

**Barriers to Reporting Sexual Harassment and Violence for Migrant Women in  
Agriculture:  
*Power dynamics, systemic subjugation and the intersection of poverty and  
vulnerability***

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A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Public Health

University of Washington

2017

Committee:

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Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

Public Health – Health Services

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**Abstract**

Barriers to Reporting Sexual Harassment and Violence for Migrant Women in

*Agriculture:*

*Power dynamics, systemic subjugation and the intersection of poverty and vulnerability*

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**Background:** Sexual harassment of women within the U.S. agricultural sector has become a dangerous and pervasive societal norm. Sociocultural adversities present in this field interplay to reinforce vulnerability and contribute to their status as one of the most underserved populations living in the United States.

**Objective:** The purpose of this study was to examine societal implications that act as barriers to reporting workplace sexual harassment (WSH), by identifying the impact of

workplace power dynamics and assessing the vulnerability of women agricultural workers related to economic and systemic subjugations.

**Methods and Analysis:** This study utilized qualitative methodology and focus group data analysis. Secondary data analysis of a community-based participatory research study involving focus groups were reexamined for the purposes of this study. The focus groups were conducted in December of 2014. Two groups each included the participation of 10 women agricultural workers (n=20) in Yakima Valley, Washington. Transcripts were coded and analyzed using qualitative grounded theory methodology.

**Results:** Three reoccurring themes were derived from focus group data analysis. First, the agricultural workplaces of the focus group participants exhibit a workplace hierarchy in which power dynamics place female workers at increased susceptibility for sexual harassment and harm. Second, economic insecurity exacerbates vulnerability and stress outcomes. Third, women agricultural workers noted additional systemic issues present in their lives which impede their ability to report their harassers.

**Conclusions:** Aggregate sociocultural factors have allowed the rate of sexual harassment within the agricultural workplace to become a social norm within this field, representing a dangerous societal epidemic. Economic, cultural, and social forces converge to put these women at great risk for experiencing harassment and sexual violence within their workplaces, while also preventing them from accessing resources for reporting their harassers or seeking medical services. Additional research is needed in this understudied area, along with advocates from many public health sectors. Behavior change theories are suggested for their effectiveness in public health intervention approaches.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### Background and Significance

In the United States over 2 million people work in the agricultural industry.<sup>1</sup> Washington State is one of the largest agricultural producers in the country, employing an estimated 100,000 workers.<sup>2</sup> Nearly 80% of crop workers are foreign-born, with the majority 75% having migrated from Mexico.<sup>3</sup> The 2016 national median wage of farmworkers in the U.S. was \$10.83,<sup>4</sup> placing the vast majority of them well below the Federal Poverty Line.<sup>5,6</sup> One quarter of the total agricultural workforce, about 560,000 workers, are women.<sup>7</sup> They are becoming more prevalent within this historically male-dominated sector, as sociocultural and economic factors drive both their migration and their need for work.<sup>8</sup>

### Literature Review

It is reported that on average, nearly 50% of women will experience some form of sexual harassment at work within their lifetime.<sup>8,9,50</sup> Given this already high prevalence of workplace sexual harassment (WSH), it is alarming that rates are drastically higher for women working within the agricultural industry. Although difficult to obtain, some findings show that on average, 80% of women farmworkers interviewed have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace.<sup>8</sup> The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) defines sexual harassment as “unwelcome sexual advances, requests of sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature”.<sup>10</sup> The EEOC reports that female farmworkers have been threatened, forced to have sex at gunpoint, and fired prior to reporting sexual harassment complaints.<sup>11</sup>

Most research on WSH has focused on middle-income workplaces with predominately white, educated women,<sup>12</sup> even though there is evidence suggesting that minority women are more likely to be at risk for WSH than white women.<sup>12,13</sup> This distinction is important due to the often present link between race and sexual harassment, a phenomenon defined by some as “sexual racism.”<sup>12</sup> Although WSH is a growing concern for female agricultural workers, there is limited research focusing on WSH in low-income settings or specific to minority women.<sup>12</sup>

