TRANSFORMATIONAL EXPERIENCES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN: THEIR CRITICAL REFLECTIONS AS FORMER MIGRANTS WHO EVOLVED FROM *HARVEST OF SHAME* TO SEEDS OF HOPE

by

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of

The College of Education

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Florida Atlantic University

Boca Raton, FL

December 2014

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This dissertation was prepared under the direction of the candidate's dissertation advisor, Dr. Valerie Bryan, Department of Educational Leadership and Research Methodology, and has been approved by the members of her supervisory committee. It was submitted to the faculty of the College of Education and was accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Completion of this dissertation could not have been possible without the support, guidance, and encouragement of many. I feel richly blessed to have had responsive professors, colleagues, friends, and family who contributed immensely to the completion of this project.

Words are inadequate in expressing my heartfelt thanks to my committee chair, Dr. Valerie Bryan, for believing in me when I doubted, for understanding my personal trials, and for creating an atmosphere of shared professional camaraderie. Her continued expertise, critiques, and tactful diplomacy guided me through what seemed, at times, to be a never-ending process. Sincere appreciation is also extended to my dissertation committee members, Dr. Eliah J. Watlington and Dr. Victor C. X. Wang, for their valuable contributions and time. Appreciation, as well, is extended to Florida Atlantic University professors who aided my growth and encouraged the pursuit of my dissertation topic: Dr. Ira Bogotch, Dr. Lucy Guglielmino, Dr. John Hardman, and Dr. Eliah Watlington, to name a few. Their guidance has made this an enriching and rewarding journey.

The opportunity for professional growth also was enhanced by supportive colleagues from Palm Beach State College, especially the Palm Beach State cohort. Not only did my computer skills improve with Sean Smith's help, but life-long friendships were formed as we worked on committees, organized study sessions, and exchanged ideas. Special thanks to Nancy McDonald whose friendship, intellect, and encyclopedic

knowledge encouraged me, whose creative flair was responsible for adding “Seeds of Hope” to my dissertation title, and whose husband welcomed me into their home. Thanks Aaron McDonald for many dinners and bunches of grapes, my favorite fruit.

Thanks and gratitude to the nine African American female study participants who willingly shared their stories and allowed me into their homes, offices, or comfortable meeting places. Had their stories not been shared, completion of this dissertation would have been impossible. Thanks to my friends, you know who you are, who supported this endeavor and offered to assist in any way possible, especially Yeudele Allen and Jannatte Sharpe-Paul.

Thanks, loud and clear, to my family who has been my rock throughout this process. When I decided to pursue my Ph.D., the outpouring of continual love, support, and encouragement sustained me through both challenging and extraordinary times. Thanks, especially to my sister, Mary Kindred Evans, who helped identify and locate four study participants. When feeling overwhelmed, it was my sister in her own special way that made me smile by reciting or singing these spiritual song lyrics: “Trouble Don’t Last Always.”

Thanks also to my daughter and son-in-law, Patrikka and Lens Georges, who have been my sounding board, proofreaders, and critics through the entire process. They have promoted, encouraged and delighted in the dissertation progress with loving support.

ABSTRACT

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Institution:	Florida Atlantic University
Dissertation Advisor:	Dr. Valerie Bryan
Degree:	Doctor of Philosophy
Year:	2014

Narrative inquiry was the qualitative method utilized to collect stories related to former migrant African American females who transformed their lives from migrant workers and found alternative career paths. Sustained poverty among migratory workers created a disenfranchised culture of uneducated citizens. A large part of this labor force was women. It was expected that this culture of poverty would perpetuate itself through generations. The universal stereotypes associated with impoverished migrants were so ingrained that overwhelmingly the majority of migrants accepted a life of poverty as prophesy. However, some former migrant African American women defied odds and rose above the cumulative effects of poverty.

The major findings of this study revealed factors that significantly contributed to their success in a variety of professional careers: consistent family support, adaptive coping skills, catalyst for change, transformative learning, and meaningful relationships

with non-family members, and commitment to community service. Sub-findings emerged that revealed that these additional factors also contributed to their success: value placed on education, strong belief in God, and leadership skills.

Identifying factors most significant in former migrant African American women becoming successful in a multiplicity of professional careers can encourage and serve as representative examples of how other impoverished women may escape the "culture of poverty" stereotype. The unfolding stories of these former migrant African American women provided them a platform to unmute their muted voices. Additionally, the wisdom of their words and hardships of their youth speak volumes to the heart of all women who may have been disenfranchised or disheartened at any point in their lives.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandchildren: Jathan, Jayla, and Justus.

May your voices never be muted.

TRANSFORMATIONAL EXPERIENCES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN: THEIR CRITICAL REFLECTIONS AS FORMER MIGRANTS WHO EVOLVED FROM *HARVEST OF SHAME* TO SEEDS OF HOPE

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I. INTRODUCTION

In contemporary society when one hears the phrase migrant workers, images of Mexican or Guatemalan immigrants may come to mind. However, before the brown migrants toiled the soil and picked the crops in Palm Beach County and many other parts of the United States, the face of the majority of migrant workers was Black intermingled with a few Whites. As a result, the greater part of the migratory work force before the 1960s was "racialized" in such a way that South Florida was known as a slave economy. This slave economy provided the agricultural labor force needed to harvest food for many Americans around the country. South Florida's geo-climatic conditions—specifically a longer growing season, a greater number of frost-free days, and extensive deposits of very fertile muck soils south of Lake Okeechobee—set it apart from the rest of the South (Hollander, 2006).

In 1960, a CBS Productions documentary entitled *Harvest of Shame* brought attention to the plight of migratory labor (Friendly, Murrow, & Lowe, 1960). Inspired by what was discovered in this heart-wrenching television special, a jointly funded project by the Environmental Protection Agency and the University of Houston combined resources to study migrant's exposure to pesticides. Two migrant groups were selected for the study—one from Belle Glade, Florida and one from California. Being that the researcher is from the Belle Glade area, she applied and was selected to collect data for the study. It was the researcher's responsibility to collect and record demographic data of

the participants. Some of the migrants that were featured in the documentary were in the occupational exposure to pesticide study. As explained in the documentary, the researcher witnessed the deplorable conditions of a labor force that was responsible for providing food for most of America. Living in squalor; traveling in crowded trucks, buses, and cars; often eating the pesticide-laden fruits and vegetables; the forgotten underclass workers known as migrants—uneducated, misunderstood, and disenfranchised—were the forgotten underclass.

In 1961, Oscar Lewis was credited with coining the phrase "culture of poverty" in his book entitled *The Children of Sanchez*. Lewis based his thesis on an ethnographic study of an impoverished Mexican family. In the book's preface, Lewis (1961) stated, "My purpose is to give the reader an inside view of family life and of what it means to grow up in a one-room home in a slum tenement" (p. xi). Lewis (1961) further posited that:

> The lives recorded here are seen as exemplifications of the culture or subculture of poverty, a pattern that has its own modalities and distinctive social and psychological consequences for its members. It is a dynamic factor which affects participation in the larger national culture and becomes a subculture of its own. (p. xxiv)

Lewis' findings conceptualized that culture transcends regional, rural-urban, and even national differences. Lewis (1961) suggested that many of the "patterns in family structure, interpersonal relations, time orientations, value systems, spending patterns, and the sense of community were found as much in London, Glasgow, Paris, and Harlem, as in Mexico City" (p. xxv).

Despite studying a small sample, Lewis (1961) extrapolated his findings to suggest a universal culture of poverty. The universal stereotypes associated with the poor seem to be foundational, as the Sanchez family descriptions depicted in Lewis' book mimic those of most migrant workers. Within these communities, there was "frequent violence, a lack of a sense of history, a neglect of planning for the future, and so on" (Gorski, 2008, p. 33).

Lewis' (1961) book, along with *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960), ignited controversy, conflict, and debate. Both of these sources had a profound effect on the perceptions of poverty. Nevertheless, the reality was that people did what they knew how to do and performed jobs that were available to them. In the 1960s, there was a need for a labor force to harvest crops, and a large portion of this labor force consisted of women who were categorized as belonging to a subculture of poverty. As migrant women followed the seasons to work in the fields along with their husbands, fathers, and brothers, they too, travelled from state-to-state to harvest seasonal crops as spouses, single women, and mothers. Caught in this vicious cycle known as migratory labor, they had no choice; harvesting seasonal crops was the only legitimate employment they could find. Life for these women was an endless road trip, replete with backbreaking, manual labor. In *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960), Edward R. Murrow noted the extent of the horrible conditions, as he highlighted women and children surrounded by flies, dirty beds, unsanitary toilets, and a lack of hot water.

After years of harvesting crops, some found the extraordinary inner strength to leave the migrant lifestyle while others were never able to transition beyond their structural frame within the migratory seasonal farm domain. Those women excelled:

some received high school diplomas following a traditional path while others acquired GEDs; and some went to college at night and worked the fields during the day. Regardless of their problematic circumstances, they persevered. Despite incredible odds, some of these women eventually became managers, teachers, principals, and attorneys. Many transformed their lives as well as those of their families and rose above physical, emotional, educational, and mental barriers. They appropriately can be described as "self-directed survivors" who were not only motivated and challenged, but developed the determination, resilience, and confidence to excel in a variety of professional careers.

The overarching question posed in this study is: What factors converged that most significantly contributed to former female migrants transforming their lives, prevailing over obstacles, and succeeding in a variety of professions? Attempting to find an answer, the researcher examined the similarities and differences that existed among successful women who were once migrant workers. Explorations of three conceptual frames (see Figure 1) were central to this research: historical, sociological, and adult education.

Problem Statement

In the 1960s, statistics on migrant children were grim. As reported by CBS Productions (Friendly et al., 1960), only one out of 5,000 migrant children finished high school, and none were ever reported to have finished college. When statistics of this nature are broadcast nationwide, they can become self-fulfilling prophesies for many, thus, causing some people to lose hope and belief in their abilities as well as opportunities that may exist. The individuals may accept their plight and not seek alternative paths to transform their lives.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this narrative inquiry was to identify factors that most significantly contributed to the transformational experiences of African American women portrayed in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960) as migrants who aspired to find alternative paths for their lives and became successful in a variety of professional careers.

Central Research Questions

The following central research questions guided this study:

1. What are the similarities in the transformational experiences among successful African American women whose lives were portrayed in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960)?
2. What are the differences in the transformational experiences among successful African American women whose lives were portrayed in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960)?
3. What factors contributed most significantly to the transformational experience of African American women who left the cycle of migratory labor and became successful in professional careers?

Sub-questions. The following sub-questions were also examined:

1. What similarities or differences were there between the demographic factors (e.g., age, number of siblings, position in the family, crops harvested, educational level, career, and/or religious/spiritual affiliation) of the migrant women that were successful?

2. How did these factors influence the transformational experience of the African American women who were former migrants?
3. What impact did self-efficacy have on these former migrant women's motivation to succeed?
4. For those who were successful, where did they demonstrate their successes (e.g., the disciplines they choose to work, their career paths, and their responsibility to others growth, etc.)?

Operational Definitions

African American: The term identifies an American of Black African descent. In order to be classified an African American at least one of their parents' lineages can be traced to the continent of Africa.

Black feminist thought: This concept characterizes those who are seen as being a part of an "intercontinental Black women's consciousness movement" (Collins, 2009, p. 252) that addresses concerns of women of African descent such as work, family, poverty, media objectification, sex, education, and stereotypes.

Migrants: People who migrate from their home base to pursue seasonal farm work within their country. Migrants travel from county-to-county as well as state-to-state to harvest crops.

Self-directed learners: For this study, self-directed learners will be defined as life-long learners who are always eager to learn something new and are motivated to strive for continuous improvement. Readiness for self-directed learning, as defined by Guglielmino (1977), are characterized by qualities such as initiative, independence, persistence, self-discipline, curiosity and personal responsibility.

The constant desire for self-enhancement encourages self-directed learners to grow, modify, and develop in an unbounded mode (Costa & Kallick, 2004).

Self-efficacy: This term, as defined by psychologist Albert Bandura (1982), is a person's belief in the ability to succeed in specific situations. One's sense of self-efficacy can play a major role in how to approach goals, tasks, and challenges. According to Bandura, people with high self-efficacy—that is, those who believe they can perform well—are more likely to view difficult tasks as something to be mastered rather than something to be avoided.

Self-identity: As defined by Merriam Webster, Inc. (2014), self-identity is awareness of and identification with oneself as a separate individual.

Transformational experience: This term is derived from transformative learning. Transformative experience is the process of undergoing change "in the way we see ourselves and the world in which we live" (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007, p. 130). Thus, the lens to define the transformational experiences of the women in this study will identify holistic changes through experience, critical reflection, and development (Merriam et al., 2007).

Transformational learning: This is a type of learning where an individual learns to purposively question one's own assumptions, beliefs, feelings, and perspectives in order to grow or mature personally and intellectually (Boyd, 1991; Mezirow, 1991; Taylor, 2005).

Limitations

Migrant female workers who remained in the seasonal work cycle for most of their adult life and did not secure a professional career were not included in this study.

Female migrants whose home base was not in The Glades area of Palm Beach County, Florida were not included. Male migrants were not included.

Being that the researcher is native of The Glades area, this may pose a potential bias to this study. Several strategies were utilized to minimize researcher bias, starting with Husserl's (1970) concepts of époche or bracketing (Creswell, 2013). Also, member checking, peer review, triangulation of the data, and a reflective journal (Merriam, 2009) were used to help reduce researcher bias.

Delimitations

This study was limited to African American females who were migrants prior to 1990. They all originated from The Glades area of Palm Beach County, Florida. These former migrants obtained a college degree or established themselves in professional careers. As migrants, they traveled with their families to different locations to harvest seasonal crops and were classified as living below the poverty level.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher is the daughter of a Jamaican immigrant and an Alabama-born mother. The researcher's father entered the U.S. illegally by using a friend's passport. First, this passport was given to the uncle of the researcher by a gentleman who decided that he no longer wanted to come to America on a work permit. When the researcher's uncle changed his mind, he gave his brother the opportunity to come to America to work in the sugar cane fields. This chain of events ultimately led to the researcher's father immigrating to a work camp in western Palm Beach County known as Bean City where he met and married the researcher's mother. Due to the seasonal work of cutting sugar cane, the family followed the crops as migrant farm workers for many years. Life was

difficult then, and there was not much a Black man with a Jamaican accent and a sixth grade education could do. With only a second grade education, the researcher's mother worked side-by-side with her husband when the cane season ended. Otherwise, she worked in the fields with three children in tow.

Much of the memory of the researcher's migratory past has been erased, as her parents retired from migratory field labor when she was very young. However, her sister who is two years older does remember following "the season" from state-to-state with their parents. Although the researcher does not remember going "on the season," she does have vivid memories of working weekends, holidays, and many summers in the bean, celery, and cornfields of Southern Florida. Her parents were determined that their children would finish high school. Abiding by their parents demands, three siblings graduated from high school. Although the researcher and one of her sisters graduated from college, it was not with the blessings of their parents, especially their mother. The researcher's mother sincerely felt that a high school education was all a "little negro girl needed to get by with."

The researcher's oldest sister, who is 22 years older than the researcher, was not able to leave the cycle of migratory work until she became too ill to work. At that time, she was in her sixties. She died of emphysema at the age of 70. Of her five children, three eventually left migratory labor as young adults.

After viewing the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960), the researcher vicariously relived some of the experiences portrayed. The lifestyle of the migrants was accurately portrayed. As the researcher viewed the documentary, she gazed at the "loading ramp"—a place in Belle Glade, Florida where migrants congregated

before loading onto buses and trucks that would take them to the work fields—reflecting that she too had stood there with her siblings, waiting to get on a bus or an open bed truck for day labor. The researcher was reminded that the "underserved" and "invisible" people depicted in the documentary and the stories collected, were also her story.

Through this research, the researcher hoped to unmute the muted voices of those who were able to leave migratory labor. In doing so, the goal of the researcher was to remain as objective as possible during the interview process. Several cognitive steps were undertaken to ensure researcher's objectivity. First, the researcher followed the established guidelines in the interview protocol (see Appendix C). Because the researcher was once part of the Glades migrant community, there was reciprocity in sharing some aspects of their experiences. This, as cited by Dickson-Swift, Kippen and Liamputtong (2007), would set the stage for a straightforward and fair exchange. Reciprocity of experiences also created a non-hierarchal relationship between researcher and participants (Dickson-Swift et al., 2007).

Significance of Study

Lewis (1966) argued that, "The subculture [of the poor] develops mechanisms that tend to perpetuate [poverty], especially because of what happens to the world view, aspirations, and character of the children who grow up in it" (p. 199). These theoretical precepts, as explicated by Small, Harding, and Lamont (2010), were accepted beliefs by many policy makers, as well as large segments of the population, who believed that poverty generated cultural attitudes, beliefs, values, as well as practices that tended to generate itself over time. As further hypothesized, even if the structured conditions were to change, the children of poverty-stricken individuals would be culturally acclimatized

to poverty. Some scholars, as well as many people of today, were and are quick to "blame the victim" (Small et al., 2010, p. 7).

Believing that people, especially children, are socialized into poverty, and that there is nothing to do about it, can create feelings of inferiority, marginality, and helplessness. Far worse, this doctrine may negatively affect a person's self-efficacy as these feelings manifest themselves into self-fulfilling prophecies. This study reveals that some people who were classified as living in poverty were not seeking a handout, but were in need of a helping hand. Therefore, the significance of this study is that it presents additional research to dispel the myth surrounding the culture of poverty stereotype. This study is also significant because it contributes to the literature by identifying and employing intervention methods to assist in breaking the cycle of poverty among children as well as adults.

Moreover, qualities possessed by the former African American female migrants in this study were worth investigating because the study might encourage other impoverished women not to concentrate on their state of poverty and powerlessness; instead, they can focus on self-empowerment and the empowerment of others who are equally disenfranchised.

Chapter Summary

From problem statement to significance of the study, Chapter I provides an overview of the astonishing moxie of former African American migrants whose resilience and determination challenged the status quo. In 1960, a CBS Productions documentary entitled *Harvest of Shame* brought attention to the plight of migratory labor (Friendly et al., 1960). In 1961, Lewis, an anthropologist, was credited with coining the

phrase “culture of poverty.” This phrase eventually developed into a widely accepted theory that suggested “once in poverty, always in poverty.” However, there were African American migrants of the sixties who defied the odds. The central and sub research questions centered on identifying factors that most significantly contributed to the transformation from impoverished migrants to specialized careers not involving migratory labor. Once these factors were identified, they could serve as exemplars to other impoverished women.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review introduced background information on the hardships of migratory labor as it also provided critical insight into the factors that contributed to some former female migrants becoming successful in a variety of careers. Factors such as self-efficacy, self-identity, Black feminist thought, critical social theory, self-directed learning, transformational learning, and critical reflection were explored.

This literature review stemmed from a documentary, entitled *Harvest of Shame,* produced in 1960 by CBS Productions, which brought attention to the plight of migratory labor (Friendly et al., 1960). The documentary exposed the deplorable conditions of a labor force that was uneducated, misunderstood, and disenfranchised, yet responsible for providing food for most of the nation. Also, the documentary disclosed how the migrants lived in squalor, traveled in crowded trucks, buses, and cars, and often ate the pesticide-laden fruits and vegetables. As described, they were the forgotten underclass known as migrants.

Many African American women in the 1960s followed the season to harvest crops along with their husbands, fathers, and brothers. Traveling from state-to-state to harvest seasonal crops as spouses, single women, and mothers, these women, too, were caught in the vicious cycle of migratory labor. For most, they had no choice: the fields were the only place they could find legitimate employment. Life for these women was an endless road-trip, replete with backbreaking manual labor, yet many excelled beyond expectations. After years of harvesting crops, some found the inner strength to leave the

migrant lifestyle while most were never able to transition beyond their structural frame within the migratory seasonal farm domain. Acquiring GEDs, going to college at night, and having the resolve to persevere, these women succeeded despite incredible odds. Some became managers, teachers, principals, and attorneys. The conceptual frames for this literature review (see Figure 1) highlights those aspects that contributed to the transformation in their lives as they rose above physical, emotional, educational, and mental barriers.

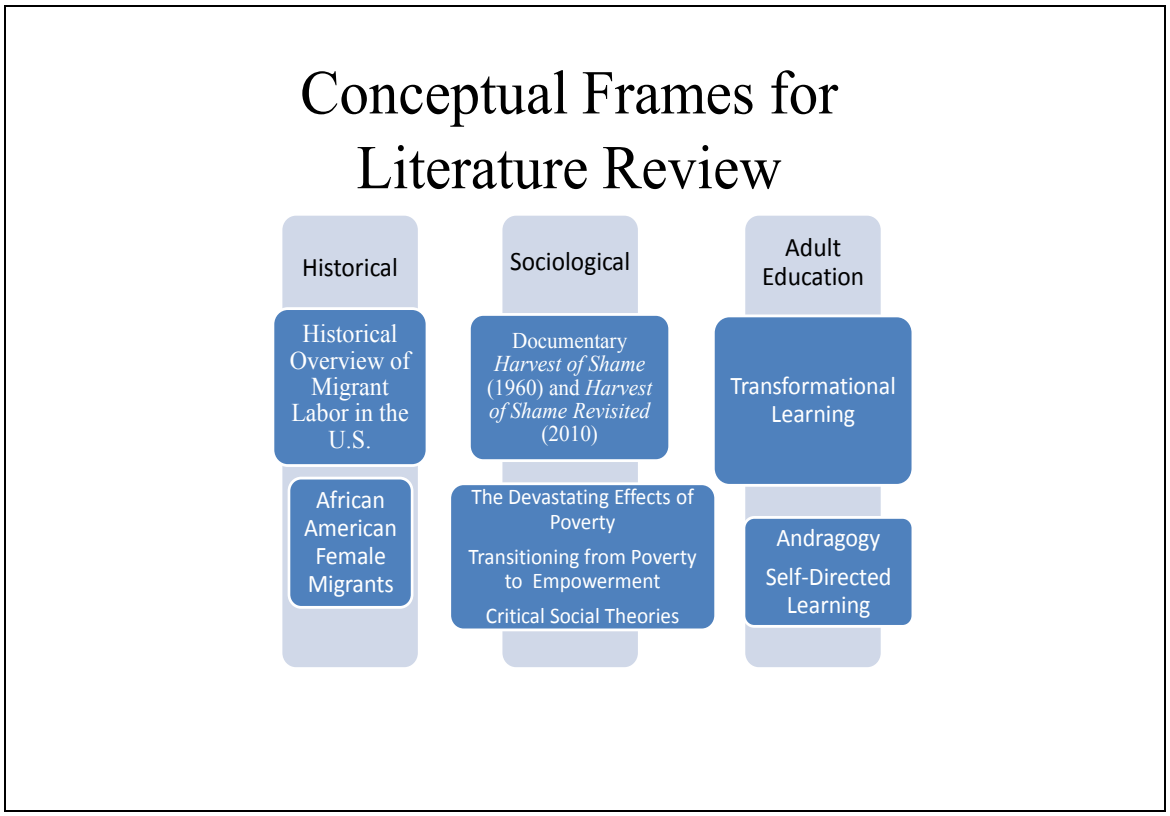

Figure 1. Conceptual frames for the literature review of this study.

Historical Overview of Migrant Labor in America

Controversy surrounding migratory labor frequently makes headline news as if it is a new phenomenon on the American scene. Conversely, the reality is migrant labor is not new to the American landscape. Tracing the history of agricultural labor in America,

one can start in 1607 when the first Europeans arrived at the Jamestown, Virginia colony. The King of England offered certain "Knights, Gentlemen, merchants and other Adventurers…to make habitation, plantation…into that part of America commonly called Virginia" (Woolley, 2007, p. 18). There was a profusion of land to be harvested and cultivated. However, a labor pool was needed not only to till the fields, but was also critical for survival. As a result, incentives were provided for planters to import workers. For each laborer brought across the Atlantic, the master was awarded 50 acres of land. The indentured servants would have their cost across the Atlantic paid and a contract was written to stipulate the length of service—typically five years (Independence Hall Association, 2014a).

Before Bacon's Rebellion that occurred in 1676, many Africans were not classified as slaves but as indentured servants since they were contracted to work for a given amount of time. After the rebellion, planters began to prefer permanent African slavery to White indentured servants because slaves were more easily controlled (Washburn, 1957). By 1700, the slave population had increased tremendously, British immigration had slowed, and many poor Whites had either become better established or had left the colony (Green, Becker, & Coviello, 1984). At the turn of the century White Virginians were increasingly united by White populism, or the binding together of rich and poor Whites through their sense of what they considered their common racial virtue. This resulted in a common opposition to Indians and enslaved Africans (Independence Hall Association, 2014b).

Tobacco, primarily produced with African slaves, was the cash crop. Exploitation of the labor force continued with slave labor, as slaves were needed to work the southern

crops (Mobed, Gold, & Schenker, 1992). Subsequent to colonizing Jamestown, Virginia and taking advantage of a ready-made labor force to work the crops, migratory labor became indispensible in America.

Many laws were passed in support of, as well as in opposition to, migrant labor. When the migrant labor force began to grow, the U.S. Congress enacted a law in 1790 to initiate residency requirements. The Alien Act of 1798, signed into law by President John Adams, gave the President of the United States the authority to expel aliens. Any alien deemed dangerous or who spoke against the government, the President could deport them at will (Miller, 1951). As the country grew, the demand for workers also grew. As a result, the Burlingame Treaty of 1868 allowed immigrants from the U.S. and China unlimited travel to study, reside, and work in either country (Lee, 2003). This law made it easy for Chinese immigrants to become migrant laborers, which helped satisfy the United States' demand for workers. Later, accompanied by controversy, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was passed because it was believed that Asian immigrants were driving wages to a substantial low level and taking jobs away from White Americans (Green, 2003).

Increasing animosity toward foreigners placed the country in a position to deal with political and social anti-immigration measures (Brinkley, 1993). In 1891, Congress enacted the first comprehensive federal immigration law, which included a provision permitting the exclusion of persons likely to become a "public charge" if admitted to the United States. Generally, a public charge is an immigrant who is likely to become primarily dependent on the government for subsistence ("Liable to Become," 2013). Following this first comprehensive federal immigration law, the U.S. Immigration

Commission in 1911 issued a report stating that immigration was damaging the United States and called for restrictions on immigration from both southern and eastern Europe. As a consequence of this report, literacy requirements for immigrants were imposed. On May 28, 1924, Congress passed the Labor Appropriation Act of 1924, officially establishing the U.S. Border Patrol for the purpose of securing the borders between inspection stations. In 1925, the duties of the U.S. Border Patrol were expanded to patrol the seacoast (U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, n.d.).

In reference to gender, documented migrants have been predominantly female since 1930 (Borak, 2005). However, some field work is predominately relegated to males. Sugar cane cutting falls in this category. As delineated in *Big Sugar: Seasons in the Cane Fields of Florida* (Wilkinson, 1990), for the first time in U.S. history, sugar cane was grown with commercial success in 1931. For the next 11 years, crops were harvested by African American men recruited from Southern states. White men, representatives of U.S. Sugar Corporation, would travel to cities such as Memphis, Tennessee, and Tuscaloosa, Alabama recruiting an African American labor force. The recruiters would walk through African American communities and offer free transportation, meals, housing, and medical care to anyone who would cut sugar cane in Florida. Once the men arrived, they would be charged for transportation to South Florida as well as the equipment needed to cut the sugar cane. By 1943, sugar cane laborers were paid 40 cents an hour (Browning, 2003).

Workers would be told that they could not leave the sugar plantations until they satisfied their debt. Those who attempted to leave were threatened, beaten, or murdered.

To find a sufficient number of sugar cane workers every year, U.S. Sugar Corporation representatives traveled farther north to recruit workers who had not heard of the unscrupulous practices. Eventually, word spread, and it became more difficult to lure African American sugar cane cutters to South Florida (Wilkinson, 1990). Naturally, for those who remained on the sugar plantations, their wives, girlfriends, and other family members would inevitably join them. With females joining the males, an additional labor pool was formed.

The illegal and inhumane practices of U.S. Sugar Corporation were not overlooked. The company was indicted in 1942 by a federal grand jury in Tampa, Florida for carrying out a conspiracy to commit slavery (Wilkinson, 1990). A year later U.S. Sugar Corporation rescaled operations and set its sights at the international level. Although entangled in legal troubles and negative publicity, U.S. Sugar Corporation shifted from Jim Crow racism to the importation of Black workers from the Caribbean (Hollander, 2006). Jim Crow racism was the type of discrimination common among White Americans from the 1870s to the 1960s. The trademark exemplars of this type of racism were acts such as burning crosses, white hoods, lynchings, and liberal use of the word "nigger" (Boskin, 1976). According to Wilkinson, the West Indians, who were experienced sugar cane cutters, arrived in the South Florida fields in the fall of 1943 to the same Jim Crow racism experienced by African Americans. Dormitory style housing was provided for the Caribbean workers throughout parts of South Florida. The sub-standard housing they lived in was deplorable:

> The majority of the larger barracks are built of cement from the simplest plan…they look like shoeboxes…like slums. Often there is trash in the

> yards….Sanitation is lax…purity of the water is questioned. Stalls in the bathroom have no doors….The cutters sleep in double-decker bunk beds lined in rows, heads to the walls…between each bed is room enough for a man to stand and pull on his pants. (Wilkinson, 1990, pp. 14–15)

The home of U.S. Sugar Corporation is in Clewiston, Florida. The sugar cane fields were located in Hendry County and Palm Beach County, Florida. The surrounding towns that had dormitory-style facilities to house the West Indian cane cutters were in Pahokee, Belle Glade, South Bay, Clewiston, and Moore Haven.

Reacting to the fear of communism, restrictions were placed on alleged communists and other undesirables in 1952. These restrictions reaffirmed congressional support for a national origins quota system. Conversely, in 1965 the Immigration and Nationality Act repealed the national quota system and gave first preference to immigrants uniting with family members already in the United States (Green, 2003). Although the national origins quota system was repealed, anti-immigrant sentiment was still strong. Encompassing five years of intense discussion, Congress passed the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, embracing the recommendation to expedite the entry of temporary workers into the United States under full protection of U.S. laws, thus, establishing programs for special agricultural workers who were made eligible for permanent resident alien status and eventual citizenship (Fuchs, 2014).

Moving into the second decade of the twenty-first century, agriculture in the United States still relies heavily on migrant and seasonal farm workers for labor-intensive crops, especially in Florida, where crops are harvested year-round. Although working as a migratory laborer is not the easiest way to make a living, it is the only means of

sustenance for many citizens. This industrial workplace, renowned by flagrant health, human rights, and safety violations, has not drastically changed from the seventeenth century—although this human labor force has been indispensible to the success of American agriculture (Riley, 2002).

