. are confronting ongoing marginalization and racism, which is derived from anti-immigrant and nativist sentiments against their presence (Orozco Vargas, 2015). The main purpose for migrating to the U.S is to escape poverty (and in many cases violence) derived from global capitalist and colonial economies that forcibly displace them by draining their countries' resources (Merril, 2014; Noyori-Corbett & Moxley, 2016; Tichenor, 2015). Once in the host country, immigrant workers undergo abusive treatment at work, that promotes low wages and limited protection, if any (Wilson, 2017). An inexpensive and disposable labor force, these workers refrain from claiming better working conditions, in fear of capital owners' retaliation by reporting their often-undocumented status to ICE. The abuse of migrant workers in the U.S. has deeper roots in the historic socio-political and economic relations among the U.S. and its Latin American neighboring nations, as discussed

earlier in this study. America has failed to recognize that Latino workers, particularly those without legal presence, are a vital sector of the workforce in the country.

This phenomenon of immigration and its aftermath of deportation can be interpreted as a classic example of a social class struggle, as interpreted by Karl Marx's conflict theory. In the coming section, I will discuss how scholars explore conflict theory from both Marxist and human rights frameworks.

Conflict is defined as "an individual or collective action, whether violent or illegal, that is used to confront or resist the actions of the majority -in particular practices that repress, exploit, attack, discriminate against, and exclude them" (Estévez, 2012, p. 105). Bartos & Wehr (2002) offered another definition of conflict, referring to a "situation in which actors use conflict behavior against each other to attain incompatible goals and/or express their hostility" (Bartos & Wehr, p. 13). In both definitions, conflict implies a clash between groups with opposite interests that could escalate into hostile and violent responses.

Estévez (2012) contextualized the eruption of a global social conflict around migration when wealthy countries deny people their right to migrate, as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. Estevez focused on analyzing migration and social conflict both in North America and Europe. In both geographical locations, migration has become an urgent priority in their sociopolitical discussions. Migrants are mobilizing in larger numbers requesting asylum across the globe. This is not a new phenomenon, as millions of refugees migrated in the aftermath of WWII. The main difference between this newer migrant wave versus the post-WWII wave is the place of origin of said migrants (Estévez, 2012). Today's migrants are not escaping a world war, instead, they are forcibly displaced by religious and ethnic persecution, extreme poverty, extortion, natural disasters, and overall fear for their lives and safety. The fight

over scarce resources after environmental catastrophes such as drought, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes is another source of conflict in itself. These phenomena leave numerous families without homes and jobs, forcing them to seek refuge away from their countries. Estévez (2012) provided the example of internal/external social conflict when indigenous communities in Central America become victims of land expropriations, forcing them to leave their countries in search of work.

The social conflict that forces migrants to leave their countries does not resolve itself once migrants reach the host country. On the contrary, the response toward the newcomers is increasingly conflictive, due in part to the perceived menace of a 'migrant invasion' from people with no right to enter or stay in the host country (Estévez, 2012). Countries in the Global North are following a colonialist and discriminatory framework, which not only denies human rights to migrants but also criminalizes them as 'illegal' and undeserving of any protection. Making the migrants' existence 'illegal' allows government authorities to maintain and control the vulnerability of migrants. Thus, migrant vulnerability is not a social characteristic, but a consequence of impunity, which validates the efforts of the authorities to use the legal system to discipline migrants through fear of deportation (Estévez, 2012).

Marxist theory and migrant labor. Karl Marx is known for his ideas relative to philosophical history, political economy, and social reform. But one of his most salient contributions was a strong position against the capitalist economic system that operated in the 19th century in England and other European countries. He has also been recognized as one of the fathers of modern Sociology (Stevenson, Haberman & Matthews Wright, 2013). Born in Germany in 1818, he grew up in a Jewish family that later converted to Christianity. Marx was exposed at a very early age to classical writings from Greek philosophers, as well as the work of

Fredrich Hegel, an important German philosopher from whom Marx later develops his ideas about history based on economic human relations (Stevenson et al., 2013). Marx predicted that capitalism would become more and more unstable, where the class struggles between the owner of capital and the proletariat would increase. This conflict would end in a major social revolution when the oppressed class would take power from the owners of capital.

In *The History of Political Philosophy*, Strauss and Cropsey (1987) interpret Marx's work on how class conflict develops:

> The masses have been deprived of the opportunity to become free and self-respecting men because they have always been forced into the position of cringing dependents- slaves, serfs, or proletarians- subject to men who, although private citizens or subjects themselves, could yet arbitrarily deprive them or their living by cutting off their connection with the means of production. The dehumanization inevitably resulting from such servile dependence has been compounded by poverty imposed upon the many by their exploiters (p. 806).

The major force behind oppressed social classes to resist and demand change on their undermined condition is called 'class consciousness,' a turning point where people subjugated by those in power take awareness of their disenfranchised status and demand their emancipation (Turner, 1975).

David Wilson (2017) recently developed a conceptual analysis entitled *Marx on Migration: Workers, Wages, and Legal Status.* In this work, Wilson discussed Karl Marx's position concerning migrant work and capitalism. Marx wrote to his collaborators in the United States about the antagonism created between English and Irish proletarians. Native-born English workers saw Irish migrants as the ones responsible for the lower wages and the poor work

conditions for the working class in England. The Irish were viewed as a 'surplus' sent by Ireland, who were accepting lower wages and destabilizing the English economy. Marx's socioeconomic analysis described antagonism as "artificially kept alive and intensified by the press, the pulpit, the comic papers, in short, by all the means at the disposal of the ruling classes" (p. 21). Marx suggested that antagonism was the secret of the capitalist class to maintain its power.

Wilson used Marx's 'antagonism' analysis to discuss the parallels between the Irish migrants in the 1800's England, and the situation of forcibly displaced workers in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean after the NAFTA treaty took place:

> Just as English policy devastated small-scale agriculture in Ireland, the U.S. promoted neoliberal programs like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) have uprooted small producers in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean islands, and this in turn has driven millions of displaced to seek work in the United States. Once here, present-day migrants are forced, like their Irish predecessors in England, into low-paying jobs and substandard living conditions, only to face hostility from native-born workers who view them as competitors. Antagonism over this competition are further fueled by racial and ethnic prejudices, artificially kept alive and intensified by the press (p. 21).

Wilson posit that many potential causes are driving down wages in the U.S. economy, and that migrant work is only one possible variable that is difficult to quantify in relation with other probable variables. Economists have attributed both benefits and damages to the U.S. economy derived from immigrant labor (Wilson, 2017). Most analyses of migration and wages correspond to the theory of supply and demand. When migrants enter the U.S. workforce, an increase of labor supply without an immediate increase in demand for this work tends to reduce wages. Wilson explained that over time, wage rates should stabilize, as new migrants also

increase the demand for goods and services, and therefore, for labor (Wilson, 2018). Other models of supply and demand show that workers who become more affected by the new immigrant labor are the less educated, low-skill native-born workers. These workers will be competing for the same jobs with new migrants, who do not speak English and have even fewer working skills or educational levels than U.S. born workers.

Wilson added that the assumption of migrants as the sole variable responsible for lower wages does not take into account other forces operating in the country such as xenophobia and racial discrimination, as new immigrant workers are considered people of color. Other variables that could be influencing the reduced-wage phenomenon might be related to the undocumented status of new immigrant workers. Wilson mentioned that in 2012, the Pew Research Center estimated that over one-third of immigrant workers in the U.S. (8.1 million), had undocumented status. These workers not only face rejection from society-at-large and abusive practices at work but also live in constant fear of deportation threats due to their 'illegal' migratory conditions (Wilson, 2017).

Wilson suggested that the most important challenge for immigrant rights advocates would be to convince the native-born workers to unite efforts with migrant laborers to demand better working conditions for all. This has proven a difficult task, especially due to America's history of racism and discrimination. Nonetheless, the idea of linking the parallel struggles between native-born workers and immigrant laborers against the capitalist class could be revisited by immigrant activists to create a common front to improve working conditions for all workers.

Marx's theory on socioeconomic conflict has influenced important emancipatory movements. Examples of these movements are the non-violent civil disobedience of Mahatma

Gandhi for the independence of India from Britain; the work of Dr. Martin Luther King as the leader of the Civil Rights' Movement in the United States; and the Liberation Movement of Paulo Freire in Latin America. The 1960s Chicano Movement led by César Chávez and Dolores Huerta was influenced as well by Marx's ideology of the 'emancipation of the working class.'

An example of Marx's conflict theory today can be analyzed in the struggle for permanent protections from deportation, with the current mobilization of the *Dreamers.* The Dreamers are approximately 800,000 young adult migrants who entered the country, unauthorized as children with their parents. On October 5th, 2017 after President Trump rescinded the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals or DACA (Jordan, 2017), beneficiaries of the program lost their temporary protective status (TPS). DACA was an Executive Order signed by President Obama in 2012 in response to congressional inaction on migration reform. Despite the imminent danger of DACA's elimination, Dreamers and their allies are actively protesting nationwide through civil disobedience. Grassroots initiatives, such as undocumented students at Freedom University, continue to inflict greater pressure on the government to recognize that they are willing to stay and contribute to the social wellbeing of the United States of America.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to describe and interpret the living experiences of Latina immigrants facing the detention and deportation of a loved one in a rural location in Georgia. This research explored Latina immigrants' resilience, resistance, *concientización* (consciousness awareness) and *conocimiento* (knowledge), while defying their risk of detention and potential deportation. It also explored the participants' living conditions in the aftermath of a deportation in their household, and how this crisis affected their families and communities. Hence, two research questions guided this study:

1) How do Latina immigrants describe and interpret their lived experiences in Georgia after the detention and or deportation of a loved one?

2) What do Latina immigrants identify as strategies and mechanisms of coping, resilience, resistance, and knowledge in the aftermath of the detention and deportation phenomena?

Qualitative Research Design and Rationale

Qualitative inquiry is personal (Patton, 2015). It allows the researcher to become the primary instrument of data collection and analysis to gain meaning and understanding of the phenomena of interest (Merriam, 2009). The essence of qualitative research is to create a "conceptualization of the lived reality for respondents" (Campbell, Taylor & McGlade, 2017, p. 66). The emerging and flexible characteristics of qualitative research responds to the "changing conditions of the study in progress" (Merriam, 2009, p.16). Qualitative researchers must develop competencies such as a high tolerance for ambiguity, being a careful observer, and thinking

inductively (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2015). Maxwell (2013) articulates that the interconnection and coherence of a research design is a matter of pragmatic compatibility, not of logical consistency. His assertion responds to the need for qualitative design to be a more flexible design than a quantitative one. Maxwell states that there are factors beyond the researcher's control that can influence the design, and therefore, the outcomes of the study. Examples of these factors are the following; resources, research skills, perceived problems, ethical standards, research setting, and data collected and results from the study. These issues, as Maxwell posits, are not part of the design of the study, but belong to the environment within which the researcher and its design exist (Maxwell, 2013).

The present study follows a heuristic inquiry methodology, guided by a feminist-informed paradigm. Feminist research intentionally creates the conditions for provoking a dialogue between the researcher and the data, while recognizing that structural and systemic power differentials will permeate throughout the investigation.

Process of Heuristic Inquiry

Scholars Sultan (2019), Abbott (2004), and Moustakas (1990) explained the heuristic process as a way of knowing and being informed about a phenomenon that captures a researcher's attention. Abbott defined heuristics simply as "the study of how to find things out of the discipline-as it were, of discovery" (Abbott, 2004, p. 81). In the quest to find answers through a deep process of discovery, the researcher enters into a dialogue to find underlying meanings and knowledge of important human experiences (Sultan, 2019; Moustakas, 1990). The sources of meanings take place within the individual through one's senses, perceptions, beliefs, and judgments. Heuristic research "involves self-search, self-dialogue, and self-discovery; the research question and the methodology flow out of inner awareness, meaning, and inspiration"

(Moustakas, 1990, p. 11). Among the characteristics inherent to heuristic inquiry, *meaning discovery* begins with a question or problem, which the researcher seeks to illuminate, or answer, to understand the human experience.

Moustakas (1990) claimed that the contact of the researcher with the phenomenon investigated must be direct and personal. This statement is central to heuristic research; the entire research is driven by the researcher's intense and personal experience with the phenomenon studied, but the researcher is not as omniscient as other sources of knowledge such as research partners, the social context, and the multiple systems within the phenomenon that is taking place. In Sultan's words, heuristic inquiry honors the intersection of the personal with the mutual and the social context. This assertion is conceptualized by Sultan in Figure 3.1 below:

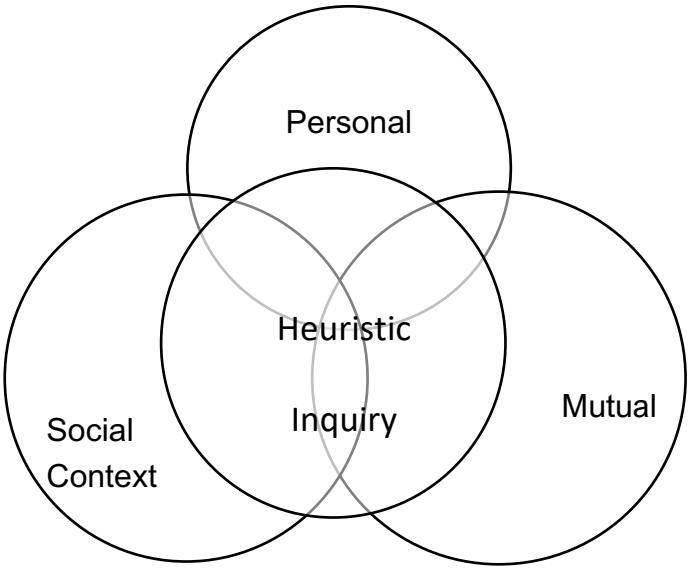

Figure 3.1: *Heuristic inquiry intersects the personal, the mutual and the social context.*

Source: *Sultan (2019)*

Heuristic inquiry allows the researcher to transcend their personal experience and move toward the shared, essential meaning of the phenomena (Sultan, 2019). This process results in a wholeness shared experience with the researcher and participants, and within and across

participants. Sultan (2019) posits that the researcher's experience with the phenomenon studied is not omniscient, but rather "it acts as a frame of reference for co-creating novel understandings of the living experience that is being explored" (Sultan, 2019, p. 27).

Moustakas (1990) differentiates heuristic inquiry from phenomenology, although in principle both qualitative approaches study the human experience of a phenomenon in depth. However, in phenomenology, the researcher is encouraged to detach oneself from the phenomena being studied. Phenomenology produces the essence of a phenomenon, avoiding highlighting the unique and individual voices of those living the experience under study (Moustakas, 1990). In contrast, a heuristic researcher seeks to provide not only the essence of the phenomenon but also a unique depiction of individual experiences of the phenomenon. Hence, heuristic inquiry allows the researcher to aim for the understanding of both the wholeness and unique patterns of the experience (Sultan, 2019; Moustakas, 1990).

Feminist Research and Heuristic Inquiry

This study is infused by a feminist approach. As cited by Sultan (2019), Hesse-Biber (2014) explained that feminist research uses gender as a lens to unravel power structures and struggles. The purpose of feminist research is to encourage marginalized oppressed individuals and communities to take an introspection of their lives and act to change their reality. Sultan (2019) indicated that heuristic inquiry and feminist research approaches have different aims and outcomes, but they can coexist within one's research with vulnerable populations, such as Latina migrant women. Whereas the natural aim of heuristic research is to enhance the essential nature of an experience, feminist research aims to highlight social injustices (Sultan, 2019). Nonetheless, both research approaches strongly encourage the researcher to engage in the continuous reflection of our positionality in terms of power differentials between researcher and

participants. Sultan also recommends feminist researchers using heuristic inquiry to keep the research process authentic and balanced.

> Special attention must be given to the feminist research agenda and personal investment in the topic of inquiry, the research process, and the expected or desired outcomes. Thus, the focus on research reflexivity should be highlighted as feminist researchers examine their values, beliefs, and biases in the interest of not imposing advocacy or social justice agendas on their participants (p. 37).

Although Sultan (2019) and Moustakas (1990) refer to their participants as co-researchers or research participants, the conditions for that to happen in this study were not possible, due in part to the risk of exposing participants' potential undocumented migratory status. Sultan makes a few more suggestions to feminist researchers, to make the participants' experience the central topic of said study. He indicates that heuristic inquiry engages in the whole experience of the participants. This holistic approach expands possibilities for exploring other meanings and interpretations beyond the frame of a marginalized group affected by one isolated phenomenon. Lastly, Sultan suggests feminist researchers take a heuristic intimacy approach while engaging in the research process and content, which could enhance the dialogue between the researcher and the participants. This approach also suggests embracing all the data as it emerges.

Heuristic Processes

According to Sultan (2019) and Moustakas (1990), a researcher doing heuristic inquiry engages in a deep internal discovery of human experience that takes place during several processes and phases. These processes include *self-dialogue, tacit knowing, intuition, indwelling, focusing, and internal frame of reference.*

Self-dialogue. Self-dialogue is the process where researchers allow the phenomenon to speak to their experiences, be questioned by it, and examine it while engaging in a flow to best understand its possible meanings. Moustakas called this process the "critical beginning," where a researcher must start an internal conversation with oneself. Self-dialogue also requires the researcher to be open to one's experiences, trust in one's self-awareness, while entering in a "highly reflective and ongoing process as you engage and reengage your perceptual, emotional, cognitive, and sensory experiences of all the facets of the phenomenon" (Sultan, 2019, p. 85).

Tacit knowing. Tacit knowing is the main principle of heuristic inquiry. It involves a revelatory meaning-making process "about the research question or topic of inquiry that allows for an implicit understanding of it and the relationships between its various dimensions" (Sultan, 2019, p. 87). Moustakas explains tacit knowledge as "knowing more than we can tell," or the ability to receive more information than one is readily aware one has. This is called the tacit dimension that guides the researcher into untapped sources of meaning (Douglas & Moustakas, 1985). Tacit knowledge is the very foundation for all heuristic discovery (Sultan, 2019).

Intuition. Intuition is another pivotal criterion of heuristic inquiry. It serves as a bridge between explicit and implicit knowledge (Moustakas, 1990). Through the intuitive process, "there are clues that undergird our understanding" (Sultan, 2019, p. 89). Intuition allows the researcher to adjust the inquiry, by connecting us researchers with the essential meanings of the phenomenon. It is intuition that provides the researcher with knowledge that may not be initially clear to the researcher at the beginning of the study. Intuition works to make decisions on how to proceed when the researcher is between the implicit and the explicit bridge of the phenomenon studied.

Indwelling. Indwelling infers a "deeper understanding of a particular facet of human experience with the aim of comprehending it holistically" (Sultan, 2019, p. 90). This heuristic process facilitates the researcher's ability to tap into the tacit, the intuitive, and the explicit dimensions of the experience by exploring every aspect of it. Indwelling also involves embodying the phenomenon of study, to make it personal, even though we researchers are not directly experiencing it. Going through the indwelling process repeatedly is particularly important during the explication phase of the heuristic inquiry, as it facilitates the researcher's reflective analysis about the phenomenon, resulting in the researcher's transformation and personal growth. This exercise will be crucial in building the flow of the implicit-explicit representation of the phenomenon in the last heuristic phase called creative synthesis.

Focusing. Focusing invites the researcher to clear an inner space in her/his mind wherein thoughts and feelings are needed to clarify a question or illuminate core themes that may arise. Researchers must tap into their feelings "to separate the clutter that might be blurring their understanding, opening a space for hidden elements of an experience to surface" (Sultan, 2019, p. 91). The focusing process allows the researcher to identify and elucidate core themes of the phenomenon. Focusing requires the researcher to spend time with the questions while allowing the experiences to emerge directly from the data. Sultan and Moustakas emphasize that this process requires the researcher to develop patience and persistence while exploring the unknown within and beneath the data.

Internal frame of reference. This is an essential process of this methodology. "The internal frame of reference serves as a catalyst for the various processes of heuristic inquiry as researchers return, again and again, to seek within themselves a deeper understanding of their perceptions, feelings, thoughts, decisions, and actions" (Sultan, 2019. p. 92). Sultan and

Moustakas emphasize the importance for the researcher to maintain a balance between our attunement and our personal experience as the researcher while developing empathy, trust, and the intersubjective experience that unfolds between researchers and participants. The internal frame of reference calls for the researcher to enhance the integrity of the study by recognizing our perceptions, thoughts, feelings, or senses while allowing the participants to explicate the meaning of their experiences.

Phases of Heuristic Inquiry

The six phases that guide heuristic methodology are *initial engagement, immersion, incubation, illumination, explication, and creative synthesis*.

Initial engagement. In this first phase of heuristic inquiry, the researcher embarks on an inner search of a topic that is of intense interest and holds a great personal meaning (Sultan, 2019). The researcher must be able to discover this critical area of interest that will guide the proposed study. Immersion is not a static or uniform phase. This phase will require the researcher to self-immerse in the phenomenon from our own experience with it, while generating our central guiding questions. Immersion implies the researcher will engage with saturation of the data and of the whole study from beginning to end (Sultan, 2019).

Immersion. This second heuristic phase, immersion, requires the researcher to become one with the question under investigation. The topic of the research takes precedence in the life of the researcher. During this phase, the researcher's personal experience with the phenomenon intensifies while the main research question is crafted. Heuristic researchers must understand how immersion into the topic will affect their interaction with the phenomenon. This interaction could be intense or moderate across the study, and it will be influenced by people, places, things, readings, and the environment surrounding the researcher and the topic. The relationship of the

researcher with the phenomenon and the degree of immersion will fluctuate over time. It will transition from superficial into a more intentional and deep immersion (Sultan, 2019).

Incubation. Sultan (2019) explains "during this phase, the researcher withdraws from the intense and focused attention on the question and or data to engage in activities unrelated to the research." This allows the seeds of the process to germinate, as suggested by Moustakas (1990). Hence, the researcher lets the inner tacit dimension grow and develop. During this tacit period, there is an opportunity for the researcher to continue cultivating deeper understandings of the phenomenon that are outside of the researcher's immediate awareness (Moustakas, 1990). Sultan describes this phase as one of increased understanding and growth for the researcher, he calls this incubation period the 'sleep-on-it' phase where "our certainty gives us room to leave the matter alone for a while, which also creates the space for the emergence of new knowledge and for its free movement as it relaxes into a new beginning" (Sultan, 2019, p. 97).

Illumination. The Illumination phase lets new awareness or understandings emerge from the incubation period (Moustakas, 1990). Discovery takes place during this time, it is a moment of elucidation for the researcher, who is awakening to "new, previously unrevealed dimensions of the experience" (Sultan, 2019, p. 97). This phase requires the researcher to be receptive and open to the development of tacit knowledge and intuition (Moustakas, 1990). This is the period where new themes may emerge that the researcher has not yet integrated into the whole experience of the phenomenon.

Explication. In the explication phase, once the new dimensions and themes are illuminated, the researcher steps into a deep exploration of what has come into awareness through indwelling, focusing, and self-disclosure (Moustakas, 1990). The researcher is now able to interlace together the many awakenings, new consciousness, and developments that have

germinated in the illumination phase. This is the phase where a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon is finally revealed as a whole. The essences of the experience are refined in preparation for the creative synthesis phase (Sultan, 2019).