In the United States, women farmworkers are predominately Latina, low-income, and work in majority male environments, all of which are factors that may increase their risk for sexual harassment, and lower reporting rates.<sup>14</sup> Many of these women are migrant workers who relocate to follow the growing season, often leaving them unemployed for large portions of the year.<sup>6</sup> In addition to the economic stress, women farmworkers often struggle with additional social demands. It is estimated that half of all agricultural workers are not authorized to work in the United States.<sup>3</sup> Many of them are living in constant fear of deportation. Given compounding factors of poverty and immigration status, it is not surprising that the World Health Organization found rates of WSH in agriculture to be severely underreported when compared to other sectors,<sup>15</sup> even though the prevalence of WSH is thought to be drastically higher within this workforce.<sup>8</sup>

The effects of persistent WSH on agricultural workers can be long-lasting and devastating to the health of these women. Some health consequences may include chronic pain, sexually-transmitted infections, substance abuse, unintended pregnancies, depression, panic, anxiety, fear, nervousness, and posttraumatic stress disorder.<sup>9,16</sup> In

spite of the seriousness of these health concerns, and the high rate of WSH within the agricultural sectors, the industry is not yet required to provide their employees with any type of sexual harassment prevention training. The result of this has been many agricultural workers obtaining inadequate information and protection from their workplaces.

### Purpose of the Study

To understand the disparities that gave rise to this epidemic, it is essential to consider the many societal forces working to keep these women at the intersection of poverty and violence. Socioeconomic hardships present in the daily lives of women farmworkers keep them from reporting their perpetrators to the authorities, making them vulnerable to workplace abuse and more likely to be repeatedly victimized.<sup>17</sup> In particular, immigration status, workplace power dynamics, and economic stress limit autonomy and perpetuate vulnerability within this group of women.

Despite the dangers associated with WSH, it remains an entrenched problem for female agricultural workers.<sup>6,8,11,13,17</sup> Furthermore, issues related to immigrant and farmworker health continue to remain understudied. This thesis attempts to better understand the socioeconomic barriers that keep women farmworkers from reporting WSH. This study was designed using qualitative approaches and grounded theory to generate hypotheses regarding barriers to reporting WSH that are specific to women working in the agricultural sector.

This thesis will build upon recent research from an ongoing community based participatory research (CBPR) project. A longstanding community partnership between the University of Washington's Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center

(PNASH) and the community in Yakima Valley, Washington, enabled a qualitative study utilizing focus group interviews. The topic of this study was chosen using CBPR principles of participatory engagement, and sexual harassment in agriculture was identified by the Yakima Valley, WA community as a topic of urgent priority affecting their health and well-being. This work will serve to inform the larger study.

### Research Questions

Qualitative grounded theory employs the method of research question development by way of participant data analysis,<sup>18</sup> that is hypotheses were gleaned from reoccurring themes discussed throughout focus group discussions. In line with this procedure, the following study questions were developed throughout the process of focus group data analysis: 1. What power dynamics are present in the hierarchy of the agricultural workforce that may act as barriers to reporting sexual harassment? 2. What economic circumstances exist for women agricultural workers that may act as barriers to reporting sexual harassment? 3. What other systemic issues arise in a woman agricultural worker's life that may act as barriers to reporting sexual harassment?

## DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### Study Setting

Sexual harassment in agricultural worksites has been recently identified as a widespread issue within the U.S.<sup>6,8,11,19</sup> This study focuses on the highly productive agricultural region of Yakima Valley in Eastern Washington. The Yakima Valley area has been the site of recent sexual harassment law suits within agricultural workplaces.<sup>20,21</sup> The 2016 case against Evans Fruit and the 2017 case against Quincy Vegetable Farm, for example, resulted in large monetary settlements paid by local farm owners.<sup>20,21</sup> Given the magnitude of the social and financial consequences of WSH to this region, along with the prioritization by community members that research and advocacy on this topic be employed within the Yakima community, this study setting was pertinent.