African American Female Migrants

One is hard pressed to find gender specific statistics on African American female migrants because they were unrecognized and invisible in America in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. According to Boyd and Grieco (2003), females were not included in the statistics for international migratory labor prior to the early 1970s. However, research in the 1970s and 1980s began to include women. While Boyd and Grieco, as well as others, provided some insight into international migratory labor, there were only modest statistics of African American females.

In collecting information from oral the interviews of African American women who worked alongside their husbands or alone in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, participants in this study disclosed that they were subjected to the same horrific housing and lifestyle as males. In some cases, female migrants suffered more. As early back as the seventeenth century, the time served for most female indentured servants was longer than for males. This was because females who became pregnant had an additional two years added to their term of service (Daniels, 2002). Advancing to the twentieth century, pregnant migrants were still not given maternity leave to deliver. Some delivered at night and returned to work the following day frequently with their newborn in a basket amid the pesticide infested field. Depending on the crop, sometimes they worked seven days a week. Sick, weak, or depressed, they worked. Their survival as well as their children's

survival depended on their meager salary. For those who were married, field work was a necessity as it contributed to the family economy.

In extreme cases female migrants were held against their will and forced to work for little or no pay. Since 1997, seven slavery operations involving more than 7,000 workers in Florida fields —the majority of them women—have been prosecuted (Pitts, 2010).

The Documentary *Harvest of Shame* (1960) and *Harvest of Shame Revisited* (2010)

In the 1906 novel written by Upton Sinclair entitled, *The Jungle,* the life of twentieth century migrant workers is described as follows:

> A population, low-class and mostly foreign, hanging always on the verge of starvation and dependent for its opportunities of life upon the whim of men every bit as brutal and unscrupulous as the old-time slave drivers; under such circumstances, immortality is exactly as inevitable, and as prevalent, as it is under the system of chattel slavery. (p. 126)

Sinclair's motivation for writing *The Jungle* was to enlighten the American public to the blight of migrant workers. He hoped his words would encourage the public to take action and reform the way America neglected its immigrant workforce. Contrary to his good intentions, his publication did not receive a conscious-awakening reaction.

Fifty-four years after Upton Sinclair wrote his novel, *The Jungle,* to bring attention to the blight of migrant workers, a documentary entitled *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960) was broadcast to the American public. This controversial documentary specifically addressed the plight of farm laborers in rural Palm Beach County, Florida, some of whom worked for as little as a dollar a day performing grueling

manual labor from sunrise to sunset. Until this documentary was nationally broadcasted, most Americans were unaware of the men, women, and children responsible for the daily provisions on their tables or the food for their holiday feasts.

The documentary was broadcast on a Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, and it shocked viewers with its vivid images of impoverished migrant workers. Observing this documentary during the Thanksgiving holiday weekend was orchestrated to contrast with the greed of big growers. It was intended, as stated in the documentary by CBS producer David Lowe, "to shock the consciousness of the nation" (Friendly et al., 1960). Topics covered in the documentary ranged from the harsh living conditions, endless travel, low wages, and limited opportunities for migrant children. As shown on CBS News in 1960, migrant worker lives were ruled by others who cared little about them, and were willing to surrender them to adverse working and living circumstances (Friendly et al., 1960). As Murrow exposed the appalling environment endured by America's more than three million migrant workers, he called them "the forgotten people; the under-educated; the underfed" (as cited in Pitts, 2010, para. 2). They were deprived of basic medical services, educational opportunities, and fundamental human rights many middle-class Americans took for granted.

In 1960, America was given a glimpse of what Murrow described as "the migrants, workers in the sweat shops of the soil – the harvest of shame" (Friendly et al., 1960). On November 23, 2010, CBS Evening News revisited South Florida's fields. This time CBS News Chief National Correspondent, Byron Pitts, chose to go to the tomato fields in Immokalee, Florida. The conditions that Byron Pitts noted were strikingly similar to those of the sixties. In the 1960s, it was estimated that African

Americans constituted approximately 90–95% of the labor force in the Atlantic Coast Migratory Stream (Browning & Northcutt, Jr., 1961) with a predominant female labor force since the 1930s (Borak, 2005).

Most housing for migrants in 1960 was crowded and dilapidated with no inside plumbing. Many times, when traveling up the East Coast for seasonal work, migrants lived in deplorable housing that sometimes resembled stables for horses. In some locations there was no privacy; entire families shared one partitioned room. No matter how deplorable housing was then, chances were that where they lived was all that the migrants could afford, as the average annual income for migrants was $900.00. The average salary for migrants in 2010 was approximately $10,000 to $12,500 per year. There was no mandated health insurance, overtime, or sick pay in 1960, nor do growers provide benefits in 2010 (Pitts, 2010).

With the advent of advanced mechanization, there are many field assignments that require specific skills, but most tasks still consist of planting, tending, harvesting, and packaging vegetables manually; the same as in 1960 (Browning & Northcutt, Jr., 1961). As discovered when Byron Pitts visited the Southern Florida area of present-day migrants, not much has changed for the thousands of seasonal migrant workers.

While there, Pitts interviewed Claudia Vasquez, a hard-working mother of four. Her children often accompanied her in the field. For the 2010 season, Vasquez picked blueberries in Michigan, tomatoes in Georgia, and grape tomatoes in Florida. In Florida, she was paid $7.25 per hour; plus, she received an additional 60 cents for each 32-pound bucket of grape tomatoes she filled. Vasquez solemnly explained her situation to Pitts. She said as a migrant worker she made just enough money to feed her children and pay

rent for the trailer she lived in a few months out of the year, but not enough to save any money for the future. She felt fortunate to have employment (Pitts, 2010). Vasquez's migratory status and story is a microcosm of many female migrants today as well as in the sixties.

For the uneducated and illiterate, as long as there are fields to be harvested, there will be work. It is estimated that there are two to three workers for every available job in the field, no matter what the crop is. This implies that farmers can offer a very low wage and still find someone willing to work (Riley, 2002). This also suggests that most migrants will remain poverty-stricken their entire life.

The Devastating Effects of Poverty

Exploitation of the less fortunate is not new to the culture of America. Even Captain John Smith purported in *The Generall Historie of Virginia*, originally published in 1624, that America had the potential to be a land of endless opportunities, thus, predicting that the true richness of America was in her land (Smith, 1624/2006). This pronouncement strongly suggested the need for skilled as well as unskilled laborers, and encouraged many to migrate to the New World. As the colony began to develop, new ideologies formed. Americans rejected the oligarchy and aristocracy of Europe and began to cry for freedom as underscored in the Declaration of Independence with these renowned lines: "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" (Green, Becker, & Coviello, 1984, p. 771). Many historians concur that at the time of its writing it was meant for free, White men who owned property (Green et al., 1984). Conversely, since the origin of the Declaration

of Independence, many disenfranchised groups have capitalized on the phrase "all men are created equal" to argue that it means mankind. For example, Abigail Adams, wife of the second President of the United States, John Adams, said in one of her stimulating letters to her husband that, "We will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation" (Gilbert & Gubar, 2007, p. 137).

As another example, African American women, such as Sojourner Truth, were disenfranchised due to racism, gender, and poverty. In addition to her struggles for survival, Truth fought to have African American females classified as women. In her famous speech "And Ain't I a Woman," Truth declares that Black female slaves are women too (Gilbert & Gubar, 2007). Ironically, while one group of privileged women was fighting for the right to vote, another group of impoverished women was fighting to be declared women.

The heinous effects of slavery and Jim Crow laws in the nineteenth century circumvented economic and social progress for African American women. Even in the twenty-first century, African American women are "overrepresented in low-skill, low-paid jobs, such as health aide and private household worker" (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 244). Discrimination against them in almost all social, economic, and political areas means that they have to bear a disproportionate share of unmet needs. As a result, many are relegated to live in the throes of generational poverty and have resigned themselves to a life of low-income jobs, inadequate assets, poor education, and racial stereotypes.

The stark reality is that poverty is devastating for anyone. However, in America, a disproportionate number of African American women live in poverty. Based on the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), more than six million African Americans live in poverty. Of

this number, African American females head 48.8% of households with no husband or male present.

Poverty among African American women with children is especially alarming. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) supplements the food budgets of the neediest people through a debit-like card that can be used at grocery stores or other authorized locations. In 2010, SNAP served more than 45 million Americans (Office of Research and Analysis, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2011). Of those served, 13.1% were African American women (Office of Research and Analysis, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2011). This program is important because it counteracts the devastating effects of malnutrition during pregnancy. As reported by the Bread for the World Institute (2012), malnutrition during the 1,000 days from pregnancy through a child's second birthday produces permanent changes in the child's brain structure and function. Even proper nutrition after this period cannot undo the damage, which affects the child's cognitive and emotional function and increases the risk of future heart disease and diabetes (Bread for the World Institute, 2012).

In order to feed their families, some indigent women resort to prostitution. Various studies support the argument that street prostitution is related to poverty and drug abuse, as women may turn to drug use in an attempt to cope with the hardships of their daily lives (Romero-Daza, Weeks, & Singer, 2003). Female prostitutes, in disproportionate numbers, are known to be ethnic minorities who are impoverished, uneducated, and possess few marketable skills (Monroe, 2005). These uneducated and impecunious women are motivated by financial reasons for basic survival; most do not

seek prostitution because they view it as a profitable or respectable occupation (Benson & Mathews, 1995).

Whether in the 1960s or today, poverty has devastating effects. Harrington in his book entitled *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (1981) put in plain words the culminating consequence of poverty by saying that it "is constructed as to destroy aspiration…designed to be imperious to hope" (p. 9). Harrington (1981) also stated: "The poor are politically invisible….[They] do not belong to unions, to fraternal organizations….They have no face, no voice" (p. 6). Viewing the faces of migrant females and listening to their stories from the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960), the researcher found that Harrington provides an accurate description of a subculture of American society.

The majority of female migrants allowed the acceptance of powerlessness decide their future. Their horizon was so limited that many felt that there was no reason to hope for a better life. However, there were a few women who would not allow the demands of labor-intensive work keep them undereducated and underprivileged. With an extraordinary strength of courage, initiative, and determination, they chose to empower themselves by getting an education, establishing careers, and contributing to their community.

Transitioning from Poverty to Empowerment

The prevailing question is: After a lifetime of poverty, how do people, particularly migrant women, empower themselves to rise above their circumstances? When evaluating the concept of empowerment theory from its micro to macro levels, empowerment theory is rooted in community organizations, adult education, feminist

theory, and political psychology (Giroux, 1988; Gould, 1987; Lee, 2001; Stanage, 1987). Research indicates that empowerment must first begin with the individual so that those who become empowered can grow and solve complex issues (Page & Czuba, 1999).

Although theorists do not always agree on the steps to be taken or the definition of empowerment, often saying the term is vague and ambiguous, there is an accepted definition of empowerment that characterizes the transformation of the migrant women in this study. It is defined as "a process of increasing personal, interpersonal, or political power so that individuals can take action to improve their life situations" (Gutierrez, 1990, p. 149). Empowerment is a cyclical as opposed to being a linear process; traits acquired by those who are empowered include decision-making proficiency, ability to locate resources, and the wherewithal to make choices from a range of options (Chamberlin, 1997). Also, the literature expresses four vital psychological changes that will occur within the individual as the person moves from "despair to action" (Gutierrez, 1990, p. 150) on the journey to empowerment: increased self-efficacy, expanded group consciousness, reduced self-blame, and assumed personal responsibility (Gutierrez, 1990). Of the four psychological changes, self-efficacy predisposes other changes, and from this researcher's perspective, is the most significant.

The concept of self-efficacy lies at the center of psychologist Albert Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory, presented in his paper entitled, "Self-Efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change". According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is an amalgamation of people's beliefs toward their possibilities, aptitude, and cognitive skills. The formation of these beliefs begins in early childhood because children are affected by an array of experiences, tasks, and circumstances. Nevertheless, self-efficacy

does not end in childhood; it continues to evolve throughout life as people acquire new skills, experiences, and understanding. Self-efficacy, as espoused by Bandura (1992), determines how people feel, think, motivate themselves, and behave.

Critical Social Theory

As a historically oppressed group, the knowledge and experience acquired from being viewed as second-class citizens in America is the driving force that propelled many African American women to embrace critical social theory from a Black feminist perspective (Collins, 2009). Critical social theory encompasses bodies of knowledge and sets of institutional practices that address injustices. Instances of racial inequality were very prevalent in the sixties at the time the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960) was produced. To address the injustices of the sixties, there was civil unrest with sit-ins, marches, and riots. These events served to inspire many to act by challenging many of America's established political, social, economic, and cultural institutions and beliefs. Because of the oppression many African American women experienced, critical social theory evolved naturally from a Black feminist perspective.

Martin Luther King, Jr. (1964) wrote, "we know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed" (p. 75). Demanding emancipation, when the oppression of African American women had been deeply institutionalized, seemed practically impossible. Espoused by Collins (2009), emancipation begins with self, both individually and collectively. Collins (2009) also posited that, "Self is not defined as the increased autonomy gained by separating oneself from others. Instead self is found in the context of family and community" (p. 124). Throughout history, African American women have found ways

"to escape from, survive in, and/or oppose prevailing social and economic injustice" (Collins, 2009, p. 11). These injustices, according to Collins, stimulated African American women's critical social theory, whether immigrant or non-immigrant seasonal workers. Being outsiders to the dominant culture, they shared their ideas with other African American women who were in the same position as them. This sharing of ideas, according to Collins (2009), is viewed as Black feminist thought to some, but to others it is critical social theory.

The most ubiquitous factors African American women faced were enduring racial segregation, discrimination, and isolation. During the sixties, African American migrants lived in exclusively all-Black neighborhoods, their children attended all-Black schools; and they belonged to all-Black churches. This was partially designed by a system that encouraged political control and economic exploitation of those living in restricted all-Black areas (Squires, 1994). However, living in all-Black neighborhoods was not altogether destructive, for this arrangement provided a separate domain where African American women could openly dialogue about their desires, aspirations, despair, and ways to resist racial oppression. Going against the status quo, their oppositional knowledge prompted them to question their peculiar situation from a realistic perspective and to think in terms of possibilities. As clarified by Coy, Woehrle, and Maney (2008), oppositional knowledge questions what is "considered possible and what is considered impossible, what is thought to be desirable and what is thought to be undesirable" (para. 3.2). Oppositional knowledge provided impoverished migrant women a vision for the future. This mental picture was outside of what would have been regarded as normal at the time.

Another factor that stimulated African American women's critical social theory originated in the commonality of experiences gained from their employment (Collins, 2009). Most uneducated African American women in the sixties either worked in agriculture or as a domestic. Life circumstances did not give them a choice. They worked to survive. Due to a lack of education, their freedom to choose other forms of employment was limited. In the words of the fathers of critical theory, Adorno and Horkheimer (2011), "freedom is when you can choose your own work" (p. 16). They expound their philosophical position towards work by comparing labor to a trained dog. Man, like the trained dog, would prefer to return to a "state of being," but "he works in order not to have to work" (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2011, p. 14).

The reality is that the majority of seasonal migrants endured a lifetime of arduous labor with no hope of retirement. In perpetual marginality, they were devalued, exploited economically, and viewed as outsiders. However, being a historically oppressed group, African American women have produced social thought designed to oppose oppression (Collins, 2009). This mindset did not escape migrant women who were searching for ways to escape poverty.

Transformational Learning

While African American female migrants in this study were struggling not only to survive, but also to improve their quality of life, some educational theorists were debating whether adults could learn. And if they could learn, theorists debated how learning happened. The women portrayed in this study demonstrate that active, continuous learning is part of the everyday experiences of adult life. Through the hardships of life,

they moved beyond the trappings of dispositional and physical barriers to become intelligent, responsible, confident, and conscientious leaders.

With an average annual income of $900.00 for migrants in the 1960s (Pitts, 2010), migrant workers found it extremely difficult to rise above the first stratum of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs. In Maslow's paper, "A Theory of Human Motivation," originally published in 1943, the first stratum consists of basic physiological needs such as food and shelter (Maslow, 1970). Building upon Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Douglas McGregor (1960) introduced Theory X, an authoritative management style that described the attitude managers appeared to have toward migrants in the 1960s. Managers, known as owners, farmers, and crew chiefs in the structural frame of migrants, basically treated their subordinate migrants as if they had "little ambition, prefer[ed] to be led, and resist[ed] change" (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 125).

This authority-compliance type of leadership is one of the least desirable when it comes to building trusting relationships. In an organizational structure of authority-compliance leadership, the leader places more importance on tasks and job requirements, and less importance on people, "except to the extent that people are tools for getting the job done" (Northouse, 2010, p. 73). The leader is in complete control, and no one is permitted to make any suggestions or offer any opinions, no matter how it may benefit the group. According to Northouse, communicating with subordinates is primarily for the purpose of giving instructions about the task. The authoritative leader is often seen as "controlling, demanding, hard driving, and overpowering" (Northouse, 2010, p. 73).

As a result of working under these harsh conditions for years, the women in this study developed a resilient interior. Farmers appearing to have adopted the Theory X

philosophy and assumed that most migrant workers needed to be directed and wanted security of a field job for life. These assumptions were transferred to the migrant workers through the limitations of their indentured servitude and slavery conditions and became a self-fulfilling prophesy for most African American migrants of the 1960s, but not all.

Quite possibly, a catalyst for transforming their lives emerged after national exposure of the horrendous living conditions and inhumane treatment migrant workers experienced as portrayed in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960). Although the documentary's primary goal was an appeal to "common sense, decency and the American conscience" (Harrington, 2004, p. 354), it also encouraged many migrants to reflect on their existence, beliefs, and attitude. As a result, they began to think beyond a lifestyle of migratory labor and refused to accept the normative stereotype that migrants were an inferior group with no ambition outside of farm work.

This new introspective perception set the stage for transformational learning. A stage set when migrant women in this study realized assumptions about their selves and by their selves were not totally accurate. They began to examine their lives and their future. As educator Patricia Cranton (1996) advocated, there is a connection between transformational learning and self-examination. "If the individual…opens herself to alternatives, and consequently changes the way she sees things, she has transformed some part of how she makes meaning out of the world" (Cranton, 2002, p. 64).

Transformational learning is learning to purposively question one's own assumptions, beliefs, feelings, and perspectives in order to grow or mature personally and intellectually (Boyd & Greico, 2003; Mezirow, 1991; Taylor, 2005). Thus, the lens to view transformative learning provides holistic changes through experience, critical

reflection, and development (Merriam et al., 2007). Mezirow (1978) after interviewing 22 adult women suggested that the process of transformation occurs in 10 phases with the first phase being a disorienting dilemma. As espoused by Mezirow, a disorienting dilemma occurs when one is faced with a critical life challenge that cannot be solved by the person's previously held "frame of reference" (as cited in Merriam et al., 2007, p. 132). When a personal crisis or devastating series of events transpire, a disorienting dilemma is the first phase in the transformative learning process.

Transformational learning occurs "after an individual realizes, upon reflection that previously held assumptions are flawed and require revision" (Drago-Severson, 2004, p. 19). Succinctly put, transformational learning is about change—a change that first happens introspectively and proceeds to a change in the way the world is viewed. Transformational learning, which is distinctively adult learning, was first introduced in 1978 by Jack Mezirow. As expressed by Mezirow (2000), transformational learning is defined as:

> the process…[to] transform taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning schemes, habits of mind, mindsets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action. (p. 8)

A benefit of transformational learning, according to Mezirow, is the development of greater self-sufficiency as a person; this autonomy makes the distinction between childhood and adulthood.

Since its introduction, transformational learning has been conceptualized in many different ways by experts in adult education. One conceptualization of transformational

learning that dovetails with the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960) was introduced by Paolo Freire (1970) and is known as emancipatory education. Freire's work with illiterate rural workers of Brazil helped him realize that passive listening and acceptance of facts did little to help his students move beyond their poverty. Freire, believing that education was for the purpose of liberation, had students reflect and discuss relevant life issues, such as the inadequate pay they received. Through this process, the rural workers recognized societal structures that oppressed them. They also learned ways to overcome these barriers (Freire, 1970).

Through consciousness-raising, according to Freire (1970), learners view themselves and the world differently. Freire's work is one of the best-known sociocultural approaches to transformational learning. Whereas Mezirow's (1978) theory is based on the experiences of White, middle-class women and focuses on individual transformations, Freire's theory is based on impoverished, uneducated, rural workers who were oppressed. In Freire's approach, personal empowerment and social transformation are inseparable processes. Freire also believes that once a problem is identified, the next logical step is to seek solutions. A solution in the form of a helping-hand is what was needed with the transformation of the women highlighted in this study.

Social conscience, or consciousness-raising as articulated by Freire (1970), was imported to ignite communal activism in the sixties and assistance in many forms began to arrive in Belle Glade, Florida—the home base for migrants featured in *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960). For example, Florida Rural Legal Services opened an office to assist migrant workers in 1966 (Florida Rural Legal Services, 2012). The media as well as Catholics converged on the area. Leadership by the Catholic Workers

Movement encouraged "individual responsibility for social ills and for one's neighbor" (Klejment & Roberts, 1996, p. 162). To identify with the plight of the suffering, the Catholic Workers undertaking was to help the underprivileged, resist war, and oppose social injustice.

The physical presence of new organizations and innovative people encouraged some migrants to social action, as their migratory lifestyle can be classified by what Mezirow (1978) identified as a disorienting dilemma. Mezirow went on to say, "When the disorienting dilemma is the result of oppressive action, the person needs to take individual or collective action against the oppressor" (as cited in Merriam et al., 2007, p. 135). Then, Mezirow delineated a three-step process for social action: (1) become aware of a need to change by critically reflecting on assumptions and biases; (2) establish solidarity with others who are committed to change; and (3) identify appropriate actions to implement change (as cited Merriam et al., 2007).

To escape the concentrated poverty that existed among migrants, one would think it took superhuman effort. However, it is assumed that the three-step process for social action was implemented by situational leaders who were willing to match their style to meet the needs of the migrants. Focusing on leadership in different situations, situational leaders place more emphasis on relationships with the people they are leading as opposed to tasks. The premise of the situational approach to leadership posits that, "different situations demand different kinds of leadership" (Northouse, 2010, p. 89). In lieu of superhuman effort, leaders provided necessary "directive" and "supportive" (Northouse, 2010, p. 91) actions needed to help transform the lifestyle of migrants.

Andragogy and Self-Directed Learning

John Dewey (1938/1997) in *Experience and Education* says, "All social movements involve conflicts which are reflected intellectually in controversies" (p. 5). The social movement Dewey was alluding to is the restructuring of the educational system. Throughout his book, Dewey elucidated the problems with traditional education as he stresses the importance of students' experiences and the obligation of the teacher to recognize students' past experiences. In doing so, teachers can effectively plan beneficial educational experiences so that students can fulfill their potential and become contributing members of society.

Although Dewey (1938/1997) asserted the need for educational reform in America, this institutional transformation did not wholly include disadvantaged African American women who worked as seasonal farm laborers. Nonetheless, an internal intellectual controversy brewed within a number of African American seasonal migrant women who wanted to transform their lives from generations of illiteracy, limited financial resources, and inadequate language acquisition to become successful, accomplished women. Utilizing their farm work experience as a catalyst for individual change, these disadvantaged, uneducated women set out on a course to transform their lives by assuming responsibility for their own upward mobility. Thus, they embraced and subsequently epitomized the quintessence of self-directed learners.

Although the genesis of both andragogy and self-directed learning probably can be traced to the beginning of civilized man, these concepts were not defined, articulated, or researched until the 1960s. The concept of andragogy was made popular in North America by Knowles (as cited in Merriam et al., 2007) even though the term originated

from Dusan Savicevic, a Yugoslav adult educator (Carlson, 1989). According to Carlson (1989), upon being introduced to the European concept of andragogy, Knowles adapted the term.

In contrast to the European definition of andragogy, which stressed the adult accompanying adult in the learning process, Knowles (1980) placed more emphasis on life situations of adult learners and helped to distinguish andragogy from K-12 learning. To further identify variations in adult learning, Knowles' concept of andragogy was supported by the following assumptions:

1. As a person matures his or her self-concept moves from that of a dependent personality toward one of a self-directing being.
2. An adult accumulates a growing reservoir of experience, which is a rich re source for learning.
3. The readiness of an adult to learn is closely related to the developmental tasks of his or her social work.
4. There is a change in time perspective when] people mature—from future application of knowledge to immediacy of application. Thus, an adult is more problem centered than subject centered in learning.
5. The most potent motivations are internal rather than external.
6. Adults need to know why they need to learn something (Merriam et al., (2007).

Knowles (1980) envisioned these assumptions as the foundation upon which programs for adults could be devised; however, some migrant women used their seasonal fieldwork as the springboard to the diagnosis of their own learning needs and to become self-directed learners. Despite the fact that these migrant women were unfamiliar with

the literature produced by educational theorists who debated approaches to instructing adults, these former migrants completed high school in GED programs and some started college in their forties. Success was achieved in the face of adversity, harsh conditions, sexism, and racial injustice. Their life struggles mimic more renowned American females who excelled with little or no formal education. Women such as Abigail Adams, outspoken first lady on women's rights, Sojourner Truth, abolitionist, and Madam C. J. Walker, first African American entrepreneur, can be classified as self-directed learners—although the term was yet to be coined during their lifetime. Despite not having a formal education, these women developed skills and became leaders during their lifetime.

In order to fully appreciate the self-directed learning evolution, it is essential to recognize the pioneering work of Houle (1988). Conducting two-hour interviews with 22 adult learners in 1961 from the Chicago area, he developed an understanding of the motivation for what he referred to as self-initiated learning. His results yielded three categories of motivations for learning, and the learners were classified based on their incentive for learning: goal-oriented, activity-oriented, and learning-oriented (as cited in Merriam et al., 2007).

Houle's (1988) students, namely Allen Tough and Malcolm Knowles, made significant contributions to self-directed learning in follow-up research that was originally published by Houle in 1961. Focusing on the learning-oriented adult learner, Tough (1971) found that some aspects of adult learning were planned and organized by someone else, but most learning was self-planned. Knowles (1975) defined self-directed learning as follows:

> A process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes. (p. 18)

Malcolm Knowles (1975) stated that, "to be adequate for our strange new world we must think of learning as being the same as living. We must learn from everything we do; we must exploit our experience as a learning experience" (p. 16). As it relates to migrant workers in this study, they learned to make the most of their experiences whether in a Virginia potato field, GED classroom, or on-the-job training. Learning for them was continuous and happened in various places and at different times in their lives. Their actions, upon leaving the migrant seasonal cycle, replicate the humanistic philosophy that purports that personal responsibility is imbued in the first goal of adult learning (Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991). The first goal is "to enhance the ability of adult learners to be self-directed in their learning (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 107). Being self-initiated in achieving their goals, the former migrants in this study achieved much, and they epitomize what self-directed learners can accomplish when they challenge themselves. Despite environmental circumstances and barriers, these women propelled themselves out of a nebulous cycle of migratory labor.

As further expounded by self-directed learning philosophy, learners must not be motivated by external stimuli, but by their own desires. No matter how difficult the struggle, they must continue to thrive and not make excuses, but confront challenges with a positive attitude. When confronting challenges, they must not be viewed as "obstacles" (Guglielmino, 1977, p. 73). Guglielmino (1977), originator of the Self-Directed Learning

Readiness Scale (SDLRS), an instrument to test a person's readiness for self-directed learning, identifies readiness traits as "initiative, independence, and persistence in learning; acceptance of responsibility for one's own learning; self discipline; a high degree of curiosity; a strong ability to learn independently; enjoyment of learning; a tendency to be goal-oriented" (as cited in Merriam et al., 2007, p. 121). These readiness traits suggest that self-directed learners are life-long learners who are always in a continuous learning mode, for they are "always striving for improvement, always growing, always learning, always modifying and improving themselves" (Costa & Kallick, 2004, p. 31).

The documentary, *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960), served as a medium to bring attention to an underclass of citizens in American society known as migrants. The expectations were that people in the migratory cycle would remain for life. However, for some migrant women, the documentary did not become a self-fulfilling prophecy, as they chose to rise above their dispositional and physical barriers to transform their lives. The women who are portrayed in this study are imbued with extraordinary moxie. As leaders in a variety of professions, they did not let history label them. Employing critical self-reflection and self-directed learning skills, they learned to empower themselves and transform their lives. Defying all odds, they did not allow low self-esteem, fear of failure, and feelings of inferiority impede their professional growth. Through the hardships of life, poverty provided them with an inner-strength not only to survive, but to excel. As leaders of today, these former migrants challenged the status quo, which was a divergence from what Murrow reported in 1960 in *Harvest of Shame*

(Friendly et al., 1960). With passion, determination, sacrifice, and empathy, these women may inspire others to excel by revealing their personal stories.

Chapter Summary

The literature review provided a historical overview of migratory labor in America as well as the difficulties and challenges migrants faced. Succeeding against incredible odds, some female, African American, former migrants were able to rise above their physical, emotional, educational, and mental barriers. Therefore, topics covered in this literature review were ones that facilitated their transformation. These included: transitioning from poverty to empowerment, critical social theory, transformational learning, andragogy, and self-directed learning.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Qualitative methods of narrative inquiry were utilized to collect stories related to the study participants' lives. The collected stories aligned with both the purpose statement and research questions of this research. Formulation of the purpose statement was to affirm that this narrative inquiry identified factors that most significantly contributed to the transformational experiences of African American women portrayed in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960) as migrants who aspired to find alternative paths for their lives and became successful in a variety of professional careers.

Central Research Questions

The central research questions that guided this study and focused on the transformational experiences of the study participants were:

1. What are the similarities in the transformational experiences among successful African American women whose lives were portrayed in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960)?
2. What are the differences in the transformational experiences among successful African American women whose lives were portrayed in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960)?
3. What factors contributed most significantly to the transformational experience of African American women who left the cycle of migratory labor and became successful in professional careers?

Sub-questions. The following sub-questions were also examined:

1. What similarities or differences were there between the demographic factors (e.g., age, number of siblings, position in the family, crops harvested, educational level, career, and/or religious/spiritual affiliation) of the migrant women that were successful?
2. How did these factors influence the transformational experience of the African American women who were former migrants?
3. What impact did self-efficacy have on these former migrant women's motivation to succeed?
4. For those who were successful, where did they demonstrate their successes (e.g., the disciplines they choose to work, their career paths, and their responsibility to others growth, etc.)?