Creative synthesis. This is the final phase of heuristic inquiry. Here the various strands of information, including experiences and meanings of both the researcher and the participant are integrated into a whole. The researcher must demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the data, developing a personal interpretation that represents all the elements, meanings, and interpretations derived from the study. "This creative synthesis may be expressed using any of a number of different forms, including the following: a drawing or painting, a narrative story or tale, a poem, a photo, collage, or mandala, a mosaic, sculpture, or tapestry, an audio or video recording," or some other creative form (Sultan, 2019). The creative synthesis phase is the culmination of the comprehensive essences of the phenomena.

Methods

The University of Georgia's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved this study. The Board provided the guidelines, recommendations, and authorizations to conduct research with human subjects. Because of the nature of this study where some participants were assumed to be undocumented immigrants, the university's IRB agreed to waive the required participant's signature of the consent form. It has been noted in research literature that undocumented persons do not trust government-related agencies, due to their obvious fear of being reported to ICE because of their immigration status (Abrego & Menjivar, 2011; Quesada, 2011). In as much, no information containing potential identifiers on the participants were collected as data for this study. Pseudonyms were used to identify each participant. All phone contacts and/or electronic communication, if any, were encrypted and deleted from all electronic devices. All data collected

through interviews and phone calls were kept in an electronic device under a locked password known only to the researcher and deleted permanently upon completion of the study. Lastly, participants were given a $25 gift card as incentive for participating in the study.

Sample Selection Criteria

Heuristic inquiry provides ample guidelines for determining how participants will be selected for the study. Although there are not a set number of required participants, both Sultan (2019) and Moustakas (1994) suggest that 10 to 15 participants will provide richer, more profound, and more varied meanings when depictions of the experience of others are included. Eleven participants were selected for this study. Selection criteria for eligibility included: be a Latina immigrant, 18 years or older, residing in rural Georgia, who has been affected by the detention and or deportation of a loved one in the aftermath of a deportation crisis in their families and communities.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Site Research

A purposeful homogeneous criterion-based snowball sampling approach was used to identify participants for the study.

Recruitment. Participants were recruited primarily from rural settings in Georgia, with the assistance of long-term community leaders. I have also been engaged as a volunteer with the Latino immigrant community in Georgia for the past four years. In my volunteer work with the Latino community, I regularly visited a library branch on the premises of a mobile home park. As I immersed myself into getting to know the community at this location, I started feeling comfortable speaking with residents to explore their willingness to participate or refer participants to the study. I provided my business card to local community leaders and neighbors, who passed them onto potential participants. The neighbors in this particular community are

regular patrons at the local library, where they receive educational services such as English classes, informative sessions from local resources, after-school tutoring for their children, etc. My volunteer duties within the Latino immigrant community included assisting women with paperwork and translations when applying for food stamps, Medicaid, and other health and social services. I also served as an advocate in schools when translations were needed at parent-teacher conferences. I became involved in a local coalition comprised of grassroots organizations dedicated to advocacy for immigrant rights. This non-governmental organization has been critical in allocating funding, emotional support, and other community resources to more than 20 families affected in the aftermath of deportations since 2015.

Data collection. An in-depth, semi-structured interview guide with eighteen questions was constructed for this study. The interview guide included three domain areas: the first domain focused primarily on women's reflections on identity, values, and traditions; the second domain explored in-depth the phenomenon of detention and deportation and its immediate impact on the participants and their families; the third domain showcased how women perceived the aftermath and longer effects of the deportation crisis in their families, their knowledge of existing community resources available to them, and their response to the ongoing crisis in terms of supports and coping mechanisms. The interview protocol was available both in English and Spanish, and all women but one preferred the interview to be conducted in Spanish. Interviews were primarily conducted face-to-face, at a location chosen by the participant, ten out of eleven participants chose home interviews. There was one interview conducted at the participant's workplace, per her request. The interviews were expected to take between 60 and 75 minutes; however, some interviews lasted just over 30 minutes and others took about 90 minutes. The longest interview took two hours. I allowed for enough time for participants to set the pace of the

dialogue while maintaining the interview protocol at sight for guiding purposes. Interviews were audio-recorded digitally and transcribed by the researcher and a bilingual Spanish-English transcriber. Different types of memos (processing 'memoing', reflective 'memoing', etc.), were used during the data collection for early summaries and analyses of the interviews. Memos were hand-written in a dissertation journal and kept in a locked cabinet, as well as transcribed and all identifiable information was removed. All audio files were kept in an encrypted, password-secured electronic file.

Data Analysis

The qualitative tradition of heuristic inquiry guided the analytic procedures and interpretation of the findings for this study. Participants responded to 18 questions from the semi-structured interview. The analyses were part of the findings presented as a Venn diagram in Figure 4.1. (p.136). An in-depth, within and across group analysis of the transcripts resulted in 105 codes, that were clustered into seven themes and organized into three domains. The seven themes were identified using thematic analysis, as suggested by Moustakas (1990). Subsequently, the interpretive codes were analyzed using a thematic analysis and four additional themes emerged (i.e. identity, class and racial conflict, violence, and aftermath of deportation), with twenty subthemes that corresponded to each one.

Each interview was recorded and translated verbatim, however, for the ease of analyses and disseminating the findings, each interview was professionally translated into English. Interviews were analyzed using line-by-line coding in the margins. Upon completing that process, my co-researcher, who was my dissertation committee member, and I re-read the codes and read the transcripts in a recursive manner to determine the most salient codes, which were phrases and words that were put into a large data map. The map/grid contained 11 columns, one

for each participant, and 18 rows, one for each question. Consistent with the aims of heuristic inquiry (Moustakas, 1990; Sultan, 2019), the aim was to comb through the data within and across the sample. At the end of the rows (for each question) and the columns (for each participant), the codes were organized as descriptive and interpretive summaries for each participant and for all participants as a whole. I also included data from my observations of the participants in their home, as well as theoretical concepts for the interpretive analyses. I conducted further analyses of these memos to guide my subjectivity essay and ethical dilemmas' sections. Lastly, I kept a reflexive journal where I wrote notes about the overall research progress. In this journal I added my personal reflections regarding my positionality and my Latinidad during each phase of the study.

Similar to the work of Bermúdez, Stinson, Zak-Hunter & Abrams (2011), I used the seven steps for data gathering and analysis when using heuristic inquiry: 1) data gathering and organization; 2) data immersion; 3) construction of individual depictions; 4) checking the individual depictions; 5) creating a composite description; 6) developing exemplary portraits; and 7) providing a synthesis. Line-by-line descriptive codes were organized in a map/grid and were used to aid in the interpretations of each participant's experience. Memos were coded manually as well. Additionally, as suggested by Moustakas (1990) and Sultan (2019), in addition to summarizing their individual portraits and the composite depiction, exemplary portraits emerged as three distinct groups of women who clustered together based on their common and nuanced experience with the phenomenon under study. In sum, the above-mentioned steps facilitated the organization of the data collection and analyses.

Validity is a term most commonly used in quantitative research; however, with qualitative methods, and specifically heuristic inquiry, the concept of trustworthiness is closely

related. Trustworthiness relies on the ability of the researcher to constantly assess appraisal significance of the data collected (Moustakas, 1990). This process entails a continuous checking and judging on the researcher's part to achieve a valid depiction of the experience being investigated. Although there are no established rules to guide verification of data quality, Moustakas suggests returning to the research participants, "and share with them the meanings of the phenomenon as derived from reflection on an analysis of the verbatim transcribed interviews and other material for assessing comprehensiveness and accuracy" (p. 34). Unfortunately, this exercise of sharing the data with the participants was not able to be completed for this study. The reasons for this decision will be discussed in Chapter Five. Instead, I relied heavily on my co-researcher to maintain methodological rigor and co-interpret the data to ensure trustworthiness and verisimilitude of the findings.

Trustworthiness

Establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research depends exclusively on the researcher as the main instrument of data collection (Patton, 2015). It requires constant self-and-external checking on the researcher's own biases, credibility, validity and overall integrity of how the study has been conducted, while developing safeguards to protect participants' wellbeing (Liamputtong, 2008, 2007). Additionally, I followed the guidelines of Lincoln and Guba (1985), as cited by Sultan (2019), who suggested four ways in which to determine rigor and trustworthiness in qualitative research; 1) credibility, which reflects one's ability to have confidence in the research design; 2) transferability, which reflect the critical importance of the context, setting, and/or the situatedness of the study to apply the findings to other settings; 3) dependability, which reflects consistency and justifies the choices that were made with the methodology and data collection process, and lastly; 4) confirmability, which requires the

researcher to identify the connection between the findings and the interpretation. According to Sultan (2019, p.182) other relevant strategies for confirmability are triangulation of the data, external audits, providing a thick description of the findings, member checking, peer debriefing, and negative/alternative explanations.

Additional measures were taken to increase trustworthiness. Consistent with culturally responsive research (Seponski, Bermudez, & Lewis (2013), I worked closely with four cultural brokers (two women and two men) who are members from the Latinx migrant community in this study. They were central to the deportation crisis in this community and served as a bridge for me to gain access and trust with the women I interviewed. I also worked closely with my co-researcher (bi-lingual, bi-cultural Latina immigrant), who worked side by side with me to interpret my findings. Lastly, I relied on my own self-reflexivity, which is considered the most critical strategy for enhancing confirmability (Sultan, 2019).

To summarize, in both Sultan's and Moustakas's heuristic approach, participants are intensely affected by the phenomenon studied. The researcher, on the other hand, while also invested in the participants' lived experiences, is also impacted, but to a lesser degree, by the phenomenon. This is the case of my experience as a researcher. I, being a Latina migrant, worked as a volunteer for over 4 years in a rural Latino enclave in Georgia and I was personally affected by the U.S. deportation crisis and immigration policy, but not directly affected by these threats of deportation. Given that the researcher's experience is at the forefront of the research process for heuristic and feminist informed research, it is essential that I share my social location and subjectivity stance to situate who I am within this body of work.

Researcher's Subjectivity Statement

Issues affecting Latino families in the U.S. have been both a professional and a personal concern of mine for a long time. My aspiration of doing social work research with Latinos has been framed by my own diasporic experience during the past 12 years. Crossing the Atlantic Ocean from the Island of Puerto Rico to the U.S. mainland has transformed me into a woman of color practically overnight. When I was in Puerto Rico, I was certainly less affected by issues of racial identity and racial discrimination, due to my overall lighter skin tone. Once in the U.S., I became a minority classified into this larger diverse group of Latinos or Hispanics, which has an ethno-racial meaning different from what we know back home. Authors like Roth (2012), Itzigsohn and Dore-Cabral (2000) along with other scholars have researched how Latino migrants in the U.S. adopt this racialized label for themselves as an imposed one, rather than a chosen one. Initially, I did not understand this process of being forcibly categorized in an ethno-racial label until I began my doctoral studies at the University of Georgia, where I had the opportunity of educating myself on issues related to Latino identities as a basis to expand my knowledge and scholarship with Latino/a families and communities.

I came to the U.S. mainland in 2006, with the idea of using my social work training to work with vulnerable populations and become engaged in social justice issues similar to those I was involved in Puerto Rico. Back home I had years of expertise practicing mostly at the community level. However, my social work experience included other fields such as healthcare and mental health services, to name a few. My initial plans of finding work proved to be difficult. First, I needed to become fluent in English, my first language being Spanish. Second, I was not expecting to be welcomed with racist and discriminatory treatment by my fellow American colleagues at my workplaces in Virginia. Although I encountered discrimination and

racism in the past as an international undergrad in Spain, I was surprised, as an American to be treated differently. For example, when I was visiting a boutique store in a small town, a clerk followed me throughout the store. They stopped only when I asked for help to buy something.

While working as a medical social worker, I tried to be tolerant and proactive when clients asked me how I came here and when I got my papers, referring to their assumption on my legal migratory status. It was hard to believe the lack of knowledge Americans have about their country's history and political relations with Puerto Rico and other non-incorporated territories. Sadly, most of the offensive comments came from college-educated people, especially in the healthcare setting, such as when a nurse asked if my accent was a problem of my tongue or my brain. These and other personal experiences made me aware of the oppression and discrimination Latinos, including myself, face daily in the U.S.

Diversity and privilege were concepts I began using more when I became an adjunct faculty member at Radford University School of Social Work. Teaching at the MSW program at Radford was the 'aha' moment when I discovered that "*enseñar ES lo que quiero hacer,"* teaching IS what I want to do. Academia was the place where I could bring together my work and ethnic background and fuse them into my unique way of teaching while researching in-depth, from a macro perspective, how to improve the quality of life and services for Latinos and other vulnerable groups through a culturally responsive social work approach.

Volunteering during the past three years with Latino immigrant families throughout the recent deportation crisis in rural Georgia has been a humbling and heartbreaking experience. I and other volunteers have been welcomed into families' homes to listen to their fears and trauma in the aftermath of deportations that occurred in their living rooms. These experiences encouraged me to continue working in solidarity alongside the Latino community, not for them,

but with them, in the search for resources to address their complex problems exacerbated by the harsh practices of detentions and deportations.

Using borderland feminism as one of the conceptual frameworks has allowed me the flexibility to code-switch language particularities from my realities as a bicultural-bilingual social work researcher. Anzaldúa wrote about the experiences of Chicana/Latina women living between two worlds, or many worlds for that matter. She theorized how language and embodied experiences become a way of knowing, of interpreting, and of living. These interpretations are often seen by the outside world as ambiguous because they do not correspond to the traditional inquiry methods established in our patriarchal society, 'scientific knowledge.' Borderland feminism, a variant of the critical race feminism thought, is the bridge that brings me closer to attempt to understand the threats and outcomes of deportation for Latina women, their families, and communities, not only from their individual experiences but also as a collective phenomenon. These women are not only resilient; they are sobrevivientes or survivors, in a new country, raising their children in a hostile and racist society embedded within an institutionally oppressive system.

Finally, throughout this research proposal, I acknowledged that my personal biases and privileges as a U.S. citizen carried the potential danger of overlooking issues of power differentials while conducting my research with mostly undocumented Latinas. I was also preoccupied with not imposing my views of the world and my beliefs concerning issues of oppression and marginalization of undocumented women. I understood that my job was not to educate the participants about their oppression or promote an activist agenda against the current anti-immigrant political climate. I did my best to listen to their stories and interpretations of their

lived experiences, but I took the liberty to analyze their meanings and reach my own conclusions based on the data and the literature review.

Nonetheless, I am cognizant that my selection of critical conceptual frameworks, methodologies, and epistemologies, had a great influence on the outcomes of this study. These empirical decisions were important for me, as I am still in a quest as a future scholar to urgently address the current gap in academic research about migrant women in the U.S. Above all, I wanted to showcase the lived experiences of these women as mothers, sisters, daughters, wives, and neighbors of deported people. I longed to highlight their courage while resisting their fear and threat of deportation to provide a safe environment for their families and communities.

As a bicultural/bilingual Latina social worker, I have a strong commitment to continue serving the Latino communities in the U.S., while advocating for the elimination of barriers to access community resources for all Latinos and other groups of color.

Ethical Dilemmas

As a feminist-infused heuristic inquiry, this study researched people that are oppressed and at the margins of society (Hasse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004; Jaggar, 2016). Therefore, there are numerous ethical considerations I had to acknowledge while researching an extremely vulnerable population (Liamputtong, 2008, 2007). Such is the case with this study's population cohort of Latina migrants, many of them undocumented while living in the U.S. As a member of the Latino community myself, I intentionally explored what feminist scholars call a *situated dilemma* of feeling like an insider/outsider researcher (Bolak, 1997; Pulido, 2008; Valenzuela, 2013; Wolf, 1996). Although being a Spanish-speaking bilingual/bicultural Puerto Rican social worker, my ethnic identity, socioeconomic status, and educational attainment differs greatly from the Latina migrants that participated in this study. Research scholars suggest that it is not enough

for a researcher to feel like an insider; they must be prepared for rejection and distrust from the prospective *subjects* of the study (Bolak, 1996). Hence, I came into this research knowing that my experiences as a Latina migrant would not resemble the ones of the participants of my study. Latinos are a diverse ethnic group, where many individuals do not enjoy the privileges that are taken for granted by many others. Most of the Latina migrants in this study are living in extremely vulnerable conditions. Although I faced no major inconveniences interviewing participants, I tried to be cognizant of this possibility, as those with an undocumented or in a mixed-status family tend to be reluctant to expose themselves and their migratory status to outsiders (D'Angelo et al., 2009; Quesada, 2011; Zayas, 2016).

Sprague (2016) described how the dilemma of reporting styles in qualitative research tends to hide the researcher's reasons for studying their topic of interest. She called this practice particularly deceptive in the case of qualitative research since these kinds of studies are precisely developed, in many cases, upon the development of informal interactions or relationships between the researcher and the researched. Sprague also critiqued the neutral representation of the authors as trying to detach themselves from their writing. I had to deal with this issue throughout this study, giving constant thought on whether to hide my feelings and use a passive voice in my writing. Authors Sprague (2016) and Liamputtong (2007) criticize the inhibition of the researchers' first-person voice, which they argue can be detrimental to actively denounce power imbalances while conducting qualitative research with vulnerable populations. I decided to use the first-person voice, where appropriate, as well as the third-person throughout the study.

Despite the problems I confronted during all phases of the study, I felt that my community experiences prior the beginning of the study served as a positive opportunity for my progressive insertion into the migrant community in rural Georgia. In addition, being a Spanish-

speaking Latina has provided me privileged access to Spanish-speaking participants that would not be possible otherwise. The researcher's situated dilemma of being an outsider/insider permeated this study beginning, development, and completion. Nonetheless, heuristic inquiry encouraged me as the researcher to explore these and other dilemmas as they emerged. I managed to deal with ethical, positionality, and power differential issues, using methods such as reflexive essays and memos, where I wrote down my observations, concerns, and feelings that could potentially affect my work as a researcher, and perhaps influence the outcomes of this study.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The following chapter presents central findings derived from the data collected to address the two research questions driving this study: 1) How do Latina immigrants describe and interpret their lived experiences in Georgia after the detention and or deportation of a loved one? And 2) What do Latina immigrants identify as strategies and mechanisms of coping, resilience, resistance, and knowledge in the aftermath of the detention and deportation phenomena? The chapter provides descriptive information from each participant, which was collected through a demographic survey. Individual depictions will be presented along with findings from the thematic analysis using a line-by-line coding process. Qualitative data analyses were performed from transcribed interviews, memos, and the researcher's observations. Lastly, exemplary portraits will be discussed, followed by a composite depiction of the principal themes related to the detention and deportation of a friend or family member.

Participants' Demographics

Eleven (*N*=11) Latina immigrants were selected as participants for this study. A one-page demographic survey was conducted prior to the completion of the semi-structured interview. Every participant was assigned a pseudonym to follow the proposed confidentiality protocol. All but one participant spoke Spanish as their primary language, the youngest participant (age 19) speaks primarily English. Five participants reported that they also speak English. The age of participants ranged from 19 to 56 years old, with a median age of 44 years. Participants have been living in the U.S. between 12 and 28 years, with an average length of residence in the

country of 18 years. Seven participants identified themselves as 'Hispana' for both their race and ethnicity, while three of them used the term 'Latina' (one participant identified her race as white). Only one woman identified her race and identity as 'Mexicana.' Eight participants are originally from Mexico, two were born in Guatemala, and one is originally from El Salvador. Seven participants are married, three are single, and one is divorced.

Education, Employment, Income & Remittances

Participants' formal schooling ranged from three to 16 years of schooling, the mean for the sample is 9.5 years of formal education. Five participants were employed or self-employed at the time of the interview, while six were unemployed. Occupations for those employed included work as a restaurant cook, factory production worker, food vendor, wholesaler (business owner), and retailer. The median household income is $1,300 per month, however, income ranges between $0 and $4,166. About 40% of the families send a monthly or quarterly remittance to their relatives back in their countries of origin. Seven participants send between $100 and $600 while four do not send any money at this time.

Household Size and Housing Tenancy

Family size ranges from three to seven individuals, with an average household size of four. The composition of each family varies, for example, one household is composed of four adults and three minors (under the age of 18), where a participant lives with her husband, her brother and his wife, plus her child and her brothers' two children in a two-bedroom apartment. Another participant lives with her husband, her mother, and three young children in a four-bedroom, in a paid-off single-family home. Five participants are homeowners while the remaining six are renters. Families spend between $225 to $659 on rent or mortgage, one

participant shares her rent and utility expenses with another participant. One participant in that same household lives with her mother and does not pay rent.

Table 4.1

Age, Ethnicity/Race, Marital Status, Education & Employment

Participant	Age	Years in the U.S.	Race/ Ethnicity	Country of Origin	Marital Status	Years of Formal School	Languages Spoken	Employment Yes/ No	Occupation
1.Aracelis S.	39	12	Hispanic	El Salvador	Married	14	Spanish	No	Homemaker
2. Norma A.	49	16	Hispanic	Guatemala	Single	8	Spanish	No	Homemaker
3. Luz B.	32	21	Hispanic	Mexico	Married	13	Spanish/ English	No	Homemaker
4. Roberta C.	45	19	Latina/ Hispanic	Mexico	Single	16	Spanish/ English	Yes	Cook
5. Solimar E.	40	16	White/ Latina	Mexico	Married	9	Spanish/ English	No	Homemaker
6. Elena V.	44	21	Hispanic	Mexico	Married	6	Spanish	No	Homemaker
7. Olga L.	32	13	Latina	Guatemala	Married	5	Spanish	Yes	Production/ Factory
8. IrmaM.	56	23	Mexicana	Mexico	Married	3	Spanish	Yes	Food Vendor
9. Ofelia R.	40	12	Hispanic	Mexico	Married	12.5	Spanish/ English	Yes	Wholesale businesswoman
10. Angela K.	19	18	Hispanic	Mexico	Single	10	English/ Spanish	No	Homemaker
11. Diana A.	47	28	Hispanic	Mexico	Divorced	9	Spanish	Yes	Retail

n=11 *Mean age*= 44 years old *Mean schooling*= 9 years

Table 4.2

Household Income, Remittances, House Tenancy, Public Benefits, Health Insurance

Participant	Monthly Household Income	Remittance Sent Home Amount	Frequency	Monthly Rent/ Mortgage	Housing Tenure	Medicaid	Food Stamps	SSI	Other	Other Medical Insurance	Primary Care Physician
1.Aracelis S.	$3,000	$600	Monthly	$600	Rent	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
2. Norma A.	$0	$0	0	$200	Rent	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
3. Luz B.	$2,240	$100	Quarterly	$0	Owned	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
4. Roberta C.	$1,600	400	Quarterly	$225	Owned	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
5. Solimar E.	$2,400	$500	Quarterly	n/d	Rent	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
6. Elena V.	$4,166	$200	Monthly	n/d	Owned	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
7. Olga L.	$3,200	$200	Monthly	$535	Rent	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
8. Irma M.	$899	$0	0	$443	Owned	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
9. Ofelia R.	$1,000	$100	Quarterly	$650	Owned	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
10. Angela K.	$0	$0	0	$0	n/d	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
11. Diana A.	$480	$0	0	$234	Rent	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes

Median Household Income= $1,300 per month *n/d= not disclosed*

Table 4.3

Household Size & Composition

Participant	Household Size	Adults	Children Under 18
1.Aracelis S.	7	4	3
2. Norma A.	3	1	2
3. Luz B.	6	3	3
4. Roberta C.	3	1	2
5. Solimar E.	5	2	3
6. Elena V.	5	4	1
7. Olga L.	4	2	2
8. Irma M.	5	3	2
9. Ofelia R.	4	2	2
10. Angela K.*	3	1	2
11. Diana A.	4	2	2
Totals=	49	25	24

Healthcare, Medical Insurance, and Government Benefits

Eight participants enrolled their U.S.-born children in Medicaid, while only four are utilizing the cash assistance from Food Stamps. One participant has a family member who receives Supplemental Security Income or SSI. None of the participants has Medicaid or private insurance for themselves, however, all participants reported having a primary care physician for themselves and their children.

