

Title: Family Influence on Gratitude, Generosity, and Hope in Latino Migrant Youth in U.S. Farm work

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Short Biography: Sophia is a fourth year student, pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Human Development and Family Science at the University of Missouri-Columbia. She grew up in St. Louis and has been living in Columbia the past four years. As a bilingual student, her goal is to work with families and their young children in promoting healthy development in schools and at home. Her pursuit of research in Latino migrant youth started when she traveled to Nicaragua and Honduras and further saw the treatment of immigrants in the United States (U.S.). She hopes to start and continue the conversation of justice and peace between immigrants and their receiving communities.

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Introduction. The United States, the agricultural workforce is predominantly Latino (84%) and traditionally adult men (68%) from Mexico (69%) (Hernandez & Gabbard, 2019). However, youth – ages 14 to 24– account for 18% of the total farmworker workforce (National Agricultural Workers Survey [NAWS], 2019). There are many challenges that Mexican migrant youth and other youth face in the U.S. away from their parents. For example, Latino migrant farmworker youth often face loneliness and depressive symptoms (Carlos Chavez, 2018). However, despite the various physical and emotional challenges these youth face, families may instill a sense of gratitude and hope in these youth. Although Latino migrant farmworker youth can be seen as “adolescents in adult-like roles,” they are following a unique developmental path by taking on “a-typical” responsibilities by sending financial remittances to their parents (Carlos Chavez, 2018). As such, it is possible that Latino migrant farmworker youth are engaging on tangible gratitude practices from a young age. The connection between the benefactor and the beneficiary as well as the desire to reciprocate are core elements of gratitude (Tudge et al., 2015) which may add to the cycle of giving/helping among Latino migrant farmworker youth. Therefore, these youth do not only engage in frequent practices of gratitude toward the family but their gratitude is interrelated with the value of family (i.e., familism).

Purpose of study. We had two core goals: (1) to explore the ways in which Latino migrant farmworker youth express gratitude and hope through a qualitative method, and (2) to understand why gratitude and hope are salient among Latino migrant youth’s well-being.

Method and results. The data collected consists of in-depth interviews with Latino migrant youth ($n = 20$; 100% male, 50% from Mexico, H-2A temporary visa program, aged 18 to 20 and 50% from Guatemala, 50% undocumented, aged 15-17) living in the Southeast. Interviews were conducted in Spanish (45-60 minutes in length). Participation was on a volunteer basis, and each participant received a \$10 incentive. A Certificate of Confidentiality from the National Institutes of Health was acquired to further secure participant confidentiality. Preliminary findings showed that Guatemalan and Mexican participants have an instilled sense of gratitude and generosity from their families. These youth want to give back to their families through monetary support, food, and shelter. In addition, migrant youth show a reciprocal attitude toward their parents (e.g., parents took care of them when they were little, now migrant youth want to be able to take

care/help their parents). There were four preliminary core themes: 1) Gratitude for the opportunity to work, 2) Gratitude toward family for their support, 3) Desire to give back to family, 4) Hope for a better future.

Limitations and future recommendations. A significant limitation is the small sample size ($n = 20$). In addition, the narratives from these participants only reflect the reality for migrant youth farmworkers in the Southeast region of the U.S. In future studies, including a female perspective would contribute to a better understanding of the differences based on gender among this population.

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