Narrative Inquiry

Employing narrative inquiry to investigate the "lived and told stories" (Creswell, 2013, p. 70) of former migrant women was appropriate for this study because the researcher selected study participants whose life experiences corresponded with both the central and sub research questions. The researcher, Czarniawska, channeled her cognitive perception of a narrative's function: "narrative is understood as a spoken or written text giving an account of event/action or series of events/actions, chronologically connected" (as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 70). Further explicated in Creswell and implemented by this researcher, the blueprint followed consisted of studying multiple individuals, collecting their stories, reporting their experiences, and identifying the significance of those experiences as they related to the research questions of this study.

In addition, narrative inquiry as a qualitative approach was the preferred research design because narratives are unique in that they have a way of crossing generations, race, and cultural boundaries due to commonality of experiences. For those reasons, the participants' narratives could enhance an understanding of a socio-cultural phenomenon in society. Although Silverman (2005), a renowned qualitative researcher, posits that narratives are everywhere, some voices were silenced due to gender, race, isolation, and economic exploitation. Thus, the muted voices of the study participants were unmuted as they told their stories.

D. Jean Clandinin, a Canadian researcher who has produced extensive research and publications on narrative inquiry, is quoted as saying:

> Arguments for the development and use of narrative inquiry come from a view of human experience, in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives. People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Viewed this way, narrative is the phenomenon studied in an inquiry. Narrative inquiry is the study of experience as story, then…foremost a way of thinking of the experience. (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 477)

As expressed by seminal authors and explored by the researcher, narrative inquiry provided an appropriate platform for a deeper understanding of African American women who transitioned from migratory labor to professional careers. Through the stories told, narrative inquiry depicted "much more than a look for and hear story," but portrayed "a

form of living, a way of life" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 78) for the women in this study as first migrants and later as professionals.

Research Setting and Sites

The overarching research setting is the Southeast region of the U.S. which has a long history of migrant worker exploitation. The locations of the research sites were determined based on accessibility to the study participants. Because interviews were conducted at locations and times convenient for participants, there were four different sites for the nine study participants: one study participant was interviewed in the conference room of the Community Service Center (CSC) in Indiantown, Florida; one participant was interviewed in a study room at the Summit Branch of Palm Beach County Library, West Palm Beach, Florida; three participants were interviewed in the researcher's home; and four participants were interviewed in their own homes in Florida and in South Carolina.

Study participant, Thelma Waters, requested an interview at the CSC located in Indiantown, Florida. Both the researcher and study participant parked their vehicles in a shopping center parking lot directly in front of the CSC suite. Upon entering the CSC suite's lobby, four folding chairs were lined side-by-side to the left of the front door; these chairs faced outward toward the parking lot. A hallway led to the designated conference room, where the interview was to take place. Prior to reaching the conference room, an open door revealed a room on the south side of the suite with approximately eight computers on top of computer desks with eight task chairs. In the northwest corner of the building was the conference room that had an eight-foot long oval table, eight brown cushioned leather chairs, and artwork on antique white colored walls. Other than

those items, the room was empty. Located in the rear of the building, once the door was closed the conference room provided uninterrupted privacy in a secluded spot. For added convenience, an accessible bathroom was adjacent to the conference room.

Study participant, Juanita Edwards, requested the Summit Branch of Palm Beach County Library for her interview. The researcher reserved a glass partitioned study room that was in full view of the circulation desk. Although researcher and study participant could see out and be seen by other library patrons, the room was noise free and private. In the light-infused room, there was a six-foot table and two chairs. The public library bathrooms were in close proximity to the study room where the interview took place.

Study participants, Gloria Whitley, Betty Chapman-Nelson, and Gloria James, were interviewed in the researcher's Royal Palm Beach, Florida home. All interviews took place in a 16 by 18 foot bedroom that was converted to an office with an adjacent bathroom. The ceramic tiled room contained a desk, bookshelf, computer, and printer on the north wall with a 42-inch television enclosed in a wall unit on the south wall. Two swivel office chairs, facing each other, were positioned on the east side of the room in front of a window.

Study participants, Estella Pyfrom, Cora Edwards, Carol Spencer, and Participant X were interviewed in the privacy of their individual homes. For two participants the family room was the interview location, while the dining room table was the preferred location for the other two. The two who directed the researcher to their family room invited the researcher to sit on a couch. Both couches were long enough to accommodate four to six people. Because there were only two people occupying the couch, this provided at least two feet of space between participant and researcher. The two study

participants who directed the researcher to their dining room tables had cleared the table for the interview. In both homes, the dining rooms opened to the living room. Arranged in the center of the dining rooms were eight-foot wood tables replete with eight side chairs and matching curio cabinets.

Sampling Plan

Both stratified purposeful sampling and snowball sampling were utilized to recruit representative participants of the study population. Patton (2001) describes purposeful stratified samples as samples within samples that are selected once the researcher has identified key characteristics of the study population with the intention of supporting the research questions. Thus, the function of purposeful sampling is "to select information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study" (Patton, 1990, p. 169). Information-rich cases selected for this study provided insight to not only deepen the understanding of the transformational experiences of former female African American migrants, but also to collect information that were guided by the research questions.

Specifically, the stratified purposeful sample consisted of five African American women who were migrants in the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, or 1980s from The Glades area of Palm Beach County, Florida. From this stratified purposeful sample, snowball sampling was used to acquire the other four participants. According to Atkinson and Flint (2004), snowball sampling is the process of gathering research participants through the identification of initial subjects. Initial participants in this research study were selected from a stratified purposeful sample located in the researcher's Florida hometown. This led to participants identifying the names of other possibilities for research participants.

Sample Population

The sample population consisted of nine African American females who were former migrant seasonal workers. They were selected as study participants because they were either featured in the CBS Productions documentary, *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960), or their lives replicated what was shown in the documentary when it was released. As reflected in the documentary, these women were born into the cycle of migratory farm work, and as young children, some from the age of six years old, performed seasonal field work and travelled from state-to-state to harvest crops with their family. When they reached the age of maturity, these women continued to perform seasonal field work. Both as children and adults in the migratory work stream, they lived at or below the poverty level.

The ages of the participants in the sample ranged from 55 to 76 years. Even though they all originated from The Glades area, at the time of this study only two lived in the area. They resided in the following cities: Aiken, South Carolina; Tampa, Florida; Indiantown, Florida; Miami, Florida; and West Palm Beach, Florida. As former migrants, the sample population eventually abandoned the migrant stream as adults for a different and better quality of life. Subsequently, they all acquired at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited American college or university, and/or secured employment in a professional career. Of the nine study participants, one never married, one was widowed, two were currently married, and five were divorced.

Data Collection

Data "comes into existence, not as a product of an individual, but as a facet of relationships, as a part of culture, as reflected in social roles such as gender and age"

(Gergen as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 150). Because the researcher focused on emerging stories, data was collected from study participants fitting Creswell's (2013) qualifier as "great person[s]" (p. 147) who lived through the migrant experience and exceeded society's expectations. Creswell (2003) suggests "data collecting steps include setting the boundaries for the study, collecting information through unstructured (or semi-structured) observations and interviews, document, and visual materials, as well as establishing the protocol for recording information" (p. 185).

Upon Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (see Appendix A), the data collection process began. Interviews were the principal type of data collection method. However, interviews were supplemented with observation notes, field notes, and visual materials. The initial step of the data collection method began by developing interview questions that aligned with the purpose statement and research questions of this study. As illustrated in Figure 2, the researcher constructed interview questions to correspond directly with the central and sub research questions.

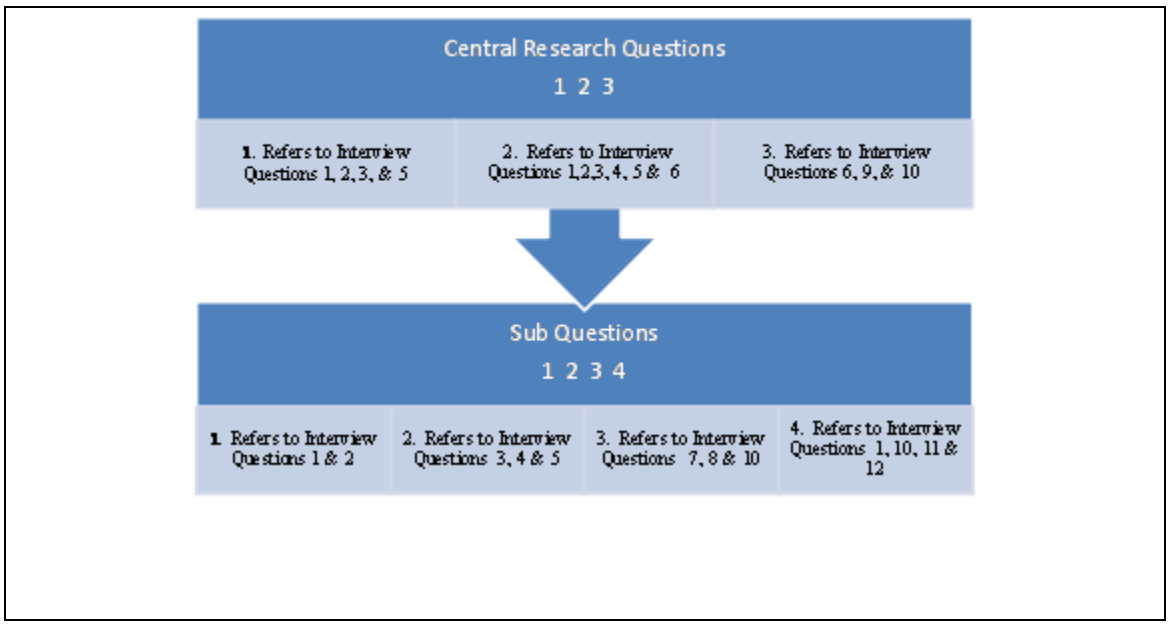

Figure 2. Corresponding central and sub research questions.

Interview questions were devised to elicit a detailed and unambiguous response, as well as collect descriptive data that would underscore the purpose statement and support the research questions of this study. Most essential, the interview questions were designed to support the purpose statement by identifying factors that most significantly contributed to the transformational experiences of African American women portrayed in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960) as migrants who aspired to find alternative paths for their lives and who became successful in a variety of professional careers.

The researcher made initial contact with potential participants via personal phone calls or individual face-to-face contact. Telephone numbers and addresses from known former migrant African American women were collected from the researcher's family members who reside in The Glades area. Once telephone numbers and a couple

addresses were acquired, the researcher contacted potential participants and explained the research project.

After receiving verbal agreements to participate in the study, confirmation was made to conduct one-on-one, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews (Van Manen, 1990). Because the interview protocol was designed to make the interviews convenient for study participants, each participant selected an opportune location and time for her interview; consequently, this necessitated the researcher traveling to different locations. Interviews were conducted in three Florida counties: Hillsborough, Martin, and Palm Beach County. One interview was conducted in Aiken County, South Carolina.

The interview questions, cited on the interview protocol (see Appendix B), consisted of eleven "flexibly worded" (Merriam, 2009, p. 90), open-ended questions with probes and one close-ended question. The close-ended question was designed to secure demographic data (e.g., age range, number of siblings, position in family, crops harvested, educational level, career, and religious or spiritual affiliation). Participants did not receive a copy of the interview questions prior to the face-to-face interviews. The researcher also developed a field/observation notes form (see Appendix C) to write contextual notes on the physical environment, emotions, temperament, and mood of study participants.

For each interview, the researcher used the identical interview protocol developed by the researcher to provide a clear, succinct purpose of study and to assure confidentiality of both written and audio notes. After stating the purpose of the study, both researcher and participant read over the Informed Consent to Participate in Research

form (see Appendix B). When a participant had questions, the researcher answered all questions prior to proceeding.

All participants granted permission to be audiotaped, and eight of the nine participants gave the researcher permission to use their legal names. Once a study participant signed the IRB approved Informed Consent to Participate in Research form, a copy of the interview questions was handed to the participant. Even though the participant had a copy of the interview questions, each question was read aloud by the researcher. When there were moments of silence or if the participant advanced to the next question, the researcher quietly intervened by saying, "The next question is…" Upon conclusion of the individual semi-structured interviews, which lasted between 90 and 240 minutes, each study participant was asked if she had any additional comments.

To ensure accuracy of recorded behaviors, gestures, and emotions of participants, field and observation notes were recorded (see Appendix C). As recommended by Merriam (2009), field notes should be particularly descriptive. Patton (2001) posits that field and observation notes methodologically take on the perspective of an "insider's view" (p. 268), and that the researcher "not only sees what is happening but also feels what it is like to be part of the setting" (p. 268). Therefore, to document objectively what was seen and felt during the interview process, field notes were recorded during brief 10 minute breaks, lunch breaks, and as soon as possible after the conclusion of each interview.

The researcher made it a point not to converse with anyone immediately after an interview, so as not to forget or "diffuse [the] importance" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 127) of the data. To further assist in accurately recording field and observation notes, the

researcher followed the suggestions of Taylor and Bogdan (as cited in Merriam, 2009) to help with recall:

- Pay attention;
- Shift from a "wide" angle to a "narrow" angle lens;
- Look for key words in [participants] remarks that will stand out later;
- Concentrate on the first and last remarks in each [interview]; and

  Mentally play back remarks and scenes during breaks in the talking and observing.

Equally important in recording field notes was the reflective component of note taking. Reflective comments were not as objective or factual as the observable field notes but, according to Merriam (2009), reflective notes are equally as important as field notes in data collection. Reflective comments included remarks on "feelings, reactions…initial interpretations, speculations…" (Merriam, 2009, p. 131). Reflective notes were noted in the margins of the field and observation form.

Additionally, for study participants who agreed to share visual data, a document analysis was completed for each item on a separate document analysis form (see Appendix D). Some visual data was handed directly to researcher for her examination while other visual data was merely shown. Documents received for analysis included family photos, migrant work site photos, family reunion programs, recognition awards, certificates, newspaper articles, diplomas/degrees, essays, uploaded emails, and DVD documentaries.

Following a participant's interview, a packet containing a summary transcript of an individual participant's interview as well as a self-addressed, stamped envelope was

forwarded via U.S. Postal Service to the interviewee for review and member checking to determine if the narrative accurately reported the participant's views. Participants were encouraged to add additional comments if they chose to do so and to return summary transcripts to the researcher in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope in a week from date of receipt. Of the nine study participants, three returned the summary transcript within a week. The others took as long as two weeks or longer to return the transcripts. Additional visual data were sent by two study participants. Only one participant added additional comments. Nonetheless, a follow-up interview was scheduled with each study participant as a final review.

Utilizing multiple research sources including interviews, member checking, field/ observations, reflective comments, and document analysis, provided triangulation to strengthen transferability of findings. Also, the multiplicity of sources helped corroborate the findings, as well as validate the accuracy of collected data.

Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis was individual former migrant African American females who aspired to find alternative paths for their lives and became successful in a variety of professional careers. Their personal stories chronicled their individual life experiences as they transitioned from migratory labor workers to specialized careers. As their stories unfolded, emphasis was placed on theories that emerged from their transformational journeys.

Study Timeline

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was granted December 5, 2013, and the first interview was conducted December 16, 2013. The final interview convened on

January 15, 2014. Transcriptions and member checking were completed February 15, 2014.

Data Analysis

There are several initial approaches that can be utilized in analyzing qualitative data. Aptly stated by Merriam (2009), "The key concern is understanding the phenomenon of interest from the participants' perspectives, not the researcher's" (p. 6). Strauss and Corbin (1998) convey the caveat that "qualitative analysis involves a radically different way of thinking about data [and requires] a more flexible, less preplanned, and less controlled approach to research" (p. 59). This researcher chose to begin the data analysis process by selecting narrative inquiry as the radically different qualitative method. Once it was resolved that narrative inquiry was the definitive qualitative method based on the research questions, the researcher then set boundaries for the narrative process.

Setting boundaries for the narrative process required the researcher to identify key characteristics of study participants in order to design an interview protocol (see Appendix B) which included an introduction, interview questions, and a closing. Each part of the interview protocol served a specific purpose: the introduction provided a brief overview of the research project and assured participants of complete confidentiality of both written and audio notes; interview questions were clearly stated with probes when necessary; and the closing thanked participants, delineated subsequent steps, and reemphasized confidentiality.

Prior to conducting the actual interview with study participants, the interview questions were field-tested. As a result of the field test, probes were added to three of the

questions and three additional questions were developed from eight field-tested questions. Also, interview questions 1, 2, 5, 7, and 8 were revised for clarity or expanded to elicit relevant data in support of the research questions. Ultimately, after analyzing the field test, 12 applicable interview questions materialized.

Data analysis resumed when interviews were completed. The culminating data was transcribed, reviewed, coded, and analyzed to detect significant patterns. After each individual interview, the audiotapes were played while the researcher created analytic memos recording her thoughts, feelings, and questions. Because the entire interviews were transcribed to synchronize with the audiotapes, this entailed the researcher carefully listening to audiotapes numerous times, as well as reading and rereading the transcripts over and over before the next step of data analysis could begin. The next step was to code the raw data.

Coding. Coding is the process of grouping raw transcripts or visual data into small clusters (Creswell, 2013) in the form of words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs and assigning codes or labels (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The researcher utilized a systematic approach to coding the data by starting with open coding (Straus & Corbin, 1998). This initial stage of data analysis, according to Strauss and Corbin, is termed open coding because the process is viewed as the opening up of the transcripts so that meanings and ideas are revealed. Ideas and meanings may also emerge from the field notes as well as reflective notes (Patton, 2001). Although Strauss and Corbin propose open coding for grounded theory, it worked well for this narrative inquiry because the researcher needed to conceptualize the transformational experiences of former migrant

African American females who transitioned from seasonal migratory labor to professional careers.

After reading through the participants' transcripts, Layder makes the suggestion that the researcher should not neglect the opportunity to "pre-code" (as cited in Saldaña, 2013, p. 19). The pre-coding process was done by "circling, highlighting, bolding, underlining, or coloring rich or significant participant quotes or passages" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 19) that influenced the research questions. Once codes were identified, a master list (Straus, 1987) of all the codes developed was maintained in both a writing tablet and on the researcher's computer. From this open-coding process, categories and subcategories of information were outlined. Weber (1990) explained that, "a category is a group of words with similar meanings or connotations" (p. 37).

Content analysis was the method used to analyze the data. By using content analysis, which utilizes word frequency counts, the researcher identified iterative relevant codes. However, content analysis, as described by Weber (1990), goes beyond counting words. Weber further asserted that the technique becomes more meaningful when data is categorized and coded, as the coding categories are derived directly from raw transcript data. The first major theme emerged from the iteration of the word "family." Family, or a derivative of the term that referenced immediate family members, was repeated most frequently, often in conjunction with or followed by "education" and "God", referenced as Jesus, the Holy Spirit or The Father as noted in the word frequentation chart (see Table 1). Integrating the number of times that the words family, education, and God were stated with quotes from the participants' stories, three major themes emerged from raw

data: consistent family support, adaptive coping skills, and catalyst for change. Two minor themes also surfaced: family valued education and strong religious belief.

Table 1

Word Frequentation Chart

Study Participant	# Times Family Repeated	# Times Education Repeated	# Times God Repeated
Betty Chapman-Nelson	87	25	36
Cora Edwards	97	59	43
Juanita Edwards	54	19	34
Gloria James	28	14	29
Estella Pyfrom	92	45	20
Carol Spencer	42	27	43
Thelma Waters	102	45	46
Gloria Whitley	42	9	52
Participant X	45	21	39

After categories and subcategories were formulated from raw data coding, then the researcher advanced to hierarchal coding, another step of data analysis. In utilizing hierarchal coding, the relationships between fragmented parts of both interesting and relevant information that directly related to the research questions were grouped into themes, also referenced by Creswell (2013) as categories. Additionally, Creswell (2005) presumed, "The identification of themes provides the complexity of a story and adds depth to the insight about understanding individual experiences" (p. 482). Creswell (2005) also stated that the analysis process involves collapsing minor themes into "a

small number of themes" (p. 482). As a result, three themes emerged: transformative learning, meaningful relationships with nonfamily members, and commitment to community service.

Once themes were identified, the researcher reread transcripts so that the themes could be compared to the written transcript and tape-recorded data. To ensure relevancy as well as accuracy, this labor-intensive process required the researcher to review the data numerous times to determine if emerging themes correctly reflected the transcript data provided by study participants.

Reliability and Validity

Assuming that each study participant brings a distinctive perspective to the study, reliability looks at the extent to which the results can be confirmed or corroborated by others (Creswell, 2005; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Distinctive practices such as, inter-rater reliability, trustworthiness, and triangulation were used to augment the reliability and validity of the study. As noted by Creswell (2013), member checking includes "taking data, analyses, interpretations, and conclusions back to the participants so that they can judge the accuracy and credibility of the account" (p. 252). Once an interview was transcribed, the researcher's next step was to member check by providing a summary transcript of each participant's interview to specific interviewees for review to determine if the narratives truthfully reported her views. Summary transcripts were mailed to study participants via U.S. Postal Service in a sealed envelope that contained a stamped-addressed return envelope so that participants could make corrections, deletions, or add information, if desired, prior to mailing packet back to researcher.

The researcher had an established protocol to ensure reliability as well. On the evening following each interview, the researcher reviewed field and observation notes and made additional comments if needed. Also, individual audiotapes were examined for clarity and voice quality.

In addition to member checking, peer review was employed for validity. Peer review involves seeking the services of a trusted professional to play "devil's advocate" (Creswell, 2013, p. 251) as both researcher and reviewer to code raw data. The peer reviewer was a trusted professional colleague from a community college. As peer reviewer, she took a peripheral look and asked questions about the data. The peer reviewer's key role was to "scan some of the raw data and assess whether the findings [were] plausible based on the data" (Merriam, 2009, p. 220). The peer reviewer also coded some of the raw data and compared her codes to the researcher's coding. Both researcher and peer reviewer produced the same categories from the coding process.

Establishing trustworthiness between researcher and participants was an important aspect of validity in this qualitative study. So that logical conclusions could be formulated, it was imperative to collect accurate and factual data from participants. Therefore, trust between researcher and participant was critical. Because the researcher is a native of the study's research setting and knows the culture of the close-knit farming community, these factors contributed to building a trusting relationship with participants. Also, the researcher, at all times was honest, open, and dependable as she followed-through in a timely manner. With trust between researcher and participant, open communication ensued.

Finally, validity was established through triangulation. Generally, triangulation is defined as a method used in qualitative research to check the validity in studies by analyzing the research question or questions from multiple perspectives (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009; Miles & Haberman, 1994; Patton, 2001). Utilizing methodological triangulation, the researcher was able to cross-reference findings by collecting data from interviews, observations, field notes, and documentaries. Visual data such as photos, recognition plaques, programs, family Bibles, newspaper clippings, television specials, and Palm Beach County statistical reports provided triangulation. The multiplicity of resources from different perspectives allowed the researcher to corroborate findings. Additional benefits of triangulation suggest "increasing confidence in research data, creating innovative ways of understanding a phenomenon, revealing unique findings, challenging or integrating theories, and providing a clearer understanding of the problem" (Thurmond, 2001, p. 254).

Chapter Summary

The research design for this study was a narrative inquiry. A stratified purposeful sample of nine African American women who were former migrants provided discourse that chronicled their life experiences as they transitioned from migratory labor to professional careers. As their stories unfolded, emphasis was placed on themes derived from their experiences.

Separate face-to-face interviews consisting of 12 questions and five probes was the primary method used to collect data. Additionally, data was collected from field and observation notes as well as document review. In sum, data analysis followed these steps: transcribe interviews to synchronize with audiotapes, and then pre/open code and

review codes to detect patterns. Once patterns emerged, the next steps of data analysis were content analysis and hierarchal coding, so the researcher could examine the material for emerging themes. Finally, reliability and validity were established by member checking, inter rater reliability, trustworthiness, and triangulation.

IV. FINDINGS

Introduction

As this narrative inquiry sought to discover the most significant factors that contributed to the transformational experiences of African American women portrayed in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960) as migrants who aspired to find alternative paths for their lives and became successful in a variety of professional careers, the emergent themes were supported by the individual participants' stories. Research questions were guided by and focused on identifying similarities and differences among the transformational experiences of study participants. Both central and sub research questions were supported by listening to and analyzing the unmuted voices of former migrant African American women as they told their stories.

Specific research questions, which led to the thematic findings, were grouped in two categories: central research questions and sub research questions. They are as follows:

Central Research Questions

The following central research questions guided this study:

1. What are the similarities in the transformational experiences among successful African American women whose lives were portrayed in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960)?

2. What are the differences in the transformational experiences among successful African American women whose lives were portrayed in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960)?
3. What factors contributed most significantly to the transformational experience of African American women who left the cycle of migratory labor and became successful in professional careers?

Sub-questions. The following sub-questions were also examined:

1. What similarities or differences were there between the demographic factors (e.g., age, number of siblings, position in the family, crops harvested, educational level, career, and/or religious/spiritual affiliation) of the migrant women that were successful?
2. How did these factors influence the transformational experience of the African American women who were former migrants?
3. What impact did self-efficacy have on these former migrant women's motivation to succeed?
4. For those who were successful, where did they demonstrate their successes (e.g., the disciplines they choose to work, their career paths, and their responsibility to others growth, etc.)?

Brief Biographical Overview of Study Participants

A succinct biographical sketch of the study participants will be the starting point for the findings of this study. The eight of the nine African American study participants, all born and raised in the western part of Palm Beach County, Florida in an area known as The Glades, granted the researcher permission to use their birth or married legal names.

As signed and reflected on the IRB approved Informed Consent to Participate in Research form, they are Betty Chapman-Nelson, Cora Edwards, Juanita Edwards, Gloria James, Estella Pyfrom, Carol Spencer, Thelma Waters, and Gloria Whitley. One participant checked on the Informed Consent to Participate in Research form "I do not agree ___to reveal my name/identity," so she will be known as Participant X.

Although the study participates originated from The Glades area of Palm Beach County, only two currently live there. The others reside in various locations: one lives in Aiken, South Carolina; one lives in Brandon, Florida; one lives in Indiantown, Florida; one lives in Miami, Florida; and five live in West Palm Beach, Florida. The youngest study participant is 56, and the oldest is 76. Betty Chapman-Nelson, Cora Edwards, Juanita Edwards (Cora Edwards and Juanita Edwards are not related), Estella Pyfrom, and Carol Spencer completed master's degrees. Gloria Whitley and Gloria James acquired bachelor's degrees while Thelma Waters and Participant X accumulated college credits, but did not complete a degree.

Study participants have worked in a variety of careers from classroom teachers to executives. Betty Chapman- Nelson is a retired pre-school teacher and adjunct professor at Palm Beach Community College. Cora Edwards retired as a middle school guidance counselor. Juanita Edwards, a former middle school principal, retired as Charter School Director for Palm Beach County School District. Gloria Whitley is a retired middle school teacher. Participant X retired as store manager of a major retail store. Estella Pyfrom retired from the public school district, but currently works fulltime for her charity. Thelma Waters is a retired daycare owner and community activist. Carol Spencer is a registered nurse and CEO/owner of Aman Institute, a nursing assistant

training school. Gloria James currently works as a court record specialist, and is the youngest of the study participants.

Although the study participants were born into impoverished migrant families, only two were reared exclusively by single mothers. As a teenager, one was the product of a divorce, one mother predeceased the family, leaving the father to rear five children alone, and five study participants were reared in a two-family household. Of the nine study participants, one never married, one is widowed, two are married, and five are divorced. They all have biological children.

Finding: Consistent Family Support

A question that continues to haunt some sociologists and many children featured in the 1960 documentary *Harvest of Shame* is why some people were able to leave migrant work and achieve professional careers when so many others were left behind (Friendly et al., 1960). After pondering this question, and listening to the life stories of former migrants who were able to escape the migratory work cycle that their parents were unable to escape, the researcher can conclude that their individual home life differed from many other migrant children. As stated by Thelma Waters, "I was raised in a two-parent household where my father did not take responsibilities as head of the household for granted." Other study participants who were reared in a two-parent household had similar mental frames and viewed their father as the supportive and authoritative family leader. Despite the harsh working and living conditions, there was family cohesiveness, cooperation, and support.

Whether in an open barn or in their Florida home base, the parents of the African American women in this study created an interconnected family unit where their children

felt that they were loved and that they mattered. Fully aware of their limited economic resources, their children became their priority. "No matter how difficult life was, my parents encouraged us and showed us love," stated Thelma Waters. Betty Chapman-Nelson expressed her mother's display of genuine maternal support and love in these words:

> [My mother] would take me to the fields—even as a baby. I was put in a box and mom showed me how she tied a rope around her waist and would pull me in a box, behind her, picking the beans. Or, she would set me under the sunflower branches until she picked up to that area and then kept that system going until she finished for the day. So, I missed a whole year of schooling because I didn't have anybody to keep me and she didn't trust us with too many people. She was hands on.

Keeping the family together and working collectively as a unit is one finding of this study that debunks the myth perpetuated by Lewis (1966) who concluded in his research that, "much of the behavior accepted in the culture of poverty goes counter to cherished ideals of the larger society…their instability, lack of order, direction, and organization" (p. 19). Lewis (1966) suggested that the behaviors of people who live in poverty are "clearly patterned and reasonably predicted" (p. 19). Lewis (1966) also stated that, "a high incidence of common-law marriages in this country and of households headed by women is thought to be distinctive of Negro family life in this country" (p. 20).

Of the nine study participants, only two were reared by single mothers. However, living within the structural framework of migratory labor, the parents of these former

migrants provided a stable, organized, and orderly lifestyle within the family structure. This is epitomized by the father of Gloria James, whose mother died of kidney disease when Gloria was 11 years old; her father remained single until all five of his children were self-sufficient adults. This self-sufficiency was evident when they either finished college or were self-supporting. In regard to Betty Chapman Nelson's parents, she stated, "the biggest blessing I have ever had was that I had my own momma, and my own dad. I didn't have a step daddy. I didn't have a step momma." Betty Chapman-Nelson added to this enduring support of migrant families by this observation:

> …seeing how hard people had to work for what they could get or for what they had…how people worked so hard to provide rather than walking off or running off, they wanted to maintain and keep their family regardless of how hard the work was, they wanted to stay and tug it out and keep families together. The parents didn't leave their children behind; they tugged their kids along with them. The parents had to make a living.

Thelma Waters' father was also a seasonal cane cutter—known then and now as "the most perilous work in America is the harvest by hand of sugar cane in South Florida" (Wilkinson, 1990, p. 3). As a cane cutter, her father often told the family stories of how difficult the work was and how razor sharp sugar cane leaves would slice through his skin. "The cane was not burned then as it is today to minimize injuries; the cane cutters did not wear shins or any protective gear," according to Thelma Waters. As a seasonal cane worker, she explained how her father would walk along the railroad tracks to and from Indiantown to The Glades area to his job so that he could be with his family

nightly. With emphasis, she stated, "While other family men would come home on the weekend or not at all, my dad always came home to be with us."