Citizenship and Migratory Status

Although a question about citizenship or migratory status was not directly asked of the participants, they were asked how many of their children were born in the U.S. Throughout the interviews, all participants revealed their migratory status once they felt comfortable enough to do so. Among those living with the participants at the time of the interview, 25 were adults and 24 were children under the age of 18. Twenty-seven family members are U.S. citizens and one is a lawful permanent president (LPR or *green card* holder). Twenty-one family members (including 10 out of 11 participants) have a non-migratory (presumably undocumented) status in the U.S.

Individual Depictions

Below I will offer the eleven individual depictions of the participants. The aim is to illuminate the participant's experience of the phenomenon and the meanings they attribute to their experiences.

Participant 1: Aracelis S.

Aracelis is a 39-year-old mother, originally from El Salvador. She received me in her two-bedroom apartment, where six other relatives live with her, including her husband, her teenage son, her 17-year-old nephew, and her brother with his wife and their child. I met

Aracelis a year ago, while I was volunteering with a local support group which helps immigrants in Georgia facing threats of detentions and deportations from Immigration and Customs Enforcement - ICE. Aracelis has been living in the United States for 12 years. When she crossed the border unnoticed, Aracelis went to live with her mother, who also migrated unauthorized to the U.S. more than 20 years ago. Her mother left her husband and children back in El Salvador when she migrated. Aracelis talked about this as her mother's abandonment of the family, and that is why she said she has a closer relationship with her dad, who is still in El Salvador.

Aracelis has been exposed to two experiences of family deportation. The first one was her mother's deportation about three years ago. A year later, her brother was also detained and deported. He managed to return to the U.S. and filed for asylum status. Aracelis said gang members were extorting her brother in El Salvador, demanded money for her brother's "protection." The gang members themselves will kill him and his family if he does not pay this ransom. After he returned to El Salvador, the gangs demanded a payment of $1,000 the first year. The second year, they demanded $3,000. Aracelis said this is very common as the gang members know who has relatives in the U.S. and they believe relatives will send remittance in larger amounts to protect their loved ones from being killed. Nonetheless, her family had no money the second time around to pay the gang's ransom. Aracelis asked for help from her pastor. Her church congregation collected the money but not for the ransom, instead for her brother to pay for a *coyote* and cross the border again. Aracelis believes this was a better option than exposing her brother and his family to be killed if the money was not paid on time. Currently, her brother is living with her and awaiting trial to present his case in immigration court for his asylum claim. He is under the supervision of Intensive Supervision and Alternative Programs or ISAP, a private contractor with ICE to manage the immigration cases that are released with relatives once caught

at the border. A case manager visits the person under surveillance and is tracked with weekly phone calls, unannounced visits, and a global positioning system (GPS) ankle device.

Aracelis hopes for the best for her brother but also fears her own deportation as she has been detained by police officers four times due to driving without a license. She has not been referred by the police to ICE yet and has been unable to find work because she fears driving and being caught once more and perhaps being deported. She has been struggling with health issues that she relates to the anxiety and stress of living undocumented and afraid of being taken. Her brother and husband both work and earn an income, but she does not want to be a burden for them. She would like a driver's license and a work permit to become a productive person in this country.

Participant 2: Norma A.

Norma is a 49-year-old mother, originally from Guatemala. She arrived in the United States 19 years ago with her then-15-year-old son, who is now 30 years old and awaiting deportation in Ocilla Detention Center in Florida. Norma has two other children from another relationship, a 10-year-old boy and an 8-year-old girl. Norma's two younger children were born in the United States, but she has two adult daughters living in Guatemala. She lost a son back in her country, who was shot and killed while participating in a robbery. He was part of a gang from a young age and died at the age of 13. Norma could not travel to Guatemala to attend her son's funeral because of her undocumented status.

Norma recently moved in with her friend Diana, after she could no longer pay her rent in the aftermath of her son's detention in January. Her adult son was the only breadwinner in the family. Her host Diana is also part of this study, as well as one of Diana's adult daughters who is living with her two small children in the same mobile home. There are 9 people living in this

household: Norma and her two children share one bedroom, while Diana and her three daughters and two grandchildren share the other two bedrooms. Diana's oldest daughter is eight months pregnant and after delivering her baby she will remain living with her mother and siblings. Norma said this situation is temporary. Currently, she is not working outside the home, however, she is desperately looking for work to make an income and move to a place of her own with her children.

Poverty and violence have surrounded Norma's life, both in Guatemala and in the United States. Growing up, her family was very poor, but her mother managed to feed and care for her seven children by herself. Norma's father died in prison before she was born. Despite the extreme poverty Norma experienced as a child, she had access to education and sports activities in Guatemala. Her two older daughters managed to finish careers in cosmetology and business management. Her family in Guatemala wants her to return there with her kids. Norma is ambiguous about returning to her country unless she is deported. She wants her two younger children to finish high school in the U.S. before returning.

Norma has no other supportive networks or relatives in the United States. She had a history of domestic violence with the father of her youngest children, who was deported to El Salvador after being arrested and convicted for battery assault against her. Norma would like to consult with an immigration lawyer to apply for a U visa that could help her to remain in the U.S. as a victim of domestic violence. Unfortunately, Norma has no transportation nor financial resources available to hire a lawyer and start her case for obtaining a temporary protective status in the United States. In the meantime, Norma avoids driving to prevent being arrested because she has no driver's license. She works odd jobs that allow her to take rides to work and back home, which limits her possibilities of finding steady employment. Her last jobs were in a flower

nursery and an organic farm. Norma used part of her limited income to pay her share of the rent and to send money to her family in Guatemala. She has not been able to save enough to rent a place on her own.

Participant 3: Luz B.

Luz is a 32-year-old mother originally from Mexico. She has three children born in the U.S. Her mother lives with her and is already a permanent resident. Luz's husband was undocumented when they got married, but he is a permanent resident now. She is currently a stay-at-home mother but is actively looking for work to help with expenses. Their home is paid off and they live a comfortable life. Luz's family managed to migrate to the United States legally because her father qualified for President Reagan's deportation amnesty in 1991. Her mother and four of her six children managed to become permanent residents, and Luz became a U.S. citizen afterward. Luz has 2 siblings that live nearby; they are a very close-knit family. Her family has lived in Georgia since they migrated from Mexico 21 years ago. Luz received me in her home for our interview. Her mother was cooking while her husband was at work and her children were at school.

Luz remembered when she first migrated to the United States as a child. She was sent to school one day with zero language skills in English. This was a challenge for her, and for a while, she felt like she did not belong here. It took her some time to learn the language, not without being bullied by her peers at school. Luz understood early on the privilege she had as a legal immigrant, which meant that she did not have to worry about her, or her family being deported. The family follows Catholic traditions and holidays, which she said, keep them connected to their Mexican culture as well. Luz mentioned her children are fluent in both English and Spanish and wants them to speak Spanish at home because her mother does not speak

English. Luz feels it is important for her children to become fully American but to also feel proud of their Mexican heritage. That is why she maintains some traditions at home such as the Christmas celebrations and other Mexican holidays.

Luz was quite outspoken about her role as an advocate for the immigrant community in Georgia. She said she has intervened often to help people that have been discriminated against because they look Hispanic or because they do not speak English very well. Luz feels it is her duty to call out people that make racist comments to immigrants. She said she has not experienced racism, but some family members have, and this has affected her emotionally. Luz sees these episodes as injustice, and she will continue to fight bigotry and prejudice against the immigrant community.

Luz said the deportation of her brother was the worst day of her life. He was deported once, due to a case of domestic violence against his then-wife. She said that this case was dismissed, and her brother and his wife were on good terms. However, there was a court day her brother missed because he was not aware of it. Years later he came back from burying their father in Mexico and he was arrested at the airport. This happened in 2011 after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. After this arrest, her brother was stripped of his permanent residency and he signed his voluntary deportation. He never left the country and returned to Georgia and continued working and living as an undocumented person. In 2015 the migration police-ICE- arrested him with a deportation order. Luz witnessed the arrest and she cried while describing her anger and fear. She felt defeated for not being able to help her brother, who was treated like a criminal. Luz said she was also mistreated by ICE agents, but she kept defending herself as she saw her brother being taken away. Luz said her brother is not a bad person, although he made mistakes that lead

to his deportation. She and her family are longing for the day they can reunite; however, she laments her mother is still grieving the absence of her son.

Participant 4: Roberta C.

Roberta is a 45-year-old mother originally from Mexico. She has lived in the United States since 1999. Roberta has two children, a 15-year old daughter and a 17-year-old son. They are both U.S. citizens. Roberta lives in a mobile home, where she received me in her living room. Work ethic seems to be a high value for Roberta. She said she has leadership skills that have helped her to earn respect in every job she's had. She currently works as a cook in a Mexican restaurant near her home. She learned to cook out of necessity to find a steady job. Back in Mexico she completed a degree in business management and worked in a government office. When she moved to the U.S., she was not able to find work in her field due to her undocumented status. Nonetheless, she decided to take any job no matter how difficult and set a personal goal to excel at her workplace. Roberta has taught her children important lessons about being a reliable worker, so they can be successful in maintaining a job when they grow older.

Roberta mentioned her life in Mexico was no different from her life in the United States. She had a very simple life in a rural town where her only activities were related to family and work. She taught her children to follow Mexican traditions at home, such as Día de los Muertos, as a reminder that the Mexican culture is their culture as well. Nonetheless, she teaches her children that it is okay to celebrate American traditions as well, such as Fourth of July, as a way to recognize that they can live and be proud of both cultures and make them their own. Roberta does not speak English, and she makes sure her children speak Spanish at home. It is important for her that her children are fluent in both languages, to be able to communicate with their relatives in Mexico and to have better opportunities in the job market as bilingual workers.

Roberta experienced the deportation of her brother in 2015. He came to live with her from Mexico and was the primary breadwinner and her main emotional support. Roberta said her brother lived with them for 12 years and was a father figure for her children since she is a single mother. Her brother had no wife or children of his own in the U.S. His deportation came as a surprise to the family, as she said he had no criminal record other than a police ticket from driving without a license. This event left her family deeply affected emotionally. Her son, for example, is still affected by his uncle's removal from the country. Roberta was so depressed in the aftermath of her brother's deportation that she spent days in bed crying and unable to work. She declined to talk in-depth about the details of his detention, but she shared her frustration and anger for not being able to stop his deportation from happening. She received support from friends and coworkers, and she managed to pull herself through for her children.

When asked about why she decided to stay in the United States after the deportation of her brother, Roberta said this is the country of her children and she has a responsibility of being there for them until they finish school. Once they finish high school and decide their own lives she plans to move back to Mexico where her mother and other relatives still live. Roberta talks bitterly about the migration system in the U.S. and says she only knows that there is nothing to be done once someone is detained and sent to a detention center. She has helped other families in the same situation to navigate the detention center details and to find a lawyer, but she tells them not to spend money on their release because in the end their loved ones will be sent back to their countries. She declined to share with me if she had an emergency plan in case she is arrested and deported. However, she said her children know exactly what to do in the event of her arrest or deportation.

Participant 5: Solimar E.

Solimar is 40 years old and is originally from Mexico, where her parents and siblings still live. Her husband is Mexican and undocumented as well. They have three boys, two of which were born in the U.S. The oldest one has a non-migratory status like his parents. Solimar agreed to be interviewed at Elena's place, per Elena's request. Solimar was more engaged in the interview than Elena and seems to have a natural outspoken personality. Solimar said she crossed the border 16 years ago and has lived in Georgia since then. Her original plan of coming to the U.S. was to save money and return to Mexico after a year or two. Her plans changed once she enrolled her son in Kindergarten. Solimar said she did not realize at first that the quality of education in the United States was much better than what she experienced growing up. Everything from the food, safety, and the learning experience itself convinced her to remain in the U.S. to provide her son the educational opportunity she did not have.

Solimar described her life experiences in Georgia as bittersweet at times. She does not drive or have a job, but she has always found a way to get to places and participate in learning activities for her personal growth. She takes advantage of free courses offered in the community to low-income families that do not require her to disclose her undocumented status. For example, she learned to make art in ceramics; more recently, she got involved in a project from a local university to become a *promotora,* or a community health worker. Solimar took 40 hours of training to help other Latino families to access health and other services in the community. She loves to help other families and learn about new services in the area, while also collecting data for academic research. She seems unafraid of taking opportunities presented to her to keep expanding her learning experiences.

Advocacy and activism with the Latino community are two pivotal activities for Solimar, and her family is involved in these efforts daily. She mentioned examples of her work as a community leader, which include providing workshops to orient families at risk of deportations about how to protect themselves and advocate for their rights. She belongs to various local groups that advocate for immigrant families. One of them is called *Dignindad Inmigrante* or Immigrant Dignity. This group has been successful in creating awareness among the residents of Georgia concerning the deportation crisis and its effects on immigrant families, their children, and the community in general.

Solimar has not experienced discrimination or racism but has known of people close to her that have. She gave an example involving a friend whose daughter was being bullied at school. The school did not help solve the situation and a teacher asked her friend why don't they return to Mexico where they would not have these kinds of problems. Solimar was enraged by her friend's experience with this racist comment from a person that was supposed to help instead of saying this to the mother.

A very close friend of Solimar lost her husband to deportation 7 years ago. She considered this friend to be almost like a sister. They spent a lot of time with each other and went on family outings together as their kids were about the same age. Solimar's friend decided to return to Mexico with her husband once he was deported. She provided emotional support to her friend while she prepared to return to Mexico. Among other things, she helped her friend sell everything they could not take, their mobile home, their cars, etc. This experience affected Solimar's emotional wellbeing and she lamented that this event felt like the whole family was deported. Solimar would have preferred for her friend to remain in the U.S. to provide better opportunities for her daughters. Nonetheless, her friend decided to keep her family together and

leave, as she was undocumented as well. Solimar misses her friend as if she has lost a sister. She fears their situation in Mexico is dire due to the poor living conditions they have been experiencing since they left seven years ago.

Participant 6: Elena V.

Elena is 44 years old and has three young-adult daughters, all of them born in the U.S. She left Mexico when she was 23 years old, is married, and her husband is also originally from Mexico. All members of Elena's family are U.S citizens except for her. Elena is a housewife and spends most days at home by herself. She does not drive due to a lack of a driver's license and fear of being detained and deported to Mexico. Elena is soft-spoken and appeared a little shy when we first met. She requested to have her friend Solimar present during her interview so both interviews were done at her place simultaneously. Elena received me and her friend Solimar at her house and made us feel at home with fresh coffee.

Only speaking Spanish has been a struggle for Elena's adjustment in the U.S. Not knowing English was more problematic for her when her daughters were little, but not as much now as she does not have to advocate for them as much in school or elsewhere. She does not interact much with anyone aside from her family members and only goes out when her daughters or husband can take her places. Elena said her Catholic faith is important for her, as well as preserving some traditions from her country such as *Cena de Nochebuena* or Christmas Eve dinner. Elena enjoys being with her family celebrating the birth of Jesus and exchanging presents while sharing a feast.

Safety concerns were the main reason Elena migrated to the United States 21 years ago. She witnessed criminal activity against neighbors and family in Mexico and feared for her life if she stayed there. Elena's parents and siblings still live in Mexico, but she is not willing to return

unless she is deported. She seems to feel protected by her family members being U.S. citizens, but she has been unable to obtain a *green card* due to being caught while crossing the U.S.-Mexico border twice. Her lawyer has told her that with the current political situation it is very unlikely she will qualify to remain legally in the U.S. She understands that the United States provided her daughters education opportunities not available in Mexico. Also, her husband has a good job here, which provides financial stability for all of them. She trusts that God will protect her from deportation and preferred not to talk about the possibility of being arrested and eventually removed to Mexico.

Elena faced the deportation of a loved one when her *compadre* (her daughter's godfather) was sent to Mexico about 7 years ago. He was detained due to driving without a license, was arrested, and sent to a detention center. His wife was eight months pregnant at the time, and they had another small child as well. Elena tried to help them by collecting money to pay for a lawyer. The immigration judge denied her *compadre's* request to remain in the U.S until his baby was born. Elena tried to be supportive of her *comadre* (who is also undocumented) during this critical time; however, once the baby was born, she left for Mexico as well. She said her relatives are having a hard time in Mexico and the children are always talking about coming back, they cry on the phone often because they miss their life in the U.S.

The situation of being undocumented has affected Elena's social life, and more so her youngest daughter's emotional health. A psychologist told Elena her daughter's complaints of stomach pain were related to stress and the fear of her mother's potential deportation. Elena reassured her daughter that if that happens, they would be okay; her dad would be there to care for them. Elena said she does not put herself in danger of deportation by not driving without a license and following the law. She said many undocumented people put themselves at risk of

deportation by driving while drunk or speeding and therefore being caught by the police. Elena thinks if undocumented immigrants follow the law they will not be targeted as much by the police or ICE.

Participant 7: Olga L.

Olga is a 32-year-old mother of three children. She lives with her husband and two children; her oldest daughter is 15 years old and lives in Guatemala with Olga's parents and siblings. Her two youngest children are U.S. citizens. She has not seen her daughter since she crossed the border in 2005. Olga and her husband are both undocumented. They both work factory jobs to send money back to their families in Guatemala. Olga received me in her house with her 1-year-old baby while her other son was at school and her husband was at work.

I met Olga through my volunteer work with immigrant families in Georgia. Her sister was caught by Immigration and Customs Enforcement-ICE while crossing the border with her 3-year-old daughter in 2015. Olga requested help from our group to take her sister to her Intensive Supervision Alternative Program (ISAP) appointment. ISAP a private company that manages cases of immigrants caught at the border and are requesting asylum in the U.S. I took her sister there and we continued to see each other on occasions for transportation and for coordinating other resources. Her sister's asylum case has little chance of being approved according to their lawyer. Her sister has decided to abandon her asylum case since she fears she will be deported to Guatemala on her next immigration court appointment.

Since Olga's arrival in the U.S., she has experienced financial struggles and domestic violence. Olga said she always worked hard in many jobs and has never been fired because she is a good worker. In Guatemala, factory jobs don't exist, families have to survive with very little money and work the land to eat. Everything is expensive. Because of a precarious economy,

families have no income to spend on food or clothing. Poverty and crime were the main reasons Olga decided to come to the United States. She said people get robbed and killed all the time. She was the first in her family to make the trip to *el norte* by herself. She has been helping her relatives in Guatemala with remittances while providing income for her family here.

At the beginning of the interview at Olga's home, she seemed reluctant to provide details about her former spouse and the domestic violence she experienced while pregnant with his child. Once I turned off the audio recorder, she appeared more comfortable and was candid in sharing gruesome details of the domestic violence she went through and how she endured it. Olga's first husband was deported months after she had her first baby. He was an alcoholic, became abusive, and took her paychecks to buy alcohol. When she tried to leave him, he physically assaulted her. He was arrested, and his family became enraged at her for pressing charges against him. Her husband's parents tried to persuade her to drop the battery charges and when she refused, they took her car, her belongings, and everything she bought for her unborn baby. They even threatened her with taking the baby away and calling ICE on her to be deported. When her then-husband was deported, she felt relieved, but she had no support or family nearby. Olga relied on a shelter program and a group of missionary nuns to get help and recover from this crisis. Olga is still completing the process of applying for a U visa as a victim of a crime. She is hopeful to get this visa, which will grant her temporary protected status and not be deported right away.

Participant 8: Irma M.

Irma is a 56-year-old mother from Mexico. She came to the U.S. with four small children 23 years ago, to reunite with her husband who was granted amnesty in 1991 under President Reagan's Amnesty Program. Under this program, Irma's husband was able to remain in the

United States with an LPR, lawful permanent residency, status after entering the U.S. unauthorized. Irma and her husband are illiterate, in English and Spanish. They live in a home of their own with their fifth and youngest son who is 18 years old and was born in the U.S. Neither Irma nor her four adult children have authorized migratory status in the United States. I met this family as a volunteer for one of the groups helping immigrant families in Georgia. Her family was affected by the deportation of one of her adult sons, who was deported to Mexico in 2015.

Irma said her life in Mexico was a constant struggle to survive, due to violence and poverty. Their situation in the U.S. has not been much different, aside from job availabilities and a safer environment. Although all her children and husband have managed to find and keep "good-paying jobs," Irma feels that her family has always battled to remain afloat financially and they have not been able to save money or live a comfortable life. Every dollar they made has gone to lawyers to pay for legal fees and other expenses in the aftermath and of lack of income after her son's deportation and her husband's illness and recent disability. Irma never worked outside the home, aside from selling enchiladas on weekends at the mobile park where her older son lives. She does not know how to drive and depends on others to go places and run errands. There is no access to public transportation where Irma lives. She spends most days in her home, watching television, cleaning, cooking, and caring for her husband.

The deportation experience for this family has been extremely traumatic for all its members. Irma remembers clearly the Sunday morning her son was deported three years ago. ICE came knocking on the door and her son, who lived with them and was the family's primary breadwinner, opened the door. She said six to eight agents entered the house and sat all the men of the house on the couch in the living room: her husband and three sons. The agents came to her bedroom and woke her up. Irma said she was very scared when this man with a gun woke her up

and told her to go to the living room. She was teary while describing how they arrested her son and she has not seen him since then. Irma said her son was desperate to be released and she and her husband spent all the money they had for lawyers to fight his removal order. He was deported three months later and was caught at the border again last year trying to cross again. He spent another 20 days in a detention center and was deported once more, with a 10-year ban on returning to the U.S. In the aftermath of her son's deportation Irma has developed diabetes and depressive symptoms, she has to take medications daily. She talked about her weight and hair loss, lack of motivation, constant sadness and inability to cope with her feelings of emptiness after her son's deportation. Irma has not sought therapy services to manage her depressive symptoms.

Irma and her children could have had a permanent residency by now. Unfortunately, the family moved so often and were so poor at times that they had no money to arrange the applications for a *green card* for everyone. Her husband is now applying for citizenship, and she hopes this could somehow help her son who was deported back to Mexico return to the U.S. and provide help to her other children to resolve their undocumented status.

Participant 9: Ofelia R.