A long-standing CBPR partnership (El Proyecto Bienestar, *The Well Being Project*) between a Yakima Valley community advisory board, the University of Washington's Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center (PNASH), Heritage University and Radio KDNA/Northwest Communities Education Center, enabled the recruitment of four focus groups of local female farmworkers, the assessment phase of the CBPR project, *Health and Safety of Women Agricultural Workers in Yakima Valley*. For the purposes of this study, only the first two focus groups were considered, the latter two were on a different topic and did not yield relevant results. This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Washington.

### Selection of Study Subjects

Focus group participants were personally recruited by Spanish-speaking farmworker members of the research team using the purposeful sampling method. This sampling strategy is appropriate in qualitative methodology in instances where it is useful to select participants based on their ability to inform an understanding of the studied phenomenon.<sup>18</sup> Researchers recruited study participants orally using a study script. Recruitment was done through personal social networks and took place away from any agricultural workplaces. Individuals were invited to contribute to a group discussion regarding their experiences as women working in agriculture. Inclusion criteria consisted of Spanish-speaking women over the age of 18 who had lived in the Yakima area for over two years and who currently or previously worked in the agricultural sector. Exclusionary conditions included those women who were under the age of 18, were primarily English-speaking, or those who had not yet resided within this area for the two-year minimum. Additional details about this study methodology can be reviewed in a recent publication on the project.<sup>22</sup>

### Conceptual Model

Qualitative grounded theory methodology was utilized in the design and analysis of this study. The grounded theory approach is recommended in studies for which literature is limited because it lends itself to inductive analysis.<sup>18</sup> Given the participatory nature of CBPR studies, grounded theory further allows the voices and perspectives of participants to remain vital throughout the course of the analysis.<sup>18</sup> Focus group interviews were selected to promote strong discussion-oriented opportunities among participants.

## Data Collection

**Focus Groups:** Two focus groups were held in Yakima Valley, Washington. Each focus group included the participation of 10 women (n=20) currently working in Washington's agricultural sector. The sample size was chosen in order to promote in-depth discussion and allow for varied perspectives, while also ensuring each participant had sufficient time to share their viewpoints. Each of the two focus group sessions were held in December 2014 at the Radio KDNA/NCEC building in Granger, Washington. Following Institutional Review Board procedures, informed consent was acquired through oral recordings prior to each focus group session. An adverse event protocol was also in place in the event that any participant revealed psychological distress during the focus group sessions. Anonymity was ensured by assigning participant identification numbers, which were used to refer to each person throughout the session. Audio-recordings were made for the purpose of transcribing and translating the discussions and were later destroyed to further ensure participant anonymity. The focus group recruitment script, oral consent form, and demographic survey were developed in English and translated into Spanish by bilingual members of the research team. Back-translation into English was then conducted to ensure consistency of language and interpretation.

Each focus group session was facilitated by a community health worker and a research team member with Spanish-speaking fluency. Facilitators used a semi-structured guide which included questions regarding sexual harassment as well as questions of overall health related to working in an agricultural workplace. Additional research team members attended each focus group to record field notes on participant's non-verbal or emotional cues. Focus groups concluded with each

participant completing a brief demographic survey that included questions about age, educational attainment, number of years worked in the agricultural industry within Yakima Valley, the type of agricultural work engaged in, marital status, religious preference, location of their birth, family size, language fluency, their own rating of health, and their health concerns related to their work (\*see Appendix, Table 3).

### Data Analysis

Analysis of this study was completed using qualitative methodology. Study objectives were formed using the grounded theory approach, which allows theories to be developed based on the views of the study's participants.<sup>18</sup> This is a particularly effective method in qualitative analysis, as it allows for theories to be based on data from the field.<sup>18</sup> Focus group audio recordings were transcribed verbatim in Spanish and translated in English by research team members, and again back translated to ensure their consistency. Secondary analysis and coding of major themes was done using the translated English transcripts.