These families tried to do everything reciprocally: worked in the fields as a unit when possible, traveled on the season in concert, ate dinner together, worshipped together, and prayed regularly. "When I married and had children, we did the same thing," Thelma Waters added.

Originally from Georgia, Thelma Waters" father migrated to The Glades area in the 1930s to do farm work, as farm work in Florida provided a greater opportunity for him to support his family. Thelma Waters explained:

> My dad came down first. He came down to work first for two years and went back to get my mother, brother, and sister. I wasn't born yet. I was born on a sack of hay in Virginia when my family was on the season working on a potato farm. My dad would often talk of the housing conditions for migrants. When on the season, we lived in an open barn with a partition between families.

Estella Pyfrom, Thelma Waters, and Gloria Whitley, the oldest of the study participants, expressed identical travel details for their family. Describing how the entire family would travel on the back of trucks "like cattle" from South Florida to northern states such as New York, Virginia, and/or Pennsylvania was voiced by three study participants as if recited precisely by one voice.

Thelma Waters stated, "No busses were provided. Riding on the bed of trucks without protection from the elements was a normal mode of transportation from one crop to the other as well as from one state to another." Continuing the story, Gloria Whitley affirmed, "…riding on the back of trucks they used to build benches on the truck for you

to sit on. You had two on the side, one on the middle and a canvas on top of the truck." Estella Pyfrom remembered:

> …the people that got on first got the premium seats because you had the back of the truck to rest your back…the two benches down the middle are back to back. The people on both sides of the benches rested their backs up against each other…so they supported each other's back bracing one another.
>
> So people didn't argue, you know, like move over. It was as tight as they could get in there. And of course they didn't take up seats for children. The children just sat on the parents' laps. When they got sleepy, they would share each other's laps. At night we would sleep on the floor across the feet of the people on a blanket or a pillow or something to make us comfortable. And we did that all night, and we were comfortable. We went to sleep. And the adults braced each other and they went to sleep.

Although many Americans remember the African proverb popularized by Hillary Clinton in her booked title, *It Takes a Village* (1996), the true embodiment of this proverb was, without fail, practiced by the families in this study. Upon arrival to a work camp, all families, children included, would band together to prepare the living space that were referenced by six of the study participants as being akin to "slave quarters," "a converted chicken coop," (see Figure 3) or a "a barn for animals". As expressed by Estella Pyfrom:

> It was a very, very long journey, but when we got to New York, the facilities were not that great. It was okay for that time because it was in our world of experience. We didn't know too much outside of that box. When we arrived, the first thing we saw was a big pile of wood chips. Just like a dump truck backed up to the

> place in front of the building and just dumped out the chips…then provided for us also was a big pile of what we called at that time kroker bags, but I think they refer to the fabric now as burlap. We would have to cut those bags open and hand sews them together. My mother did and the other female ladies there had to do the same thing. And then there was always a big barn there on the camp where they stored the hay for the winter for the cows, you know, when they harvested the hay they would put it in the barn to feed the cows in the winter. But we would use that hay to make mattresses. Our parents would sew the bags together to make a mattress.

Support and concern for their children was an ongoing process as exemplified by study participants' parents who would subordinate their comfort and slumber for their children. Juanita Edwards, tears streaming down her face, told of the heartwarming efforts of her mother as she attempted to free the hay mattresses of insects. After the children had gone to sleep, and the kerosene lights were out, Juanita Edwards said, "My mom used to sit up at night because when you turn the lights out at night, the bugs would come out and she wouldn't sleep. She'd just sit there and pick the bugs—because they would bite you." Sacrificing sleep for herself, staying in these one room work sites, sleeping on hay, as expressed by Juanita Edwards, her single mother did what she had to do to support her family. Estella Pyfrom further expressed:

> Also the wood chips were used to make a fire in a wooden stove usually in a little room about – I'd say about 5 x 6 or 8 x 10 with one or two wooden stoves in it or maybe one wooden stove with four to six burners.

> Once we got the beds together then we would settle in with whatever else we had there, but for awhile, the first years, there were no stoves in the building. The building was a converted barn or a converted chicken coop. And then they would just partition off the rooms but no insulation was in the rooms, and we had to kind of make conveniences for us.
>
> Imagine adults in one room with children, young children. They were smart enough to be able to hang partitions with ropes across the room so the adults could have some privacy. So it was pretty interesting. The statement that it takes a village to raise a child, the village did take pride in each other's children. We, as kids at the time, respected other adults because we knew the decision they made would be supported by our families, so we didn't disrespect any adult.

Pyfrom, Waters, Whitley, and Participant X expressed how unclean the living facilities were. Therefore, as they told, the adults would band together to clean the designated quarters for sleeping, cooking, and using the bathroom from work site to work site. "They had one kitchen for all of us to share and one bathroom," according to Participant X, and "these bathrooms had no bathtubs or showers." Once the cleaning was completed, parents would cook whatever provisions they had and share with those who did not have food. Estella Pyfrom added to the migrant "it takes a village" experience by saying:

> They looked out for each other's children. They fed us if we were hungry. They would share. It was just an atmosphere, an environment of sharing. It was just a neighborhood that looked after each other's children; that cared about each other's

children and the families. Someone got sick, the neighbor is going to come see about them. So, it was just a good situation.

Sub-theme: family valued education. An underlining theme of consistent family support was the value study participants' parents placed on education. Because seasonal crops had to be harvested when they were ripe for the picking, packing, or cutting, school attendance was interrupted for most migrant children. They often started school late and left school early to travel with parents for seasonal work. "We were never in Belle Glade when school started. And, we were never in Belle Glade when school ended. We had to migrate—leave early, before June and not return until after September," stated Juanita Edwards.

However, the value placed on education made some parents take extreme measures. As demonstrated by Participant X, whose parents supported her efforts to get an education, even though neither one of her parents graduated from high school. Her father finished third grade, and her mother finished eighth grade. Unlike many other farm families where older children often missed school to take care of younger siblings while their parents worked in the field, she never missed a day of school to babysit a younger sibling. However, during school holidays and on the weekends, they all worked to harvest seasonal crops. To offset Participant X missing the first day of school when corn still needed to be harvested in New York until September and/or October, she said, "My mother would send me home on a Trailways bus to be in school on the first day. She did this because I made good grades." This opportunity was not an option for her older brother because her mother said he did not make good grades. Participant X would live with her maternal grandmother until her mother returned from "the season." When

asked how old she was when she started traveling on commercial busses from upstate New York to Belle Glade, Florida. She replied, "nine." That is a distance of 1,369 miles.

Consistent family support did not always start and end with the parents of the study participants, as siblings were also supportive. When Juanita Edwards and Betty Chapman-Nelson became nontraditional college students, although married with children, both shared stories of not only parents supporting their endeavors to finish college, but also siblings and spouses. As stated by Juanita Edwards:

> Well, for years I still worked as a farm worker and I attended school. My mom, she would get the clothes and she would wash them and iron them every week. She would cook dinner sometimes when I had to attend class. I could go by and pick up the dinner and have it for the family. My brother, as I was studying in school, he would come by on Friday, he would give me gas money, to make sure that I had money to buy me lunch and when I interned, he made sure he brought me money every week so he could make sure I could eat and buy gas. My oldest brother, he would bring money by if you needed a top or any type of clothing to wear. He would make sure that was in place. My husband kept the children and we just worked it together as a family.

Listening to her mother, Betty Chapman-Nelson believed "education was the way out." Her mother had a fourth grade education, but Chapman-Nelson indicated that her mother was the "force behind" her going back to school to get a college education. After working in the fields from Florida to New York for more than 20 years following high school graduation, Chapman-Nelson attended her first college class at Palm Beach Junior College. "Preaching education," as told by Chapman-Nelson, was "our household

sermon." Being the youngest in the family worked to her advantage in her close-knit family. Her older brothers had moved away from The Glades area, but they "constantly sent $20.00 or $30.00 to help me make it out." She spoke of the pride her entire family felt that at least one of them was attending college and coming out of the fields.

According to Carol Spencer, this pride also resonated from the community. Because she and her oldest sister were transitioning out of migrant farm work at the same time, they, along with their father and the community-at-large, supported each other. Carol Spencer marveled at the encouragement from the community. She stated:

> Even the community rallied around individuals who were transitioning from migrant work to going to college or learning a new skill or a trade. I never got the sense that it was frowned upon or discouraged. It was always a good feeling we got from people—our community, our family, our neighbors, our friends.

Values instilled in Thelma Waters from her father became her own reflections. "My father spoke to his children often about the importance of achieving an education." He would repeatedly say:

> All of you gonna graduate high school. Some will go to college. They can cut your hands off, your feet, gouge out your eyes. If you got it up here (pointing to her head), no one can take it away from you. As long as you got a brain, you can make a living for yourself.

Comprising a family of 15—parents, 10 biological children, two foster siblings, and one cousin—they lived in a two-room shanty. However, Thelma Waters' parents never wavered when it came to their children's education. Living in the midst of statistics that reported that only one out every 5,000 migrant children finished high school (Friendly et

al., 1960), the 13 children in Thelma Waters immediate family all finished high school and six of them graduated from college.

Not one of the parents of the study participants finished college or high school. However, as supported by research, parents play a key role in their children's success (Fan & Chen, 1999). Parental involvement, whether living in poverty or wealth, is important in children desires to learn, their attitudes toward school, and their aspirations (Fan, 2001). Fan's study comparing middle and high school White students to inner-city middle and high school African American students whose parents were involved in their activities, revealed that parental involvement promoted respect, achievement, and positive extra-curricular experiences.

Consistent family support finding summary. Whether in the home or in the field, consistent family support provided the study participants with an impetus to seek a better life. Although the parents' study participants were migrants most, or all, of their adult working lives, they did not want their children to have the same fate. Betty Chapman-Nelson's mother inculcated the perils of seasonal field work daily by telling her two youngest children, "hard work in the fields would tear down your body. The only way out is to get an education." When Chapman-Nelson sought a higher education, her entire family rallied around the two younger siblings, so they could leave field work. Both did. Her sister has a Ph.D. in theology. When Estella Pyfrom's family would go on the "season," her father would light a kerosene lamp at night so his children could read any worn or used book given to them. Reading was a nightly ritual for her family.

Although these African American women former migrants as children were often socially isolated and economically deprived, consistent family support made them feel

loved, secure, and significant. Their challenging lifestyle, as quoted from study participant Estella Pyfrom, became their "world of experience." Consequently, supportive family members accompanied them as they confronted challenges as migrant workers and instilled the optimism that their potential for success was yet to be realized.

Finding: Adaptive Coping Skills

Gonzales and Kim (1997) reported that, "ethnic minority children are disproportionately exposed to stressful life conditions such as family poverty, diminished community resources, and racial discrimination" (p. 481). Within the routine of migratory labor, young children were exposed to social problems such as "school dropout, teenage parenthood, alcohol and substance abuse, juvenile delinquency and youth violence" (Gonzales & Kim, 1997, p. 482) on a regular basis while on the work camps. Purportedly, the aforementioned social problems occur to a greater extent in some minority communities (Gonzales & Kim, 1997). Migrant work camps were not exempt. Participant X stated, "There were often fights, stabbings, and lots of people having sex all around you."

Being migrants, study participants could not be removed from their environment, so they learned to cope in their environment. Generally, to cope for participants in this study meant to search for the positive. Further explicated by Richard Lazarus (1998), a prominent psychology professor, coping also involves "attempts to change the person-environment realities" (p. 361) as well as a way "to test reality and retain hope" (p. 211).

The reality of material poverty did not obstruct poverty of the spirit, as there were self-initiated coping skills to distract from the physical environment. There were no playgrounds or toys for migrant children who had to travel alongside their parents on

busses from state-to-state. Every inch of bus or truck space was utilized for workers who carried their belongings in bags or pillowcases. "There were no such things as suitcases, and boxes took up too much room," as remembered by Estella Pyfrom. "[Children] had to sit on [their] parents lap," according to four of the study participants. However, no matter how restrictive the space, the imagination was wide. Devising creative games to play from their work environment offered entertainment for study participants at a very early age. Estella Pyfrom described how she and her siblings used their imagination to make play out of work:

> We kids would have to go in the barn to get the hay so our parents could make mattresses. We had a lot of fun doing that because we would go way up in the barn. The hay was stacked up real high and we would dive over it. It was really fun for us.

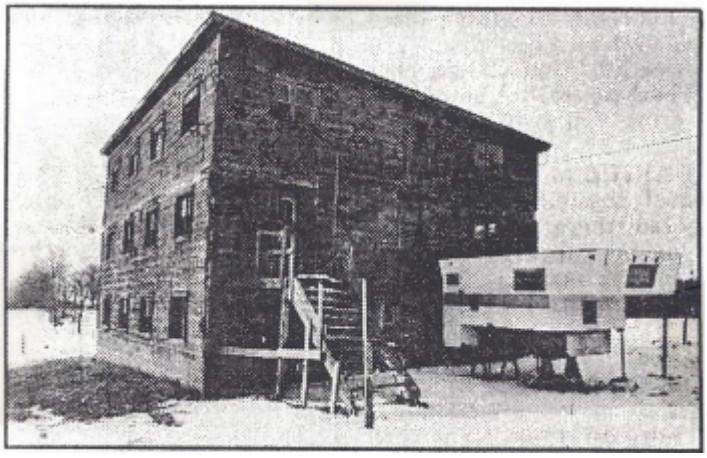

Figure 3. Converted chicken coop.

Estella Pyfrom further explained what was done to seek comfort in their crowded sleeping quarters, which was often a converted chicken coop (see Figure 3):

> As kids, we learned to share how to sleep together, how to take one bed and to be comfortable with four kids in that bed because one's head would be at this end of the bed while the other head is that one, and the third head would be —so you'd have two heads at one end of the bed and two heads at the other. And we were very comfortable. We didn't fight. We didn't complain. We just went to sleep because we were comfortable.
>
> We learned at a very early age to do what we had to do to survive and to be able to live and communicate with others.

Traveling on the back of trucks or in a converted school bus with three to a seat was an exhausting journey that took five to six days. A journey filled with mechanical breakdowns, sleeping on the side of roads at night, drinking water from springs, taking bathroom breaks in the woods, tending to motion sickness, and encountering the occasional traffic accident. "Because we were young, we enjoyed just riding on the bus. We would sing songs and interact with other families," stated Juanita Edwards.

Licensed clinical social worker and laughter therapist Enda Junkins (2013) posits that, "Laughter is the human gift for coping and for survival" (para. 2). However, the benefits of humor and laughter are not a twenty-first century phenomenon, the Bible states, "A cheerful heart is good medicine: but a crushed spirit dries up the bones" (Proverbs 17:22, New International Version). Maintaining a cheerful disposition was a coping mechanism used by most of the study participants. For example, Gloria Whitley coped by finding humor in her migrant travel experience. In observing her traveling arrangements, she described how difficult it would be for some people to sleep on the bus, and how their head would nod and "drop with a quick jerk. We made fun out of

that." Funny things like that would provide a distraction, and we would "just laugh," according to Gloria Whitley.

Betty Chapman-Nelson traveled the season as an adult for more than 20 years after graduating from high school. For her, seasonal farm work gave her the opportunity to see different parts of the country that were unknown to her. In a loud excited voice, she stated:

> Boy, was it an awakening. I got to see the world…because all I knew was The Glades area. I wanted to venture out. By visiting other places, I enjoyed all the towns I went through. I looked at it as a tour site for me.

Betty Chapman-Nelson described the living conditions, where the entire work crew lived, as "an open barn that we had to section off." To her it was akin to living in "a dormitory." Through transference of reality, Betty Chapman-Nelson, as a college-aged adult, coped by relating living in an open barn to a college dormitory. There were some similarities in that college dormitory living gives students the chance to share their rooms with students who have similar academic interests. The difference was when those living in college dormitories awoke early to attend classes; she was already in the field. College dormitories have bathrooms, so there was no need to go to "the bushes" to relieve themselves. College dormitories had showers unlike migrant work camps. Hands jubilantly waving and barely able to contain her excitement, she reminisced:

> When you are happy and not sad at the situation where you are, you make the best of it. It was just like living in a dormitory to us when we got the chance to partition the barn off. Each person knew what their private space was, so we knew not to go beyond our shower curtains or whatever partition we had up.

Because study participants were not constantly told they were poor, they did not internalize their situation. Not fully aware of the dearth of material possessions, this possibly made it easier for them to assimilate (Dewald, 1982; Wachtel, 1980) as well as learn from their experience (Kolb, 1984). Applying Kolb's experiential learning theory, study participants learned to adapt based on knowledge acquired through their migratory experiences. Kolb also posits that learning involves the acquisition of abstract concepts that can be applied in a variety of situations, as evident by creative play and humor.

The researcher previously cited Gonzales and Kim (1997) whose research reported that "ethnic minority children are disproportionately exposed to stressful life conditions" (p. 481). These stressful conditions did not always surround the migratory work cycle, as exemplified by Estella Pyfrom:

> One challenge was when I was nine my grandfather died, and we had to move to Quincy, Florida in the country. There were no lights. No inside running water. We learned how to make a light by putting kerosene in a bottle and burn a rag. But we read; we got our homework, and we didn't stay behind.

As migrants, Estella Pyfrom's family often traveled and lived in locations without basic facilities, so when the family temporarily relocated to a small town in North Florida, they adapted to their new environment. This adaptation involved working in the fields, attending a new school, and surviving the only way they knew—living off the meager income farm work provided, but "never complaining." While growing up, "I never heard my parents complain," and even today, "I never complain," stated Estella Pyfrom. One of the lessons learned from her parents that is much valued by her is "that

we learned how to work for what we wanted." Espousing further lessons learned from her father, she had this to say:

> It's not always how much money you have; it's the attitude that you bring to the table and what you are willing to do. My dad used to always say, "if you expect to have anything don't expect for anyone to hand it to you on a silver platter. You got to work for it." So hard work is a part of all our vocabulary.

Despite the portrayal of migrant farm work in *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960) as one of the most demoralizing occupations, many study participants adapted and found dignity in hard work. They viewed farm work as a means to earn an honest living with dignity. Dignity is defined as "1. The quality or state of being worthy of esteem and respect. 2. Inherent nobility and worth: the dignity of honest labor" (The Free Dictionary, 2014, para. 1). Study participant Carol Spencer had this to say about her positive experience of being a migrant:

> I am grateful though that I did have the experience of being a migrant worker because what it does is it teaches you how to work and how to feel proud, pride about working, no matter where the setting is. It is honest. It is good work. It's hard work. But it is rewarding too.

Acclimatization to hard work imbued study participant Cora Edwards with dignity and pride, so that she was "able to go out and work". Yet, there were not many jobs in Belle Glade, Florida, that did not involve manual labor regardless of your attitude. The availability of field work provided ample opportunities for honest work that she could perform well. Whether packing corn or picking beans, this was a way to contribute to her

family's income. Over time she was talented enough to develop different skills for different crops and found herself employed when others were not. Expressing pride about the skills she acquired as a migrant, Cora Edwards had this to say:

> Being a migrant was being independent. Being able to go out and work. I felt that if I didn't make it with education, I knew that I had skills I could use. I could go out in the fields. I could go out and pick things. I could pack corn. I can do all those things. That hard labor made me strong.

Adaptive coping skills finding summary. Material poverty was the reality for study participants as they were partially raised on migrant work camps that were void of basic housing essentials such as running water, inside toilets, or private living quarters. However, they witnessed how their compliant parents tailored their surroundings to meet fundamental needs whether in their home base or "on the season." "My parents never complained; they made do with what they had," stated Estella Pyfrom. As children, study participants observed and emulated the behavior of their parents. This resulted in adaptive coping mechanisms, such as creative play, humor, and assimilation to counterbalance the physical environment.

Finding: Catalyst for Change

Consistent family support as well as adaptive coping skills contributed to the study participants transforming their lives. However, no amount of familial love, protection, encouragement, and adaptability could protect them from what has been described as "the inhumane treatment" of farmers and crew chiefs. Thelma Waters described what she considered inhumane:

> Those people were so inhumane. There was no consideration for you as a person. When you were working, you couldn't leave your job site to go to the bathroom. Well there were no bathrooms. You had to use the bushes. When you asked the person over you to go to the bathroom, he said "no." Workers had to go twos. So, I would have to hold my urine until somebody else had to go. Unless they gave you permission, you couldn't go to the bathroom. That's why so many migrant farm women have problems with their bladder today. The person over you would decide whether you could go to the bushes. Then you would be timed. No matter how long you were gone, he would say, "Y'all been gone a mighty long time. I gotta dock pay from you black SOBs." We were only paid 50 cents an hour. Most times we worked six days a week. If we asked to take a day off, we were told if our "Black asses weren't on the truck, don't come back the next day." Those were some mean White folks back then.

Although resigned to a life of farm work, a catalyst for change occurred in 1967 for Thelma Waters after being introduced to the American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker advocacy group. With tears streaming down her cheeks, Thelma Waters told the story of the tragedy responsible for her developing a relationship with the American Friends:

> The same year I lost my 17-month old baby. I left my sleeping baby home with his father, so I could go to church. While in church, a relative rushed in to say my husband had to rush the baby to the hospital. In a panic I rushed to leave, but was startled by what I saw clear as day. On the white rear wall in the church, I could clearly see the word POISON. God seemed to be preparing me for the inevitable.

It was not unusual in the 1960s for farmers to spray crops while migrants worked in the fields. Sometimes, the same insecticides used in the fields were given to farm workers to use in their homes to kill rodents and other pests (Wilkinson, 1990). Thelma Waters' husband was given some parathion to be used to kill pests. However, he was unaware of the deadly fumes in an empty container that he left inside the home.

Thelma Waters concluded this tragic story by saying, "When I arrived at the hospital, the doctor said there was nothing he could do to save his life." The baby died after sniffing an empty container of parathion. The same year a similar incident took the life of a 16-year old girl, according to Thelma Waters. "Paralyzed with grief, I was unable to function for months after the death of my child. My parents and husband tried everything they knew to do to help me, but nothing helped."

Then, there was triumph over tragedy. Thelma Waters' mother was introduced to an organization—American Friends Service Committee—looking for a migrant to be on its board. In a last ditch effort to help her grieving daughter, Thelma Waters' mother pleaded, "You need to stop all this mourning and crying. Get out do something. You would be perfect for these people looking for someone to work with them to help people like us." The mission of the American Friends Service Committee states:

> The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is a Quaker organization that promotes lasting peace with justice, as a practical expression of faith in action. Drawing on continuing spiritual insights and working with people of many backgrounds, we nurture the seeds of change and respect for human life that transform social relations and systems. (American Friends Service Committee, 2012, para. 1)

Thelma Waters' authenticity and willingness to accept new experiences made her life-changing transformation possible. She summed up the catalyst for her transformational journey as follows:

> After going to Lake Worth for an interview, I accepted the job with the American Friends Service Committee. Because of the exposure I had with the Quakers, my life changed forever. The exposure I had was like an umbrella opened up for me, and I held it out for my children to come under the same thing.

Feeling desperate after the migrant lifestyle resulted in a teenage pregnancy for Participant X, the pregnancy became the catalyst for her transformation. She said, "I was desperate and determined that this was a mistake I would not repeat. I felt trapped in this lifestyle. I knew then that the only way out for me was marriage." Therefore, the self-initiated plan for this academically high performing student was to marry someone who was not a migrant. Not being able to attend school after her pregnancy, which was the culture of the time, her mother, aware of the cultural norms, proclaimed that Participant X and her unborn child would be migrants for life just like her. During the sixties, there were limited opportunities for a high school dropout in a small, agricultural town.

However, Participant X had other goals in mind and made plans to escape the migratory lifestyle. Her plan entailed the following:

> The year after my daughter's birth—when the time came for the yearly migrant trip, my baby was too young to travel, and we had no one to take care of her. So, I was allowed to remain home with her at my grandmother's. When my mother went on this trip, it was during this time that I purposely asked my grandmother to sign the necessary papers for me to get married, and she did. Her signature was

accepted. I was delighted. When my mother returned, I was married. She was not very happy.

Not willing to give in to her mother's prophesy; she attended night school and acquired her GED. Her then husband was in the military, so she moved to a military base in Texas to be with her husband. Attending college, but never obtaining a degree, she worked as an operation manager, an assistant store manager, and a store manager of a major department chain.

As storied from one study participant to the other, each had an event, a word, or an epiphany that served as a catalyst to transform their lives. The catalyst for study participant Juanita Edwards' transformation was initiated by her husband and finalized by her son. Acquiring a GED after becoming a teenage mother, the only work Juanita Edwards was familiar with was farm labor. Married with three young children, she had purchased a home, and determined to maintain what she had worked hard to acquire. She left her home at 6:00 a.m. to go "on the street waiting for the labor bus to come by and pick me up." Juanita Edwards had vivid memories of the day her husband watched her from a window as she left her home in the dark. When she returned from her day labor job, her husband said, "Today was your last day."

"Last day where?" she asked.

"Last day doing farm work," he asserted.

She retorted, "Are you crazy? We just bought a new house and a new car. How can that be my last day?"

Juanita Edward's husband suggested that she start looking somewhere else. She secured a job in a store, and the following year she started taking classes at the Glades

Campus of Palm Beach Junior College. With family support, she acquired her Associate of Arts degree and was satisfied until her oldest son, who was attending the University of Florida, came home for Christmas break. Conversing in the kitchen with her son, she proudly announced that she was "getting ready to start substituting." Juanita Edward's son responded to his mother by saying, "Mom, you can't start anything and not finish it." Those words of wisdom from her son were the catalyst for change. Responding to his encouragement, she said, "I listened and enrolled in Florida Atlantic University that January. It took me nine years to get that degree.

The catalyst that set the stage for Betty Chapman-Nelson's transformation occurred when she was promoted from a teacher's aide to an instructional aide. Attending Palm Beach Junior College was a big step for her where she began to feel proud of her accomplishments, but, according to Betty Chapman-Nelson, nothing could compare to the "light on my parents' faces to know that their last child had come out of the fields and now working in a school system where it was nice, air-conditioned, and working with other professional people." Becoming an instructional aide came with an increase in pay and more responsibilities, but her mother helped her realize the monumental changes that were happening, by saying: "You dress nice. You clean. You don't have to worry about all the dirt blowing in your eyes and you don't have to worry about leaving early in the morning or working in the rain."

According to Betty Chapman-Nelson, her mother's words were an "Aw Haw Moment" that resonated within her core, boosted her self-esteem, and laid the foundation for her transformation by pursuing higher education. She stated:

> I was climbing a career ladder. It was so awesome. I felt good about myself. I said I was a migrant first. I was Black. I was young, 18 when I got pregnant. I still was able to go back and get my education.

From that point, Betty Chapman-Nelson stated that she developed a thirst for education and did not stop until she received her master's degree. It is her desire to pursue her doctorate degree in honor of her mother who "lighted" her passion for continued self-improvement.

Decisions are made every day. Adults make small and big decisions. Many adults prior to making a decision will pray for guidance to make the correct decision when in distress. Sometimes when people feel the path laid out for them is not suited for them, they pray to a higher power. As a migrant child whose parents, grandparents, and all known relatives were migrants, it was possible that Cora Edwards felt there was no other career path in life. Not knowing that transformation takes place over time, Cora Edwards prayed for a miracle—one that would take her out of the lifestyle of migratory labor.

Thus, the catalyst to transform Cora Edwards' life and set the path for her to seek an alternative path happened when she was rather young, approximately 15 years old. After a particularly difficult day of field work, she looked up in the sky and reflected on the hard times her mother encountered:

> I saw my grandparents, my aunts, and uncles. I saw the people in The Glades, how hard it was for them to—to just—get by day-by-day. One day I was out in the fields, and I looked up into heaven and said to God: If You just give me a chance I know I'll make it. If You just give me a chance to get out of the fields,

I'll make it. And I promise you that I will do the very best that I can. And He did.

This conversation with God, according to Cora Edwards, was the catalyst for her transformation. As a child migrant, she said:

> After school, we would go to the fields. There would be someone to come to the school, pick us up, take us to the fields and work. After we left the fields, we would come home and we would have to do our homework.

Despite the grueling schedule, Cora Edwards graduated in the top 10 of her high school senior class. From high school, she continued her education until receiving her master's degree in guidance and counseling.

Catalyst for change finding summary. For each of the study participants, there was a trigger to prompt their transformation. Whether the catalyst for change occurred externally or internally, they all pinpointed someone or something that occurred in their lives to facilitate the aspiration to find an alternative path for their lives and leave migratory labor.

Finding: Transformational Learning

Adult learning encompasses a broad range of models, theories, and frameworks to elucidate the acquisition of knowledge for personal growth in both formal and informal settings. Many educators have contributed to the different approaches of adult learning. When Dewey wrote *Democracy and Education* (1916), he popularized "learning by doing." As previously cited in the literature review, Dewey (1938/1997) stated that, "all social movements involve conflicts which are reflected intellectually in controversies" (p. 5). The social movement Dewey was alluding to was the restructuring of the educational

system as he shed light on problems with traditional education. In his book, *Experience and Education* (Dewey, 1938/1997), he focused on the significance of a student's experience. Dewey also posited that by educators being aware of a student's past, teachers are enlightened and will realize it is their responsibility to design valuable educational experiences so that the student can fully develop and become a contributing member of society.

Focusing on the individual's past experience relates to the theory of transformative learning, a term coined in 1978 by Jack Mezirow. Transformative learning is learning to purposively question one's own assumptions, beliefs, feelings, and perspectives in order to grow or mature personally and intellectually (Boyd & Greico, 2003; Mezirow, 1991; Taylor, 2005). Transformative learning, according to Mezirow, is also a unique form of adult metacognitive reasoning. A synonym for metacognition is reflection. Generally, metacognition refers to learners' deliberate awareness of their own knowledge (Flavell, 1979, 1987) whereas reasoning is the process in which one advances and assesses something in a logical and practical manner, chiefly when beliefs result in decisions to act (Mezirow, 2003).