Ofelia is a 40-year-old mother of two children and was born in Mexico. Her children are U.S. born citizens but both she and her husband are undocumented. Ofelia runs a warehouse with her husband where she sells new and second-hand items online. She agreed to have the interview at her workplace. Ofelia arrived in the U.S. in 2006 and has lived in Georgia since then. Her older sister moved to this area previously and they lived together for a couple of years. Ofelia was convinced at first that her migration to the U.S. was going to be temporary. In Mexico, she was a sociology student where she planned to transfer to the psychology department at the

university. Sadly, Ofelia had to work long hours to save money for her books and transportation, forcing her to drop out of college after her first semester. She decided to join her sister in Georgia, save money to buy a car and return to Mexico to finish her studies.

Her initial plans changed when she met her husband and they got married. She was working at a poultry plant to pay their bills and said it was a horrible job where people had to work standing up during10-hour shifts. Ofelia said the Latino workers were mistreated and not allowed to have breaks, like the rest of the workers. When Ofelia realized the injustices the immigrant population was experiencing in the U.S., she was surprised and horrified. She had no idea how bad discrimination was in the U.S. before crossing the border. She became traumatized by this hard job, which she never had to do back in Mexico. Back home she worked in retail and office jobs but never in a food processing plant. After working in the poultry plant for some time, Ofelia managed to save enough money to be able to stay at home for 2 years when her first baby was born and did not return to the poultry plant again. Ofelia knew her plans to return to Mexico were not going to happen after her second child was born.

Ofelia experienced the deportation of her best friend's father, a man from El Salvador who had a temporary protective status but still was unable to remain in the U.S. She considers this family like her own, as they helped her and her sister when they were in need. Ofelia's friend and the rest of the family were devastated by the detention and deportation of their only breadwinner. His wife did not work outside home and they had two sets of twins attending school. Ofelia witnessed how the family separation destroyed this family over time. The boys turned against their mother, showing challenging behaviors at home and school. The wife was upset, and she refused to seek help for herself. Ofelia said she has seen this situation in other families, where children who are born here from undocumented parents develop a detachment

behavior from them and threaten or manipulate their parents with calling ICE on them. She laments that Latino families in this area are impacted dramatically not only by the deportation crisis but also by the absence of the parents from their children's daily life due to the parents long working hours.

Currently, Ofelia is an activist and advocate for immigrants' rights in Georgia. She has developed leadership skills to run workshops and rallies to develop awareness about the injustices the immigrant communities are suffering in the U.S. Although she is afraid of her potential deportation, she said she prefers to fight for her rights than wait for ICE to deport her. Ofelia also values opportunities for learning new skills. She is a participant in a university research project where she is a *promotora de salud* or community health worker. Ofelia enjoys helping the Latino community to connect with health services and other resources in the community.

Participant 10: Angela K.

Angela was born in Mexico and came with her mother to the United States at the age of 2. She is 19 years old now and has two children, a 3-year-old daughter, and an 11-month-old son. Angela lives with her mother, 2 sisters, and Norma's family, a mother with two children who is also a participant in this study. Angela received me in her bedroom where she sleeps with her 2 children. She is currently unemployed and out of school. She stopped going to school when she became pregnant at age 16. Angela would like to finish high school or earn a GED. She regrets having to abandon school in 10th grade and said she likes studying. She mentioned she would like to study a career, being a police officer, or take cooking classes. Angela's mother thinks she needs to get a job instead of going back to school to be able to provide financial support for her

children and to help with the household expenses. Unfortunately, Angela has an undocumented status and cannot study in many Georgia colleges if she does not have a valid ID from the state.

Angela does not remember much from her childhood in Mexico since she was very young when she crossed the border with her mother. She started attending school in Georgia, and English is her primary language, although she did code-switch between Spanish and English during the interview. Angela speaks Spanish with her children, she would like for them to become bilingual. Her mother used to attend the Jehovah Witness Temple and took her daughters with her. Angela does not sympathize with this or any other religion. She said because of her mother's religion, many holidays and festivities were not celebrated at her house. This has changed now as her mother does not attend religious services anymore. Angela's family now celebrates Christmas, birthdays, and other holidays when money is available.

Angela moved back in with her mother in December 2017, after her spouse and father of her children became aggressive towards her. Her spouse drank too much alcohol and he hit her once while drunk. This evolved into a domestic violence situation for Angela, who left her husband and moved in with her mother and sisters. Her husband insisted that they get back together, and she accepted. Not too long later he became aggressive again while drunk and her mother and sisters called the police. Her spouse was arrested and spent 2 months in jail and 3 months in a detention center in Southern Georgia. He was deported to Mexico in January 2018, his second deportation from the U.S. Angela said he is still in touch with her, calling her frequently and telling her to come to live with him in Mexico or he will cross the border again, so they can be together. She said she refused to return to him because it is a bad example for the children. Angela hopes to apply for a U visa which grants temporary protection to victims of a crime. She does not have the resources such as transportation and financial means to pay for a

lawyer to start this process. Nonetheless, her mother is supportive and will continue helping her as needed, at least while she stays with her.

Participant 11: Diana A.

Diana is a 47-year-old mother born in Mexico, is divorced, has three daughters aged 11, 19, and 22, and arrived in the U.S. in 1990. Her oldest daughter was born in the U.S. In 1998 she returned to Mexico with her then-husband, per his request. Her middle daughter Angela was born in Mexico and has an unauthorized immigrant status here like her mother. Angela was also a participant in this study. Diana returned to the U.S. in 1999 a second time and has remained in Georgia since. Her third and youngest daughter was born in the U.S.

Diana has always struggled financially. She mentioned she was adopted at the age of 5 and was brought to live in the U.S. by her adopted family. Diana mentioned her life in Mexico was extremely poor, with little money and food, everything had to be shared and she went hungry many times. Diana commented that due to Mexico's economic situation food is too expensive for anyone, especially the poor. People can't afford to live there and that is why they come here. She tells her daughters that life in Mexico is all suffering, with lack of access to basic things such as food, healthcare, education, etc. Diana is relieved that at least here there is some help available from programs such as food stamps, WIC and Medicaid. She also mentioned violence was a major reason she does not want to return to Mexico. Diana's birth mother and siblings still live in Mexico and she has no other relatives in the U.S. aside from her daughters and grandchildren.

Diana's life in Georgia has been tainted by economic hardship and domestic violence, among other problems. Her last husband became abusive with her, and the reason he was deported is because she called the police on him after he assaulted her and their youngest

daughter. He was deported to Mexico months later, and she received orientation about the services from the local shelter for domestic violence survivors. She did not pursue any other services from the shelter and did not apply for a U Visa for victims of a crime.

Diana had a couple of encounters with the local police for driving without a license. The first time she was detained, it ended in her arrest and the police threatened her with deportation and the removal of her daughters. A social worker interceded for her release while she was in jail. She was able to return to her daughters, not without her then-husband threatening her with taking custody of the girls. The last time she was arrested, Diana spent 5 days in jail and received probation for again driving without a license. She told the police officers and the judge that she must drive to work to sustain her family. Diana has never received a deportation order from ICE.

Diana always worked odd jobs from housekeeping, to retail, to self-employed selling food. Once she was working at a factory and there was an ICE raid where almost everyone was arrested. Diana was pregnant then, but that did not stop immigration police from arresting her. She was taken to a detention center, where she managed to produce a paper stating she was applying for a 'green card' through her adoptive mother, who was a permanent resident. The detention center released her, and she was supposed to continue attending court hearings for her migration status which she never did. Diana has been unsuccessful in obtaining her permanent residency since she applied in 1990. Her adoptive mother died years ago, and she fears she won't be able to become a permanent resident. She has not been able to follow up with the paperwork requests from the migration office and has no money to hire a lawyer to reopen her case.

Heuristic Process Analysis

Consistent with heuristic methodology, data analysis is never a linear activity. It requires the researcher to examine the raw data in-depth from different angles to reach the requirement of triangulation. After thorough analyses and a non-linear examination of selected codes emerging from the data, it was decided to present this heuristic process analysis prior to the discussion of the emerging four themes. A thematic analysis will be presented later in this chapter.

Emerging Heuristic Process' Themes and Subthemes

Heuristic inquiry allows the researcher to experience an in-depth interaction with the collected data, to make sense of it and develop intrinsic interpretations of the material. During the processes and stages of this heuristic analysis, we reviewed the list of 105 codes and wrote each one on an index card. Then we began the deductive process of clustering them into groups or categories based on the qualities they had in common. We continued to deductively reduce the clusters until they could no longer be collapsed. Seven larger categories became themes from the 105 codes (See Table 4.4). As the heuristic process analysis took place over several weeks, I managed to organize the seven larger themes or categories into three major domains. These domains responded to the 18 questions from the semi-structured interview. The three domains and grouped themes are presented in a Venn diagram in Figure 4.1. Although the transcribed data overlaps across all interviews in a non-linear way, I tried to group it into domains for a more organic analysis; however, participants did not necessarily follow a sequential method in answering my questions. Consistent with feminist informed methods, my aim was to decrease the power dynamic, engage in a dialogic process, and increase trust and mutual empowerment. Although I was following my interview guide, my hope was to help participants feel engaged during the interviews as an informal conversation, which was hopefully a less-intrusive experience for the participants and me.

Domain 1: Meanings of Migration

This domain was constructed by grouping the findings comparing the lives of the participants in terms of their migration experiences, and their lived experiences in their countries of origin prior to their migration journey. In addition, this domain compared and contrasted the participants' spiritual beliefs, values, traditions, and the meanings of being a Latina woman in the U.S. Two themes were grouped in this domain: 1) *reasons to leave their country of origin*; and 2) *border crossing.*

Theme 1: Reasons to leave their country of origin (life conditions back home). Participants were able to identify, to various degrees, the reasons behind their decision to migrate. Among the reasons to leave given by the participants were violence, food scarcity, extreme poverty, and fear of mafia-like groups that extorted them for money and threatened to harm their families. More than one participant expressed their concerns with the possibility of being deported to their country of origin, as they understand the danger and life-threatening conditions at home are worse now than before. Aracelis provided a compelling example related to her brother, who was a military officer in El Salvador. He crossed the border once to escape death threats but was deported. He crossed the border again and applied for asylum:

> *Sí, y siempre él entra como en una desesperación…esta vez él venia con su hija y con su esposa. Y ellos tienen un caso de amenaza. Y no es algo que, en realidad, yo le voy a decir, ellos no están aquí…ellos no eran millonarios. Digamos que, iban al día y no tenían, digamos, una necesidad tan grande de lo material para venirse. A ellos los obligó a venirse ahorita la situación que se está viviendo en la colonia donde ellos vivían que están matando a las personas.*
>
> Yes, and he always enters into a desperation, this time he came with his daughter and his

> wife. And they have a threat case [back home]. And it's not something that I'm actually going to tell you, they're not here... they weren't millionaires. Let's say, they got by, and they didn't have a big financial need to come. They were forced to cross now [due to] the situation happening at the colony where they live, people are being killed.

Diana brought up similar worries about the violent situation back in Mexico:

> *Digo que si nos llegan a mandar por allá...está muy feo. Aparte de la violencia que hay allí en Acapulco, este, aparecen cuerpos despedazados.*
>
> I say if we are sent [back] ...it's very ugly. Aside from the overall existing violence, there in Acapulco, uhm, [you hear of] dismembered bodies appear [out of nowhere].

Theme 2: Need for border crossing (space & place). For all participants in the study, leaving the U.S. to go back to their countries of origin was not a realistic option. Due to the dire living conditions back home, such as an unsafe environment, food scarcity, and extreme poverty, these women stay because it is their only choice to offer their families a better future. Nonetheless, women interpreted staying in the U.S. as a sacrifice they have to make. All participants seemed to be conflicted by their desire to return home versus the need to stay in the U.S., which was interpreted by all of them as home for their children.

Norma spoke of her ambiguous feelings of *estar aquí y allá* (being here and there), which for her means wanting to be with her older children and her mother, but also having the responsibility of being here for the two young children:

> *Ellos quieren que yo me vaya. Hay dos cosas, la mitad de mi corazón está allá y la otra mitad acá. Pero yo…aunque la situación esté terrible aquí [me quedo]. Muchas personas vienen día a día, no sabiendo lo que enfrentarán. Si a nosotros nos dijeran "este es su país, este es Estados Unidos," y nos enseñaran todo, no vamos a venir.*

> They want me to leave. There are two things, half of my heart is there, and the other half is here. But for me…although the situation is terrible here [I stay]. Many people come day by day, not knowing what they will face. If we were told "this is your country, this is the U.S.," and we were shown everything, we would not come.

Domain 2: Meanings of Living in the U.S.

This was the densest data across and within the map grid. This section contained three broad themes: 3) *different meanings of migration status*; 4) *narratives of being and staying here (in the U.S.)*; and 5) *conflict and anti-immigrant sentiment.* This second domain focused on the advantages and disadvantages of living in the United States. It also grouped the more profound participants' lived experiences with the detention and deportation phenomena, and its meanings and interpretations. In addition, this domain collected pivotal data in regard to the immediate aftermath of the deportation crisis in the lives of the women, their families, and communities.

Theme 3: Different meanings of migration status. All but one of the participants had an undocumented migratory status in the U.S. Nonetheless, the meanings of being unauthorized in the country were somewhat different for some of the participants. For example, Roberta does not see her undocumented status as an impediment to finding a job and providing for her family:

> *Siempre he dicho que aunque no tengamos status no quiere decir que yo no pueda sobresalir. Y es lo que hago. Como yo le digo a mis hijos "aquí yo trabajo, hago esto, hago lo otro." No puedo decir que no puedo, ¿por qué? Vamos hacia adelante, adelante, adelante. Hasta que yo cumpla lo que quiero.*
>
> I always said that even if we do not have [a migratory] status it does not mean that I cannot excel. And that's what I do. As I tell my children: "here I work, I do this, I do that." I can't say I can't, why? We go forward, forward, forward. Until I fulfill what I

want.

Most participants experienced adversity and disadvantages related to their difficulty in finding and keeping a job due to their undocumented migratory status. Olga felt she had to defend all migrant workers when a non-migrant coworker labeled them all as problematic:

> *Él seguía diciendo como Trump dijo: "tienen que abandonar los Estados Unidos porque son unos corruptos. No pagan impuestos, usan estampillas de comida y tienen muchos hijos." Entonces una compañera de trabajo dijo: "no, estás equivocado. No todos son así. Trabajo y pago mis impuestos." Y yo añadí "yo no uso estampillas de comida y tengo dos hijos." Dije que tanto mi marido como yo trabajamos duro, y que venimos a trabajar, no a crear problemas.*
>
> He kept saying like Trump said, "They have to leave the U.S. because they are corrupt. They don't pay taxes; they take food stamps and have lots of children." Then a female co-worker said: "No, you are wrong. Not all are like that. I work and pay my taxes." I added, "I do not get food stamps and I have two kids." I said both my husband and I work hard, and we came here to work, not to make trouble.

Theme 4: Narratives of being and staying here. The struggles of 'making it' in the U.S. are considered by participants less troublesome than having to return to the harsh and dangerous living conditions in their country of origin. Irma misses her country but recognizes life is better in the U.S.:

> *Aquí la vida es mejor. Hay buenos trabajos. Pero en México es muy difícil vivir porque hay mucha violencia... muchos problemas y no es bueno estar allí. Hay mucho crimen. La gente no sale como antes. Mi hijo no está bien allí debido a estos problemas. Me siento mejor en los Estados Unidos porque hay menos violencia que en casa.*

> Here life is better. There are better jobs. But in Mexico, it is very hard to live because there is a lot of violence…lots of problems and it is not good to be there. There is a lot of crime. People do not go out like before. My son is not ok there because of these problems. I feel better in the U.S. because there is less violence than back home.

Olga mentioned the sacrifices that she needs to make to remain here and provide for both her families

> *Siempre tengo que guardar [dinero] para mis dos familias. Tengo dos hijos aquí [en los EE.UU.], pero tengo que dividirme entre dos familias, dos hogares. Tengo que dejar dinero a un lado para mi familia aquí y mi familia allá. Tengo que separarme y presupuestar para cubrir nuestros gastos y los de ellos.*
>
> I have to always look for saving [money] for both of my families. I have two children here [in the U.S.], but I have to divide myself between two families, two homes. I have to put money aside for my family here and my family there. I have to separate and budget to cover both our and their expenses.

The sense of isolation is an ongoing theme for all participants. The fear of being stopped by the police and being deported prevents Olga from going out by herself or driving a car. She is concerned not only by her potential fate of being sent back to Guatemala but now her sister's fate is linked to hers as they are both undocumented:

> *Mi hermana me dice: "Espero que Dios esté dispuesto a no ser deportado porque ¿qué va a suceder con mi hija? Aquí con un poco se puede comprar comida- sopa- pero no... nos estamos acostumbrando a una vida mejor en este país ".*

My sister tells me: “I hope it is God’s will I do not get deported because what is going to happen with my daughter? Here with a little bit you can buy food-soup- but there…we are getting used to a better life in this country”.

Theme 5: Conflict and racist anti-immigrant climate. Participants experiences with discrimination and racism in the U.S. are intersected by the ongoing anti-immigrant political climate. The new wave of immigrants trying to enter the country by requesting asylum was interpreted by most participants as a matter of justice. They understand that the U.S. needs to open the border to this humanitarian crisis as the situation in their home countries keeps getting worse. Many of the participants revealed that they have encountered increasing racial conflict over the years. Solimar, for example, who has been living in Georgia for over 17 years, stated that:

Se vuelven a mirarlo a uno. La gente en lugares públicos te hace sentir incómodo, no hay necesidad de que te digan nada, la mirada lo dice todo. Una vez tuve una amiga cuya hija fue intimidada en su escuela. Su hija se negaba a ir a clases. Un día el director escolar habló con ellos y les preguntó: “¿Y ustedes de dónde son?” y mi amiga dijo, “Somos de México.” Y el director respondió: “¿por qué no se van de vuelta a allá? Allí no tendrían que batallar tanto.”

They turn to look at you. People in public places will make you feel uncomfortable, no need to say anything, the stare says everything. I had a friend once whose child who was bullied in her school. Her daughter refused to go to school. One day the principal talked to them and asked, “Where are you from?” And my friend said, “We are from Mexico.” And the principal responded “Why don’t you go back home? There you would not have to struggle as much.”

All participants described painful experiences of the deportation of a loved one. The two excerpts presented below were among the most painful and dramatic as I perceived them, although all women were impacted emotionally by the deportation phenomena. The first one is the lived experience of Luz when her brother was arrested by ICE officials

> *Mi hermano fue deportado, y yo estuve allí ese día. Fue la experiencia más difícil de mi vida. Todos mis hermanos tienen tarjetas verdes cuando llegamos, pero este hermano tenía problemas matrimoniales. Tuvo un caso de violencia doméstica en 2002. Fue deportado voluntariamente, pero nunca se fue. En 2015 tuvo un accidente automovilístico y la policía lo detuvo. Tiene 3 hijos, era una persona muy buena, no hay otros problemas que su matrimonio. Ese día me llamó diciendo que el Sheriff lo buscaba. Yo sabía que no era el Sheriff, sino ICE. Me pidió que lo llevara a su casa, salía del trabajo temprano en la mañana. Cuando llegamos allí, había una camioneta con 8 oficiales. Lo arrestaron. Mi otro hermano también estaba allí, pero el tiene papeles. Los oficiales nos gritaban, sentí que el arresto era muy violento. Ellos tenían toda nuestra información y empezaron a tomarnos fotos. Todo sucedió tan rápido, pero se sintió como una eternidad. Cuando ICE estaba allí, me quedé fuerte, pero cuando se fueron, me destruí en pedazos.*
>
> My brother was deported, and I was there that day. It was the most difficult experience of my life. All my siblings had green cards when we arrived, but this one brother had marital problems. He had a case of domestic violence in 2002. He was voluntarily deported but never left. In 2015 he was a in a car accident and the police detained him. He has 3 kids, was a very good person, no other problems than his marriage. That day he called me saying that the Sheriff was looking for him. I knew it was not the sheriff but

> ICE. He asked me to drive him home, getting out of work early in the morning. When we got there, there was a van with 8 officers. They arrested him. My other brother was there too but he has papers. The officers yelled at us, I felt like the arrest was very violent. They had all our information and started taking pictures. All this happened so fast, but it felt like an eternity. When ICE was there, I remained strong but when they left, I fell into pieces.

Irma's son was arrested by ICE at their house on a Sunday morning. Her son opened the door and ICE agents entered by force and started interrogating him and her husband. Irma described this event as violent and traumatic for her:

> *Mi cuarto hijo fue deportado. Era un domingo antes de las 6 a.m. Todos estábamos durmiendo. Mi hijo abrió la puerta. Pidieron su identificación y no tenía una. Ellos [ICE] vinieron por mí en el dormitorio. Su hija de 6 años estaba aquí, pero ella estaba durmiendo, ella no vio nada. Todo fue inesperado. Él vivía aquí con nosotros y nos ayudó a pagar las facturas, ya que tenía un buen trabajo en la construcción. Pasó 3 meses en detención, fue deportado, y regresó y fue arrestado en la frontera. Fue detenido durante 21 días y deportado de nuevo a México.*
>
> My fourth son was deported. It was a Sunday before 6 a.m. We were all sleeping. My son opened the door. They asked for his ID and he did not have one. They [ICE] came for me in the bedroom. His 6-year-old daughter was here but she was sleeping, she saw nothing. It was all unexpected. He lived here with us and helped us pay the bills since he had a good job in construction. He spent 3 months in detention, was deported, and came back and was arrested at the border. He was in detention for 21 days and deported again to Mexico.

Domain 3: Meanings of staying in the U.S.

The last domain contained questions that explored coping mechanisms participants could identify as part of their responses to address the ongoing trauma and adversity left by the separation. Other questions explored the participants' development of awareness, knowledge, and consciousness-raising, in addition to their perception of the community responses in the days and months after experiencing the deportation of a loved one. Lastly, this domain explored the reasons for women to remain in the U.S., even when their loved ones have been deported. The two main themes grouped in this domain were: 6) *reasons to stay in the U.S;* and 7) *sources of Resilience.*

Theme 6: Reasons to stay. In the aftermath of the deportation crisis and the existing conditions back home, participants overwhelmingly stated they will not return to their countries of origin unless forcibly deported. Ofelia verbalized that:

> *La decisión de venir aquí no fue fácil; dejamos todo, nuestra familia, nuestros recuerdos. Arriesgamos nuestras vidas. Nuestra comunidad personas que trabajan duro, no somos criminales. Sufrimos mucho para venir aquí. La gente viene aquí para un futuro mejor. Nuestros hijos son americanos. Si queremos un futuro mejor para ellos, debemos luchar para quedarnos aquí. A mí me gusta aquí; mis hijos van a la escuela aquí. Tengo a mi hermana aquí, tenemos árboles, es hermoso.*
>
> The decision to come here was not easy; we left everything, our family, our memories. We risked our lives. Our community are hard workers, we are not criminals. We suffered greatly to come here. People come here for a better future. Our children are American. If we want a better future for them, we must fight to stay here. I like it here; my children go to school here. I have my sister here, we have trees, it is beautiful.