Data coding was completed using the grounded theory approach. Texts were examined for salient categories and a resulting code list was developed following the analysis of both focus group transcripts using an open coding approach. Codes were then categorized and compared for interconnecting themes by way of axial coding. Comparison of code lists between research members yielded inter-rater reliability for codes of 97%. Grounded theory methodology was employed to extract the following participant themes: barriers to reporting WSH among focus group participants included systemic, economic, and hierarchical power issues. No additional focus groups were

held, as data saturation was attained. Transcripts were coded and analyzed using the Atlas.ti qualitative software.

### Theoretical Frameworks

Existing theories are useful in helping to explain the problem of sexual harassment. In attempting to understand the barriers to reporting WSH for heavily marginalized groups of women, this thesis will employ the perspectives offered through *feminist theory*, the *Social Ecological Model of Health (SEM)*, and *critical race theory (CRT)*. In particular, feminist theory is used in describing power differentials as a barrier to reporting WSH,<sup>25,26</sup> SEM provides a framework for examining and explaining economic barriers to WSH,<sup>27,28</sup> and CRT is useful in its application for explaining systemic barriers to reporting WSH.<sup>23,24</sup>

## RESULTS

Among the 20 individuals recruited by the research team and invited to participate in the study, we achieved a 100% attendance rate and participation agreement within our focus group discussions. All focus group participants were women who were either currently or formerly employed within the Washington state agricultural sector.

### Demographics

Participants varied demographically by age, with a range of 19-68 and a mean of 41, and number of years lived in the United States, with a range of 6-34 and a mean of 18.2. 45% of study participants are married. The women reported family sizes with a range of 1-7 and a mean of 4.25. 75% of participants identified as Catholic and 10% identified as Christian. Nearly all participants, 90%, were immigrant women having migrated from Mexico, while 5% were U.S. born. Most participants spoke Spanish, 85%, with limited English proficiency, 15%. Educational attainment was also reported, 85% of participants received less than high school education, high school completion (n=2), post-high school completion (n=0) (\*see Appendix Table 4: Demographic Survey Results).

Throughout the focus group sessions, it was clear that women farmworkers were very aware of the pervasiveness of sexual harassment within their workplaces and the need for workplace policies to be put in place to prevent these occurrences. Seventy-five percent of respondents discussed either a personal, or a co-worker's experience with sexual harassment having occurred in their workplaces. The focus of this study is

in identifying the barriers to reporting WSH among this specific population for the purpose of recommending culturally-appropriate intervention approaches.

The following themes emerged throughout focus group data analysis: (1) power dynamics present in agricultural workplaces represent contributing factors of vulnerability, (2) socioeconomic adversities may result from issues of systemic subjugation, and (3) poverty issues compound stressors in the lives of women working in agriculture. These overarching themes represent three of the largest barriers to reporting sexual harassment among this population.

#### *Power dynamics as a barrier to reporting WSH*

Focus group sessions revealed an acute sense of the prevalence of sexual harassment among agricultural worksites. Many participants brought up issues relating to power displacement as a contributing factor in their reluctance to report workplace abuses. The implications of sociocultural and gender norms were also discussed.

Women in agriculture typically work under the supervision of a worksite foreman. Foremen are almost always men, who act as the point person between farmworkers and farm supervisors or owners. Limited English language proficiency means women farmworkers rely on foremen to translate issues to farm supervisors or owners, who generally do not speak Spanish. This makes workers unable to go above the authority of their foreman to report abuses to owners. The combination of a male-dominated work environment coupled by language barriers represent dangerous power differentials and place women in vulnerable predicaments. These power dynamics were discussed repeatedly in focus group conversations.

*“The foreman will take advantage of women and do what he wants to do with the person. He says, ‘if you do not do what I want you to do, you’re fired from work.’”* –Age 34, has lived in the U.S. for 14 years.

*“They keep insisting and insisting to do something you should not do.”* –Age 41, has lived in the U.S. for 6 years, has worked in agriculture for 5 years.

*“I believe it is the abuse of power, I believe that is a factor, they feel that they have the power and it is exciting for them. That’s why they do it.”* –Age 31, divorced, has worked in agriculture for 4 years.