When examining the metacognitive reasoning of the nine study participants, the lens through which their transformative learning journey was viewed revealed holistic changes. Changes for transformative learning, as hypothesized by Mezirow (1978), occur through experience, critical reflection, and development. Adding a new dimension to Mezirow's transformative learning theory is Wang and Cranton (2013) who posit that habits of mind/frames of reference (Mezirow, 2003) begin to develop uncritically and naturally in childhood through socialization and acculturation with those whom children

frequently interact with such as family, teachers, and other noteworthy relationships. However, eventually childhood habits of mind change as children grow and begin to understand their world. Unlike Mezirow's (1978) study that begins with adults, Wang and Cranton makes references to childhood habits of mind. For some study participants, their habit of mind/frame of reference began to change in childhood as they questioned the hardships of life.

Although born into migratory labor, their innate awareness felt a "disequilibrium" (King, 2009, p. 5) that persuaded study participant Cora Edwards, for example, at the age of 15 to have a private conversation with God. Her needs were not being met by her physical surroundings, so she ventured to a higher power. This conversation left an indelible mark, and as she reflected that it was at this point that her frame of reference changed as she felt a need to make changes in her life. She stated, "I was no longer a mule working for the sake of working to survive. I began to think of work as a means to escape farm labor." This change in habit of mind empowered her at a young age to view farm work from a critical perspective.

Mezirow (1978) in an effort to address the needs of women who were returning to work or resuming their education after an extended period out conducted a qualitative study of 22 adult women. After interviewing the women, the results suggested that the process of transformation occurs in 10 phases (see Table 2). These 10 phases can occur subtly over time, allowing individuals to identify the stages of their transformation through critical reflections.

Table 2

Mezirow's (1978) Ten Phases of Transformative Learning

Phases	Transformational Learning Process
Phase 1	A Disorienting dilemma
Phase 2	A self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame
Phase 3	A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions
Phase 4	Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change
Phase 5	Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
Phase 6	Planning of a course of action
Phase 7	Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
Phase 8	Provisional trying of new roles
Phase 9	Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
Phase 10	A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's perspective

To illustrate, the researcher explored study participant Thelma Waters' transformation as one who replicated the 10 phases Mezirow (1978) outlined.

The first step of the 10 phases is a disorienting dilemma. According to Mezirow (1978), a disorienting dilemma occurs as an acute internal or external crisis. The disorienting dilemma for Thelma Waters was the sudden and unexpected death of her 17-month old baby in 1967. The baby's death was the crisis situation and the catalyst for her to make a change in her meaning scheme. As previously stated, the baby died after sniffing an empty container of parathion. It took the death of her child for Thelma to realize that no matter how well-intentioned farmers were, pesticides used in the fields

could have devastating effects if used in the home. Prior to the baby's death, she and her husband would unquestionably accept pesticide offers, as this was viewed by many migrants as an act of generosity. After all, farmers were the ones in control of the chemicals used to spray the fields, and it was assumed that they also used the same chemicals in their own homes

The same year Thelma Waters' baby died, a 16-year old girl died instantly after knocking over a jar of parathion while taking a shower. The jolt of the 16-year old girl's death coupled with her son's death allowed Thelma Waters to reflect on the inherent dangers of farm work. Although psychologically debilitated by her son's death, her meaning scheme began to change. Realizing that the Waters' family were not valued as human beings, but viewed only as workers that farmers profited from, she began to focus on ways of leaving farm work.

When Thelma Waters began to question the motives of the farmers, after her acute crisis—defined by Mezirow (1978) as a disorienting dilemma—she experienced phase one of transformative learning. Adding to the theory of transformative learning, Drago-Severson (2009) says, "With transformative learning, or growth, a qualitative shift occurs in how a person actively interprets, organizes, understands, and makes sense of his or her experience" (p. 11).

Mezirow's (1978) second phase of transformative learning is a self-examination with feelings of guilt, anger, fear, or shame. Critical reflections began when Thelma Waters blamed her husband first and then herself for leaving the baby home with his father. The Sunday the father did not go to church and stayed home with the baby to nurse a cold was the day her child died. Her guilt was so pronounced until it basically

crippled her. Thelma Waters further expressed how she questioned their parenting skills as she asked "why her?" Immediately after the death of her son, she did not know what to do, but she felt that something needed to be done. She stated, "I have always loved children. When children had to go to the field with their parents or were left home alone I knew I had to do something."

Mezirow's (1978) third phase for the individual undergoing transformative learning is a critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions. Phase three involves the learner validating a best judgment (Mezirow, 2006) or where "the individual evokes to monitor the epistemic nature of problems and the truth value of alternative solutions" (King & Kitchener, 1994, p. 12). Thelma Waters' mother was deeply concerned about her daughter "stressing and mourning over the baby." As surmised by Thelma Waters, her mother alluded to her intellectual abilities by saying, "Don't assume you can't do better." Doing better meant for Thelma Waters to make a change in her outlook for life. At that time she had not realized her potential beyond farm work.

Recognition that one's discontent and process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change is Mezirow's (1978) fourth phase of transformative learning. The manner in which Thelma Waters' negotiation for change occurred can be viewed as a psychic phenomenon. Thelma Waters' mother prayed that her daughter would find employment outside of farm work. Her mother encouraged her daughter by saying, "God has something better for you." Thelma Waters' rebuttal was that she had no other choice but to work in the fields because there was no other work available for her or others like her in their community. However, in 1967, around the

same time Thelma Waters was grief-stricken over the death of her son, an African American female came knocking on her mother's door. This African American female, a former migrant herself, was a liaison for the American Friends Service Committee. As explained by Thelma Waters, this organization was comprised of people known as Quakers, and they were looking for a migrant to work with them, so the Quakers could better assist the migrant community. Thelma Waters' mother recommended her daughter by saying, "If anyone can do the job, Thelma can."

Tisdell (2003) delineates the socially constructed positions of race, class, and gender, which he identified as the cultural-spiritual perspective of transformative learning. This perspective fosters cultural and spiritual awareness. One of the first factors to promote spiritual-cultural transformation learning, as posited by Tisdell, is for an individual to be exposed to cross-cultural relationships. Thelma Waters' cross-cultural interaction with White Quakers exposed her to diverse people, different ways of thinking, and new worldly experiences. Because she was open to a new experience, this opened her internal door for transformation to happen.

Mezirow's (1978) fifth phase of transformative learning is an exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions. After an official interview in Lake Worth, Florida with the American Friends Service Committee, Thelma Waters became a board member and accepted her first non-farm work job with the American Friends Service Committee. Referencing the organization asThe Friends, Thelma Waters expounded on the many first opportunities and experiences she encountered as an adult after meeting them. For example, as a result of The Friends she experienced her first airplane flight, visited her first college campus, and met with people who not only

listened to her concerns but also were actively involved in the migrant community. As a board member, she developed supportive relationships with board members in other states, particularly when she attended meetings at Quaker supported colleges. The most indelible impression occurred on her first visit to a college campus cafeteria in South Carolina. She had this to say regarding the lasting impression the visit made:

> We lived on campus. I entered the cafeteria and spread out on a table was fresh fruit and pastries. Students walked in and grabbed a fruit free of charge. I had never seen anything like that in my life—students eating fresh fruit and studying in groups. There was an abundance of juices, rolls, and fresh fruit for the students. I had worked in fruits and vegetables as a farm worker all my life but had never seen students in study groups eating fresh fruits. This was amazing to me. I want my children to go to college and eat fresh fruit too.

Mezirow's (1978) sixth phase involves planning a course of action. Although Thelma Waters' life began to change physically, emotionally, and intellectually when she accepted the job with The Friends, it was after the visit to a college campus that she began to make concrete plans. Prior to her accepting employment with The Friends, her young children worked alongside her and her husband in the fields. After accepting the job with The Friends, she not only began to think of taking college classes but also of her children graduating from a college. She reasoned:

> Because of the exposure I had with the Quakers, my life changed forever. The exposure I had was like an umbrella opened up for me. I held it out for my children to come under the same thing.

"What can I do so my children can attend college, study, and eat fresh fruit?" "Where did the money come from?" "Do the students eat like this all the time?" These questions consumed her as the thought of her children attending college was a real possibility. They were performing on or above grade level in their school, and she made sure they had all their required school supplies. After the loss of her baby, she had six remaining children, and the youngest of the six would "benefit more." One benefit the two youngest girls did have was that they attended daycare unlike her older children. By attending daycare, their academic talents developed earlier than the children who did not attend daycare, Thelma Waters observed. She said they learned their ABCs faster and were reading at a younger age than her other children. As a result, she started making plans to open a daycare for migrant children.

Mezirow's (1978) seventh phase of transformative learning entails the acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans. To fully understand this phase of Thelma Waters' transformation, it is important to take a brief look at the social, political, and cultural environment at the time. In retrospect, conundrums of social injustice proliferated in the decades of the sixties and seventies: segregation and discrimination were evident by separate schools, separate drinking water fountains, designated seats in the rear of public transportation, and killings. African Americans were viewed as an inferior race. Members of the Ku Klux Klan were actively propagandizing White superiority as they intimidated many African Americans, especially in the South.

As Thelma Waters reflected on her past, she remembered living in the segregated South under "Jim Crow" laws. She also recalled that when her family moved from Pahokee, Florida to Indiantown, Florida how fortunate they were to live in a house

without inside plumbing while some migrant families lived in their cars for years until housing became available. She recalled that there were no daycare centers or healthcare facilities. She could vividly remember children dying as a result of pneumonia or choked to death by intestinal worms—conditions that were treatable and/or preventable. She witnessed some parents forcing an older child to miss school to baby sit younger siblings while their parents worked in the fields.

As a young adult working with The Friends, Thelma Waters also noticed that in the late sixties or early seventies "Minute Maid opened a daycare center out in the fields for their workers." She began to question the wisdom of this: "If they could put one in the field, why couldn't they put one in the community." After expressing concerns for a daycare center in the Indiantown community, Thelma Waters was invited to attend Minute Maid Company's monthly meeting where daycare issues were addressed. Although she was invited to attend the meetings, she was not allowed to speak. She attended monthly meetings in Central Florida cities such as Apopka, Auburndale, and Frostproof. Driving alone more than a hundred miles in the evenings did not dampen her yearning to gain knowledge, as she learned about "state funding, grants, and operating a daycare."

Acquisition of knowledge did not stop while attending Minute Maid monthly meetings. Utilizing the resources and willingness of The Friends, Thelma Waters started inquiring as to what needed to be done to help her children escape a life of migratory labor. She began to research admissions requirements, and with the help of The Friends she was introduced to academic scholarship acquisition. However, she also realized that for her to better assist her children, she needed to improve her skills. As a result of this

awareness, Thelma Waters enrolled in a local junior college to begin taking college classes.

With knowledge acquisition, new responsibilities emerged for Thelma Waters, which served as an antecedent to Mezirow's (1978) eighth phase of transformational learning. This phase, according to Mezirow, is provisionally trying out new roles**.** Consciously aware of the anguish among the migrants due to inadequate living conditions, nonexistent medical care, and lack of childcare, Thelma Waters began to speak at local commissioner meetings, lobbied in Tallahassee for better housing and healthcare, and became owner/operator of a daycare. "I started a daycare called Lad and Lassie for 25 cent per day per child," Thelma Waters proclaimed, "This was the first daycare in Indiantown, Florida for children of migrant field workers."

Although Thelma Waters' primary job with The Friends was in family planning, which entailed driving women from Indiantown to Pahokee, Florida for medical check-ups, a self-appointed role for her was to recruit families to relocate from Pahokee to Indiantown, Florida. During the monthly meetings with The Friends, as revealed by Thelma Waters, she would express her concerns about the "bad housing" conditions. Eventually, a representative from the Rural Improvement Council came to see the housing conditions. "He made one visit and that turned the tides," stated Thelma Waters**.** Taking the researcher on a tour of the area, Thelma Waters, pointing to a neighborhood, said, "all this was White; no Black person could live here."

"The Friends and I had a meeting with Okeechobee County community leaders and a representative from the Federal Housing Administration attended. At this time I was actively recruiting families to live in Indiantown," posited Thelma Waters. When

the representative from the federal government spoke, he stood up and said this, as remembered by Thelma Waters:

> When you hear the word Federal that means equal opportunity for everybody. If a house becomes vacant that Black person has just as much right to get that house as a White person and they cannot be denied the right to live in that house. Those are federal dollars and they belong to the country. It is time to integrate.

Provisionally trying new roles assisted Thelma Waters in her transformational learning journey. From the aforementioned experiences, she learned that one person could make a difference not only in the lives of others but also in one's own life.

Phase nine of Mezirow's (1978) transformational learning is building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships. The liaison with the Quakers helped Thelma Waters discover the courage and confidence to pursue other roles, one of which was becoming a community activist. As previously stated, Thelma Waters was not allowed to speak at Minute Maid meetings, but eventually she was granted permission to speak after a meeting. Nervous, but determined, she made her presentation. Her passion to correct inequities and ameliorate suffering in her community boosted her confidence to make a presentation that had an impact on the migrant community. According to Thelma Waters, "Later that year a Title XX daycare opened in my name, funded by the State Agriculture Labor Program." Opening in 1979, The Thelma Waters Infant Care Center was named in her honor.

According to Bandura (1982), "When beset with difficulties, people who entertain serious doubts about their capabilities slacken their efforts or give up altogether, whereas those who have a strong sense of efficacy exert greater effort to master the challenges"

(p. 123). The undeterred resiliency of Thelma Waters attested to her self-efficacy. Additionally, mastery of Thelma Waters speaking skills was nurtured and developed by having to speak at board meetings of the American Friends Service Committee throughout the southeast region of the U.S. Bandura (1982) went on to say, "High perseverance usually produces high performance attainment" (p. 123).

Thelma Waters' self-efficacy was challenged on numerous occasions. However, through persistence her self-confidence and competence began to grow. Each time she was confronted with a difficult situation, she did what was necessary to conquer her fears. Another display of self-efficacy under difficult circumstances is when Thelma Waters was informed that doctors were coming to talk about healthcare in urban areas at the Lake Lytal Commissioner Chambers in Lake Worth, Florida and was asked by a gentlemen if there was "any way you can get some of the people to make a presentation?" Thelma Waters said she remembered that night in 1972, as if it were yesterday:

> Two or three people rode with me but no one would say anything. At that meeting I sat next to Buddy White from Pahokee who had been to D.C. and had a meeting with Senator Robert Kennedy. Bill Miller was the health administrator for Martin, Port Saint Lucie, as well as Indian River County. The meeting facilitator said, "We want to hear something about the Indiantown area." No one stood up, so I stood up and told about the health care in Indiantown. They were appalled. I was so engrossed in what I was saying and the realness of it. I found myself just crying. At the end of the meeting, two representatives came out of the audience, one was named Mr. Green. He said, "Mrs. Waters we don't promise you a clinic this year but next year you will have a satellite clinic."

The satellite clinic, named Florida Community Health Center, still exists today and is the only health care center in Indiantown, Florida.

The process of Thelma Waters aspiring and believing that she could make life better for her family and her community attested to her high degree of self-confidence. This self-efficacy was instrumental in helping to secure funds for a Title XX daycare, promoting integrated housing, and opening the channels for a community healthcare clinic.

The final phase of Mezirow's (1978) transformational learning is a reintegration of new assumptions into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective (Mezirow, 1978). The culmination of Thelma Waters' transformative learning can be conveyed by a study by Bandura (1982) who concluded that, "people do not live their lives as social isolates. Many of the challenges and difficulties they face reflect group problems requiring sustained collective action to produce social change" (p. 143). Occurring over a period of years, transformation for Thelma Waters was not easy nor was it quick. Decisively, transformation, according to Mezirow (2006), must invoke an alteration of "specific assumptions about oneself and others until the very structure of assumptions becomes transformed" (p. 8).

As stated previously, transformation is about change, and where there is change there is action. Beginning with a very traumatic experience and ending with a self-examination of assumptions that changed her meaning scheme and habit of mind, Thelma Waters transformed. Cross-culturally, she worked alongside and saw sensitive, compassionate, powerful people who cared about the human race. As a result of her communication, interface, and affiliation with racial, social, and cultural diversity over

time, her perspective and mindset expanded. Her limited exposure, observations, and experiences as a migrant were responsible for her forming the perspective that they "were some mean White folks back then." However, by first working with The Friends she learned to work together with "genuine people" of different races who respected her insight and knowledge. The reintegration of new assumptions was exemplified by Thelma Waters' community involvement and social activism.

Another aspect of Thelma Waters' transformation was reflected by what Johnson-Bailey and Alfred (2006) identified as understanding the importance of cross-cultural cooperation and negotiation. In order to foster transformative learning from a race-centric perspective, according to Johnson-Bailey and Alfred, one must be a spokesperson for voices traditionally silent. Thelma Waters became, and still is, a voice for the disenfranchised silent. In the 1980s when Guatemalan immigrants started arriving to Indiantown, Florida in large numbers to work in the orange groves, she observed them sleeping in the fields where they worked. According to Thelma Waters, they did not have access to fresh water or bathroom facilities, and she pleaded with anyone who would listen for help, even lobbying in Tallahassee for housing.

This African American female still lives in the community she was reared in as a migrant. She and her husband built a home—with inside plumbing—to raise her six children. In her seventies, she currently serves on the Board of Non-profit Housing, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Neighborhood Association Committee.

Although Thelma Waters was not part of Mezirow's (1978) seminal study of 22 women, she is an exceptional example of one who transformed her life by changing her "frame of reference, habits of mind, and points of view" (Mezirow as cited in Merriam et

al., 2007, p. 132). What makes her transformation exceptional is that her life story mimics all 10 phases outlined by Mezirow (1978), and she did not fall victim to the expected stereotype of the migrant worker. There were low expectations for migrants, as reported in *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960): only one out of every 5,000 migrant children ever finished high school and none had ever been reported to graduate college. Thus, as one born into a family of migrants, it was expected that one would follow the path of their parents: uneducated, unskilled, and undemanding.

Murrow, in *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960), quoted one of the farmers as saying, "We use to own our slaves, but now we rent them." The connotation of a rented slave suggests a life of servitude by people who work only to put food on the table, have a roof over their head, and earn money for meager supplies. Although not all of the study participants' transformation commenced with a disorienting dilemma, they all began their lives as migrant workers who transformed out of the familial cycle of migratory labor. This is evident by their professional occupations delineated in Table 3.

Table 3

Study Participants' Professional Occupations

Study Participants	Occupation
Betty Chapman-Nelson	Retired Early Childhood Teacher and Adjunct Professor
Cora Edwards	Retired Guidance Counselor
Juanita Edwards	Retired Middle School Principal and Charter School Director
Gloria James	Court Record Specialist
Estella Pyfrom	Retired Area Administrator for Palm Beach County Schools
Carol Spencer	Registered Nurse and CEO/Owner of a Nursing School
Thelma Waters	Retired Business Owner
Gloria Whitley	Retired Middle School Teacher
Participant X	Retired Store Manager

Many educators have added to Mezirow's (1978) transformational learning theory. One theory worth mentioning is the role of relationships (Taylor, 2000) in the transformational learning process. Specifically, according to Taylor (2000), for critical reflections to occur, there must be "trust, friendship, and support" p. 306). All study participants expressed the consistent support they received from family. However, the level of trust granted to study participant Cora Edwards from her parents helped propel her transformation. As she stated:

> I was fortunate enough when I turned 15 to be pulled out of the fields because I had a special needs brother. My mother couldn't afford to stay home and take care of him, so I was the chosen one to stay home to take care of my brother.

Cora Edwards was not the oldest of her siblings; she was the seventh of eleven children. However, her parents must have seen something special within her to select her among her siblings to become primary caretaker for her mentally and physically challenged younger brother. The nurture and attention she showed to her brother was noticed by others in the migrant community as well. She further stated:

> All of the small kids on the camp that couldn't attend school or were too young to work in the fields, I was sort of like their mother at the age of 15 years old. I took those kids from one town to the other to go to school and return when we were on the season upstate. They started to pay me. I was paid about $14.00 a day, which was a lot of money at that time.

The trust that others had in Cora Edwards helped build inward trust in her abilities, and transformed both her meaning scheme and habit of mind. As unrealistic as it seemed to a farm girl from an agricultural town in the 1960s, she began to think of ways she could use her God-given talent to help others. By becoming a school counselor, she could play a vital role in helping the personal, social, and academic development of students. The subtle disorienting dilemma that forced her out of the fields was also instrumental in helping her realize her life's calling. Although she confirmed, "migrant work never left me." Once she entered college, she did not take a break after receiving her bachelor's degree. She entered graduate school, specializing in guidance and counseling. Upon completion of her Master of Arts degree, she returned to Belle Glade, Florida "because I knew that's where I came from" and worked as a guidance counselor.

Sub-theme: relationship with God. Relational transformations do not always have to coexist exclusively with other people. For most study participants, the relationship with God or a higher power played a critical role in their transformational learning process. Their strength and courage to never give up was supported by an abiding faith as expressed in the following quotes:

- "Keep your eyes on God. The serenity prayer got me through tough times — 'God grant me the serenity to accept the things I can't change; courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference'" (Betty Chapman-Nelson).
- "I had to pray and ask God for wisdom so that I could discern good and evil" (Juanita Edwards).
- "The scriptures were very encouraging to me from a very young age. Whatever my situation was in life, I learned where there is life, there is hope" (Gloria James).
- "I did not realize this as a teenager or younger, but God and the Holy Spirit has always been with me—to guide me and to protect me and to direct me. I know God sent an angel to watch over me and keep me safe. Opened doors for me that should never have been opened" (Participant X).
- "The most significant influence in my life that helped to mold me into the person I am today is my faith. Having faith in God and knowing that He always had a plan for my life and I just had to hear it. Then I had to begin to actually walk in the purpose and plans He had for my life. God called me, even while in the corn fields, to be a nurse. I received this calling at about 17 years old. Once I did, I

had faith in Him that He would help me to achieve the goal of becoming a nurse" (Carol Spencer).

- "My grandmother instilled in me to always pray. God can help you; you just have to have faith and just believe. You have to bend your knees and look up and pray to God because He owns everything. He made everything. If you're in a situation, He's a problem-solver. Just trust in the Lord" (Gloria Whitley).
- "I had a praying grandmother. Every Sunday morning we would go to her house for prayer. My grandmother would pray for everybody in that room. She would go one-by-one, name-by-name, and she would pray for God to bless you. Only time I can remember not working in the fields was when we were in church. We worked together. We prayed together" (Cora Edwards).

Transformational learning finding summary. The documentary, *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960), brought attention to an underclass of African American women known as migrants. The expectations were that these women would remain migrants for life. However, the documentary did not become a self-fulfilling prophecy, as the nine study participants found the mechanisms and inner-strength to transform their lives. Their transformative learning occurred through experience, critical reflection, and development.

Resulting from a revision of their belief systems, study participants were able to make major changes in their lifestyles. Perspective changes that espoused a strong religious faith contributed to them critically reflecting on previously held assumptions, as they purposely implemented plans to transform their lives and permanently leave migratory labor.

Finding: Meaningful Relationships with Non-Family Members

Another factor that contributed most significantly to the study participants' transformations was their ability, impetus, and motivation to develop meaningful relationships with non-family members. According to Taylor (2005), mentors are very important throughout the learning and growing process, as the definitive goal of transformational learning is the development of lifelong personal relationships. Mentors can serve as a "guide, cheerleader, challenger, and supporter" (Merriam et al., 2007, p.138) as individuals develop holistically.

To corroborate the important role mentors play in the transformational learning process, Gross (1999) cited a study conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor that revealed that about 70% of the training in American business and industry is "informal"—not from organized classroom instruction (p. 251). As a result, the lessons learned are "deep, sustained, and profound" (Gross, 1999, p. 251), and these educators, teachers, or trainers are called mentors. Unlike coaches, who help people develop specialized skills, mentors serve as lifelong guides (Fenwick, 2003).

Participant X, an avid story teller, metaphorically referenced the people who aided her transformation as "root" people. Telling stories to expand her frame of reference parallels with educator Laurence Parks Daloz' (1999) storytelling conceptualization. Somewhat different from Mezirow (1978) who focused on critical reflection, Daloz focused on stories, as stories can be a basis of support while challenging students and encouraging construction of a vision. To promote a positive self-image, stories were told to Participant X, and storytelling became part of her everyday survival as a child and later as an adult. Distinguishing between "leaf" people, "branch" people,

and “root” people, Participant X storied a meaningful relationship outside of her immediate family that significantly assisted her development. Participant X had this to say:

> Everybody has trees in their life. The abundance of what you see on trees is leaves. The leaves represent the many people we associate with in our lives. The leaves come and go as the wind blows and the seasons change. Just like leaves, there are leaf people in our lives that we meet, and they are gone. Branches are the next thing we notice on trees. We also encounter branch people in our lives. The branch people are more solid. However, if you get on a branch and step out too far, it may break. Although branch people may be part of your inner circle, you can't step out too far because you are not too sure how far you can trust them. Branches have a tendency to break off; just like branch people can shatter your trust.
>
> Then you have people that are like roots. The roots are buried deep in the soil. Root people are solid in your life. Things you share with root people, you don't share with leaf or branch people. There are only a few people in your life that you will look at as a root person. The root people remain with you mentally, emotionally, and spiritually for life. You learn and grow from the positive experiences you had or are having with root people.

A representation of Participant X’s tree people metaphor is show in Figure 4.

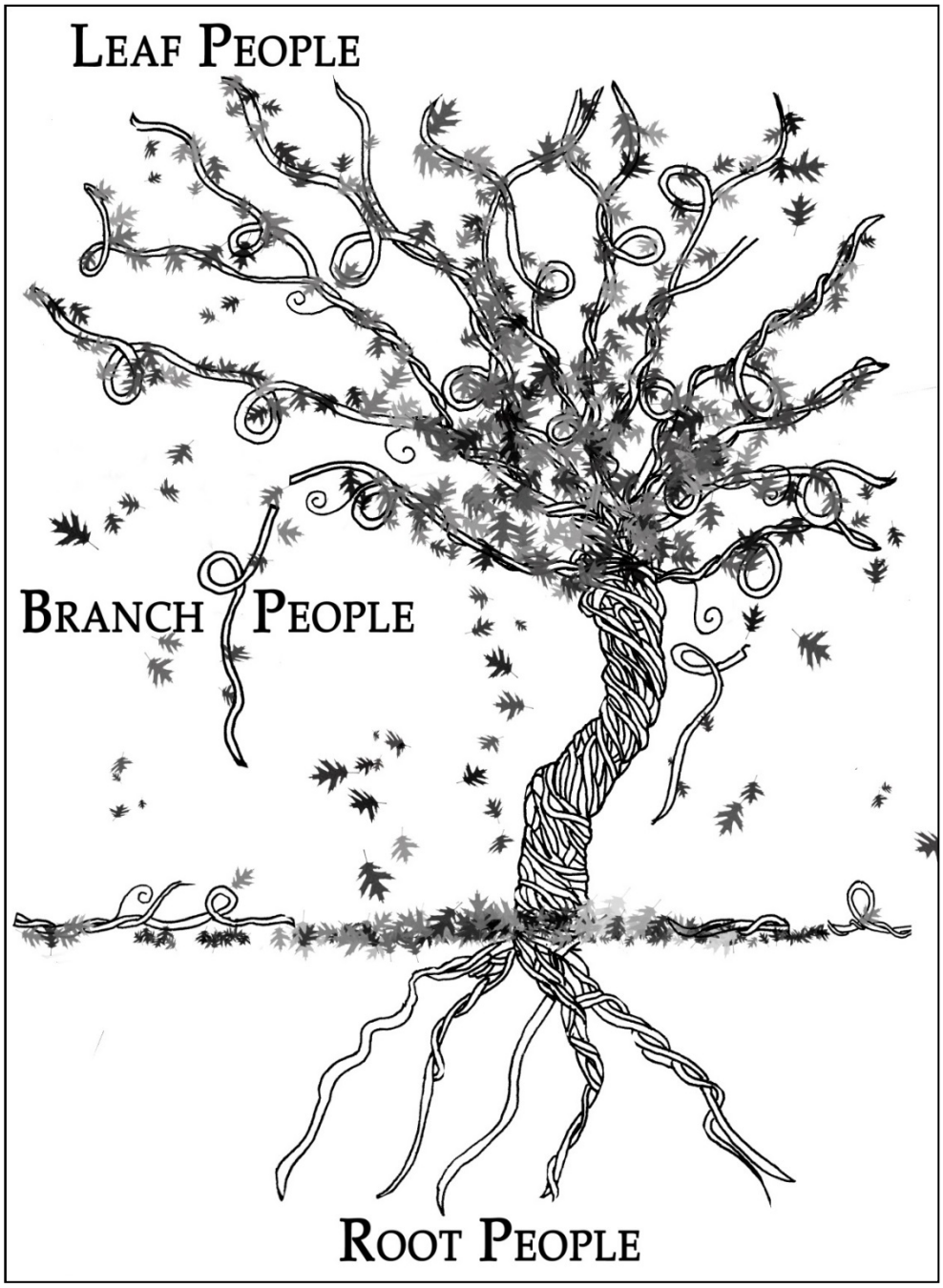

Figure 4. Participant X's tree people metaphor.

Participant X's fifth grade teacher made a significant impact on her life. "She has been my root since fifth grade," stated Participant X. "I will never forget the day she pulled me aside and told me the story of 'The Little Red Engine that Could.'" As a child

migrant, many days, Participant X had to work in the fields after school, as well as on weekends. Sometimes, her work schedule would impede her ability to produce her best work or complete homework assignments. Historically, she made very good grades and was recognized for her academic excellence. Participant X's mother, not having much to brag about, would boast about her daughter's exceptional report card, replete with A grades. However, when her school performance began to falter, her fifth grade teacher noticed. As told to Participant X, when discouraged and overwhelmed, her fifth grade teacher who was her first "root person." The teacher would say, "You can do this. There is nothing you can't do." The teacher, knowing her potential and intelligence, helped foster a spirit of excellence within Participant X by making her redo assignments and telling her that she was not a C student. Participant X accepted the challenge and began to believe that she was not a C student, so why produce mediocre work.

This teacher's voice became an axiom that motivated Participant X to excel not only in school but also in her career. Participant X stated, "As I began to climb the career ladder, I would whisper to myself, 'Mrs.----- would be proud of me.'" Even when confronted with difficult challenges and feeling like giving up, Participant X said she could hear the encouraging words of her teacher saying, "You can do this. There is nothing you can't do." In her church and inner-circle, according to Participant X, she is known as the lady who can tell a story about anything. She often tells her grandchildren stories, and they remember her stories as they recite them to friends. Participant X modeled her life from an important lesson learned in fifth grade.

According to educator John Dirkx, "To integrate the emotional and spiritual parts of learning in ourselves, we must make sense of the symbols and images in our psyche"

(as cited in Merriam et al., 2007, p. 139). For Participant X, the symbols and characters in her stories have added meaning to her life. As a result of the story about the little red engine that could, she was able to make sense of her life and recognize her individual worth. This was ignited by a fifth grade teacher whom she has not seen since elementary school, but whose impact has been timeless.