Theme 7: Sources of resilience. Participants identified their cultural values and traditions as a bridge to remain connected with their roots and their families back home, but also as a way to keep their families together in the U.S. Luz has fond memories of her life in Mexico despite living in extreme poverty:

> *Siempre tratamos de seguir la misma cultura que en México. Tenemos eventos religiosos que seguimos rigurosamente para enseñar a nuestros hijos. Aunque no es lo mismo, tratamos de hacerlo lo más parecido posible. Eventos como la Navidad son muy importantes, nos gusta pasar tiempo con la familia tanto como podamos. Le cantamos al niño Jesús, colocamos dulces y velas, comemos y bailamos. Es hermoso.*
>
> We always try to follow the same culture as back home. We have religious holiday traditions we rigorously teach our children. Although it is not the same, we try to make it as similar as possible. Events such as Christmas are very important, we like to spend time with the family as much as we can. We sing to baby Jesus; we place candy and candles, we eat, and we dance. It is beautiful.

Other participants such as Roberta chose to allow the celebration of both countries, Mexico and the U.S. as a way to embrace both cultures

> *Cuando viene el cuatro de julio pues ellos saben que es de aquí porque ellos nacieron aquí y este es su país. O sea, yo nunca les digo ay no no no. Yo les digo vamos a convivir, vamos a creer en las dos culturas.*
>
> When the Fourth of July comes, they know it is from here because they were born here, and this is their country. I mean, I never tell them no no no. I tell them we're going to live together, we're going to believe in both cultures.

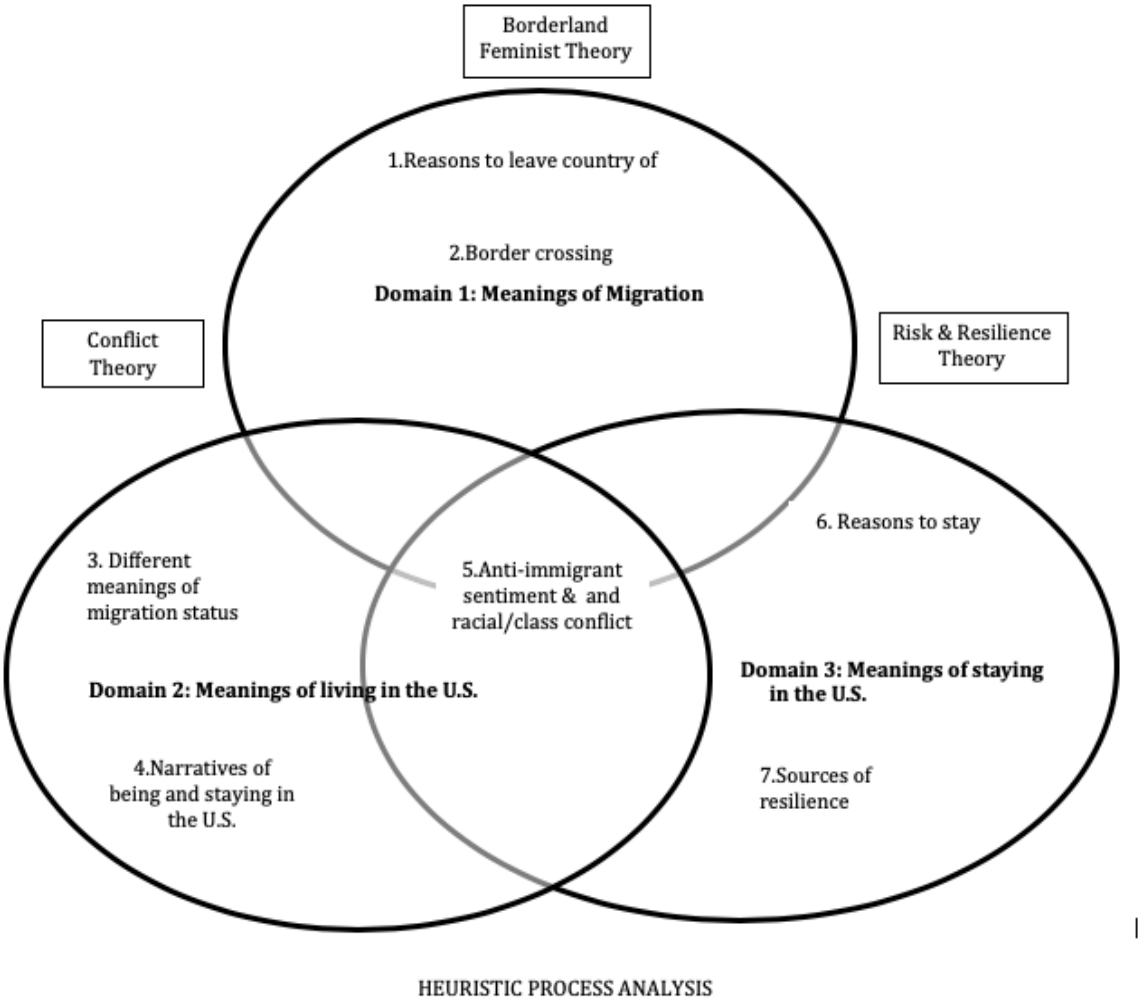

Figure 4.1. *Heuristic Process Analysis*

Table 4.4

Heuristic Process Themes and Codes

Themes	Codes
1. Reasons to leave (life conditions back home)	Violent place back home Food scarcity Poverty Mafia Leaving not an option Worse back home Wish to return home Made it through
2. Border crossing (space & place)	Sacrifice of coming here Aquí y allá- here and there Drastic change Harder to migrate Migration necessary Want to stay
3. Different meanings of migration status	Undocumented Documented is a good status Undocumented status not a disadvantage Less affected Citizenship
4. Conflict and racist anti-immigrant climate	Discrimination and racism Migration Law Sense of justice Political climate Elections Police Deportation Tragedy and crisis of separations
5. Narratives of being and staying here	
Financial	Legal fees Main provider deported Financial constraint Dependent Welfare Low income Financial Struggle Work struggle

Themes	Codes
Fear and disempowerment	Voiceless Disempowered Pessimistic Fearful of leaving home Living in fear Helpless Hopeless Community in fear
Violence	Domestic violence Harassment No support here
Effects on the family	Separation Children affected Loss Father figure gone
Aftermath	Loneliness and isolation Limited interaction Remain home Non-belonging No sense of community
Physical and emotional stress	Emotionally and physically stressed Limited information about migration
Language and education	Low education Illiteracy English language barrier
6. Reasons to stay	
Better life	Better future Stability Food is cheap and available Place of progress Life easier but still hard More advantages here Good environment Comfortable life Opportunity to move forward/ *Salir Adelante* Work Kids' future and education Hope

Themes	Codes
Support and resources	Spouse supportive Support from Nuns/Social Services Migrant community
7. Sources of resilience	
Values	Hard work Lives to work Strong work ethic Identity is family and work
Traditions	Home and family life Religion Keep the culture Spanish is a value Family value Hard to celebrate
Identity	Ability to provide on her own Provide for kids New role as breadwinner Main support Dreamer Survivor
Agents of change	Resistance Not fearing Fight for immigrants Sharing knowledge Leader Activism Serving others Knowledge transfer on migration & ICE

Findings on Thematic Analysis

To expand the reach of the different interpretations of themes and sense-making from the collected data, I conducted a thematic analysis in addition to the heuristic process analysis presented earlier in this chapter. This thematic analysis resulted from the summary of the interpretive analysis from across the sample for each of the eighteen question and within the sample from each of the eleven participants. The descriptive and interpretive summaries were grouped at both ends of the data map/grid (across and below). After grouping all the participants' responses across and within the sample, I created a composite depiction in my attempt to capture the essence of the phenomenon. This will be presented at the end of this chapter. Below I review the four themes from the interpretive summaries.

Theme 1: Identity

Identity was defined in this study by how their sense of self was shaped by their traditions, family unity, spirituality, hard work, education, migratory status, and Spanish language.

> *En México mi mundo era trabajar y volver a casa con mi familia, lo mismo que aquí en los Estados Unidos. Para mí es muy importante enseñar mis valores a mis hijos. Las tradiciones que celebro son el Día de los Muertos. Puse una ofrenda para mi abuelo, puse una foto y comida para él, y le explico por qué le hago esto a mis hijos. También celebramos el 4 de julio, porque mis hijos nacen aquí, y debemos convivir con las dos culturas-vivir con ambas culturas.*
>
> In Mexico, my world was to work and come home to my family, the same as here in the U.S. To me it is very important to teach my values to my children. The traditions I celebrate are Día de los Muertos. I put an offering for my grandpa**,** I put a picture and

food for him, and I explain why I do this to my kids. We also celebrate the 4th of July, because my kids are born here, and we must live with both cultures (Roberta C, 45).

For example, with Solimar, being together as a family was extremely important

Yo creo que el valor más importante es la unión familiar. Los Latinos siempre tenemos el concepto de que la unión familiar es para toda la vida. Porque siento que como papá y mamá están juntos, los niños están felices, y tienen esa mentalidad de salir adelante y somos su ejemplo.

I believe that the most important value is family unity. Latinos always have the concept that family unity is for life. Because I feel when mom and dad are together, the children happy, and they have that mindset of moving forward and we are their example.

Theme 2: Class & Racial Conflicts

Class and racial conflicts were identified and shaped by their sense of non-belonging isolation, discrimination, poverty/financial need, and lack of transportation or a drivers' license.

Ojalá [yo]hubiese nacido aquí en los Estados Unidos, como mis hermanas. Aquí hay oportunidades para estudiar y trabajar. No me gradué de la escuela secundaria, me embaracé a los 15 años de edad. Aquí donde estamos es un lugar más seguro para vivir. Mamá emigró por el dinero para el logro financiero. Luchó mucho en México por [obtener] dinero.

I wish I was born here in the U.S. like my sisters. Here there are chances to study and work. I did not graduate from high school, I got pregnant at 15 years old. Here where we are is a safer place to live. Mom migrated for the money for financial achievement. She struggled a lot in Mexico with money (Angela K, 19).

Theme 3: Violence

The role of violence was reflected in their experiences with intra-partner/family violence criminality/gang violence, sexual harassment and abuse, separation, and detention/deportation proceedings.

> *He sido discriminada y he sufrido acoso sexual. Mi trabajo es muy duro, no tengo transporte, cuido para mis hijos, o un lugar para vivir. Sufrí de violencia doméstica. No tengo licencia de conducir. Las personas con papeles se aprovechan de nosotros. Somos muy pobres, y tengo que defenderme sola. Mi hijo tenía 13 años cuando fue asesinado por pandillas de vuelta en mi país.*
>
> I have been discriminated against and suffered sexual harassment. My work is very hard, I have no transportation, childcare or a place to live. I suffered from domestic violence. I have no driver's license. People with papers take advantage of us. We are very poor, and I have to fend for myself. My son was 13 when he was killed by gangs back in my country (Norma, 49).

Theme 4: Aftermath of Deportation

The effects of the aftermath of deportation differed for each participant to varying degrees. While some participants experienced physical and mental illness, hopelessness, and ongoing fear, others developed knowledge/*conocimiento*, consciousness awareness/*concientización*, and coping mechanisms, resilience, and resistance.

> *Caí en una depresión severa y no pude hacer nada para ayudar a mi hermano. Mi iglesia me ha ayudado financiera y emocionalmente. No salgo mucho porque temo ser arrestada y deportada o ser atacada por estadounidenses que no nos quieren aquí. Han atacado nuestra iglesia. Yo ayudo a otras familias con información en la medida que puedo. Les*

digo acerca de los recursos comunitarios.

I became severely depressed and was not able to do anything to help my brother; my church has helped me financially and emotionally. I don't go out much because I fear being arrested and deported or being attacked by Americans who don't want us here. They have targeted our church. I help other families with information as I can. I tell them about community resources (Aracelis S., 39).

Luz lost her brother to deportation during a difficult transition in her family. Around the same time, her husband, who was undocumented himself, was in the process of obtaining his *green card,* and had to leave for Mexico as part of the U.S. migration law requirements. Luz's children were already traumatized by the experience of losing their uncle to deportation, and were upset when their dad had to travel away from them

Sí, fue muy traumático, pero a la vez como padres tratamos de explicarles [a ellos]. Yo siempre todos los dias le decía a mi hija, "Papi va a regresar. Vamos a pedirles nomás a Papá Dios que así va a ser. Y ella le decía a su papá cuando él llamaba '¿Y cuándo vas a venir?' 'Muy pronto' decía el. ¿Cuándo es ese pronto? Yo quiero que me digas dos días, tres días, cuatro días, cinco, que yo los pueda contar".

Yes, it was very traumatic, but at the same time as parents we tried to explain [to them]. I always would say to my daughter every day, "Daddy's coming back. Let's just ask God that it is going to happen. And she would ask her dad when he called 'And when are you going to come home?' 'Very soon,' he said. 'When is that soon? I want you to tell me two days, three days, four days, five, that I can count them."

For Solimar, losing her best friend felt like a major loss, as all the family followed in the aftermath of the deportation of one family member

"*Sientes como si hubiesen deportado a toda la familia, incluyendo a los niños nacidos en los Estados Unidos, que tuvieron que dejar su educación y su vida aquí para irse con sus papás a un país que no es el de ellos".*

"It feels like they deported the whole family, including the children born in the United States, they had to leave their education and their lives here to move with their parents to a country that is not theirs"

Exemplary Portraits

In this heuristic analysis, three exemplary portraits emerged from the whole experience of the participants with the phenomenon of the detention and deportation of a loved one. These three portraits represent the participants' different experiences in response to the research questions of this study:

1) How do Latina Immigrants describe and interpret their lived experiences in Georgia after the detention and or deportation of a loved one?
2) What do Latina immigrants identify as strategies and mechanisms of coping, resilience, resistance, and knowledge in the aftermath of the detention and deportation phenomena?

Exemplary Portrait 1: Consciousness-Raising, Knowledge, and Sense of Agency

This first cohort represents participants who were able to describe examples of *'conscientización'* and *'conocimiento,'* resilience and resistance over the deportation of a loved one. This group was salient due to their intrinsic desire of helping others in their immigrant community, and their sense of agency and advocacy towards families that have lived a similar experience of deportation in their household. In addition, these women were able to recognize themselves as leaders in their communities and share a passionate commitment to continue

fighting for the wellbeing and protection of the Latino immigrants in Georgia. The exemplary portrait number one is composed by Luz B., Solimar E., Ofelia R., and Aracelis S.

Exemplary Portrait 2: Isolation and Limited Involvement

This second cohort is characterized by women who have been forced to limit their participation in public life in the aftermath of a relative's deportation. They fear their own deportation, a sentiment that has been exacerbated by the current anti-immigrant political climate. This group has some resources such as having a working spouse, or a child that is not undocumented, or a source of steady income. These elements appear to buffer to an extent the detrimental effects of deportation, such as loss of income and family separation, among others. Elena V., Olga L, Roberta C., and Irma M. were placed in this group.

Exemplary Portrait 3: Great Socioeconomic Adversity, Resistance, and Survival

This last group is represented by participants whose personal and home life has become dramatically worse in the aftermath of a deportation in their family unit. This cohort's lived experiences as immigrants in the U.S. are defined by a lack of steady income/unemployment, low levels of educational attainment, no family or community support, and intra-partner violence. For these three women, the deportation of a spouse was in principle a positive outcome for their safety and protection. However, these women were entirely dependent on their partners' income. The deportation experience shifted these women's roles from housewives and stay-at-home mothers to entering the workforce to sustain their families. This role shifting, in addition to their already harsh life circumstances prior to the deportation phenomenon, prevents them from seeking help outside their household. Lastly, their participation in public life with the migrant community is hindered by their extreme fear of driving without a license, being caught by the

police and sent to a detention center for deportation proceedings. Norma A., Diana A., and Angela K. compose this less resourceful and less engaged group.

Table 4.5

Exemplary Portraits' Summary

Exemplary Portrait 1: Consciousness raising, knowledge, and sense of agency.	Exemplary Portrait 2: Isolation, fear and limited involvement.	Exemplary Portrait 3: Great socioeconomic adversity, resistance, and survival.
• Help others to find resources, possess leadership skills. • Able to transfer their knowledge from their lived experiences to others	• Still able to provide for the family or has financial stability. • Limited involvement with the immigrant community.	• Domestic violence survivors, low SES, low education attainment. • No nearby family or friends, no stable financial support, • No involvement with the immigrant community.
Luz B. (HR/HE)	Elena V. (HR/SE)	Norma A. (LR/LE)
Solimar E. (HR/HE)	Roberta C. (SR/SE)	Diana (LR/ LE)
Ofelia R. (HR/HE)	Olga L. (SR/LE)	Angela (LR/LE)
Aracelis S. (SR/HE)	Irma M. (SR/LE)	

Note: HR=highly resourceful; HE= highly engaged; SR= somewhat resourceful; SE= somewhat engaged; LR= less resourceful; LE= less engaged

Summary of Findings

Seven greater themes or categories and 105 subthemes were identified during the first data analysis. These themes and subthemes were collected first in a 12' x 12' data map grid made by hand. This data map was useful to complete an in-depth, within- and -across group analysis on the themes that represented the experiences and meanings of detentions and deportations for

all participants. The seven themes resulting from the heuristic inquiry process were the following: 1) reasons to leave; 2) border crossing; 3) different meanings of migration status; 4) conflict and racist anti-immigrant climate; 5) narratives of being and staying here; 6) reasons to stay; and, 7) sources of resilience. The findings resulted from the data did not respond to a linear process. As Sultan (2019) and Moustakas (1990) suggest, the development of meanings and interpretations in heuristic inquiry respond to explicit and implicit stances of the data analyzed, which allow the researcher to reinterpret new knowledge from previously analyzed data.

In addition to the heuristic process analysis, I conducted a thematic analysis, where four major themes were identified from within and across both ends of the map/grid. They were identity, class and racial conflict, violence, and the aftermath of the deportation. For some participants, this last theme was experienced by physical and mental illness, hopelessness, and ongoing fear; for others, it meant the germination of knowledge about their rights as migrants. This could also be interpreted as an awakening of consciousness' awareness about their situation as an oppressed group. Lastly, the theme of aftermath of deportations was represented by subthemes such as the development of coping mechanisms, strength, resilience, and resistance. Both procedures of data analysis responded to the two original questions from the study.

Participants from this study migrated to the U.S. from Mexico and Central America as an escape from extreme poverty, but also for protection from gang activity and increased criminality in their home countries. They came in search for educational opportunities for their children, and better paid jobs for themselves. Seven of the participants did not complete high school, two of them did not complete elementary school. However, four of them attained some years of schooling beyond high school.

Only five participants were employed at the time of the interview. Among the six participants who were married, only one had a full-time job as a business owner with her husband. Another married participant worked on weekends as a food vendor, but she did not consider this a job. For the rest of the participants, unemployment or under employment placed their family units at a greater risk of having to juggle their unstable finances, to pay for food, utility bills, medical expenses, and transportation. In the most extreme situations, participants such as Norma, Angela, and Diana were forced to share a mobile home, or become homeless with their children. This arrangement meant that 9 people, from three family units, had to share a small, crowded living space with 3 bedrooms and one bath on a daily basis.

Although the median income for the study's sample was $1,300 per month, income for each participant's household varied greatly. For example, Elena's household had the highest income from the sample, but only her husband worked outside the home, and he is a permanent U.S. resident. Among the eleven participants in the study, two of them had zero income at the time of the interview.

Among the risk factors permeating the lives of the participants in this study, these were the most salient: 1) having to work with or without false papers; 2) driving to work without a valid license; 3) illnesses derived from overwork and the trauma of separation; 4) lack of preparedness or emergency plans to respond to a deportation threat; and, 5) isolation and limited participation in social and community life. Norma mentioned that she has worked with false identification for the past 20 years in the U.S. For her, it is a matter of survival to keep her children safe, by being able to provide food and shelter for them. Norma's life is extremely hard due to the lack of immigration documentation, nor does she possess a work permit that would improve her current unstable work and living conditions. Nonetheless, she is coping with

adversity by seeking resources from her community, and by not giving up on pushing forward for her kids.

Two participants suffered detention and convictions for driving without a license in Georgia. For both Aracelis and Diana, their encounter with the police and eventual arrest left them scarred and traumatized. They both understood that it is a risk to drive in Georgia while being undocumented, but they were left with no choice but to drive illegally and expose themselves to a potential deportation. Not being able to drive meant to be limited to underpaid jobs, as they cannot travel further distances due to lack of reliable public transportation.

Many participants realized that working too hard led to poor physical health. Diana and Aracelis, for example, are both suffering from chronic illnesses, which they both relate to working extremely hard, with no breaks, no access to health care, and not taking care of themselves as they should have.

Only two participants were open to sharing details of their emergency plan in the event of another detention or deportation in the family. Most participants declined to talk about this topic or to share whether they had an emergency plan in place. Only Luz was not worried about being detained or deported, since she is a U.S. citizen. Regardless, she worries about other relatives, like her parents-in-law, who are elderly and live as undocumented in the U.S. Luz is afraid that they will not be able to live by themselves in Mexico if deported, since all their children already live in the U.S.

Composite Depiction

A composite depiction is a representation of the grouped meanings and interpretations of the phenomena of detention and deportation as experienced by the participants in this study. The thematic analysis consolidated the four principal themes found across and within all participants.

For all the participants, *migrating was necessary.* None of the participants indicated that it was their choice to leave their countries of origin, for all of them it felt like the only opportunity to *move forward*. Participants identified themselves as *immigrants, mothers, and workers*. Only three participants identified themselves as Latinas in the demographic survey. Overall, women described their identity in terms of the values and traditions that are important to them, such as being able to work and to keep their families together while keeping their culture alive as much as possible. The *Spanish language* is an important vehicle for the transferring of cultural values and traditions between the participants and their children. *Spirituality* was signaled as an important defining quality for most of the participants' identity as well.

All participants could identify lived experiences where they were exposed to various kinds of conflict, including *discrimination and classism.* They interpreted their migration status and working conditions as *hard,* some even said it was h*arder to live in the U.S.* than in their countries of origin because they have felt *racism* here and not back home. This sentiment of *feeling isolated and discriminated* was tied to their migratory status and *fear of deportation,* as 10 out of 11 participants do not have a valid migratory status in the U.S. All the women migrated to the U.S. with almost no knowledge of English. Education in their countries of origin is costly and sometimes out of reach. Nonetheless, five out of eleven participants managed to study beyond 12th-grade high school. Participants recognized *education as a value* that they wanted to pass onto their children, as they recognize low education levels are a disadvantage to obtain better work opportunities in the U.S. Participants with a lower socioeconomic status were not pursuing education opportunities for their children as much as others, having to rely on them to get to work and bring extra income into the household. Limited opportunities for schooling in the U.S. for the participants are interjected by 1) their need to work and provide for their families;

and 2) the lack of transportation or ability to obtain a driver's license legally. Class conflict was also described and interpreted by poor health and lack of access to health care and other services, where undocumented families are unable to afford insurance, and forced to pay out-of-pocket for their health care.