Similar to Participant X, the "root" person in study participant Gloria Whitley's life was her high school science teacher. She had given up on the possibility of finishing college until encouraged by this teacher. When approached by her former high school teacher, Gloria Whitley had completed two years of college. She stated:

> When I first went to college, I went for two years and I came out. I stayed out for 10 years, and during those 10 years I went back to being a migrant: working in the field, going up and down the road. Then I ran into one of my favorite teachers one day. He started talking to me and said, "You should go back to school. You have two years and to go two more won't take you that long."

After this encounter, it was like a chain reaction for Gloria Whitley, as others began to persuade her to finish college, namely her middle school principal and a community leader. Throughout her college journey, they were available for support. When she started teaching, her former high school science teacher became her lifelong mentor.

As previously expressed, Thelma Waters' relationship with the Quakers exposed her to life-altering experiences and decisions. Establishing a mentor/mentee relationship with members of the Lake Worth Chapter of The American Friends Service Committee, she was able to expand her contacts, establish a network, gain direct access to resources,

and understand diverse perspectives. These newly formed relationships facilitated her examining previously help conceptions and formulating new perceptions.

As a result of the mentor/mentee relationship with the Quakers, Thelma Waters became a liaison to facilitate communication among a variety of groups not only in her local community but also statewide. These meaningful relationships enabled Thelma Waters to use networking as a tool that united people to exchange information for utilitarian purposes. For example, when she opened her daycare center, Thelma Waters told the story of a three-year old girl who was severely constipated. When the child was able to relieve herself, the child passed dozens of intestinal worms that were interlinked in a ball. This episode prompted Thelma Waters to seek the medical counsel of a nurse who came to the daycare and instructed the staff as well as parents on how to treat and avoid intestinal worms.

Meaningful relationships were also developed with state policy makers. Thelma Waters, in partnership with the Quakers, was a driving force in the 1970s to assist with the creation of racially diverse neighborhoods in Indiantown, Florida as mandated by the federal government. In the 1980s, Thelma Waters' network had expanded as she lobbied for decent housing for Guatemalan immigrants who were the newly arriving disenfranchised seasonal workers.

Not only did the Quakers establish a meaningful relationship with Thelma Waters that significantly impacted her transformation, but it was also a Quaker who significantly contributed to the transformation of Cora Edwards. Being reared in a migrant family, "we were deprived of a lot of things that others had," stated Cora Edwards. "But there was this lady, a Quaker lady, who came into my life and began to show me what my

mother was not educated enough to share with me." Encouraging Cora Edwards to go to college, the Quaker purchased stocks for her when she graduated from high school. This set her on the path to financial security. Initially, Cora Edwards did not understand the stock market, but eventually she learned to research, monitor, and reinvest with the help of a financial advisor.

The Quaker entered Cora Edwards' life when she was on a work camp in Upstate, New York. "This lady had four boys and no girls, and she sort of adopted me," stated Cora Edwards. "She was a very loving person." Exposing Cora Edwards to ballet and horse shows, the Quaker sparked a "desire to want to do more and see more." The Quaker also introduced Cora to college girls who would come to the camp and interact with the migrant children. As explicated by Cora Edwards, a major change occurred when the Quaker asked Cora Edwards' uncle, who was the crew leader, if she could work in a school she co-owned. In her home and at her school, there were African American and Caucasian students, living and working together in 1968, as storied by Cora Edwards. The mentoring relationship with a Quaker was Cora's first introduction to racial diversity.

After Cora Edwards graduated from high school, she went to Oneida, New York and lived in the Quaker lady's home. "This Quaker lady was very inspirational to me," stated Cora Edwards. "She taught me how to live on a budget and appreciate what was given to me." As explained by Cora Edwards, this Quaker lady not only paid her college tuition and purchased her books, but she also established a bank account in her name to withdraw money from based on need. However, according to Cora, the maximum allowable withdrawal amount was $10.00. Her mentor, the Quaker, established these

standards. Because Cora Edwards never abused the gifts or privileges extended to her, the Quaker began to entrust expensive pieces of silver and china to her that she still has today. Cora Edwards expressed these final remarks on her mentoring relationship:

> I believe I am where I am today because of the White Quaker lady who took an interest in a poor, little Black girl. Of all the lessons I learned from her, the most important is to listen—be patient and listen. Had I not listened I would not have learned certain life lessons that are not in textbooks.

From her mentor, Cora Edwards felt loved and accepted by someone of a different race and higher economic level than she could imagine. They established a mentor/mentee relationship that lasted until the Quaker died. The mentor empathized with the mentee's plight, yet she did not marginalize or demean her mentee. Even though Cora Edwards was a child when they first met, there was mutual respect, boundaries were not crossed, and expectations were established. Cora Edwards proclaimed that her financial security today is because of this Quaker lady.

Meaningful relationships with non-family members summary. Meaningful relationships with non-family members contributed significantly to the transformational experience of study participants. Most of these relationships evolved into lifelong mentor/mentee associations. The significant impact mentors had on study participants' lives was encapsulated in the words of study participant Cora Edwards as she described when her mentor entered her life "and began to show me what my mother was not educated enough to share with me." The mentors did not replace the love and support from their family, but mentors were able to share knowledge, life experiences, education, and career goals that the migrant parents were not "educated enough to share." The

direct and personal interactions provided leadership and direction at a time when it was needed. As explicated by the aforementioned study participants, these meaningful relationships contributed to their success.

Finding: Commitment to Community Service

One salient factor that significantly impacted the transformational experiences of study participants was dedication to their community and motivation to assist the less fortunate by volunteering in a variety of venues. The general concept of volunteering refers to the "rendering of service by choice of or free will for the benefit of the wider community by an individual, group, or institution without necessarily expecting monetary gain in full knowledge and appreciation of being a volunteer" (Wu, 2011, p. 3).

Although volunteers are viewed as people who freely give of their time to help others in need without expecting monetary or material compensation, this does not mean that there is no reciprocity. Research has shown that volunteering is as beneficial for the donor as it is for the recipient (Wilson & Musick, 1999). A research study done by Points of Light Institute outlined the impact volunteering can have on an individual in the following key findings:

- Volunteering makes a significant contribution to the global economy.
- Volunteering enhances the social connections between different sectors, builds the bridges for governments, enterprises, and employees.
- Volunteering helps build a more cohesive, safer, stronger community.
- Volunteering increases the social network between communities and neighborhood.

- Volunteering promotes people to be more active in civic engagement and concerned of citizenship.
- Volunteering delivers some part of public services, encouraging more people work in public section, helping raise the educational performance of youth, leading environmental movement and adapting to climate change risk.
- Volunteering also has positive effects on volunteers as individuals, increase their self-esteem, enhance various skills and capacities, expand career paths, and be healthier physically and mentally (Wu, 2011).

The nine study participants' involvement in community service underscores the relevancy of the key findings in the Points of Light Institute study. When reviewing the life work of study participant Thelma Waters, as previously discussed in this study, one will discover that she not only embraced, and was impacted, by her volunteerism, but her volunteerism has had long term local and statewide effects. In sum, her life of community service coincides with the key findings delineated in the Points of Lights study.

There are both intrinsic and extrinsic benefits of serving others. Study participant Betty Chapman-Nelson endorsed service to one's fellowman because, even as a migrant, she indicated that she would "seek to find the positive things." Happiness for her was not found in materialism, but an "inner peace…within." Questioning her motives, she asked herself, "Am I able to share; what am I able to give?"

Although Betty Chapman-Nelson had amassed enough college credits to become a teacher's aide in the early 1970s, she still worked in the fields and traveled for seasonal work during the summer. Her teacher's aide job required that she leave before the corn

crop ended. However, as a result of working in the public school system, she began to realize the negative impact of starting school late and leaving early had on the migrant children. With their parents' permission, she would bring between 12 to 15 school aged children back to Belle Glade, Florida and register them in school so that they started school on the first day. All of these children lived with her in a two-bedroom apartment. "I had them everywhere, scattered around, but we were there together, and they were safe," she stated. The arrangement continued until she left the migratory cycle. Betty Chapman-Nelson also had this to say:

> That's what I started doing to help the parents out with their children because the migrant parents needed so much help. Those parents trusted their children with me. I would make sure they got to their designated schools, so they wouldn't have to keep transitioning from one school to the next. It was such a hardship for them.

One finding of the Points of Light study specifically states that volunteering "helps build a more cohesive, safer, stronger community" (Wu, 2011, p. 4). The safety and security these children experienced resulted in Betty Chapman-Nelson eventually legally adopting four of the children who travelled with her. Some of these children preferred to live with her in a crowded two-bedroom apartment rather than go home with parents who lived in tenements without inside plumbing or to live with parents who relied on the oldest sibling to be responsible for feeding, dressing, and ushering younger siblings off to school. As revealed in the *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960) documentary, an eight year old was responsible for caring for three siblings while his single mother worked in the fields.

Metaphorically describing her actions as one who chooses to be "a bucket dipper or a bucket filler," Betty Chapman-Nelson chose to be a bucket filler. "Literally, you can brighten your day by fulfilling a need in the community." "When you fill your bucket, sometimes you help build your own self-esteem by helping others," she emphasized. Wu (2011) noted that an increase in self-esteem for the volunteer was also a finding in the Points of Light study.

To continuously fill her bucket, Betty Chapman-Nelson became a trained foster and/or surrogate parent to countless children in The Glades area of Palm Beach County. Her oldest son, and only biological child, has a degree in computer engineering. Of the four she adopted, two have college degrees and one is a certified computer programmer. The youngest son is 17 and was officially adopted on September 27, 2013. In regard to the youngest son, she had this to say:

> I have had him since he was five. He knows his parents but they just walked out of his life. Since he has been with me so long, I felt I had to give him a forever family. He knows he's loved and he's with a family that really cares about him. He has been in ESC because of his special needs. He needs special care.

Betty Chapman-Nelson expanded on his academic challenges as she told of his inability to pass the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). However, she vowed that he would learn a trade in hopes of one day functioning independently.

"Everyone has a God-given talent and purpose in life," Betty Chapman-Nelson stated. "I am a foster parent and a child advocate." These statements provide credence to her mental, educational, spiritual, and emotional transformational journey. As she transformed from migratory labor to a professional career, her transformation would not

have been complete had she not given back to her community by providing a service to those in need. "Giving back makes me happy, and it completes me," she proclaimed.

Another finding in the Points of Light study indicated that "volunteering… [helps] raise the educational performance of youth" (Wu, 2011, p. 4). Understandably, there is always a need for tutors in schools at all levels, and volunteer tutors are welcomed, especially if one has teaching experience. The experience derived from employment in the public school sector (see Figure 5) prepared study participant Juanita Edwards to lend a hand when and where needed as a volunteer in Palm Beach County School District. She stated, "When they need me, all they have to do is call, and I'm there."

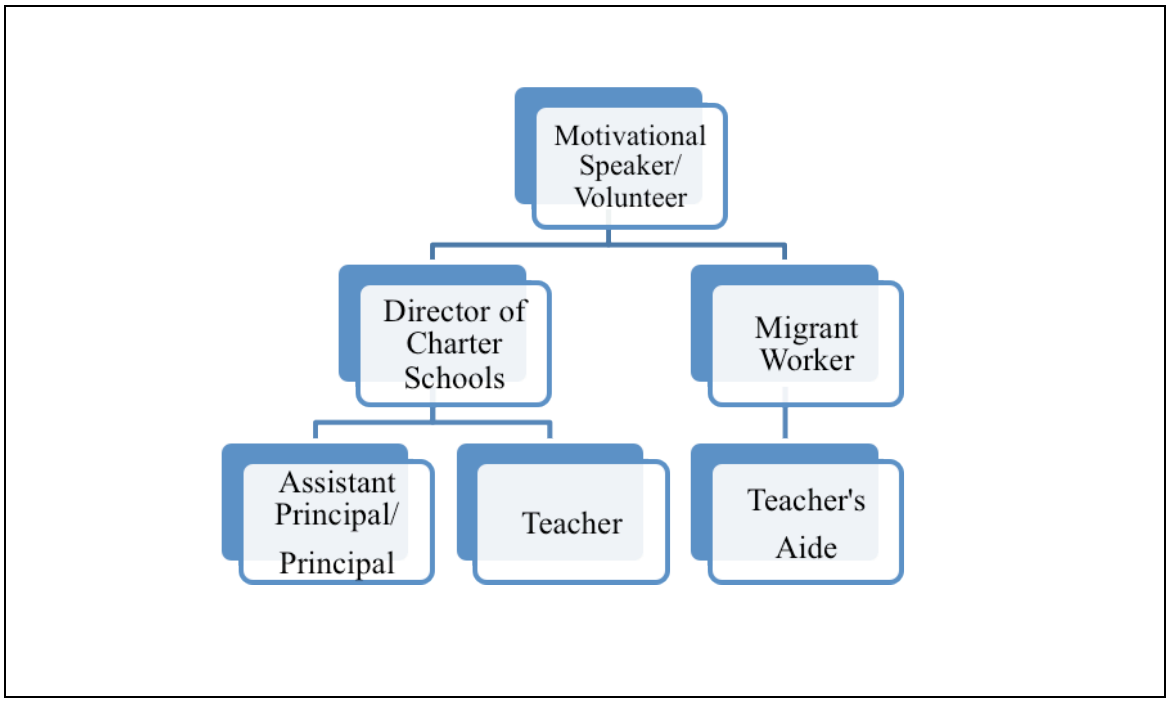

Figure 5. Study participant Juanita Edwards' job titles.

Also, the experiences derived from different occupations prompted Juanita Edwards to become a motivational speaker, not for pay, but as a service. When she was a

migrant, by listening and observing the actions and behaviors of others, she posited how she learned to propel herself socially and professionally. This conception is supported by social cognitive learning theory that suggests that much human learning occurs in a social setting. "By observing others, people acquire knowledge, rules, skills, strategies, beliefs, and attitudes," stated educator Dale Schunk (1996, p. 102). More importantly, according to Juanita Edwards, was her migrant, impoverished beginnings, imbued empathy, as well as an understanding and identity with other disenfranchised people. Thus, as a motivational speaker, she hopes her story will leave "people inspired and ready to tackle challenges."

Whether speaking to a professional women's group, school district employees, or teenagers, "I observe," Juanita Edwards stated. "I observe to discern needs, especially of children." Because she was poor, she stated she knows how it feels to be ridiculed for wearing the same clothes over and over. As a Sunday school or classroom teacher, she engendered service to her students in non-academic ways. For example, she had this to say of her unique way of giving back:

> In my Sunday school class that I currently teach—I teach 15 to 17 year olds—when they come, if one of them wears something two or three weeks in a row, I pull them over and say is there anything I can purchase for you? We have to identify when people are in need. They don't have to tell us; you need to identify it. That's why the Lord took us from migrant to where we are. We can't get here and forget. We can't forget where we came from. We have to look beyond and serve others.

After getting permission from parents, she said she would purchase clothing, personal hygiene items, and school supplies needed for students today just as she did when she was a classroom teacher. "We just can't stand up where we are. We've got to reach down and let them know we care," she concluded. "Sometimes I had to take my principal hat off and be a momma."

The Points of Light Institute study also suggests that volunteering "enhances various skills and capacities… [and] promotes people to be more active in civic engagement and concerned of citizenship" (Wu, 2011, p. 4). When the researcher asked interview question eight to study participant Cora Edwards, "Describe your passion and enthusiasm for life when you left migrant work," she responded by saying, "It never really left me." This is evident by her active involvement in The Glades community. Every chance Cora Edwards gets to go back to The Glades community to assist she goes to serve the community by feeding the hungry, teaching etiquette classes to young girls, or assisting with elections. Proudly proclaiming for almost 20 years since relocating to Royal Palm Beach, Florida, she has returned to The Glades community to assist in every local, state, and national election. She has volunteered to be a poll watcher, registered citizens to vote, and transported citizens to the poll to vote. However, the most endearing of Cora Edwards' community service endeavors stemmed from cooking lessons learned from her mother. She had this to say about her mother:

> She had no education. She couldn't read. She couldn't write. But, she was smart. She was the best cook in the world. If you notice me, I love to cook. I don't cook by recipe. I cook by feel. I cook by taste. That's how my mother was. She did things out of the ordinary. She put food on the table, and I can't describe it. She

died young, age 56. God put her here for a short time. She came, did what she needed to do, and she did a great job, and she left.

Tears streaming down her face, she invited the researcher to come to a cooking demonstration she was including as part of a seminar she was conducting at Crestwood Middle School. As part of her presentation, she wanted to impart to the middle school girls "not to be afraid to try different things" by mixing and pouring. "Cooking, like reading and writing, can enhance your life," she added.

Living in The Glades, surrounded by lakes and seasonal crops, food was always available. However, there were those who were either too sick or too elderly to fish in the lake or work in the fields. Following in her mother's footsteps, she stated:

> That is why when I cook; I always cook enough to feed those in need. Sometimes I transport food to The Glades to feed the elderly. I can offer someone food even if I cannot offer anything else, like money or shelter. No one should go to bed hungry.

Cora Edwards' mother's legacy influenced her transformational journey from migrant worker to one who now dedicates her life to helping others. As a lifelong transformational learner, she told of how she constantly experiments with different recipes to share with others, whether in need or for enjoyment.

Study participant Estella Pyfrom had a similar response to Cora Edwards when asked to describe her passion and enthusiasm for life when she left migratory work. Without hesitation, Estella Pyfrom responded by saying:

> I really never left the migrant work cycle basically in the true sense of the word. I left it in one capacity and did it in another capacity. Because I stopped actually

working in the field, but all my career as teaching, administrator, counselor has been with migrants. Whatever I did I continued to work with the migrants, so I was still connected to them.

I worked after hours. I visited homes. I would drive from school sometimes and go to kids' families that I taught during the day to help further address some of the needs they had…finding resources for these families I worked with. I would go on trips with underprivileged children from Miami, Dade County, Palm Beach County, Broward County, and Okeechobee County. Four bus loads of kids we took on these trips.

When examining the impact volunteering can have on an individual, Estella Pyfrom encompassed all six of the major findings as provided by the Points of Light Institute study. In sum, volunteers contribute to the global economy, enhance social connections, increase the social network between communities and neighborhood, promote civic engagement, encourage more people to work in public section, help raise the educational performance of youth, lead environmental movements, increase self-esteem, improve various skills, and expand career paths (Wu, 2011). These findings were exemplified in Estella Pyfrom's total commitment and dedication to community service. She started a food program "years ago" that now feeds more than 3,000 people a month (O'Connor, 2013, p. D4). In a *Jet* magazine interview, she stated, "I was raised to help others" (Kyles, 2013, p. 34).

Working in the fields as a migrant since six years old, Estella Pyfrom retired twice from the Palm Beach County School District after being employed for more than 50 years. Prior to her last retirement, she identified a void and used more than a million

dollars of her retirement pension and personal savings to create a school on wheels, supplied with a satellite dish and Internet connections. This mobile school provides computer access to children who do not have home computers. In a radio interview with radio announcer James T on 105.1 FM, she told of how her children persuaded her and her husband to use their savings for their personal enjoyment and not worry about them. Having her children's moral support was confirmation for Estella Pyfrom to proceed with the school on wheels. She also stated in the radio interview that she has "always been motivated to serve" and her children knew this (T., 2014). "We visit south Florida low income children and teach them to get online; there is no charge for these services," stated Estella Pyfrom.

Known as Estella's Brilliant Bus, as shown in Figure 6, this mobile school first went on the road in 2009. "From preschoolers to high school seniors, from Pahokee to Lake Worth, Florida, if help is needed, we bring learning to them," Estella Pyfrom stated. In a year, the bus provides 8,000 hours of instruction to more than 500 children (O'Connor, 2013). The bus also has a summer camp program where learning continues with educational games as well as fun activities such as road trips. Once inside the bus, there is a classroom setting with 17 computer stations. The *Palm Beach Post* reported that these "computers are loaded with educational software that measures progress, links up with state-mandated curriculum material, readies the kids for FCAT testing and tracks their progress against their own scores and those of every other student in the state" (O'Connor, 2013, p. D4).

Figure 6. Estella's Brilliant Bus mobile educational program.

"Today, this is not just a bus but a movement. We feed the hungry. We give toys. We give school supplies. We do activities, such as reading readiness skills with kids on the computer as young as age two," Estella Pyfrom declared. Adding to this, she also stated in *Jet* magazine, "This isn't about giving people handout. It's about making sure they have the skills needed to improve their lives" (Kyles, 2013, p. 34). Emphasizing that unlike what some people think, the bus is not a Bookmobile, "It's a movement that is going to change minds and attitudes and perceptions," Estella Pyfrom firmly stated.

From 2009 to 2014, Estella's Brilliant Bus has expanded its services to the community by offering the following:

- Agency support
- Anti-bullying education

- Business sponsorships
- College preparation education
- Community partnerships
- Computer training
- Field trips
- FCAT readiness education
- GED preparation education
- Mobile facility rental
- Tutoring and homework assistance
- Feeding the hungry and volunteer opportunities (Estella's Brilliant Bus, 2013).

Recognizing the brilliance and uniqueness of Estella Pyfrom's mobile school, the vision of her brilliant bus has garnered both national and global attention. She has been contacted by organizations in other states, as well as other countries, who either want to partner with Estella's Brilliant Bus concept or offer assistance in the form of grants or specialized skills and training. For example, organizations such as Microsoft have "stepped up to the plate" to offer assistance. While being interviewed by the researcher, an organization from New Orleans called to offer a robotics component for disabled children. John P. Kotter in his book *Leading Change* (1996) states:

> A great vision can serve a useful purpose even if it is understood by a few key people. But the real power of a vision is unleashed only when most of those involved…have a common understanding of its goals and direction. (p. 85)

However, when those who may not be directly involved in a project offer unsolicited support, this communicates the value of Estella Pyfrom's vision and the impact the vision

has had on her transformation, as her goal of serving others provides lifelong learning through community service.

Although none of the study participants seek recognition or self-aggrandizement for their community service, the unselfish commitment to give back to an underserved community did not go unnoticed, as Estella Pyfrom was recognized as one of the Top Ten CNN Heroes. Figure 7 displays her in Atlanta, Georgia giving her acceptance speech.

Figure 7. Estella Pyfrom's acceptance speech for her recognition as a Top Ten CNN Hero.

In addition to the community service provided by the named aforementioned study participants, the remaining study participants also provide in-kind service in a variety of ways: serving women in homeless shelters, becoming mentors and tutors to at-risk students, reading to patients in nursing homes, chaperoning students to visit colleges and universities, creating unique service projects of their own, and opening the doors of

their home to people in need. Community service for the study participants can be viewed as a significant pathway to their transformation with both volunteer and recipient reaping tangible and intangible benefits. The intangible benefits mentioned by study participants—such as reciprocal satisfaction, fulfillment, pride, and accomplishment—are attributes that also contributed to their transformation.

Commitment to community service finding summary. By volunteering in a variety of venues, some study participants discovered hidden talents while others said it just made them feel good. Giving back helped their personal growth as it fostered empathy and self-efficacy. Uniting people from diverse backgrounds, their volunteerism promoted camaraderie while culturally, economically, and racially diverse people worked together toward a common goal. Ultimately, the study participants discovered that volunteerism promoted lifelong learning, which aided their transformational journey in life.

Finding: Field/Observation Notes and Document Analysis

A review of Field/Observation Notes forms (see Appendix D) concluded that all study participants appeared genuinely enthusiastic to participate in this study during the interview by their welcoming body language. The researcher was greeted with either a handshake or a hug and smiling faces. While reading the introduction that provided an overview of the study, participants listened intently as they nodded their heads up and down, made sounds suggesting agreement, leaned forward, and/or opened their hands in a praise motion often seen in African American churches. From beginning to end of the interviews, study participants looked at neither their watch nor a clock.

The interviews began by eliciting demographic information. One of the probes in answering the demographic questions is "Position in the family_____." This probe was confusing for five of the study participants. It was the only question that caused a puzzled look on some study participants' faces or caused them to respond by asking, "What do you mean?" However, as the interview progressed, participants maintained direct eye contact for most of the interview. Eye contact was lost when six study participants became emotional and began to cry. Study participants were alerted in the Informed Consent to Participant in Research form (see Appendix B) under the risks category that recalling distressing memories might possibly cause them to become emotionally upset. Therefore, the Informed Consent to Participant in Research Form specifically stated:

> Because you will be asked to recall memories that may be associated with distressing situations, you may become emotionally upset. During this distressful time, if you want to stop to compose yourself I will be patient and not rush you. If you need to refrain from answering a question and would like to reschedule the interview, I will accommodate your request to reschedule. If you feel participating in this study causes any emotional distress you are unable to handle, we encourage you to contact your primary care provider, a spiritual advisor or pastor for counseling. If you desire to remain anonymous, you may want to call the National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder hotline (802-296-6300). In addition, you have the right to discontinue participation in this study at any time if unanticipated stress occurs.

None of the nine study participants decided to discontinue participation in the study. All participants answered the twelve questions and responded to the probes cited on the Interview Protocol (see Appendix C).

Question 2 asked study participants to "Tell me a little about your family life and migrant work structure." When they began to talk about their family, especially their mother, four study participants began to cry. The four who cried were asked if we needed to stop for a break, but they said "no." Study participant Juanita Edwards began to sob uncontrollably as memories of her mother and the sacrifices she made for her family surfaced. When Juanita Edwards began to tell the story of how her mother remained awake at night to pick bugs from hay she and her siblings slept on, the memory was "too painful" for her to continue. The researcher stopped the interview, gave her tissue, sat patiently, and tried to console her by saying, "I understand; remember my experiences are somewhat similar." She was also asked if she would like to reschedule the interview, as assured on the Informed Consent to Participate in Research Form she signed. No time was kept to record how long she cried, but it was longer than any of the other study participants. The researcher asked if she wanted to discontinue and resume at another time, but Juanita Edwards insisted on continuing the interview once she composed herself. She stated, "This is important," as she softly cried.

At the conclusion of Juanita Edwards' interview, the researcher reiterated where she could seek help if she felt the need to talk about her feelings. Again the researcher mentioned the potential risks to her as a participant and pointed to people or places to seek help as stated on the Informed Consent to Participate in Research Form which directed participants who felt distressed emotionally "to contact your primary care

provider, a spiritual advisor or pastor for counseling. If you desire to remain anonymous, you may want to call the National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder hotline (802-296-6300)."

Study participant Thelma Waters began to shed tears when she discussed the migrant work structure relating to her personal experiences as a migrant. For her, migratory labor was a "traumatic" experience that she believes has caused her long-term medical problems. When she recalled the "inhumane treatment" and the constant profanity laced outbursts almost daily when in the fields, she began to wipe tears that streamed down her cheeks. As Thelma Waters wiped tears, she continued unhesitantly telling her story. Unlike the aforementioned study participants who cried when discussing their parents' struggles, she perked up as she vivaciously narrated details about her parents. Almost instantaneously, smiles and laughter replaced the tears as she discussed the enduring support, guidance, and words of wisdom she received from her parents.

Laughter, as expressed by study participant Gloria Whitley during her interview, was a coping mechanism she adopted to endure her many years as a migrant worker. As storied by other study participants as well as Gloria Whitley, their parents did not complain, so neither did they. Migrant labor was a lifestyle they were born into. Therefore, they acclimated themselves to the living conditions and work cycle, as they coped with what Murrow called in *Harvest of Shame*, "deplorable" (Friendly et al., 1960). Gloria Whitely coped by mimicking the example of her migrant mother and aunt, who found humor in some aspects of their migratory experience. The researcher observed that certain subjects that made other study participants become pensive and sad

would ignite bursts of laughter from Gloria Whitley. For example, as study participants discussed the living conditions, descriptive words such as "horrible," inhumane," and "dirty" were used by some study participants. These descriptors were often in conjunction with facial contortions that suggested distressing memories. However, for Gloria Whitley as her story unfolded, she laughed and laughed. Her laughter was juxtaposed with waving hands and light foot tapping. It appeared to be authentic, spontaneous laughter with bright widely opened eyes. This was somewhat confusing to the researcher because she was unsure if her laughter was relief, joy, anxiety, or a surrendering to her past.

Document analysis. Documents from study participants provided data sources (Bowen, 2009) that were analyzed. Specific documents included the following:

- Archival data in the Palm Beach County Library Belle Glade branch
- Audio tapes
- Books
- CDs
- Computer programs
- Diplomas
- An essay
- A Facebook page
- Flyers
- An invitation to Points of Light Reception at The White House
- Photographs
- Magazine articles

- Newspaper articles
- Pamphlets
- Plaques
- Recipes
- Recognition certificates
- Television documentaries
- Videos

The aforementioned documents assisted in clarifying and confirming narratives storied from study participants. For example, only one of the study participants, Estella Pyfrom, made a direct reference to the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960). Describing the travel arrangements, she stated, "As portrayed in '*Harvest of Shame*.' However, in comparing the specific stories of six study participants, the physical descriptions of their travel were identical to what was portrayed on the television documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960). Other study participants' parents owned vehicles and traveled behind the bus, but their stories synchronized with the others. It was as if all nine voices became one with the 1960 documentary.

Other documents that synchronized with both the narratives and the *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960) documentary were newspaper articles. One in particular was a February 17, 1991 newspaper article entitled "Remnants of Work Camps Still Exist: Migrant Camp Was Summer Excursion for Many from Belle Glade" (Dudajek & Farrell, 1991), submitted by study participant Estella Pyfrom. The article states:

> The three story chicken coop was converted to a barracks for migrant workers from Belle Glade, [Florida], who traveled north each summer to harvest Central

New York crops. One who stayed in these quarters was Harva Mims Miller, a former school teacher and mayor of Belle Glade. (Dudajek & Farrell, 1991, p. 1E)

Estella Pyfrom used the same language, "converted chicken coop," in describing her family's living conditions. The article specifically referenced Harva Mims Miller, who is Estella Pyfrom's younger sister. Also, newspaper articles were shared that told Cora Edwards story as a migrant.

Recognition plaques, certificates, and diplomas were shared with the researcher. However, the majority of recognition items highlighted the accomplishments of study participants' children. Their children have excelled in a variety of professions with degrees ranging from the B.S., M.A., J.D., and Ph.D. degrees.

In sum, documents shared or submitted to researcher were systematically analyzed to relate their usefulness in confirming the narratives. In addition to the questions answered on the document analysis form (see Appendix E), the researcher reviewed the what, when, where and why of each document to relate its significance to the purpose statement which states: The purpose of this narrative inquiry was to identify factors that most significantly contributed to the transformational experiences of African American women portrayed in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960) as migrants who aspired to find alternative paths for their lives and became successful in a variety of professional careers. Some documents, such as recipes, CDs and books, were irrelevant to the purpose of this research, but were accepted and analyzed because they were important to study participants.

V. REVIEW OF FINDINGS

Introduction

Although the origin of this study is rooted in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960), research questions were formulated in direct conflict of a study by anthropologist Lewis (1966) who argued that "The subculture [of the poor] develops mechanisms that tend to perpetuate [poverty], especially because of what happens to the world view, aspirations, and character of the children who grow up in it" (p. 199).

These theoretical precepts were accepted beliefs by many who believed that poverty generated poverty and that cultural attitudes, beliefs, values, as well as practices, tended to regenerate over time. As further hypothesized, even if the structured conditions were to change, the children of poverty-stricken individuals would be acclimatized to poverty. The central and sub research questions were designed to investigate the similarities and differences among a group of African American women who did not acclimatize themselves into poverty even though they were born into poverty and spent all of their childhood in poverty as migrant farm workers.

Research Question 1

What are the similarities in the transformational experiences among successful African American women whose lives were portrayed in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960)? Similarities of the nine study participants began at birth, as they were all born into poverty-stricken, migrant families. None of the study

participants' parents finished high school; however, all study participants received a high school diploma. Motivated to succeed, all study participants displayed characteristics of being self-directed learners, identified by Guglielmino and Guglielmino (2003) as self-reliance, resilience, intellectual curiosity, and tenacity. Consistent with self-directed learning, the study participants' progression to successful careers was also consistent with the concept of andragogy that suggests that adult learners have a psychological need to be self-directed learners. This is further evident by the fact that all study participants assumed a leadership or supervisory role in both their professional careers and community.

Families of the study participants played a vital role in their transformation in that they all supplied consistent support by instilling strong work ethics characterized by a sense of responsibility, integrity, and discipline. Among the first generation of migrants to attend college, the family support was not only from immediate family but also their extended family. Although the parents of study participants did not have an education, they valued education. All study participants were told by their parents that "education is the way out" of migratory labor and the emphasis placed on education became their children's manifestation.

The adaptive coping skills acquired as children, living in material poverty, motivated the study participants to give back to their community by serving others. They all are actively involved in some form of community service. Also, transformative learning played a role in the changes they had to undergo from migrant to professional. With or without the help of others, they all took the initiative to better their lives.

Whether an overt or covert disorienting dilemma, they all experienced a spiritual awakening and repeatedly expressed their faith in God.

Research Question 2

What are the differences in the transformational experiences among successful African American women whose lives were portrayed in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960)? One discernible difference noted in the transformational experiences among the nine study participants was within their family structure. Of the nine, seven were reared in two-family homes where both parents were involved in their lives. The seven study participants reared in two-family homes married and eventually started a family. The two study participants reared by single parents became single parents themselves the same as their parents, and were reared by single mothers. Of the two, one participant's father was actively involved in her life while the other participant did not meet her father until she was 32 years old. The policy in the 1960s was that if a student became pregnant, she was not allowed to attend regular school. Both the pregnant female and the father, if identified, were expelled. However, the two study participants who were teen mothers completed high school by attending night school to obtain their GED. One GED graduate never finished college, and the other said it took her nine years to get her bachelor's degree.

Another difference of the transformational experiences among study participants was the manner migratory work affected their school attendance. Some were not able to start the school year until late September or early October and would have to leave prior to the end of the school year. As youth, four study participants' school attendance was not interrupted. Gloria James, Betty Chapman-Nelson, Carol Spencer, and Participant X

indicated that their parents made alternative arrangements, such as living with a friend or relative, so that their school attendance would not be affected by the migratory cycle. Gloria James stated that her father was adamant about them being in school and would leave the season early so that she could start school. The five study participants whose school attendance was adversely affected were class assignments behind the rest of their classmates and had to "play catch-up" by working hard. However, Cora Edwards stated that her teachers were understanding and would work with the migrant children who were late starters.

Another difference in the transformational experiences among the study participants was that they left migrant work at different times. Two of the study participants worked for more than 20 years after finishing high school. Three worked summers and weekends after graduating from high school while the others worked from four to 10 years after high school. Of the nine, one study participant's children worked as seasonal workers.

Research Question 3

What factors contributed most significantly to the transformational experience of African American women who left the cycle of migratory labor and became successful in professional careers? The factors that contributed most significantly to the transformational experiences of the nine study participants are expounded in the findings. After interviewing, coding, and categorizing the most salient facts, the factors that were most significant are as follows: consistent family support, adaptive coping skills, catalyst for change, transformational learning, meaningful relationships with others, and commitment to community service. Minor categories emerged that revealed the

following: immediate and extended family valued education, undeterred resiliency, transformative relationship with God, strong protestant work ethic, empowered self-directed learners, and dedication to serve impoverished people.

Sub-Question 1

What similarities or differences were there between the demographic factors (e.g., age, number of siblings, position in the family, crops harvested, educational level, career, and/or religious/spiritual affiliation) of the migrant women that were successful? There were more similarities in the demographic data than differences among study participants. Despite more than a 20 year age difference between the youngest and oldest participants, they harvested basically the same crops with one difference: study participant Betty Chapman-Nelson was the only one to state that she worked in sugar cane. However, she stayed in the migrant work cycle for more than 20 years after high school; thus, her longevity in seasonal work may have exposed her to more crops.

All study participants came from large families of five or more children. Birth order ranged from the first to the last. Although two study participants did not graduate college, they all acquired well-paying professional careers. Education was the chosen profession for six of the study participants. They all practice different denominations of Christianity, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Demographic Data of Study Participants

Study Participant	Age Range	Number of Siblings	Position in Family	Crops Harvested	Highest Educ	Career	Religious Affiliation
Gloria James	45–55	8	6th	Cucumbers, Peppers, Tomatoes	B.A.	Court Record Specialist	Pentecostal
Cora Edwards	61–65	10	7th	Corn, Beans, Celery, Strawberries, Sweet Peas, Potatoes	M.A.	Teacher and Guidance Counselor	Pentecostal
Juanita Edwards	61–65	4	2nd	Beans, Corn ,Cotton, Oranges, Potatoes, Tomatoes	M.A.	Principal and Director of Charter Schools	Baptist
Betty Chapman-Nelson	66–70	4	4th	Cabbage, Cane, Celery, Corn, Lettuce	M.A.	Early Childhood Educator	Pentecostal
Estella Pyfrom	76 and Over	6	2nd	Apples, Beans, Corn, Potatoes, Strawberries, Sweet Peas	M.A.	Guidance Counselor	Methodist
Carol Spencer	45–55	4	2nd	Beans, Corn, Oranges, Pineapples	M.A.	Nurse and Nurse Educator	Baptist
Thelma Waters	76 and Over	12	10th	Apples, Beans, Corn, Potatoes, Strawberries, Sweet Peas	One year post-secondary	Business Owner/ Daycare Provider	African Methodist Episcopal
Gloria Whitley	76 and Over	7	1st	Beans, Cabbage, Celery, Corn, Potatoes	B.A.	Teacher and Associate Minister	African Methodist Episcopal
Participant X	61–65	4	2nd	Beans, Celery, Corn, Peanuts, Peppers, Potatoes	One year post-secondary	Store Manager	Baptist

Sub-Question 2

How did these factors influence the transformational experience of the African American women who were former migrants? People do not choose the family or

circumstances they are born into. Because study participants were born into a family of migrants, it was expected that they would become and remain migrants as well. This appeared to be their predisposed career, and for many years they worked alongside their fathers, brothers, and husbands in the fields. Seasonal field work was a requisite for survival. When there were no crops to harvest in Florida, they all traveled up the east coast to work.

When work was a necessity, gender roles for African American women, which had been shaped during slavery, meant that African American women performed the same work as men (Jones, 1985). As a result, these women learned from an early age that hard work was a part of life and a way out of poverty. With or without a spouse, they knew how to survive. Study participant Cora Edwards stated that field work, although "hard labor, it made me strong and taught me skills I could use." By utilizing skills for the variety of crops harvested, she learned to cook well by adapting to her environment.

Study participant Estella Pyfrom, referencing her five sisters, surmised that "Work is a part of all our vocabulary. We learned to work for what we wanted." Hard labor had taught her that transformation meant change, and with change one must learn to adapt. Having adjusted to the life of field work from sunrise to sunset and coming home to perform domestic duties prior to slumber helped prepare her for the rigors of college. Because there were few available scholarships and money was scarce when Estella Pyfrom attended college, her adaptability to working long hours with little sleep as a migrant prepared her to earn money through college. She would sew clothes and press hair for other college students, often working until 3:00 or 4:00 a.m.

Transformation through adaptation, which occurred over many years, could not be observed directly, but working multiple crops, traveling to different work locations, and living in atrocious conditions not only taught the study participants flexibility, but also multiple skills. For example, depending on where a female migrant was placed, the corn field required skilled pullers, packers, or checkers to harvest the crop whereas those working in cabbage would wield a knife to dislodge cabbage from its root. Bean picking required workers to crawl on their knees unlike strawberry picking which required workers to bend down to hand-pick the berries. As the study participant relocated from field-to-field, they adapted to the skill level needed to harvest the crops. Through adaptation, which is an intellectual construct, they empowered themselves and transformed their lives.

Religion played a significant role in the transformation of the study participants. As noted in the demographic data, they are all Christians. Consistent with an abiding faith in their Christian religion, study participants often quoted scriptures and expressed how they used their faith to sustain them through difficult transitions. These were some words used to describe what their Christian faith taught them: patience, tolerance, ethics, compassion, and morality.

As they all stated directly or indirectly, they never heard their parents complain, so they did not complain. However, they all expressed the belief that God had designed a purpose for their lives, and they had to go through the migratory work cycle in order to understand God's purpose.

Sub Question 3.

What impact did self-efficacy have on these former migrant women's motivation to succeed? Generally, as defined by Bandura (1977), self-efficacy is a person's belief in his or her ability to succeed in specific circumstances. According to Bandura, people guide their lives by their beliefs of personal efficacy, as one's sense of self-efficacy can play a key role in the approach people use to accomplish goals and tasks, as well as confront challenges. Referencing study participants, their self-efficacy had a direct impact on their "capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3) to move beyond the physically demanding labor of field work.

Because of a strong self-efficacy, as further explicated by Bandura (1977), some people may have to change their "environmental conditions" (p. 3). Seasonal field work alienated study participants from leading more intellectually challenging lives. Their personal efficacy and belief in themselves motivated them to change environments. Supported by Bandura's theory—those with high self-efficacy believe in themselves—quite possibly without a strong self-efficacy, study participants may not have moved beyond the economically exploitative work of migratory labor and secured professional careers.

The transformation from migrant to professional was not a straightforward journey, as study participants faced challenges such as teen pregnancy, economic hardships, harsh living conditions, illnesses, and deaths of loved ones, to name a few. However, they did not give up. According to Bandura (1982), "When beset with difficulties…those who have a strong sense of efficacy exert greater effort to master the challenges" (p. 123). This greater effort meant working multiple jobs while in college,

studying longer and harder than many of their peers, continuing to perform seasonal field work during the summer months and holidays while in college, and being available to assist family when needed.

Concurrent with the physical and psychological demands of migratory labor, study participants were beleaguered often with mixed emotions as they transitioned from migrant to professional. Exacted from the descriptions of study participants, at times they felt "confused," "guilty," "overwhelmed," "undeserving," "happy," and "sad." However, despite the multiplicity of negative and positive emotions, their high personal efficacy motivated them to take the good with the bad and "never complain," as posited by study participants Cora Edwards, Juanita Edwards, Betty Chapman-Nelson, Estella Pyfrom, Thelma Waters, and Gloria Whitley. Although oblivious to them, these mixed emotions might have actually benefited them during difficult times by allowing them to confront hardships and find a deeper meaning in their experiences. Also, changes in their mixed emotional experiences could have paved the way for improvements in both their overall emotional well-being and their health (Adler & Hershfield, 2012).

It is worth noting that the genesis of the study participants' self-efficacy began with the love, support, and guidance they received from their parents. Despite their migrant farm work status, they all stated that their parents made them feel special, they mattered, and they belonged. Parent educator Pam Leo (2008) stated on her website that, "Feeling loved and connected is the emotional fuel that gets [children] through the day" (para. 3), and ultimately through life.

Sub-Question 4

For those that were successful, where did they demonstrate their successes (e.g., the disciplines they choose to work, their career paths, and their responsibility to others growth, etc.)? "One way not to prosper is to be unemployed", posits McClelland and Tobin (2010) in their book entitled *American Dream Dying: The Changing Economic Lot of the Least Advantaged* (p. 46). However, study participants were not stifled in their transformation by unemployment. After migratory labor, various career paths and disciplines kept study participants employed, as illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5

Career Paths of Study Participants

Study Participant	Career Paths
Cora Edwards	Middle School Teacher, Retired Guidance Counselor
Juanita Edwards	Teacher's Aide, Middle School Teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal, Charter School Director
Betty Chapman-Nelson	Teachers Aide, Instructional Aide, Early Childhood Teacher, Adjunct, College Professor
Gloria James	Court Record Specialist
Carol Spencer	Registered Nurse, School Nurse, Nurse Educator, Adjunct Professor, CEO/Owner of a Nursing School
Estella Pyfrom	Seamstress, Florist, Middle School Teacher, Guidance Counselor, Area Administrator for Palm Beach County School, District
Thelma Waters	Coordinator for Family Planning, Retired Business Owner
Gloria Whitley	Middle School Teacher
Participant X	Retail Associate, Operations Manager, Assistant Store Manager, Store Manager

Each of the study participants indicated that they felt their purpose in life extended beyond their paid professional careers. Imbued with an ethical responsibility to benefit society by helping as many people as possible, especially migrants or other impoverished sub-groups; the study participants have remained connected and active in their communities. As lifelong transformational learners, each in her own way, expressed an obligation to benefit society at large. Balancing work, family, and life demands, they all reach out to others. Whether in their fifties or seventies, their commitment to the growth of others have placed them in the position to be servant leaders, mentors, tutors,

chaperons, foster/surrogate parents, and role models. In addition to giving of their time for the growth of others, some study participants utilized their own funds to provide help in the following ways:

- One study participant purchased a mobile school for children that now services more than 500 children per month.
- One study participant provides scholarships for students to attend CNA/LPN nursing school.
- One study participant reared an abandoned child and supported him financially through college.
- One study participant frequently shops for children who need clothing and shoes.

Growing up as migrants, study participants were guided, mentored, supported, and challenged, and now they are helping others in the way they were helped.

VI. DISCUSSION

Study Significance Revisited

This study sought to refute the conclusion drawn by Lewis (1966), who argued that "The subculture [of the poor] develops mechanisms that tend to perpetuate [poverty], especially because of what happens to the world view, aspirations, and character of the children who grow up in it" (p. 199). These theoretical precepts were accepted beliefs by many policy makers as well as large segments of the population who believed poverty generated cultural attitudes, beliefs, values, as well as practices that tended to generate itself over time. As further hypothesized by Lewis, even if the structured conditions were to change, the children of poverty-stricken individuals would be culturally acclimatized to poverty.

Believing people reared in poverty were socialized into poverty and there was nothing to do about it could negatively affect their self-efficacy and create feelings of inferiority, marginality, and helplessness. This study revealed the opposite attitudinal beliefs among study participants who substituted these negative feelings with self-confidence, independence, and achievement.

Employing narrative inquiry to investigate the stories of nine study participants who transformed their lives out of migratory poverty into professional careers provides a strong argument of refutation against Lewis (1966) who derived his conclusions after studying one family. In contrast to Lewis' findings, this study revealed that not all African American former migrants who were born into poverty acclimatized themselves

to the generational-cultural-poverty stereotype. Imbued with values, honor, and pride instilled by their parents, these former migrants did not focus on their poverty and powerless; instead, they empowered themselves by pursuing academic excellence that eventually led to successful careers and financial security. Once they transformed their lives, they focused on the empowerment of others who were equally disenfranchised.

Utilizing narrative inquiry methodology for this qualitative study, the researcher examined multiple individuals, collected their stories, reported their experiences, and identified significance of those experiences. The migrant-life experiences of the nine study participants corresponded with central and sub research questions. Additionally, the researcher channeled her cognitive perception of a narrative's function to agree with that of Czarniawska: "narrative is understood as a spoken or written text giving an account of event/action or series of events/actions, chronologically connected" (as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 70).

Researcher's Reflections

As a product of The Glades area and the migrant experience, the researcher can relate to both the painful experiences of migratory labor and the triumph of attaining a successful career, the same as the women in this study. The researcher left the seasonal cycle associated with travel at a young age, but sought work after school and on holidays in the corn and bean fields in Palm Beach County, Florida. However, the researcher's oldest sister worked as a migrant her entire life, leaving the migrant cycle in her sixties when she was very ill with emphysema. Her oldest son, the researcher's nephew, remained in the migrant lifestyle until his death.

The researcher learned from study participant Betty Chapman-Nelson that she traveled "on the season" and lived with the researcher's sister for more than 20 years. Accustomed to working seasonal crops around The Glades area, Betty Chapman-Nelson did not begin to travel as a migrant out of the state of Florida until the age of 18, saying there was no year-round work other than migratory labor once she finished high school. "Momma didn't want me to go but she trusted your sister," stated Betty Chapman-Nelson. Because of the researcher's family history, she is culturally sensitive to impoverished people, especially female migrant workers. Therefore, as she listened to the stories of the study participants it was as if she was reliving parts of her past and learning her family history.

During the 1960s, the teenage years of the researcher, farms proliferated up and down the East Coast of the United States, and most of these farms were family owned. A common definition of a family farm is a farm owned by a family, where the family makes the important management decisions, making the farm and the family inseparable. According to Professor John Ikerd, family farms can be full-time or part-time, they can be family owned, leased, or rented, and non-family members can do much of the work on the farm, as long as the farm workers become a part of the farm's family (Ikerd, 2006). This definition is partially consistent with the reality of experiences for migrant farm workers in the 1960s. However, it was highly unlikely and unusual that the farm workers were treated as part of the family.

Based on the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960), migrant workers' lives were ruled by others who cared little about them, and were willing to sacrifice them to poor working and living conditions. Echoing the experiences of the

researcher's family and as remembered by the research, the hierarchal, organizational migrant work structure in the 1960s was that owners usually assigned family members as supervisors. The liaison between the farm workers and the supervisors was the crew chief. The crew chief was often referred to as a slave driver. The type of work African American migrant females performed was "long associated with Black women's status as mule" (Collins, 2009, p. 54), working long hours in the field, cooking for the family in the evening, cleaning the home, and preparing school-age children for school the next day. For most, this meant their domestic chores did not subside until midnight, only to rise early the following morning to repeat the cycle. As study participant Thelma Waters stated, during peak season farmers only "gave us Sundays off." The relationship between farmers and workers describes an authority-compliance leadership style.

Authority-Compliance Leadership

Authority-compliance leadership is one of the least desirable when it comes to building trusting relationships. In an organizational structure of authority-compliance leadership, which characterized the migrant work cycle, the farmer as leader placed more importance on tasks and job requirements, and less importance on people, "except to the extent that people [were] tools for getting the job done" (Northouse, 2010, p. 73). The leader/farmer was in complete control, and no one was permitted to offer opinions or make suggestions, no matter how it might have benefited the group. According to Northouse (2010), authority-compliant leaders' communication with subordinates is often viewed as "controlling, demanding, hard driving, and overpowering" (p. 73). Having to work for years under these conditions, study participants developed a tough interior, and became self-reliant and resilient. As migrants, they were bewildered by the lack of

compassion for the migrant workers who made many farm owners wealthy. Nonetheless, the totality of their farm labor experiences sparked an intellectual curiosity within them as they heuristically used the hardships of life to propel them to a better life outside of migratory labor.

Customs, Symbols, and Traditions

Despite the intellectually uninspiring and physically demanding work of migrant labor, study participants learned to survive by adapting and adjusting to their different surroundings, whether in their hometown or in an isolated work camp. Survival for the study participants often depended on the ambiguity and uncertainty of life. However, because of their creativity and resourcefulness, customs, myths, and traditions developed within the migratory community. Since migrant workers were not part of the political bureaucracy or power structure, they created their hierarchal symbols. For example, in the cornfields some of the workers could be honored with the coveted title, "Peacocks of the Field." They were the "pullers" who determined the speed and direction of the "mule train" (where corn was packaged) based on their skill and agility.

The pullers dressed differently from the rest of the labor force when working in corn. They would wear long, silk headscarves, and they always wore protective long sleeved shirts even in temperatures well above 90 degrees Fahrenheit. They were always dressed in two pair of pants - a shorter pair over a pair of long pants. The pullers appeared to be well respected among the farm workers because only a select few could endure the speed, strength, and coordination required to be a "puller." The pullers often entertained the work crew with humorous jokes and/or singing. This helped the workday move faster.

Next, in order of symbolic importance were the "packers." After the pullers pulled corn from the stalks and placed the corn on a conveyor belt, the packers would systematically place the corn in crates to be shipped to different parts of the United States. Because the pullers and packers worked in synchronized harmony, many rituals developed among them. Pullers were primarily males, and packers were predominantly females. The packer who packed the most boxes of corn in a day would be recognized and symbolically initiated into a select group of distinguished packers by the pullers. Everyone knew and flattered the packer for her skill, as if she were the queen of corn. The researcher's oldest sister was a distinguished packer who was recognized for her packing skills. These simple rituals created a bond of camaraderie among migrant workers.

As further echoed by study participants, many of the migrants were arbitrarily assigned titles and given nicknames, such as "doc," "prez," "teach," "ma," and "pa." One study participant was nicknamed "teach" because she frequently corrected grammar and helped with word enunciations. The "ma's and pa's" of the field were titles reserved for older migrant workers whose guidance and wisdom served as the moral compass for others. Metaphors, such as "peacocks of the fields," helped migrant workers endure their circumstances and feel esteemed among their peers. According to Bolman and Deal (2008), metaphors can influence people's attitudes and actions. Positive metaphors reaped positive outcomes as exemplified by the endearment "teach." Nicknamed "teach" by other migrants, this became one study participant's reality, as she did become a certified classroom teacher.

Stereotypes

Paraphrasing a farmer's perceived stereotype of migrants, when interviewed by Murrow in the documentary *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960), the farmer portrayed them as having a "little gypsy in their blood," saying that farm work is all they want to do, that migrants don't have a worry in the world, and that they are the happiest race of people on earth. In the researcher's frame of reference, this racial stereotype is reminiscent of the "happy slave" stereotype—ignorant, jovial, naive, and servile (Turner, 1994), singing and scratching his head.

Racial stereotypes are negative constructed beliefs and expectations that are supposedly shared by all members of the racial group (Jewell, 1993). Because most people did not attempt to understand the community of migrants, it was easy to label them. However, in opposition to these stereotypes, migrants created a cohesive community within their culture by using symbols and metaphors. This close-knit community served their needs for friendship, acceptance, security, status, and personal growth.

Community Cohesiveness and Family Support

The backbone of the migrant community cohesiveness was the love and support displayed to migrant children from their parents as well as their teachers. Each study participant spoke of consistent family support, and this support not only sustained them but also served as a motivating force for them not surrendering to racism, criticism, low standards, or cynicism. For further discussion, the question that haunts the researcher is why the study participants were able to transform their lives when so many other African American migrant women remained in the migrant cycle for life, including the

researcher's oldest sister. One level of understanding to this puzzling question was possibly answered by Dr. James Comer, a Yale University trained psychiatrist, who has done extensive study on why some promising lives falter and others succeed.

Following the tradition of oral family history, Dr. James Comer (1988) described his mother's recollection of her childhood in Mississippi at the turn of the 20th century in a sharecropping family, and her struggles against poverty and racism. Comer's mother's struggles were analogous to this study's participants' parents. However, it was the wisdom of Dr. Comer's mother that shed light on the question of why some children falter, and others from the same neighborhood succeed. Comer's interest in child psychology began in adulthood when he wondered why three of his childhood friends from the same neighborhood with two-parent households whose fathers worked at the same steel mill, grew up to lead hard lives: one died from alcoholism, a second was in and out of jail, and a third was in and out of mental institutions. On the other hand, among his five siblings there are 13 college degrees. His mother pointed out that these children's problems "stemmed from [their] family life. I don't think [their parents] sat and talked with the children or did anything together" (as cited in Dubin, 2013, p. 20). Comer's childhood as well as study participants' family dynamics was noticeably dissimilar. As expressed by all study participants, their parents sat and talked with them, and they did things as a family unit, above all going to church together on Sundays. Comer (1988) stated that his family did everything together, and his parents habitually sat and talked to him and his siblings.

This research has imbued the researcher with a greater understanding of her own family. As mentioned previously, the researcher's oldest sister remained a migrant her

entire life. This sister was 22 years older than the researcher, and her father and the researcher's mother never married. However, the oldest sister was reared by a stepfather who was the researcher mother's first husband. The researcher's mother's second marriage produced three children. Unlike the researcher's father who was a kind, hardworking, family oriented individual, the oldest sister's stepfather was verbally, physically, and emotionally abusive. Maybe it was the inhumane working conditions that did not allow much time for them to sit and talk to her, but her rearing and parental relationship was much different from those of her siblings who were about 20 years younger than she.

By the time the researcher's mother and father married, the researcher's oldest sister was a single parent migrant with two small children. The researcher's mother and father did not finish high school, but they saw to it that their children acquired at least a high school diploma. Not only did they sit and talk to their children, but no matter what school function the McLaughlin children were involved in, at least one of their parents were in attendance.

The support of family helped sustain study participants during difficult times. Comer (1988) agreed that his home life positively influenced his own success in life. At times when he wanted to give up, he was encouraged by his family. One of the toughest years of his life was his freshman year at Indiana University. Being one of a few African American students at the university at the time, an English professor praised a paper Comer had written until the professor discovered that it had been written by him. The open criticism the professor unleashed in front of the class devastated Comer. However, his mother was there telling him to keep going, and he did—the same way study

participants "kept going." Encouragement was a way to show their belief and pride in their children, as the children honored their parents in their quest for academic excellence and economic success.

Influence of Educators

Supporting the parents were African American teachers who taught at segregated schools that the migrants attended in The Glades area of Palm Beach County Florida. As stated by study participant Cora Edwards, "the teachers knew the migrant children, and they tried to help us." This help involved helping "us catch-up to their peers when they arrived from the season after the school year had started" she stated. Other study participants, namely Betty Chapman-Nelson, Estella Pyfrom, Gloria Whitley, and Participant X, credited some of their teachers with being influential in their transformation. Even when they traveled, some were fortunate enough to attend summer programs or start the school year in the state where their parents harvested crops. Many teachers created a warm and protective environment as they performed multifaceted roles of surrogate parent, role model, disciplinarian, mentor, and counselor.

Portrayed in *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960) was an African American teacher who served migrant students in New Jersey by teaching in a summer program. When interviewed by Murrow while standing in her classroom, he asked, "Are your pupils, who most of them are children from migrant families, are they anxious to get an education?" The teacher's response was that they were "terribly anxious," more so than her children in regular school. She noted the progress her migrant pupils made from year-to-year. When asked about specific pupils, she knew the basic family history, telling Murrow that these children were from large families, and the possibility of them

finishing high school was grim. As stated by this teacher, most of the parents could not read or write, and when required forms needed to be signed, most marked an X. She also expressed her "compassion for those in this situation," and stated how she felt "a bit of responsibility for these children." (Friendly et al., 1960).

Comer (1988) contended that teachers play a critical role in childhood development. He offered a unique perspective to educating children, one that was underscored by Participant X: story telling. According to Comer, one way that teachers influence the positive growth of children is not by just telling stories, but by telling the right stories. Employing the Jackie Robinson story to illustrate his point, Comer says that often teachers teach that Jackie Robinson was the first Black in baseball. However, "That is not the story. The story was his persistence, self-regulation, determination, cool under fire, demonstration of excellence" (as cited in Dubin, 2013, p. 25). As study participants told their stories, the traits identified by Comer's example were traits found in all study participants.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

Overview of Conclusions

The purpose of this narrative inquiry was to identify factors that most significantly contributed to the transformational experiences of African American women portrayed in the 1960 documentary *Harvest of Shame* as migrants who aspired to find alternative paths for their lives and became successful in a variety of professional careers (Friendly et al., 1960). Additionally, the significance of this study presented additional research dispelling the myth surrounding the culture of poverty stereotype. This study was also significant because it contributes to the literature by identifying and employing intervention methods to assist in breaking the cycle of poverty among children as well as adults.

Astoundingly, the findings in this study were strikingly similar to findings in *the Moving out of Poverty: Success from the Bottom Up* study where "narratives from 60,000 people: poor or formerly poor women, men, and youths in over 500 communities across 21 study regions in 15 countries" (Naranja, Pritchitt, & Kapoor, 2009, p. 7) were conducted "to explore from the bottom up how people move out of poverty" (p. 8). The dynamics of both studies provide substantial evidence to show how self-efficacy, determination and aspiration influence the individual process of getting out of poverty. Key findings from Naranja et. al., (2009) study were:

- Poor People are not trapped in a culture of poverty (p. 18)
- Poverty is a condition, not a characteristic (p.23)

- Power "within" can help a person move up (p. 26)
- Equal opportunity remains a dream (p.30)
- Responsive local democracies can help reduce poverty (p.33)
- Collective action helps poor people cope but not get ahead (p. 38)
- Poverty reduction should be guided by lessons from poor people (p. 41)

After carefully examining data collected from interviews, documents, field and observation notes, the researcher of this study revealed factors that most significantly contributed to the transformational experiences of the nine study participants were: consistent family support, adaptive coping skills, catalyst for change, transformative learning, meaningful relationships with non-family members, and dedication to community service.

Finding 1: Consistent Family Support

One significant finding in this study revealed that the central motivating factor behind these former migrants becoming successful in professional careers stemmed from the consistent family support they received as children and as young adults. Focusing on the stories of these African American women's challenging childhood and young adulthood, replete with the trappings of becoming catastrophic failures; this research strongly suggests that there is an intricate connection between the importance of parental involvement in childhood development and academic success.

It could be argued that the family is the most important unit in society. Family harmony provides emotional and social stability among many other benefits. An outsider might question the stability of migrant travels, but as concluded by study participants it was a way of life for them in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, and they, as a family unit, did

what they needed to do to survive. Aptly stated by study participant Estella Pyfrom, “It was our world of experience. We didn't know too much outside of that box.” Held together by emotional bonds of care and support, the family unity was their “private haven” (Collins, 2009, p. 53) from outside forces.