Participants have experienced violence in the form of e*xploitation, sexual abuse, domestic violence, criminal and gang activity, and the arrest and deportation of a loved one.* Four participants described their experiences as survivors of intra-partner violence, stating that the main reason for the deportation of their spouses was a domestic violence episode. In that sense, deportation came as a relief from violence for these participants, but it also came as a shift in their role as housewives. Although only 5 participants were working at the time of the interview, nearly all of them were actively seeking to be or remain employed. The *lack of income* and dire financial situation was also seen as a violent, ongoing condition in their lives. *Criminality and gang violence* in their country of origin was mentioned repeatedly as one of the main reasons for participants' decision to remain in the U.S. protecting their family's safety.

The effects of deportations in Latino immigrant women can be represented as a continuum where some women are affected in more impactful ways than others. For all participants, the immediate effect of an arrest, and eventual deportation in their families brought an ongoing sense of fear of their own *potential deportation*. This fear, in turn, forced many of the participants to live in isolation, avoiding participating in social life. Some participants described a sense of mistrust from anyone outside their family and close friends, which was evident during some of the interviews. Many participants described how their *chronic health issues* are related to the extreme stress and anxiety produced in the aftermath of the deportation of a relative. Among the physical and mental symptoms described by women as the result of a deportation are

hair loss, headaches, blurred vision, rheumatoid arthritis, weight loss, depressive symptoms, and the overall trauma related to the deportation event.

Participants were able to identify triggers in their daily lives that generated tremendous amounts of stress, such as seeing a police car on the street or a stranger knocking at their door. Nonetheless, other participants developed other ways to cope with the aftermath of an arrest and deportation. Four out of eleven participants have become more *engaged with their communities* when a family is affected by deportation. These participants are taking the initial steps to assist families in crisis with *emotional support*. Some participants have organized fundraising events to cover the family's immediate expenses such as rent and utilities. Two of the participants have taken a further step and have become *leaders and activists* in the immigrant community in Georgia. These participants are mobilizing other undocumented and mixed-status families to join them in the fight for *social justice* and to demand the protection of their *human rights as migrant*

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"Hace falta borrar las fronteras,
la primavera no lleva documentos
para cruzar aduana.
Hace falta tejer las banderas,
con tanta tela se puede hacer
la vela para una sola tierra".

('Canción Pequeña'
Grupo Guardabarranco)

Overview of the Chapter

The purpose of this study was to describe and interpret the lived experiences of Latina migrants facing the detention and deportation of a loved one. This heuristic research explored the meanings and interpretations of 11 Latina immigrants, 18 years and older, residents of Georgia, in the aftermath of such deportation. Two research questions guided this study: RQ1) "How do Latina immigrants describe and interpret their lived experiences after the deportation of a loved one?" And RQ2) "What do Latina immigrants identify as strategies and mechanisms of coping, resilience, resistance, and knowledge in the aftermath of the deportation phenomena?"

This chapter will provide an interpretive analysis of the research findings guided by the literature review and the conceptual frameworks used in this study: borderlands feminism, risk and resilience theory, and conflict theory. The limitations of the study will be highlighted as well Consequently, I will present the main contributions of the study and the important implications for social work education, research, and practice. Lastly, this final chapter will discuss the researcher's final reflections, followed by a Creative Synthesis, the last step in the heuristic inquiry stages.

Discussion

Demographics

Significant and unexpected findings were identified across the demographic data collected, which deserves to be examined in depth. For example, more than half of the participants have been living in the United States for 18 years or longer. Participants have established long-term relationships with neighbors and have developed a wealth of knowledge about resources available in the community for Latina immigrants. Walsh's (2012) family resilience model and Falicov's (2012, 2014) MECAmap model for immigrant families posit the importance of supportive networks which families can rely upon in times of adversity. González-Arizmendi & Faver (2010) stated that Latina women take leadership roles in the community to act as natural problem solvers and cultural brokers for other women and their families when problems, such as a deportation in the family, arise.

Georgia is Home. Georgia was the first relocation choice for most of the participants; they have lived there since they first migrated to the U.S. This finding was in contrast with the notion of the general population that Latinos are newer immigrants to Georgia (Pruitt, 2009; Weise, 2015). The fact that participants have remained in Georgia for ten years or longer infers that this area provides, at least, opportunities for work and other benefits for immigrant families. The labor market for Latino immigrants most likely offers low-skill and manual jobs, particularly for people with an undocumented migratory status (De Genova, 2006; Wilson, 2017). The availability of jobs sustains the claims of scholars, such as Aviva Chomsky (2007), that the general population in the U.S. is not applying for existing jobs due to low wages and or hazardous and dangerous working conditions. For a Latina immigrant, having a job also implies the ability to send remittances to relatives in Mexico and Central America (Estévez, 2012; IFAD,

2017). Most participants in the study are currently sending money as remittance to their countries of origin. This income not only helps their immediate families with basic needs; it also helps their countries of origin as a source of economic development. Data collected on remittances reflected that participants send an average of $231 quarterly to their countries of origin. Many families in Mexico and Central America depend entirely on this money. In times of economic contraction in the U.S., the lack of remittances exacerbates the poverty conditions for relatives abroad (IFAD, 2017).

In the following section, I will discuss and interpret the most relevant findings from Chapter 4. In the Venn Diagram (Figure 4.2) presented in Chapter 4, three domains were created to cluster seven themes and the subsequent 105 codes. The Venn diagram was selected because these findings and the corresponding analyses are not linear, but rather circular, and sometimes overlap each other. Sultan (2019) and Moustakas (1990) both posit that heuristic inquiry is a non-linear process of interpretation, forcing the researcher to move along and return to the data later for further re-interpretation and analysis of findings. Hence, the Venn diagram felt appropriate to cluster the main findings of the heuristic process analysis.

Domain 1: Meanings of Migration

The first two themes derived from the heuristic process analysis are 1) reasons to leave the country of origin, and 2) the need for border crossing. Chicanas and other Latina feminist scholars such as Anzaldúa and Moraga (2015), Elenes (2013), Lucero-Liu and Hendrickson-Christensen (2009), and Cantú and Hurtado (2012), have constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed the conceptualizations of Chicana/borderland feminism. One of the many applications of borderland feminist theory by Elenes (2013) and Anzaldúa (2004) suggests that

borderland theory is a mechanism to achieve social justice and human rights for all marginalized groups.

Migration and human rights. Most participants in this study interpreted their migration journey as a way to escape socioeconomic injustice in their countries of origin. Furthermore, they saw their migration journey as a way to seek socioeconomic justice in the form of better work and living conditions in the U.S. Most participants described their migration journey as the hardest decision they have ever made. They were convinced that leaving their families and home countries, despite their relatives' concern for their safety, was the right thing to do. It is noteworthy to mention that some participants made their migration journey alone, with no relatives or friends as travel companions.

Ariadna Estévez (2012) developed a conceptual framework of migration as a social conflict, which is relevant in the interpretation of some of this study's findings. Estévez posits that to avoid the consequences of migration as a social conflict "it is necessary to recognize the human rights of migrants" (p. 4). Findings revealed that very few participants identified their decision of migration as their human right. Nonetheless, all participants have felt at some point in time that their rights as human beings have been violated in the U.S. Participants' interpretations of their invisibility in the U.S. is consistent with a space of 'non-existence,' as described by Estévez (2012). All participants in this study are what Estévez calls 'modern migrants,' which is characterized by their unauthorized migratory status in the U.S. The illegality of their existence makes them 'inexistent' and therefore undeserving of protections or recognition in American society. In addition, undocumented immigrants are not viewed as asylum seekers because the causes for their migration (for example economic hardship and intra-partner violence) do not qualify for temporary protective status.

Women escaping their countries. Noyori-Corbett & Moxley (2016) found that women migrating from global south countries are lacking essential protections in their countries of origin, forcing them to make the dangerous journey to reach a wealthier country, such as the U.S. The inability of many Latina immigrant women to apply and attain asylum exposes them to greater risk if they are deported to Mexico and Central American countries such as El Salvador and Guatemala (Villalón, 2010). Many women fear for their lives and the lives of their loved ones abroad if they are not able to remain in the U.S to continue providing for their families both in the U.S. and in their countries of origin.

All participants recognized that crossing the border was both a major sacrifice and a conflictive decision since many participants did not want to leave their countries of origin initially. Nonetheless, participants understood that immigrants have no other choice when they decide to leave their homes and make the dangerous journey to 'el Norte' (the North) without papers. The decision to migrate, and the later adaptation into a new reality in the U.S., is exemplified in borderlands theory as a conflicted sentiment. The participants in this study also see their lives as a juxtaposition of living between borderlands, both physically and metaphorically. Immigrant women learn to live in ambiguity, longing to return to their countries of origin, but knowing this wish may never become a reality for most of them (Falicov, 2012; 2014).

Migration with no return. The border crossing was also interpreted as a drastic, unknown change, which many participants were not prepared to manage. Latina women described a sense of loss and invisibility in the host country (Arriola, 2003; Chávez, 2000; Few, 2009; Moraga & Anzaldúa; 2015; Mummert, 2012; Roth, 2006). Some participants described their lives in the U.S. as lonely and with a sense of nostalgia (Falicov, 2012, 2014; Leon, &

Dziegielewski, 1999). This nostalgia responds to the impossibility of traveling back to Mexico or Central America to visit their parents, children, siblings, and other relatives and friends that were left behind. The lived experiences of oppression and discrimination in the U.S. deter participants from trusting Americans. They described a fear of being attacked, hurt, or being reported to ICE for deportation. For that reason, most participants stay at home all day, leaving only to attend church on Sundays or go to the store occasionally. Dealing with discrimination and racism on a daily basis in the U.S. hinders participants' interactions with other Latino families and other ethnic groups in their communities. This finding concurs with authors Cleaveland (2011; 2013) and Valdéz et al. (2013), where Latino immigrants live in constant fear of ICE but also of their U.S. citizen neighbors. Consequently, this fear inhibits them from participating as members of the American social fabric.

Domain 2: Meanings of Living in the U.S.

In this domain, three themes were grouped together: 3) different meanings of migration status; 4) narratives of being in the U.S.; and 5) anti-immigrant and racial/class conflict. For some participants in this study, their migration status as undocumented did not appear to be a problem for their daily functioning at work and home. As Mendez-Shannon (2010) and her colleague Bailey (Mendez-Shannon & Bailey, 2016) suggest as long as undocumented immigrants stay in the shadows or out of the radar of the authorities, they will continue to live and work in the U.S. indefinitely. The fear of being detained and deported increases and decreases as the anti-immigrant rhetoric becomes more or less antagonistic in politics and the media.

Non-belonging here or there. All participants described they felt *no ser ni de aquí, ni de allá,* or not being from here nor there. This interpretation was used by participants in various ways. First, this was a way to describe their position in the context of a new country and a new

life, where they did not feel welcome (D'Angelo et al., 2009; Hancock, 2007). Second, some women used this term to describe their feelings of being in two places at once, where their bodies were placed here in the U.S., but their hearts and souls were with their families back in Mexico, El Salvador, or Guatemala. This metaphoric statement resonates with the interpretation of the 'double consciousness,' coined by W.E.B. DU Bois (1994) in *The Soul of Black Folk.* With this assertion, Du Bois described the way black persons viewed themselves in regard to their racial identity and also being American. For Du Bois, the double consciousness represented a dilemma of how people must deal with two identities that can overlap but could also clash against each other. In the case of Latina migrant women, learning to exist in this ambiguous setting could be considered a mechanism of survival (Kasun, 2015) but also a source of disengagement for not considering themselves belonging to the community other than their Latino/a relatives and friends (Albarrán et al., 2014; Anzaldúa, 2004; Ayón & Ghosh Naddy, 2013; González-Arizmendi & Faver, 2010).

Racism, discrimination, illness & trauma. The Latino undocumented and documented community in the U.S., such as the participants in this study, have experienced ongoing racism and discrimination throughout their historic presence in the United States. It is well documented in the literature that people who experience racial discrimination face potential and mostly unattended trauma (Caminero-Santangelo, 2016). For Latinos, this is no exception. Participants described their experiences with illness and injury as part of the sacrifice of hard work and not taking enough care of their health. Both Otiniano et al. (2012) and Yaros et al. (2015) explained how being discriminated against, on an ongoing basis, even if it is a microaggression (Pérez-Huber & Maria Cueva, 2012), could develop symptomatology of physical and mental illness. Without the proper protections at work, and the inability to obtain health insurance while

undocumented, most Latino/a immigrants will face an unfair and unjust disadvantage in their health care and well-being. As many scholars have found, poor health trajectories for low-income people and minorities could be passed onto future generations and pose greater risks for children of immigrants' health (Ornelas et al., 2011; Pérez-Escamilla, 2010).

Domain 3: Meanings of Staying in the U.S.

The last domain of this heuristic process analysis included two themes: 6) reasons to stay, and 7) sources of resilience. In tune with the working class' conflict theory developed by Karl Marx, data analyzed from this study revealed Latina immigrant women in Georgia are extremely impacted by the consequences of global capitalist economic forces such as the North American Free Trade Act or NAFTA. Most participants described their main reasons for staying in the U.S. are protecting and caring for their children. To do so, they need to obtain a job to help both their families in the U.S. and their relatives in Mexico and Central America. Work provides not only an income, but also financial stability. Work also implies an ethical value that makes Latina immigrants proud of their contributions to American society. Although many undocumented immigrants possess only manual working skills, migrant workers develop abilities rapidly in order to attain higher wages and more managerial responsibility. Unfortunately, hard work also implies becoming sick or dying young because of no health care and lack of work safety protections (Bohon, 2001; De Genova, 2006; Wilson, 2017).

Migrant women as an oppressed working class. Latina immigrants' experiences with their insertion into the workforce are influenced by the increased restrictions of migration laws, their gender, and their duties as mothers. Most of the participants described deplorable working conditions at their past or present workplaces but felt disempowered to claim better work conditions due to fear of retaliation, job loss, or deportation (Chávez, 2000; Cleaveland, 2013;

Gates, 2017). For participants in this study, having no work, or having underpaid strenuous jobs, brings tremendous challenges, such as being consistently exposed to harsh conditions and safety hazards by employers (Snipes, Cooper & Snipp, 2017) and financial instability. Most participants in this study, as millions of undocumented migrant workers in the U.S., have no protections at work and lack the means for demanding said protections (Wilson, 2017). The financial struggle and the anxiety it produces, is aggravated by their limited job choices. The available jobs for undocumented Latina immigrants, particularly in the agribusiness, are unfit for their physical ability, or are far away and force them to leave their young children in the care of others for long periods of time (Rafaelli et al., 2012; Reina, 2014; Snipes, Cooper & Snipps, 2017).

Resilience protective factors. Throughout this study, participants identified various examples of resilience sources, including protective factors. I highlighted a few protective factors that have been crucial in the development of mechanisms to cope in the aftermath of a deportation in their families. These protective factors collected from the data are 1) family unity (*estar en familia*); 2) hard work; 3) following celebrations and holidays as a community (*convivio*); 4) cooking and eating of meals that remind them of home; 5) speaking Spanish with their children at home; and 6) cultivating spirituality. The importance of 'being with the family' and the need to 'work hard' were two protective factors that came across all participants narratives. 'Hard work,' in this case, seems to be interpreted as a coping mechanism and a source of security to protect their families.

In consonance with Falicov's (2012, 2014) MECA model of migrant family processes, all participants gave high importance to family dynamics and rituals. For Latina immigrants, traditions and values from their countries of origin are a source of resilience, such as Christmas

and other important holidays. Celebrating traditional religious dates and other events appear to be difficult sometimes because their relatives live far away. Living in a non-Latino enclave also appears to hinder the celebration of traditional holidays. Celebrations without their loved ones while being away from home could become a sad moment for Latina immigrants, which in contrast could become a risk factor for their mental health (Falicov, 2012, 2014). On the other hand, celebrating American holidays with their children seems to be a source of resilience for participants.

Findings revealed that participants encouraged their children to speak Spanish at home, as opposed to English. In Falicov's MECA model, the use of the language from the parents' country of origin (in this case Spanish), was identified as a protective factor to promote family resilience. Falicov (2012, 2014) included language as a contextual protection for both the parents and the children. In tune with Falicov's multidimensional model, participants understood that their children will have an advantage in life if they learn Spanish and become bilingual. Bilingualism can also be interpreted as a promoting factor of fostering resilience in Latina immigrants' children. On the other hand, this potentially positive factor for promotion of resilience, may not contribute to Latina immigrants' integration into the American social fabric. Although the U.S. does not have an official language, English is spoken across the country. For Spanish speakers only, especially in Georgia, it becomes an obstacle not to speak English (Green et al., 2012). Spanish-only speakers experience more adversity in the U.S., as they cannot communicate with English-only speakers. These participants end up relying in their bilingual children to serve as interpreters for them (Arbona et al., 2010; Arredondo, et al., 2012; Tran et al., 2014). Latina immigrants could benefit from bilingualism as a promoting factor of resilience.

Nonetheless, speaking Spanish appears to help participants to remain connected with their ancestral land, cultural values, and traditions, which should not be underestimated.

Religious beliefs. Collected data suggested that some participants practice spiritual rituals and participate in religious activities as a coping mechanism to manage fear and isolation . Attending a religious event may be the only activity some women take part outside home. Manifestations of spirituality and religious values varied among Latina immigrants that participated in the study. For example, some women described themselves as atheist, and others are nonpracticing. For those who belong to a religious affiliation or practice some kind of religious ritual, this seems to benefit them by ameliorating exposure to long-term isolation, which is often followed or precipitated by depressive symptoms and anxiety. As Falicov (2012, 2014) pointed out ,"the presence of community networks helps to ameliorate the symptoms of isolation and disenfranchisement, especially in women" (p. 314). Thus, spirituality could foster ecological resilience in Latina immigrants who have no other sources of family support or networking in the U.S.

Sense of agency and consciousness' raising through knowledge. Using Anzaldúa's description of borderlands theory as a path to consciousness awareness and knowledge, I found distinctive narratives that could be interpreted as various stages of this *conocimiento*: Most participants in this study have attained important knowledge and consciousness awareness about their oppression as migrants in the U.S. Across the study, I found relevant data placing participants at various stages of *conocimiento,* through their searches for social justice and recognition of human rights for themselves and their families. For some women, moving forward from a sense of paralysis and despair in the aftermath of a deportation is taking longer than for others. Those women who have struggled to stay afloat as the main providers for their families

have had a more difficult path to move across the seven stages of Anzaldúa's conocimiento (Anzaldúa, 2012, 2004; Elenes, 2013). Nevertheless, findings from this study suggest that women are consciously and actively resisting the deportation threat and fear by 1) remaining in the U.S. in spite of deportation threats; and most importantly, 2) joining and or creating social action efforts to challenge the current migration policies, such as the denial of driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants. Hence, this knowledge of the deportation phenomenon is unique to these participants, and it is important for social work professionals to acknowledge and validate this when working with families facing a deportation.

Some participants in the study have taken further steps in the stages of *conocimiento*, by becoming activists and advocates for migrant families facing detentions and deportations. As presented in the Exemplary Portraits of Chapter 4, some participants have demonstrated higher engagement and were highly resourceful in the aftermath of the deportation crisis in their families. Participants who were more engaged and had more resources such as financial stability and some educational attainment were able to find meaningful ways cope with the detentions and deportations aftermath (exploration stage). They were also able to share their knowledge with others (sharing narratives). Lastly, they were able to create critical spaces for building alliances and engage in collective ways for negotiating conflict surrounding the phenomena of detention and deportation policy (spiritual activism).

Conclusions and Recommendations

First and foremost, demographics in Georgia are shifting at a rapid pace, and Latino families are an intrinsic part of this population change. As Latinos/as keep entering Georgia's cultural, economic and social life, it will become more imperative for the state to create a more welcoming environment across government, private, and nonprofit institutions. Despite the anti-

immigrant narrative existing in Georgia, many sectors are coming together to ameliorate the rejection of immigrants by providing direct services and advocacy. Examples of these groups are Athens Immigrants' Rights Coalition, Interfaith Sanctuary Coalition, Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights (GLAHR), Project South, and many others.

Immigrant rights are human rights (Estévez, 2012). This assertion becomes more relevant in the current anti-immigrant climate in the U.S. Particularly important is to validate claims of asylum from immigrant women and families who are escaping violence and extreme poverty in Mexico and Central America. In order to accomplish this, migration policy change is needed to expand, and not restrict, asylum laws to protect more people in danger arriving in the U.S. for protection. As extreme violence and poverty continues to escalate in Mexico and Central America, more immigrants will attempt to cross the U.S. -Mexico border, and more immigrants will attempt to remain here. Working around this strategy and converting it into an opportunity of growth is not an easy task in the present. One potential strategy to ameliorate the impact of increased migration is to provide temporary work permits and driver's licenses for people to move freely and be more productive. States like New York and 12 other states (including Washington D.C.) provide some form of driver's card to certain undocumented immigrants. In Connecticut, research has shown that providing a driver's license to undocumented immigrants leads to safe roads (Burrell, 2019). In Oregon, a group of Latina undocumented women from a community-based organization developed a campaign project for introducing legislation allowing undocumented immigrants to obtain driver's licenses. Although Oregon rejected the measure on the ballot, the campaign infused a sense of empowerment and pride on the immigrant women, who led the efforts of advocating with lawmakers (Gates, 2017). Recommendations

from this study encouraged social workers to engage in community-based research with immigrant women to address their urgent needs throughout political participation.

Promoting a welcoming environment for immigrants also implies to tackle the historic racism and discrimination that has permeated for centuries the U.S. This is a major challenge that requires all sectors of American society to purposively dismantle the scaffolding structure that maintains racism in place in our society (Tourse et al., 2018). The intentionality of removing the barrier of racism must begin with meaningful conversations both at the bottom and at the top of the society, in community centers, in schools, in the workplace and at the convenience store. Avoiding this overdue task is not an answer anymore to deter racial disparity and exclusion.

One more important finding that needs urgent change is to recognize and enhance the Latina immigrants' sense of agency and consciousness' raising through knowledge. Latina and Chicana women are carriers of indigenous knowledge passed from generation to generation. As mothers, Latina women nurture and transfer cultural values and traditions that are responsive to their ways of ancestral knowing. Latina immigrants are cultural brokers (Contreras, 2005); they work collectively (Jaramillo, 2010) to address the immediate needs of their families and communities. Latina women have historically made major contributions to organize communities and educate people about their rights through the Chicano/a Movement, for example. It would be of great benefit for Latina women to continue educating themselves on their rights and transfer this knowledge to other families in their communities. This is an ongoing effort already happening around Georgia Latinx communities.