The emphasis placed on education in the home helped the study participants grow intellectually. Supporting this finding is Comer who stated, “of all the babies I delivered, there was not one born with an interest in academic learning” (as cited in Dubin, 2013, p. 23). The desire to succeed stemmed from the constant nurturing and loving support from family. Comer also noted that, “developing strong relationships requires effort and hard work. But the payoff is profound” (as cited in Dubin, 2013, p. 23). The hard work in the field did not preclude the parents of study participants from working hard in the home to develop strong family ties. The experience of family life left a distinctive and lasting impression, and helped prepare study participants for life outside of migratory labor. The payoff may not have materialized until many years later, when study participants realized that ". . . as a determinant of earnings, education matters" (McClennand & Tobin, 2010, p. 46).

Finding 2: Adaptive Coping Skills

Knowles (1975) stated “to be adequate for our strange new world we must think of learning as being the same as living. We must learn from everything we do; we must exploit our experience as a learning experience” (p. 16). For study participants, exploiting their migrant experiences can be equated with learning to adapt to their environment. As children, void of toys or playground equipment, they learned to improvise. Viewed on *Harvest of Shame* (Friendly et al., 1960), a migrant crew from

Belle Glade, Florida had arrived for work in Chenango County, New York. While their parents worked in nearby potato fields, children left on their own were engaged in group play. One girl was in the center of a circle of children who followed her lead by rhythmically singing, hopping, and clapping. According to Doireann O'Connor (2012), a professor of early childhood education and care with particular interest in play and creativity, "creativity is developed in the early years through the wide spectrum of play. As all developmental learning in the early years is centered within play as a medium for learning" (p. 3).

As described by four of the study participants, when the children were asked to retrieve hay from the barn to simulate mattresses to sleep on, they would use this as an opportunity to create a game. When the travels on back of trucks became difficult, they would "laugh at themselves," according to study participant Gloria Whitley. Living in a barn for study participant Betty Chapman-Nelson was akin to living vicariously in a college dormitory. "We would sing songs on the five to six day trip upstate," noted study participant Juanita Edwards. Study participants spoke of the resourcefulness of their parents, as none ever remember a day of not having food to eat. Grits, rice, and beans went a long way in feeding the immediate family as well as the "camp family," according to Estella Pyfrom. Unaware of their material poverty, study participants adapted to their surroundings by using their imagination, originality, and problem-solving abilities. This level of cosmic creativity (Wang & King, 2011) challenged study participants to embrace their world in childhood.

Material poverty did not translate to spiritual poverty, as there were self-initiated coping skills to distract from the physical environment. Many adaptive coping skills,

learned as children, helped the study participants as adults when they transformed from migrant work to professional careers. Adaptive coping skills, through play, prepared them to be engaged mentally, physically, and sensibly in preparation for the world beyond migratory labor.

Finding 3: Catalyst for Change

Change, in *The New American Webster Handy College Dictionary* (Morehead, & Morehead, 1995), is defined as to give a different position, course or direction; to undergo transformation or transition. Change is what kept the study participants from becoming stagnant and remaining in the migratory labor pool. Because they were willing to embrace change, transformation became a reality for them. The catalyst for change for some study participants came from within while for others change was initiated from an external source. For example, encouraging words by family or teachers sufficed for some study participants, while some were assisted in their transformation by an individual or an organization through direct intervention. For study Participant X, the catalyst for change occurred after an unexpected teen pregnancy. Most significantly, study participants were willing to make changes in their lives, and, as a result, advancement followed.

Finding 4: Transformative Learning

Cluster coding revealed that contributions to the transformative learning of study participants involved multiple life experiences replete with personal tragedies, individual growth, and learning opportunities. As previously referenced by Mezirow (as cited in Merriam et al., 2007), the key components of transformative learning are experience, critical reflection, and development. Relating to this study, the advantages of these components allowed the interview questions and the unfolding narratives to focus on the

individual lives of study participants (Boyd, 1991; Daloz, 1999; Mezirow, 1978). Each story revealed their transformative journey from migrant labor to professional careers. Pertinent to the transformative learning process of study participants was a willingness to let others into their world of experience. This openness to new perspectives diffused distrustfulness, making study participants less defensive and more reflective and critical. As a consequence, they were receptive to change.

Because transformative learning is about change, the study participants' receptivity to change promulgated an intrinsic, as well as an extrinsic, transformation. Intrinsic change, such as a desire to leave migrant labor, occurred first. The extrinsic change reflected the outcome of their heart's desire, also known as a frame of reference (Mezirow, 1978). Hypothesized by Mezirow (1991), a frame of reference includes both habits of mind and a point of view that are shaped by assumptions through which one interprets and understands the world. As migrants, the study participants had a limited world view which relegated their understanding to migratory acculturation and socialization. As professionals, who embraced lifelong learning, their frame of reference changed after completing high school, acquiring college degrees, and experiencing successful careers.

Also, the researcher traced study participants' transformation utilizing the 10 phases of Mezirow's (1978) transformative learning model: commencing with phase one, a disorienting dilemma, and ending with phase 10, a reintegration of new perspectives into one's life. Experientially, study participant Thelma Waters' transformational learning journey literally replicated Mezirow's model. Among other study participants who did not experience a disorienting dilemma as traumatic as Thelma Waters did, the

accidental death of her 17-month old son, the researcher classified their migratory lifestyle as a disorienting dilemma.

Driven by a desire to succeed, all study participants reintegrated into society with new perspectives, as demonstrated by their skills, talents, and personal attributes. Skills and talents were reflected in their professional careers, and personal attributes of being honest, resilient, confident, and responsible adults complemented their new worldview. As a result, it would be safe to conclude that all study participant narratives exemplified transformative learning.

Finding 5: **Meaningful Relationships with Non-Family Members**

Cluster coding uncovered the significant influence that mentors, as well as personal relationships with non-family members, had on the learning and growing process of study participants as they transformed their lives. Organizations and innovative people who were well-intentioned, unselfish, and sincere extended a helping hand that was at least partially responsible for study participants exiting migratory labor. Ultimately, a mentor/mentee relationship developed for some. A few of these relationships were short-term while others spanned a lifetime. However, once established, these relationships enabled study participants to expand their contacts, establish networks, and gain direct access to resources and value diverse perspectives. Establishing mentor/mentee relationships facilitated study participants' examination of previously held beliefs as they formulated new perceptions.

Study Participant X metaphorically referenced the people who significantly aided her transformation as "root" people. This symbol appropriately described those who left indelible impressions in her life, and "root" people can also be applied to the mentors

who aided the development of other study participants. Whether symbolically represented or concretely identified, diverse people from different social stratifications touched the lives of study participants, depicted in Table 6. However, only a few left permanent marks. "Leaf" people came in and out of their lives but did not have their best interest at heart. "Branch" people appeared to be concerned about their welfare on the surface but were economically exploitive. "Root" people, appearing at the bottom of the swirling funnel, as shown in Figure 8, were not seeking recognition or self-aggrandizement. Definitively, "root" people significantly aided the study participants' transformations.

Table 6

Participant X's Types of Tree People

Type of Tree People	Examples	Characteristics
Leaf People	Farmers	Critical, Insensitive, Emotionally Detached, Task Master, Racist, Unsympathetic
Branch People	Crew Chiefs	Spiteful, Cruel, Economically Exploitive, Inhumane, Uncharitable
Root People	Teachers Quakers	Altruistic, Charitable, Compassionate, Empathetic, Philanthropic, Tolerate, Unselfish, Understanding

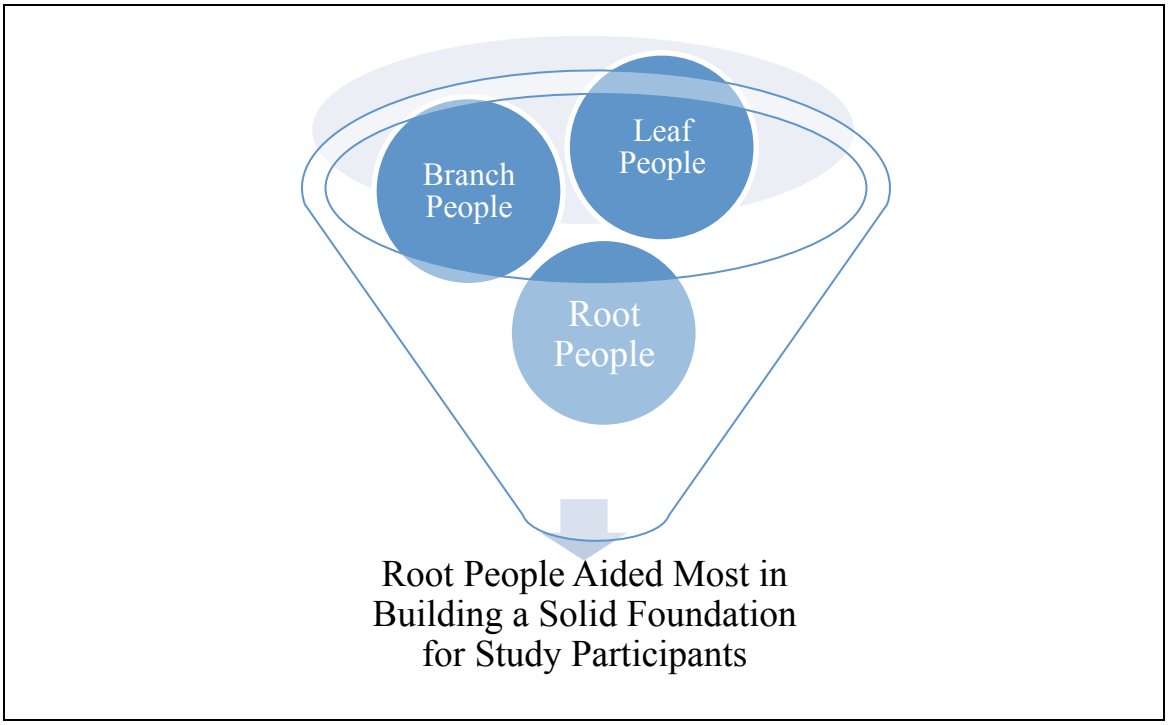

Figure 8. Swirling people.

Meaningful relationships with non-family members did not replace the love and support from study participants' families. However, mentors shared knowledge, education, and career goals as well as exposed study participants to experiences their parents were not privy to due to limited education, restricted exposure, and racial tensions at the time. These contacts and personal interactions provided leadership and direction at a time when it was needed.

Finding 6: Commitment to Community Service

Another step in the transformational learning process discovered by cluster coding was that study participants' willingness to give back to The Glades community as well as other communities in need. Modeling the behavior of those who helped them succeed, study participants gave back culturally, financially, educationally, and politically. Not

afraid to get their hands dirty, they displayed their dedication to serve in the following domains as professionals:

- Venturing back to the corn or bean fields to talk to parents of migrant children they taught (Cora Edwards, Estella Pyfrom and Betty Chapman-Nelson).
- Offering free tutorial sessions for FCAT and specific subjects (Cora Edwards, Juanita Edwards, Estella Pyfrom, Thelma Waters, and Gloria Whitley).
- Opening their homes to the homeless (Cora Edwards and Betty Chapman-Nelson).
- Speaking to middle and high school students (Cora Edwards, Juanita Edwards, Gloria James, Estella Pyfrom, Thelma Waters, Gloria Whitley, and Participant X).
- Using thousands of dollars from their personal savings to provide educational training by building or purchasing physical structures to improve skills and/or educate the underserved (Carol Spencer and Estella Pyfrom).
- Paying college tuition for students who could not afford to remain in college without their assistance (Carol Spencer, Estella Pyfrom and Cora Edwards).
- Volunteering for a multitude of established organizations.

While providing guidance and benevolent service, study participants mentored many. Mentoring, as a transformative process (Narushima, 2005), integrates well with the lifestyle of older adults because many yearn to serve by sharing their experiences with others as a way to "make a difference in the world around them" (Hudson, 1991, p. 174). Additionally, volunteering has proven to be as beneficial for the donor as it is for the recipient (Wilson & Musick, 1999); specifically, senior donors have less mortality risks,

improved medical status, and increased physical activities (Harris & Thoreseen, 2005). Equally important is that senior volunteers have the opportunity to continue sharpening skills learned while they were in the work force (Smith & Gay, 2005; Wu, 2011), thus, reaping enhanced academic, intellectual and emotional benefits. Research has shown that "knowledge and skill depreciates in value if left unattended" (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, p 334). Therefore, through volunteerism, lifelong learning is promoted.

Emergent Theme: Leadership

Although the major theme derived from this finding was the study participants' commitment to community service, leadership emerged as an interrelated theme. Their leadership capabilities and skills were prevalent in Christian outreach work, community organizations, professional associations, and academic affiliations. Study participants' leadership qualities manifested in the creation of new programs as well as volunteering to serve in community based organizations not only as members but also directors and/or presidents. Of the nine study participants, three are associate ministers (Gloria James, Juanita Edwards, and Gloria Whitley), and one (Participant X) is superintendent of her Sunday school. It is worthy to note that study participants do not limit themselves to church-related services as they also are actively serving on community/municipal-based boards, the Boys and Girls Club, Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation, and Family Planning, to name a few.

Based on study participants' commitment to give back by assuming various leadership positions, they embody Robert Greenleaf's (1977) description of servant leadership. A servant leader "focuses on the needs of the followers and helps them to become more knowledgeable, more free, more autonomous, and more like servants

themselves" (Northouse, 2010, p. 385). Those with servant-leadership characteristics are best suited for the public service sector, where emphasis on shared leadership and healthy follower relationships creates a "spiritual generative culture" (Spears, 1996, p. 86), as exemplified by the three study participants who serve in a ministerial leadership role.

Study participants leadership consisted of creating new programs, being the driving force behind existing programs, role modeling, and mentoring directly or through advocacy, and speaking for those with muted voices. As leaders, study participants have tried to create a better future for others through education, risk-taking, open-mindedness, and vision. Believing that helping others was a necessity of a fulfilled life motivated study participant Estella Pyfrom to open a mobile school with nearly a million dollars of her own money. Although not looking for recognition, this mobile school concept received international attention when she was identified as one of CNN's Heroes in 2013.

Study participant Carol Spencer used thousands of her own money to open a nursing assistant training school. After purchasing a dilapidated old building in Aiken, South Carolina, she, along with her children and community volunteers, worked for months to renovate and repair the building to its usefulness today: The Aman Institute (see Figure 9). Under her leadership, the school is a nurse assistant training school that mainly recruits adult students from identified disenfranchised communities in Aiken and surrounding counties. Figure 10 shows study participant Carol Spencer with a group of Aman Institute CNA graduates. In an interview with Rob Novit (2011), writer for the *Aiken Standard Local News*, Carol Spencer said, "I believe the Lord wanted me to do this. I was called to open the school to provide a service to the community" (p. 2A).

Figure 9. Aman Institute logo. "Caduceus on the open Bible captures our faith and commitment to education," according to Carol Spencer, CEO of Aman Institute, Inc.

Figure 10. Aman Institute CNA graduates. Five of the July 2011 CNA graduates are in RN nursing programs, and the others are working as CNAs (Photo courtesy of Carol Spencer, 2014).

Educator Booker T. Washington's (1901) immortal words reign true for study participants' commitment to community service when he stated, "I have learned that the best way to lift one's self up is to help someone else" (p. 126). Study participants felt good about themselves because they were able to reach back and give others a helping hand with the leadership skills they had learned in their transformational journey. Their leadership moved beyond deciding what the right thing was to do, but to getting the job done (Barnard, 1938).

Conclusion Summary

When study participants were growing up, it was commonly believed and generally accepted that poverty for many became a cultural norm. The social theory, culture of poverty, purported the hypothesis that generational poverty created attitudes and beliefs that somehow made people comfortable with their state of powerlessness, and those children were socialized into their state of poverty and all its trappings. However, the participants' of this study have lived to invalidate this theory.

The women in this study shared their remarkable stories of determination, sacrifice, and motivations to not only survive the hardships of life but also to succeed. The results of this study reveal that they were successful in climbing out of migratory labor to professional careers based on these significant findings: consistent family support, adaptive coping skills, catalyst for change, transformational leaning, meaningful relationships with non-family members, and commitment to community service.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS/TRANSFERABILITY

Future research can focus on areas of investigation to enhance an understanding and appreciation of transformational learning among successful women who at one time in their lives were poverty-stricken. There are lessons to be learned from the participant's stories that may help educators and community leaders plan programs for both children and adults of today. Although this is not the 1960s and many changes have occurred in American society, poverty remains a concern. CNBC News reported on March 22, 2013 that about 16.4 million Americans live in poverty, according to an analysis of 95 of the nation's largest metropolitan areas (Linn, 2013). Most of these families have children, and many of these children from low-income families do not receive the consistent family support that the participants in this study received. For some children from low-income families, school personnel may be the only place to foster the nurturing support that children need.

Therefore, this researcher recommends that individualized student counseling should be a requirement for middle and high school students. This will allow students to form a trusting relationship with an adult, especially for those students who feel alone and emotionally isolated because their parents work multiple jobs and do not have the time or skill to interact with their children. This will also provide the opportunity for youth to talk confidentially with a counselor about private concerns that may assist in facilitating personal growth. Having required individualized student counseling will circumvent most students seeking advice of a school counselor only when they are in

trouble. Depending on the student population and number of counselors available, every student should have a friendly chat with their designated counselor at least once a month—more if possible.

Another finding suggested the significance of mentors in one's life. Had it not been for a mentor/mentee relationship, it is probable that the study participants would not have left a life of migratory labor. No one can dispute the impact of a positive mentor/mentee relationship. However, after evaluating the participants' stories, mentors are equally influential in adults. Mentoring relationships in young adulthood can impact long-term decisions. There are many organizations that provide mentorship to children, but young adults need mentoring as well, especially young adults between the ages of 18 and 28 as this study found. When high school is over for children reared in low-income families, many do not have the resources to go to college or even a trade school. Some will join gangs for power, status, security, and/or acceptance (Decker & Van Winkle, 1996). Others may join because they do not have a mentor to help guide and support them (National Crime Prevention Council, 2014).

Therefore, this researcher suggests that social organizations, including sororities and fraternities, need to expand their mentorship programs to young adults. What about a man-to-man or woman-to-woman mentorship program for recent high school graduates and beyond? Emphasis in American education has increased focus on standardized test scores. The schools, especially those in low-income areas, need to refocus attention on developing collaborative relationships with community groups whose members can become lifetime mentors. This type of supportive relationship can promote life-long learning and social development.

Another recommendation that may assist poverty-stricken women is to combine systems thinking with transformational learning. Because systems thinking involve the process of understanding how things influence one another within a whole, poverty must be looked at as part of a larger societal problem. As suggested by Margaret Wheatley (2006), persistent problems cannot be solved from the same level of thinking. Wheatley argues that systems thinking theory encourages leaders to trust and involve their followers more, not less. By involving workers in the process of decision-making, even basic involvement, such as asking migrants when is the best day and time to leave from one crop to another, can be empowering, as it makes them feel as if their opinions count. This one example can be justification to combine transformational learning with systems thinking so that impoverished migrant women can begin their transformational journey.

Recommendations for future research and practice include the following:

- Conduct a qualitative narrative research study sampling research participants in this study focusing on their leadership styles as professionals.
- Conduct a qualitative study on the impact of informal learning on African American women who rose from poverty to successful careers.
- Conduct a similar qualitative narrative research study sampling former migrants who did not leave the migrant work cycle.
- Introduce educational campaigns that inform citizens of their rights and what is available to them.
- Teach job skills for those students who fail the FCAT so they do not have to rely solely on the state for public assistance.

- Require welfare recipients to take an active role in their community with the goal of instilling a sense of citizenship and pride in their neighborhoods.
- Develop targeted poverty reduction programs specific to individual needs.
- Help break the cycle of poverty by allowing first generation college graduates to tell their stories to others via the news media, school forums, or community forums that require those on public assistance to attend.
- Develop a 24-hour migrant worker complaint telephone hot line to investigate human rights abuses and wage theft. This recommendation is most immediate.

The following research questions, possibly for future studies, surfaced as a result of this study:

1. Is the motivation to succeed driven more by external rather than internal factors?
2. What impact does being a self-directed learner have on the success rate of former migrants?
3. Why do goal-oriented adults remain self-directed in their learning for extended periods of time?
4. Are mentors more influential in adults as opposed to children?
5. Why do some women from impoverished backgrounds appear to have an embedded social consciousness?

Closing Statement

The similarity that connected the transformational experience of the study participants was that each one of their lives could read like a "rags to riches" story. The thematic conclusion would advocate that it is only disgraceful to be born into poverty if one chooses not to do something about it. The phenomenon of poverty is not unique to

African Americans or women. All races and cultures, both male and female, have individuals who are born into poverty, and as children are deprived of basic necessities. Two well-known figures are Benjamin Franklin and Maya Angelou: one male and White, the latter Black and female. Benjamin Franklin chronicled his meager beginnings (see *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, 1976) and Maya Angelou recorded her impoverished background (see *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, 1969). Both autobiographical narratives have been celebrated as noteworthy "rags to riches" stories that unveil the difficulties both authors faced in their early lives as well as the remarkable qualities both possessed in order to succeed. As a result of qualities such as resourcefulness, determination, ingenuity, willingness to work menial jobs, and a strong work ethic, Franklin and Angelou managed to transcend their circumstances.

The African American women in this study who were former migrants managed to transcend their circumstances too. Their stories represent thousands of muted voices—stories that can serve as a beacon of hope to inspire other impoverished people to confront their fears and dismiss feelings of inadequacies. Then, what seems to be impossible becomes possible, as exemplified by the survivors of one of the most dehumanizing jobs in America—migrant farm labor.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. IRB Approval Letter

Institutional Review Board
Mailing Address:
Division of Research
777 Glades Rd., Bldg. 80, Rm. 106
Boca Raton, FL 33431

Tel: 561.297.0777 Fax: 561.297.2573

http://www.fau.edu/research/researchint
Michael Whitehurst, Ed.D., Chair

DATE:	December 4, 2013
TO:	Valerie Bryan, Ed.D.
FROM:	Florida Atlantic University Social, Behavioral and Educational Research IRB
IRBNET ID #:	520726-2
PROTOCOL TITLE:	[520726-2] Transformational Experiences of African American Women: Their Critical Reflections as Former Migrants Who evolved from Harvest of Shame to Seeds of Hope
PROJECT TYPE:	New Project
ACTION:	APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE:	December 4, 2013
EXPIRATION DATE:	December 3, 2014
REVIEW TYPE:	Expedited Review
REVIEW CATEGORY:	Expedited review category # B7

Thank you for your submission of Response/Follow-Up materials for this research study. The Florida Atlantic University Social, Behavioral and Educational Research IRB has APPROVED your New Project. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

- This study is approved for a maximum of **10** subjects.
- It is important that you use the approved, stamped consent documents or procedures included with this letter.
- ****Please note that any revision to previously approved materials or procedures, including modifications to numbers of subjects, must be approved by the IRB before it is initiated.** Please use the amendment form to request IRB approval of a proposed revision.
- All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All regulatory and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed, if applicable.
- Please report all NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this study to this office.
- Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years.
- **This approval is valid for one year.** A Continuing Review form will be required prior to the expiration date if this project will continue beyond one year.

If you have any questions or comments about this correspondence, please contact Elisa Gaucher at:

Institutional Review Board
Research Integrity/Division of Research
Florida Atlantic University
Bldg. 80, Rm. 106
Boca Raton, FL 33431
Phone: 561-297-0777

* Please include your protocol number and title in all correspondence with this office.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within our records.

Appendix B. Informed Consent to Participant in Research Form

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

1) Title of Research Study: Transformational Experiences of African American Women: Their Critical Reflections as Former Migrants Who Evolved from Harvest of Shame to Seeds of Hope

2) Investigator(s): Principal Investigator, Dr. Valerie Bryan and Co-Investigator, Idell McLaughlin

3) Purpose: The purpose of this study is to identify what factors contributed to life-changing experiences of African American women, such as yourself, whose lifestyle was portrayed in the documentary Harvest of Shame, yet they found different paths for their lives by becoming successful in a variety of professional careers, as you have.

4) Procedures: You will be asked to answer 12 interview questions. The interview will take place at a time and place designated by you. The interview will last about four hours. I will ask for you to grant permission to audiotape the interview using a tape recorder. One week after the interview, I will send a transcript summary to you via U.S. Postal Service so that you can review for accuracy. On the third week from the date of the interview, I will meet with you to retrieve the summary transcript. If you have made any comments, corrections or additions, we will spend approximately one hour reviewing comments. Depending on comments or additions from you, we will determine if there is a need for a third meeting. If we agree for a third meeting to ensure that your edited comments are accurately recorded, it will last 30 minutes or less.

5) Risks: There will be minimal, if any, risks to you as a participant. One foreseeable risk is that a four-hour interview can be taxing, thus, causing fatigue. To minimize fatigue during the interview, time will be allotted for lunch (not provided) as well as breaks. If you need to take a break at any time during the interview, please do so at your convenience for as long as you desire. The same applies for bathroom breaks: feel free to take as many as you feel a need to do so.

Because you will be asked to recall memories that may be associated with distressing situations, you may become emotionally upset. During this distressful time, if you want to stop to compose yourself I will be patient and not rush you. If you need to refrain from answering a question and would like to reschedule the interview, I will accommodate your request to reschedule. If you feel participating in this study causes any emotional distress you are unable to handle, we encourage you to contact your primary care provider, a spiritual advisor or pastor for counseling. If you desire to remain anonymous, you may want to call the National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder hotline (802-296-6300). In addition, you have the right to discontinue participation in this study at any time if unanticipated stress occurs.

6) Benefits: We do not know if you will receive any direct benefits by taking part in this study. However, this research may contribute to a greater understanding of intervention methods that may be employed to assist in breaking the cycle of poverty among impoverished migrant female workers of today. The qualities you identify are worth investigating because the study may encourage other impoverished women to focus on self- empowerment of others, as you have.

7) Data Collection & Storage: Any information collected about you will be kept confidential and secure and only the people working with the study will see your data, unless required by law. The data will be kept for one year in a locked cabinet in the investigator's home on a password-protected USB drive. After one year, paper copies will be destroyed by shredding and electronic data will be deleted. We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not let anyone know your name/identity unless you give us permission.

8) Contact Information:

- If you have questions about the study, you should call the principal investigator(s), Dr. Valerie Bryan at(561) 799 - 8639 or co-investigator Idell McLaughlin at (561) 793-5450.
- If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or experience problems, contact the Florida Atlantic University Division of Research at (561) 297-0777 or send an email to fau.research@fau.edu.

9) Consent Statement:

*I have read or had read to me the preceding information describing this study. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I am 18 years of age or older and freely consent to participate. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. I have received a copy of this consent form.

I agree ____ I do not agree ___ to be audio taped.
I agree ____ I do not agree ___ for you to view documents such as family photos, Bibles, programs, awards or certificates
I agree ____ I do not agree ___to reveal my name/identity. If you do not agree, a pseudonym can be used.

Signature of Participant:_____ Date: _____

Printed Name of Participant: First Name _____ Last Name_____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

FAU Institutional Review Board

Approved on:	12/4/2013
Expires on:	12/3/2014

Appendix C. Interview Protocol

Working Title of Study: Transformational Experiences of African American Women: Their Critical Reflections as Former Migrants Who Evolved from *Harvest of Shame* to Seeds of Hope

Name of Interviewee: _____

Place: Location:

Starting Time:

Ending Time:

Introduction: It is a pleasure to meet you. As discussed on the phone, I am in a Ph.D. program at FAU. For my dissertation, I have chosen to listen, record, and transcribe stories from women like you—a former migrant—who can provide encouragement to impoverished women of today. Using your life story, I am attempting to identify factors that contributed most significantly to your success, as you transitioned from a migrant worker to a professional career.

My interest in interviewing you is to learn from your experience. To ensure accuracy, I ask for permission to tape record our interview. Also, you will have the opportunity to member check (review) the written transcript.

Because I am interested in your life story, the interview will take about four hours with a half hour lunch break. We will take a 10-minute break after each hour. The interview will end four hours from start.

I assure you complete confidentiality of both audio and written notes. All accounts of this interview will be destroyed after one year. All data on the audiotape and

USB will be erased, and all written data will be shredded. Within the year, only FAU professors and I will have access to USB, documents, audiotape, or written notes.

Interview Questions:

1. Please answer the following demographic questions.

   Age Range: 45–55; 56–60; 61–65; 66–70; 71–75; 76 and Above

   Number of Siblings: _____

   Position in the Family: _____

   Highest Educational Level Completed: _____

   Career: _____

   Religious/Spiritual Affiliation: _____

2. Tell me a little about your family life and migrant work structure.

   (If not answered, I will ask these two questions: What was the level of education for your mother? Your father? Did your mother or father have the opportunity to leave the migrant life?)

3. Of your siblings how many went on to graduate or obtain a GED?
4. What were/are their careers or trades outside of agriculture?
5. In what way was your school attendance affected by your family's seasonal work?

   Probe: On the average, how long were you allowed to stay in one school at a time?

6. How long did you remain in the migrant work cycle as an adult? Probe: What prompted/motivated you to leave the migrant work cycle?
7. Describe your passion and enthusiasm for life as a migrant?

   Probe: What were the positive experiences?

8. Describe your passion and enthusiasm for life when you left migrant work?

   Probe: What were the positive experiences?

9. What kinds of support, if any, did you receive from family, organizations and/or special programs?

10. What would you consider the most significant influence in your life that helped to mold you into the person you are today?

    Probe: Explain.

11. What advice/encouragement would you give to poverty-stricken women of today?

12. Do you have suggestions as to how these women may find their way out?

Closing: Thank-you for sharing your life story. Rest assured of complete confidentiality of the information you have shared. To verify accuracy of your story, I would like for you to read my transcript for accuracy. If agreed upon, I will send the written transcript via U.S. Postal Service to you in a sealed envelope within a week. The transcript will be in your possession for you to read, make corrections or add comments. On the third week from the date of the interview, I will return to retrieve the transcript. If you have made any comments, corrections or additions, we will spend approximately one hour reviewing your comments. Thanks again for your support of this project.

Appendix D. Field/Observation Notes Form

Participant's Name: _____

Location: _____

Field Notes	Observation Notes

Appendix E. Document Analysis Form

Participant's Name: _____

Type of Document: _____

Date of Document: _____

Document Information:

1. **What did researcher learn from document?**

2. **What did research participant say about the document?**

3. **What does the document reveal about the research participant or events of the time?**

Researcher Reflections:

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