Limitations of the Study

The findings of this study were analyzed to better understand the experiences of deportation for the population cohort selected for this study. These findings highlighted other

aspects of the participants' lived experiences prior, during, and after migrating to the U.S. The overall findings can only be understood and interpreted in the context in which they were studied. The principal limitation of this study is that these findings cannot be generalized to other Latina immigrant groups which may be facing deportation of their loved ones at other locations aside from Georgia. This is not the intent of any qualitative approach; rather, the intent is to describe and interpret the experiences of the study participants and provide possible paths for future research, education, and practice in regards of the problem studied (Creswell, 2013). Secondly, the sample recruited could be considered small for quantitative study designs, for example, or for studies using other methodological approaches. Nevertheless, the sample for this study was eleven participants, which concurs with heuristic inquiry scholars Sultan (2019) and Moustakas (1990) recommendations of a sample of 10 to 15 participants. A third limitation of this study was the inability of conducting a members' checking process with the participants. This was due in part to the compromising undocumented migration status of all but one participant. I did not pursue a second interview with participants nor a later phone call. This was established as part of the Institutional Review Board recommendations of limiting the exposure of participants to protect them from harm. Despite the interest of the participants on being more involved in the study and contribute more, this step from the heuristic inquiry was not completed.

A fourth limitation of the study was related to the time selected by the participants for the interview. Most participants chose to be interviewed at their homes around 2:00 p.m. or 3:00 p.m. on a school day, close to the time when children would arrive home from school. Once children arrived home, it became more difficult to continue the flow of some of the interviews with the children present. Most participants asked for the interview to pause while they took care

of their children. All participants asked the children to go play outside or go study in their rooms and later agreed to complete their interviews.

Another issue that could be considered a limitation of the study was my ethnic background as Puerto Rican. Although participants were able to open up and talk about their migration and deportation experiences, not being of Mexican or Central American origin could have posed as a limitation for gaining participants' trust (Brabeck, Brinton Lykes & Hershberger, 2011; Da Silva Rebelo & Fernández, 2018; Quesada, 2011). Lastly, some participants appeared to be inhibited by the digital audio recorder. Although all of them agreed for the interview to be audio recorded, some of them appeared to be uncomfortable with the device in front of them. Once I turned off the device or placed it further away from them, participants appeared to be more comfortable with continuing the interview. For that reason, I made qualitative memos of each interview right after my visit, in order to write down the details I was not able to capture in the recordings.

Implications for Social Work Practice

Micro Practice

Social work practitioners are finding that more Latino/a individuals and families are using social work services in all fields of practice. It has been discussed in this study that undocumented migrants are banned from accessing federally-funded mainstream services, such as food stamps, Medicaid, Medicare, Section 8, and others (Johnson, 2003). Nonetheless, children born from undocumented migrant parents in the U.S. could be eligible for some of these benefits, which may translate into better health and overall well-being. Social work practitioners must be cognizant of eligibility requirements when working with undocumented families. As

practitioners, they can take a step further to identify additional resources when serving mixed-status families that do not qualify for the aforementioned federal programs.

At the clinical level, the increasing and unattended needs of Latinos living in vulnerable contexts, both documented and undocumented, should be addressed by the training and hiring of culturally sensitive social work practitioners (Arredondo et al., 2014). Sometimes called cultural humility or cultural competence, this approach places the clients' culture at the center of the intervention and services provided. Social worker must be cognizant of how to work around these cultural values with respect and humbleness. Mental health practitioners should also be able to recognize their biases surrounding migrants and their reasons to leave home. Social work practitioners are mandated by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics to educate themselves from a human rights and social justice perspective to better serve this population and other vulnerable groups. Social workers must aim to learn about contextual stressors in Latino families such as acculturation, biculturalism, racism, discrimination, poverty, migration policies including deportations, and other adversity elements affecting their adjustment in the U.S. (Lanesskog, Piedra & Maldonado, 2015; Leon & Dziegielewski, 1999).

Lastly, social workers in direct practice should become more knowledgeable about how to help families create an emergency plan in the aftermath of a deportation**.** Most participants in this study had not heard of, neither prepared an emergency plan in case a deportation occurs again in their households. Not having an emergency plan to cope with the possible deportation of another family member places these families at greater risk, particularly their children's future and well-being. Migration lawyers and advocates in Georgia have found that about 90 percent of detention cases end up in deportation (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2016). Aside from being a traumatic event for all family members, deportation could mean the loss of a home and other

property, as well as the loss of children's custody for the parents. Having a concrete, written emergency plan will not reduce the pain and trauma of the deportation or its aftermath, but it could provide a guide for other relatives and/or a migration lawyer to advocate for the detained and/or with the deported person's wishes to ameliorate the inflicted trauma of deportation.

Mezzo Practice

Using the findings discussed in this study, schools of social work should develop and strengthen their migration policy course offering, as well as incorporate courses focusing on culturally responsive interventions with Latino/a families. Curriculum development at schools and programs across the nation, should continue offering and expanding coursework specifically addressing the intersection of social work and historic movements such as the Civil Rights and the Chicano/a Movements, among others. Initiatives from social work programs should begin with purposively attracting and recruiting students at all educational levels whose practice, research, and teaching interests involve working with Latinos/as. Courses in social work with Latinos must be infused with community-oriented approaches, such as community-based and participatory action research. Schools of social work need to team up with local groups and coalitions advocating for immigrant rights to provide internship opportunities to work closely with the Latino/a migrant community.

Macro Practice

Social work practitioners could take larger steps to enact social change to bring social justice for millions of migrant families in the U.S, including Latino/a migrant families. The social work profession is one of the few fields in higher education that makes advocacy and social action an important part of the students' general curriculum and field education.

Therefore, students and practitioners must continue engaging in policymaking to promote governmental changes through political action.

Organizing and advocating with community grassroots efforts are intrinsically inherent roles to the social work profession. Coalition building is at the core of the social work macro practice (Sanders et al., 2013). The current political climate in the U.S. dangerously threatens the civil and human rights of its people (Sampaio, 2015). It is pivotal for social workers to join efforts in coalition building at the local, state and national levels, to promote the defense of human rights for vulnerable groups such as undocumented migrants (Shannon-Méndez & Bailey, 2016). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights must be mandated study material for social work students from the very start of their programs. Social workers need to be aware and organize to challenge migration rulings that could be violating the human rights of immigrants, particularly for unaccompanied migrant children and youth (Chapelle Deckert, 2016). There is an undeniable crisis at the U.S. south border, where desperate immigrants are dying in the desert on their desperate attempt to seek asylum and a better life for their loved ones (Androff & Tavassoli, 2012). Social workers practicing with immigrants and refugees have already developed community intervention models to address the complex needs of immigrants (Donnely, 2015; Schmitz, Vazquez Jacobus, Stakeman, Valenzuela & Sprankel, 2003). It is time to review and update these intervention models or create new ones that address the unique challenges of undocumented and mixed-status Latina women and their families.

Lastly, social work is a profession embedded in social action for social change, and in these difficult times for our country, social work must continue stepping in and standing up against the oppression of migrants and other minoritized groups.

Recommendations for Future Research

Immigrant families will continue crossing the U.S. border in desperation of securing a job to get money, but they often end up neglecting other important issues such as family. One aspect that has to be studied in the future is what are the long-term consequences for immigrant families when women are forced to work outside home in the aftermath of a loved one's deportation. It is also less known how children are coping with a deported father and a full-time working mother, for example. Traditionally, women that migrated with their spouses took care of the house chores and children, however that reality is changing dramatically (Arriola, 2003). More immigrant women are entering the workforce, either to gain financial independence or to assume the breadwinner role left by a spouse's deportation (Hancock, 2007; Hurtado- Mendoza, Gonzalez, Serrano, & Kaltman, 2014). Although initially some women appeared unprepared for the challenge of losing a working spouse due to deportation and be forced to parent alone, many are finding sources of work due to low-wages jobs available for them, such as food preparation, housekeeping, and others.

Moving from the deficit-based framework, social work scholars could lead future research focusing on Latino families' strengths and resilience paradigms from an ecological perspective. Falicov, (2012, 2014), Walsh (2012), Ungar (2012), and other resilience social work scholars posit that ecological contexts are unique for each migrant family. This provides an ample field to develop studies that respond to the particular needs of migrant families based in their specific cultural beliefs and traditions. Acculturation adjustment is also another area of study that affects all developmental stages in migrant families' life course. Social workers could also revisit comprehensive models on migrant family resilience such as Failcov's (2012, 2014)

MECA model and propose new guidelines to describe other migrant experiences not included in the model.

The loss happening for Latina immigrants in the aftermath of a deportation is complex and continuous, however, less is known about the long-term effects of this experience of ambiguous loss and trauma. Falicov's model explored nuances of deportation as an ambiguous loss, nonetheless, more research is needed to address the in-depth essences of the phenomena of deportation and its long-term consequences on Latina immigrants and their families. Falicov (2002, 2012, 2014) interpreted loss and grief experienced in the separation of migrant families as an experience with no definitive closure from mourning, comparable to a familial death. Migration sometimes implies that family members will not see each other again in the near future. Many Latina immigrants attempt to cope and move forward with their lives, unable to address the ambiguous loss of never seeing again their loved ones removed from ICE via deportation. Understanding this ambiguous loss is fundamental for social workers in clinical practice who are helping immigrant families in their practice.

It is imperative for social work researchers to better understand the complex and multidimensional experiences of deportation of a loved one for Latina migrants. Social workers must engage in historical research of migratory groups in the U.S. prior to getting involved in empirical research with migrants. Learning about how migration laws are related to sociopolitical events happening in the country is essential in understanding the connection of migration waves and the socioeconomic development of the U.S. and abroad. For example, the latest large surge of undocumented migrant workers happened in Georgia during the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, where migrants who were hired as construction workers decided to stay in the state later on.

At the international level, more women continue migrating across the world to Europe, for example escaping monumental challenges and threats against their faith, their well-being, or simply to avoid death for breaking family traditions. Many immigrant women in Europe are treated as a commodity for exchange of international economy. Bonifacio (2012) posit that demands for domestic workers, nannies, and caregivers, sex workers, and factory workers, among others, create conditions of vulnerability and exploitation among immigrant women. As women continue migrating worldwide in the hope for better employment opportunities, social workers must develop research as a means to understand the root causes and outcomes of this phenomenon, and work towards the protection of their safety and well-being as immigrants.

Inasmuch, social work scholars must examine in future research the relationships between neo-liberal capitalism and the movement of migrant workers and products between the Global North and the Global South. The migration humanitarian crisis in the United States is not an isolated event, it responds to international socioeconomic and political changes that are pushing people to escape dire conditions in their countries of origin. Marx's conflict theory could offer new dimensions to study these issues, in order to highlight the larger consequences of a wealthier North hemisphere versus a poorer South hemisphere.

Spirituality and religious beliefs as coping mechanisms seems to be a less studied phenomena in U.S. Latinx communities from a social work perspective. Although this topic was beyond the scope of this study, it is an area that deserves further attention, as it responds to a culturally- informed social work practice with Latina immigrants and their families.

Borderland feminist theory allows social work scholars to study issues affecting Latina migrants through a critical lens. It enhances the opportunity for positioning women who have experienced oppression at the forefront of the research, while acknowledging the innate ways of

knowing or epistemology of the participants in the study. Borderland and other feminist conceptual frameworks could guide social work qualitative research to understand and interpret the multiple dimensions of power differentials in the relationship between researcher and participants. Lastly, social work should engage in developing longitudinal studies with the aim of informing clinical and community-based practice, on how to address the long-term unknown challenges of separating families through deportation (Zayas & Bradlee, 2014).

Research Contributions

I identified two major contributions of this dissertation study, in relation to its impact on the Latinx immigrant community in Georgia. The first contribution highlights the empowering voices of the participants in the study, and how important it was for them to share their knowledge with me. They understood the findings from this research would be a helping resource for another Latina immigrant in the aftermath of a deportation. Another salient contribution of this study is the demystification of Latina immigrants as vulnerable or disengaged from the efforts to participating in local matters affecting their community, such as deportations. This study demonstrated that Latina immigrants are becoming leaders in their communities, they are reaching other undocumented families, and they are bridging them with services and resources available to them.

Reflections of the Researcher

Choosing heuristic inquiry as the methodology for this study has proven to be one of the most important decisions I made. Reading the participants' transcribed interviews, going back and forth to the audio recordings, the memos, and the data map, helped me understand the need of staying true to the heuristic process, even when I felt at a loss within and across the data. Getting to know these women as hard workers, as mothers, and as part of the community I live

in, was a great and humble opportunity for me to learn about their culture, and their ways of knowing. I discovered many of their goals were not so different from my own, to work hard to sustain my family, and to care and protect my child, just as much as I observed during my interviews with them.

I dealt with multiple ethical dilemmas consistently across the study. For example, I was too self-conscious regarding my attire or my use of the Spanish language when I visited the participants for the interview. I even had a hard time trying to stay aware of any potential power differentials between myself and the participants. Checking on my privileges as an educated Latina was necessary for me, and I even dedicated self-care time to write prose about those thoughts and feelings. I believe I made meaningful connections with the participants regardless of my self-doubts as a researcher. I am thankful that they accepted my invitation to answer my questions and let me enter their homes and their lives as migrants in the U.S.

I also had to make several decisions on making self-care a priority while completing this study. The chosen topic of deportation proved to be an emotionally heavy one, especially in the current anti-immigrant political climate. As I continue moving forward in my future endeavors in academia as a scholar, it will be important for me to continue developing ways of balancing both my academic and personal spaces, as they tended to intersect too often during this dissertation. Work-life balance is a difficult task that I need to put into practice more often.

Heuristic inquiry provided ample guidelines to manage these moments of doubts and uncertainty across all the stages of the research process. In further analysis, I felt I reached my goal of showcasing the participants' *conocimiento*, as they were able to recognize that they carry and transfer vital knowledge they learned from exposure to the phenomenon of deportation. Consistently with the study research questions, participants were also able to demonstrate how

they share this knowledge with their families, friends, and the Latino migrant community. Lastly, they clearly described and interpreted some of their coping mechanisms amidst the deportation crisis.

Participants in this study shared much more than what I asked in their interviews. They described their unique migration journey and their lives as migrants in the U.S. In the end, I believe it was worth it to experience at least a fraction of what these participants are going through on a daily basis as migrants living while undocumented in the U.S. I feel truly fulfilled and grateful for allowing myself to complete this work with their examples of resilience and resistance.

Despite the desperate situation of living as an undocumented migrant in the U.S., it is noteworthy to emphasize the meanings of hope, as the instrumental force that brings and keeps these migrant families struggling towards a better life. All participants nurtured a sense of hope, that they interpreted as their ability to overcome adversity in the U.S. The outcome of this sense of hope for the participants of this study is that one day their children will not have to live the hardships experienced by themselves as Latina migrants. Hope involves faith, and as Froma Walsh posits, "it is essential to the spirit: it fuels energy and efforts to rise above adversity" (p. 408). Hope implies that no matter how dreary the present, families can envision a better future for their children. I truly hope that participants' optimism prevails, and they can endure the even more unwelcoming migration policies proposed by the Trump Administration to inflict fear and separate even more families.

In the meantime, my fellow social workers must become cognizant of how Latina women and their families make sense of these threats of deportation, as they will continue exhibiting severe individual and community trauma in the years to come. My ultimate hope is to see more

social work professionals at all levels of practice engaged in challenging the violation of rights of migrants in the U.S.

Creative Synthesis

Carrying all *mujeres* embodied on my skin

I am.
I am not.
Sometimes I am sort of,
Other times I am whole.
Multiple women inhabiting me
The mother, the daughter, the learner, the lover,
The citizen, the immigrant, the wounded ghost
Of an invisible colonized border.

I observe pieces of me in every Latina immigrant I meet,
I wish I could be each one of them.
Sharing their *alegrías,* their *tristezas,*
Carrying on their *sueños,* and their *desesperanza.*

Echoing their resistance, leveraging our *voz,*
I long becoming ONE *con ellas.*
To see life through their eyes,
To embrace their *solidaridad* and *resistencia*
While embodying their struggle as *mi propia lucha.*
YME

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Synopsis of U.S. Migration Policy /Law

Year	Name	Effects on Policy/Law
1790	Naturalization Act of 1790	Restricts citizenship to free white persons who reside in the United States for five years and renounce their allegiance to their former country.
1798	Alien and Sedition Acts	Permitted the president to deport any foreigner deemed to be dangerous.
1802	Naturalization Law of 1802	Reduced the residency requirement for prospective citizens from 14 years to 5 years.
1870	Naturalization Act of 1870	Limited citizenship to white persons and persons of African descent.
1882	Chinese Exclusion Act	Barred admission of Chinese laborers (allowing entry by merchants, students, tourists) for ten years and declares Chinese immigrants ineligible to U.S. naturalization. It was renewed by the U.S. Congress for another ten years in 1892 and 1902.
1885	Alien Contract Labor Law	Prohibits any company or individual from bringing foreigners into the United States under contract to perform labor. Exceptions were domestic servants and skilled workers, who were needed to help establish a new trade or industry.
1891	Immigration Act of 1891	Created the Bureau of Immigration with Treasury Department, which was a precursor of the U.S. Border Patrol. It expanded the list of deportable aliens beyond Chinese immigrants.
1903	Immigration Act of 1903	Or Anarchist Exclusion Act. Included non-admissible classes such as anarchist, beggars, prostitutes, and people with certain disabilities.
1921-1924	The Immigration Acts of 1921 and 1924	Set quotas restricting the number of immigrants allowed entry from certain countries. With large numbers of Mexican workers needed seasonal employment, agriculturalists were strong proponents of exempting Mexicans from the

		literacy, tax, and quota requirements.
1924	Johnson-Reed Act	Or Second Quota Act- limited immigration to 2 percent of the number of each nationality group who lived in the U.S. in 1890. It lowered the total annual ceiling or quota immigrants to 165,000, increased the share of Northern and Western Europeans potential immigrants to 86 percent (142,000 of the allowed total), and decreased the share for Southern and Eastern Europe to 11 percent (18,000). It barred Asian immigration entirely (effective for Japanese and foreign-born wives and children on U.S. citizens of Chinese ancestry). Filipinos were outside the system because they are American 'nationals'- from a U.S. colony, no longer citizens of a foreign country.
1925	Creation of the Border Patrol	Was established under the Labor Appropriation Act, criminalizing border crossing and "illegal" immigration. The act was actually meant to deter Chinese immigrants, but it also had effects at the Mexico-US border.
1929-1939	Repatriation Program	Served to freeze immigration and remove immigrations as jobs became scarce during the Great Depression. Varying estimates suggest that thousands to millions – including Mexicans born in the U.S. – were deported to Mexico. The mostly commonly cited number suggests that at least one-third of all Mexicans accounted for by the 1930 U.S. census were deported back to Mexico.
1934	Tydings-McDuffie Act	Or Philippines' Independence Act. Provided for the independence of the Philippines on July 4, 1946. Meanwhile, Filipinos lost their status as U.S. Nationals and were restricted to a token quota of 50 immigrants per year.
1940	Smith Act	Or Alien Registration Act. It required all noncitizens over age 14 to be fingerprinted and broadened the ground for deportation.
1942-1964	The Bracero Program	The Bracero Program began in accordance with Mexico to fill the labor shortages resulting from World War II. The program was meant to take only workers not needed in Mexico but attracted workers

		with the promise of higher wages. It thus resulted in increased unauthorized immigration as well based on the need for work and limited number of permits. It is estimated that 4.8 million workers were contracted through the Bracero program.
1943	Chinese Exclusion Repeal Act of 1943	Congress repeals Chinese Exclusion Act and Chinese become eligible for naturalization.
1945	War Brides Act	Allowed U.S. citizens who served in armed forces to bring home foreign-born wives. It aimed to facilitate marriages between U.S. soldiers and European women.
1948	Displaced Persons Act	Allowed 202,000 refugees uprooted in wartime Europe to come in the following 2 years. It was amended in 1950 to raise the total number of visas to 341,000.
1954	Operation Wetback	Targeted neighborhoods and work places likely to house undocumented immigrants. Immigrants were put directly onto buses transporting them to Mexico. It is estimated that 1.3 million apprehensions had occurred by the time the program ended in the late 1950s.
1965	Immigration and Naturalization Act	Or Hart-Cellar Act. Although still favored Europeans and highly skilled professionals, it abolished the national origins quota system. Capped total admissions per year to 290,000. It created an Eastern Hemisphere system of equal visa limits per country of 20,000 annually, or 170,000 totals from the Eastern hemisphere. allowed entry annually. Placed first limits on Western Hemisphere immigration, with only 120,000 total immigrants allowed per year, including all Latin American and Caribbean countries.
1980	Refugee Act	Placed refugees outside the quota system by removing ‘refugee’ as a preference category. It also reduced the cap number of total admissions to 290,000 annually. It allowed for 50,000 refugees per year - those who had a “well-founded fear of persecution” on account of race, religion, nationality, or membership in a social or political movement - plus 5,000 asylum seekers per year.

1986	The Immigration Control and Reform Act (IRCA)	Focused heavily on border control and offered amnesty for those who could prove (i.e. document) that they had lived in the US since 1982. It is estimated that three million – three quarters of them Mexican – obtained legal status through the act. It also provided punishment for employers who hired undocumented immigrants.
1990	Immigration Act	Revised admissions system, creating an overall flexible cap of 700,000 persons starting in 1992. It dropped to 675,000 in 1995.
1994	NAFTA	Or North American Free Trade Agreement, is an international treaty joined by Mexico, Canada, and the United States, that created the largest common market in the world, impacting over 300 million people at its inception. NAFTA costed the U.S. the loss of 3.2 million jobs between 1994 and 2000 to Mexico, where *maquiladoras* employ over 1.3 million Mexican workers, mostly underpaid women, with no job security and unsafe working conditions.
1996	Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act	Denied all but emergency services to unauthorized immigrants. It also made citizenship a condition of eligibility for public benefits for most authorized immigrants.
1996	The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRAIRA or IIRIRA)	Increased militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border, amplified deportations, and imposed bans of 3 to 10 years on unauthorized immigrants' return to the U.S. It also made more difficult to gain asylum, established income requirements for sponsors of legal migrants, removed procedural protections from migrants who lacked documents, and raised penalties for people who aided or employed people who lacked documents.
2001	USA PATRIOT Act	Or Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism. It gave the Attorney General broad powers to wiretap and harass citizens, detain non-citizens -and even citizens- without charge or recourse to attorneys or courts. Required agencies to share information and coordinate efforts in regard to national security and border patrol.

2012	Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)	The act was meant to provide deportation protection and work visas for undocumented adults who came to the US with their parents before age 16 (and before June 2007). The program was rescinded in 2017 with federal court outcomes yet to be determined. It's been reinstated temporarily per court order until further notice.
2014	Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA)	Provided protections similar to DACA for undocumented parents of citizen children. However, in 2016, the U.S. Supreme Court let stand the decision to block DAPA. It is estimated that more than 10 million people live in households that would have been eligible for DAPA.

Note: Adapted from Walsdorf, Machado-Escudero, & Bermúdez (2018): *Context Matters: Sociopolitical Considerations for Systemic Practice with Undocumented and Mixed-Status Latinx Families* (Journal article in revision); Chomsky (2007): *They Take Our Jobs: And 20 other Myths about Immigration;* and Spickard (2007): *Almost All Aliens: Immigration, Race, and Colonialism in American History and Identity.*

APPENDIX B

Multidimensional, ecological, comparative framework (MECAmap): Continuities and changes in immigrant family processes

Transformations: communities and change	Migration and Acculturation	• Type of migration (e.g., undocumented) • Composition of separations (e.g., father alone) • Trauma pre-during, post migration • Losses and gains • Uprooting of meanings • Transnationalism • Psychological or virtual family • Complex acculturation (e.g., alternation) • Spontaneous rituals • Second -generation transnational exposure • Adolescent-parent biculturalism	Social Justice
	Ecological context	• Poverty • Work/School • Neighborhood • Isolation • Ethnic community • Virtual community • Church and religion • Racism/anti-immigrant reception • Contextual dangers (drugs, violence, gangs) • Contextual protections (language, social networks)	
	Family Life Cycle	• Cultural ideas • Meanings • Timings • Transitions • Rituals • Socioeconomic childrearing practices • Developmental dilemmas (autonomy, family, loyalty) • Suicide attempts and parent-adolescent conflicts • Pile-up of transitions • Absences at crucial life-cycle markers	Cultural diversity

	Family organization	• Separation and reunifications
		• Long-distance connections
		• Kin care: transnational triangles
		• Remittances
		• Relational stress
		  ○ Gender evolutions
		  ○ Polarizations about migration
		  ○ Boundary ambiguity	

Source: Falicov (2012)

APPENDIX C

Practice Guidelines to Strengthen Family Resilience

- Honor the dignity and worth of all family members.
- Convey conviction in their potential to overcome adversity through shared efforts.
- Use respectful language, framing to humanize and contextualize distress:

  - View as understandable, common in adverse situations (e.g., traumatic event- normal reactions to abnormal or extreme conditions).
  - Decrease shame, blame, stigma, pathologizing.
- Provide safe haven for sharing pain, concerns.

  - Show compassion for suffering and struggle.
  - Build communication, empathy, mutual support among members.
- Identify and affirm strengths, resources, alongside vulnerabilities, limitations.
- Draw out and built potential for mastery, healing, and growth.
- Tap into kin, community, and spiritual resources- lifelines- to deal with challenges.
- View crisis opportunity for learning, change, and growth.
- Shift focus form problems to possibilities.

  - Gain mastery, healing, and transformation out of adversity.
  - Reorient future hopes and dreams.
- Integrate adverse experience- including resilience- into individual and relational life passage.

Source: Walsh (2012)

APPENDIX D

Consent Forms (English and Spanish)

University of Georgia
Consent Form
Detentions and Deportations in Northeast Georgia

Dear Participant,

My name is Yolanda Machado-Escudero and I am a doctoral student at the University of Georgia School of Social Work in Athens. I invite you to participate in a research study entitled ***"The Aftermath of Detentions and Deportations in rural Northeast Georgia: Implications for Latina Immigrants, their Families, and Communities".***

Researcher's Statement
I am asking you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. This form is designed to give you the information about the study so you can decide whether to be in the study or not. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Please ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called "informed consent." A copy of this form will be given to you.

Principal Investigator: June G. Hopps
Professor, School of Social Work
University of Georgia
hoppsbjg@aol.com

Co-Investigator: Yolanda Machado-Escudero
School of Social Work
University of Georgia
detentionsanddeportations@protonmail.com
706-363-0661

Purpose of the study
The purpose of this study is to explore the multilevel impact of recent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids in Northeast Georgia, with emphasis in documenting the lived experiences of Latina immigrants affected by the detention and deportation of a relative in Rural Northeast Georgia**.** It is my hope that the findings from this research project may help to propose positive changes on immigration reform in the United States.

Study Procedures
Your participation in the study will consist of one audio-recorded interview that should take about 60-90 minutes. I will use a guide to ask you questions during the interview. These questions will ask you about yourself, your life prior migrating to the United States, your migration journey, and finally, your lived experiences with the detention and deportation of a relative or loved one. An audio recording device will be used to record interviews. These recordings will facilitate the review and analysis of information you provide at a later date. The audio recordings will be stored in a password-protected electronic file. Audio recordings of interviews will be destroyed after transcription and initial analysis are completed.

Privacy/Confidentiality
In order to ensure your privacy, a pseudonym or fake name will be assigned to you to protect your identity. This pseudonym will be used to identify all information you provide to me. De-identified data, such as transcripts, will be kept in a password-protected electronic file for 3 years after the completion of the study, and destroyed afterwards. Other identifiable data such as your name, email, address, phone number, etc., will not be collected for this study. I will delete any potential identifier from all my electronic devices, such as my cellphone and computer.

Your confidentiality is at risk as a research participant. For example, you may choose to complete this interview at any place of your convenience. If you choose your home, other family members may become in contact with the information you provide. If you feel uncomfortable by this, I will provide an alternative meeting place with some privacy, although total privacy cannot be guaranteed.

Additionally, the location of this study will be disguised as Rural Northeast Georgia. The results of this research study may be published, but your name or any information that identifies you will not be used. In fact, the published results will be presented in summary form only. Finally, identifiers such as name, phone number, etc. collected from you or your family will not be used in any part of this study or any publications resulted from the study. I will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent unless required by law. Also to protect your confidentiality, only a transcriber, my three advising professors, and I will have access to your information.

Risk and discomforts
There are potential risks associated with this study. As a social worker, I am a mandated reporter in the State of Georgia for child abuse and neglect cases. This means that if you tell me that you or your children are experiencing abuse, I will have to contact child protective services. I must also report any criminal or dangerous activity. This means that I will have to tell the authorities if you tell me about any criminal activity, such as gang involvement or the selling of drugs. Plus, if you share that you are planning to hurt yourself or someone else, I must inform the police.

Being a participant puts your confidentiality at risk. For example, you may feel threatened of having your migrant status being disclosed. To protect you from this risk, and due to the possible experience of stigma, I will not ask you about your or your family migration status in this country. Neither is required from me to inform the authorities about your migratory status. I will

also disguise the location of this study by calling it Rural Northeast Georgia. I encourage you to keep your participation in this study confidential.

As a participant in this study, you might experience discomfort or emotional stress during or after the interview. For example, you may become upset by reliving traumatic events from your experiences regarding to the detention and/or deportation of a loved one. I will provide you with a list of bilingual resources at the end of this interview to use if you feel like you are in danger or need some extra help, such as further counseling services.
No other potential risks have been identified for this study.

Benefits
There are no direct benefits to you from this study. Nonetheless, you may benefit from this study as you get to share your story with others. Sharing your story might help other Latina immigrants to discover ways to cope with the effects of detentions and deportations, and to learn from your experience. Your participation in this study might also help to make positive changes in migration policy in Georgia and in the United States.

Incentives for participation
Participants will receive $25.00 Walmart gift cards at the end of the interview. In addition, a Spanish/English resource guide will be provided to you at the end of the interview with information about bilingual social services available in Northeast Georgia.

Taking part is voluntary
Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate in the study or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as yours will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information.

If you have questions
The main researcher conducting this study is Yolanda Machado-Escudero, a graduate student in the School of Social Work at the University of Georgia. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact me at 706.363.0661 or detentionsanddeportations@protonmail.com . You can also contact my advising professor, Dr. Hopps, at 706-542-7002 or hoppsbjg@aol.com. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at 706-542-3199 or irb@uga.edu .

Research Subject's Consent to Participate in Research:
You will not be asked to sign any consent document. By reading and keeping this information letter and continuing on with the interview you are considered to have provided consent. Thank you. And please, keep this copy of the consent script for your records.

(Spanish consent form)

Universidad de Georgia
Formulario de consentimiento
Detenciones y Deportaciones en el Noreste de Georgia

Estimado participante,

Mi nombre es Yolanda Machado-Escudero y soy estudiante de doctorado en la Escuela de Trabajo Social de la Universidad de Georgia en Athens. Le invito a participar en un estudio de investigación titulado ***" Detenciones y Deportaciones en Georgia: Implicaciones para los Inmigrantes Latinos, sus Familias y Comunidades".***

Declaración del investigador
Le pido su participación en este estudio de investigación. Antes de que usted decida participar en este estudio, es importante que entienda por qué la investigación se está haciendo y lo que conlleva. Este formulario está diseñado para darle la información sobre el estudio para que pueda decidir participar o no en el estudio. Por favor, tómese el tiempo para leer cuidadosamente la siguiente información o yo la puedo leer en voz alta para usted. Pregúnteme si hay algo que no está claro o si necesita más información. Cuando todas tus preguntas hayan sido contestadas, puede decidir si quiere estar en el estudio o no. Este proceso se llama "consentimiento informado". Le entregaré una copia de este formulario.

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Propósito del estudio
El propósito de este estudio es explorar el impacto multinivel de las incursiones recientes en inmigración y cumplimiento de la aduana (ICE) en el noreste de Georgia, con énfasis en documentar las experiencias vividas de inmigrantes latinas afectadas por la detención y la deportación de un pariente en el noreste rural de Georgia. Espero que los hallazgos de este proyecto de investigación puedan ayudar a proponer cambios positivos en la reforma migratoria en los Estados Unidos.

Procedimientos de estudio
Su participación en el estudio consistirá en una entrevista audio-grabada que debe tomar cerca de 60-90 minutos. Voy a usar una guía para hacerle preguntas durante la entrevista. Estas preguntas están a usted, su vida antes de emigrar a los Estados Unidos, su viaje de migración, y finalmente,

sus experiencias vividas con la detención y deportación de un familiar o un ser querido. Se usará un dispositivo de grabación de audio (grabadora digital) para grabar entrevistas. Estas grabaciones facilitarán la revisión y el análisis de la información que usted proporcione en una fecha posterior. Las grabaciones de audio se almacenarán en un archivo electrónico protegido con contraseña. Las grabaciones de audio de las entrevistas serán destruidas después de que la transcripción y el análisis inicial se completen.

Privacidad/Confidencialidad

Para garantizar su privacidad, se le asignará un seudónimo o nombre falso para proteger su identidad. Este seudónimo se usará para identificar toda la información que me proporcione. Los datos *des identificados,* como las transcripciones, se guardarán en un archivo electrónico protegido por contraseña durante 3 años después de la terminación del estudio, y entonces serán destruidos. Otros datos identificables tales como su nombre, correo electrónico, dirección, número de teléfono, etc., no serán recogidos para este estudio. Voy a eliminar cualquier identificador potencial de todos mis dispositivos electrónicos, tales como mi teléfono móvil y mi computadora personal.

Su confidencialidad está en riesgo como participante de la investigación. Por ejemplo, usted puede optar por completar esta entrevista en cualquier lugar de su conveniencia. Si usted elige su casa, otros miembros de la familia pueden ponerse en contacto con la información que usted proporciona. Si usted se siente incómodo por esto, le voy a proporcionar un lugar de encuentro alternativo con algo de privacidad, aunque la privacidad total no se puede garantizar.

Además, la localización de este estudio será disimulada como el noreste rural de Georgia. Los resultados de este estudio de investigación pueden ser publicados, pero su nombre o cualquier información que le identifica no será utilizada. De hecho, los resultados publicados se presentarán sólo en forma resumida. Finalmente, los identificadores tales como nombre, número de teléfono, etc. relacionados a usted o su familia no serán utilizados en ninguna parte de este estudio o cualquier publicación sobre este estudio. No divulgaré los resultados identificables del estudio a ninguna persona que no sean las persona que trabaja en el proyecto sin su consentimiento por escrito a menos que sea requerido por la ley. También para proteger su confidencialidad, sólo un transcriptor, mis tres profesores de asesoría, y yo tendremos acceso a su información.

Riesgos y molestias

Existen riesgos potenciales asociados con este estudio. Como trabajadora social, tengo la obligación de reportar casos de maltrato infantil y negligencia en el estado de Georgia. Esto significa que si usted dice que usted o sus hijos están sufriendo abuso, tendré que contactar la oficina de servicios de protección infantil. También debo reportar cualquier actividad criminal o peligrosa. Esto significa que voy a tener que decir a las autoridades si usted me dice acerca de cualquier actividad delictiva, como la participación de pandillas o la venta de drogas. Además, si comparte que estás planeando lastimarse a sí misma o a otra persona, debo informar a la policía.

Ser participante pone en riesgo su confidencialidad. Por ejemplo, usted puede sentirse amenazada de que su estatus migratorio sea divulgado. Para protegerle de este riesgo, y debido a la posible experiencia de estigma, no le preguntaré sobre su estatus migratorio o de sus familiares en este país. **No se requiere de mí informar a las autoridades sobre su estatus migratorio.** Le sugiero que mantenga su participación en este estudio confidencial.

Como participante en este estudio, es posible que experimente molestias o estrés emocional durante o después de la entrevista. Por ejemplo, usted puede enojarse reviviendo eventos traumáticos de sus experiencias con respecto a la detención y/o deportación de un ser querido. Le proporcionaré una lista de recursos bilingües al final de esta entrevista para usarlo si usted siente que está en peligro o necesita ayuda adicional, tal como servicios de consejería adicionales. No se han identificado otros riesgos potenciales para este estudio.

Beneficios
No hay beneficios directos para usted de este estudio. Sin embargo, usted puede beneficiarse de este estudio al compartir su historia con otros. Compartir su historia podría ayudar a otras inmigrantes latinas a descubrir maneras de hacer frente a los efectos de las detenciones y deportaciones, y de aprender de su experiencia. Su participación en este estudio podría también ayudar a hacer cambios positivos en la política migratoria en Georgia y en los Estados Unidos.

Incentivos para la participación
Los participantes recibirán $25.00 en una tarjeta de regalo de Walmart al final de la entrevista. Además, se le proporcionará una guía de recursos en español e inglés al final de la entrevista con información acerca de los servicios sociales bilingües disponibles en el noreste de Georgia.

Participar es voluntario
Su participación en el estudio es voluntaria, y usted puede optar por no participar en el estudio o detenerse en cualquier momento sin penalidad o pérdida de beneficios a los que usted tiene derecho de otra manera. Si usted decide retirarse del estudio, la información que puede ser identificada como suya se mantendrá como parte del estudio y puede continuar siendo analizada, a menos que usted haga una solicitud por escrito para remover, devolver o destruir la información.

Si tiene preguntas
El investigador principal que lleva a cabo este estudio es Yolanda Machado-Escudero, estudiante de posgrado en la Escuela de Trabajo Social de la Universidad de Georgia. Por favor, haga cualquier pregunta que tenga ahora. Si usted tiene preguntas más adelante, usted puede contactarme al 706.363.0661 o al email detentionsanddeportations@protonmail.com . También puede ponerse en contacto con mi profesora de asesoría, Dr. Hopps, al 706-542-7002 o hoppsbjg@aol.com. Si tiene alguna pregunta o preocupación sobre sus derechos como participante de la investigación en este estudio, puede ponerse en contacto con el presidente del Consejo de Revisión Institucional (IRB) al 706-542-3199 o irb@uga.edu .

Consentimiento para participar en la investigación:
No se le pedirá que firme ningún documento de consentimiento. Al leer y mantener esta carta de información y continuar con la entrevista se considera que ha proporcionado consentimiento. Gracias. Y por favor, guarde esta copia del consentimiento para sus registros.

APPENDIX E

Demographic Survey/ Encuesta Demográfica

Edad (Age)____

Género/Identidad sexual (Gender/ Sexual identity) _____

Raza/ Etnia (Race/Ethnicity)_____

País de origen (Country of Origin)_____

Estado civil actual (Current marital status)_____

Años de escolaridad (Years of formal education) _____

Idiomas que habla (Languages spoken)_____

Número de personas que viven en su hogar: menores de 18 años_____ adultos____ (Number of persons living at home: under 18 /adults)

Estatus de empleo (Employment status)_____

Ocupación (Occupation)_____

¿Tiene "aseguranza" médica? Si____ No_____ (Medical insurance? Yes/ No)

¿Recibe usted o alguien en su familia algún beneficio del gobierno o de alguna organización caritativa, estampillas, WIC, TANF, SSI, Medicaid, Medicare, Seguro Social, Banco de alimentos, etc.?

Si____ No_____(Do you or anyone in your family receive any benefit from the government or a charitable organization? Yes/No)

¿Tiene usted un médico primario? Si_____ No____ (Do you have a primary care physician? Yes/No)

Ingreso(s) del hogar (Household income) _____

Vivienda: propia/alquilada/ vive con familiares/ otro_____(Housing: homeowner/rental/ live with relatives/ Other)

Fecha que entró a Estados Unidos (Date of entry to the United States) _____

Lugar de entrada (Place of entry) _____

Qué cantidad de dinero, si alguna, envía usted como remesas a familiares o amigos en su país de origen? Mensual o anual?_____ (How much money, if any, you send as remittance to relatives and friends in your country of origin? Monthly or Yearly?)

¡Muchísimas gracias por su participación! (Many thanks for your participation!)

APPENDIX F

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. Your information is important and helps us gain a better understanding of how your culture, identity, experiences of living in Georgia, and your experiences related to deportation have affected you and your family. My first questions have to do with your identity as a Latina/Hispana.

I. Identity as Latina

1. What does your culture and identity as a Latina mean to you? How does your culture influence your life and your sense of self?

2. What cultural values and beliefs are most important to you and why?

3. What does it mean to be a Latina immigrant in rural Northeast Georgia?

II. Way of Life in Georgia

Now I'm going to ask you to describe your culture and what it is like for you to live in Georgia.

4. Can you describe your life here in the United States and how it differs from your country of origin?

5. What values and traditions from your country are practiced or followed in your home here?

6. How are these values and traditions similar or different from those values and traditions from your country of origin?

7. What have been the advantages for you living here? What significance do these advantages have for you?

8. What obstacles or challenges have you encountered in your daily life here? What those these challenges mean to you and what have you done to overcome them?

III. Effects of Deportation

Next, could you please help me better understand how the recent ICE immigration raids have affected you, your family and your community.

9. Please describe your experience related to the detention and deportation your family member? Who was it that was detained or deported?

10. Could you tell me what you can remember about that day?

11. How did this arrest and or deportation affect you personally?

12. How did this arrest and or deportation affect your family?

13. What did this arrest and or deportation mean to your sense of community, belonging, and safety?

14. How do you describe your life after the detention and or deportation of your family member?

15. Have you or your family received any help from anyone after your family member's detention and or deportation? If so, from whom? How was this helpful?

16. What are the advantages and disadvantages of staying in the US?

IV. Open Ended Question

Thank you for answering my questions. I want to remind you that all what you have told me will be held to the highest level of confidence and I sincerely appreciate and value the trust you have given me.

17. Is there anything else that I didn't ask that you think would be important for me to know or understand?

18. Is there anything else you would like to share with me?

(Semi-structured interview- Spanish)

Guía de entrevista semi-estructurada

Gracias por aceptar participar en mi estudio. Su información es importante y me ayudará a obtener una mejor comprensión de cómo su cultura, identidad, experiencias de vida en Georgia, y sus experiencias relacionadas con la deportación han afectado a usted y a su familia. Mis primeras preguntas tienen que ver con su identidad como Latina/Hispana.

I. **Identidad como Latina**

1. ¿Qué significa para usted ser Latina, y como esto se relaciona a su cultura e identidad? ¿Cómo influye su cultura en su vida y en su persona?

2. ¿Qué valores y creencias culturales son más importantes para usted y por qué?

3. ¿Qué significa ser una inmigrante Latina en la zona rural del noreste de Georgia?

II. Modo de vida en Georgia

Ahora le voy a pedir que describa su cultura y cómo es su vida en Georgia.

1. ¿Puede describir su vida aquí en los Estados Unidos y cómo se diferencia de su país de origen?

2. ¿Qué valores y tradiciones de su país se practican en su hogar?

4. ¿Qué tan similares o diferentes son las tradiciones y valores practicados en su hogar en Georgia de los de su país de origen?

5. ¿Cuáles han sido las ventajas de vivir aquí? ¿Qué importancia tienen estas ventajas para usted?

6. ¿Qué obstáculos o desafíos ha encontrado en su vida diaria aquí? ¿Qué significan estos desafíos para usted y qué ha hecho para superarlos?

III. Efectos de la deportación

A continuación, ¿podría ayudarme a entender mejor cómo las recientes redadas de inmigración de

ICE le han afectado a usted, su familia y su comunidad?

1. Por favor, describa su experiencia relacionada con la detención y/o deportación de algún miembro
de su familia? ¿Quién fue detenido o deportado?

2. ¿Podría decirme lo que puede recordar sobre ese día?

3. ¿Cómo le afectó personalmente este arresto o deportación?

4. ¿Cómo afectó este arresto o deportación a su familia?

5. ¿Qué significó este arresto o deportación en relación a su sentido de comunidad, pertenencia, y seguridad en su vecindario?

6. ¿Ha recibido usted o su familia ayuda de alguien después de la detención o deportación de su familiar? Si fue así, ¿de quién? ¿Qué tan útil fue esta ayuda?

7. ¿Cómo describe su vida después de la detención y/o deportación de su familiar?

8. ¿Cuáles son las ventajas y desventajas de permanecer en los Estados Unidos?

IV. Pregunta final

Gracias por responder a mis preguntas. Quiero recordarle que todo lo que usted me han dicho será protegido con el más alto nivel de confidencialidad, y aprecio sinceramente la confianza que usted ha depositado en mi.

1. ¿Hay algo más que no le pregunté ya, que usted cree sea importante para mí saber o entender?

2. ¿Hay algo más que le gustaría compartir conmigo?

APPENDIX G

Definitions and Acronyms

Asylum seeker- The United States recognizes a political asylum seeker as a migrant who requests protection, after reaching U.S. soil, due to fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

DACA- Differed Action for Childhood Arrivals.

DHS- Department of Homeland Security.

Detainer- A detainer is a procedure where local enforcement agencies notify ICE within 48 hours about a removable alien's arrest (a person with undocumented status). It also requests the local police to maintain custody of such person for 48 hours beyond the time the alien would have otherwise been released, to allow DHS to assume custody for removal purposes.

Detention- A legal enforcement operation to arrest a person suspected of breaking the law.

Deportation or removal- The act of removing an undocumented person outside the U.S. A migration judge must order a deportation or removal order of a person suspected of unauthorized entry.

ICE- Immigration Customs Enforcement

Latino/a immigrant- A person of Latino or Latin American origin, who migrated to the United States with or without authorization.

LPR- Lawful Permanent Resident (Green Card)- A government-issued ID from Immigration and Naturalization Services to allow an authorized migrant to remain in the U.S. as a lawful permanent resident.

Mixed-status- A family where one or more members have undocumented or under-documented

status.

Refugee- An internally or externally displaced person that request to the U.S. protection from persecution at his/her country of origin. Sometimes refugees must wait in a country other than their own for years before being accepted into the U.S. Once refugee status is granted, the person is allowed to be resettled in the U.S.

Secure Communities- A federal program from the Department of Homeland Security or DHS, established during President George W. Bush's administration. It requires the cooperation of local law enforcement jurisdictions to share data on those arrested with Immigration Customs Enforcement or ICE.

TPS- Temporary Protective Status. It provides certain benefits to nonresidents, such as a parole from deportation. DACA recipients have a form of TPS allowing them to work, study, and obtain a driver's license.

Unauthorized or undocumented immigrant- An individual who either overstayed his/her visa for visiting the United States or entered the U.S. territory without the proper permit or documentation. Those entering without documentation will either use a port of entry or cross the border unnoticed by the U.S. Border Patrol authorities.

U.S. citizen- A person born or naturalized in the U.S.