*“There is no way to speak up. How are we going to report the foreman if he is the one who is harassing you? You never see the owners.”* –Born in Mexico, has lived in the U.S. for 8 years

Issues relating to the abuse of power by workplace foremen were very common in focus group discussions. These abuses occurred in the form of solicitation for sexual favors, threats of retaliation, or acts of degradation towards their employees. Some participants discussed the issue of nepotism as furthering the power imbalance and infallibility of the foremen.

*“I work in a place where they were rude using bad words such as ‘stupid, didn’t I tell you to get those apples?’ Sainly God, how they treat them. And the lady who was checking the apples said ‘you dirty pig, look what you are doing.’ When I told the foreman and he came over. I was fired [by the checker]. The checker told me, ‘get out, I told you to get out of here, the farm. Here on the farm, I’m in charge.’ I didn’t even have a car.”* –Age 42, divorced, has lived in the U.S. for 18 years.

*“I believe that that’s why things happen because the foremen are the ones in charge and if you say something, they will fire you.”* – Age 29, divorced, has worked in agriculture for 4 years.

*“Because of familismo (tendency to prioritize the family in one’s personal and professional life), the foreman goes to a place of familismo – and if something happens to you, he tells you to be*

*quiet and not say anything. This affects your health for life. And you have to be quiet because the foreman tells you to shut up because he needs to report that everything is going well at work. All this affects you too.”* –Age 45, married, has lived in the U.S. for 26 years.

Women working in heavily male-dominated workplaces often experience greater levels of gender inequality. Traditional gender roles within the Latino community may complicate these inequities within agricultural workplaces. Participants discussed the daily stressors of traditional female (*marianismo*) roles including child care and house work, compounded by their roles and responsibilities within the workplace.

*“That’s how you learn to distrust every man and always be scared that a man will get close to you, because you are fearful that they will do the same thing, say the same things, threaten you. And if you have a husband you are also scared they will tell him. They would say that they were going to speak to my husband, someone who knows him, who you know is jealous and distrusting of you, and you know that with that will come the destruction of your marriage, of your family, and your own life. And all this just because of a lie by a man dedicated to harassing women.”* – Age 45, Born in Mexico, has worked in agriculture for 26 years.

*“And always they intimidate you, by saying I will fire you, I will invent something, or I will call your husband to tell him even if it’s a lie. So, with the supervisors, there are always these types of abuses there.”* –Age 45, has lived in the U.S. for 26 years.

*“The truth is that it’s like you’re in the shadows because there are many things that you want to do but the opportunities are not there. People get used to it, but they are tired, like asleep, and up to here about being there but, well they have the need to continue working there because they need to, and they abuse you or take advantage of the need that you have [to keep working], and well it was like that.”* –Age 31, divorced, born in Mexico.

*“Yes it’s true that it affects you because apart from that their wives think that you are promiscuous – they harass you they signal you, when you are not doing anything bad, they even say that you provoked them that you are harassing them when it’s them. And,*

*they see you if you are alone [single] they say 'that woman is looking for a man, be careful with your husbands.' When it's not true and the only thing you want is to work because you have a need for the job."* –Age 29, divorced, has worked in agriculture for 4 years.

### Systemic subjugation as a barrier to reporting WSH

The historical implications of women working in U.S. agriculture manifest themselves in a number of ways. About half of women farmworkers lack documentation status, and most have limited English proficiency and limited access to health care.<sup>29</sup> A lack of resources place women in a cycle of vulnerability, severely limiting their choices and increasing sexual harassment and tolerance levels to workplace abuses. Many of the women were made repeatedly aware that if attempts to report sexual harassment were made, retaliation would follow.

*"All the humiliations that we have to put up with, in the fields and that you can't say anything or defend your rights because they will tell you to shut up and if you don't like it, leave."* –Age 50, married, has worked in agriculture for 17 years.

*"We have daughters and they are going to start working, for them it will be harder and worse. Look for help outside of wearing big clothes."* -Age 29, divorced, born in Mexico, has lived in the U.S. for 15 years.

*"They pressure you hard, abusing you at work such that sometimes when you have a problem at work and report it, after that they abuse you more."* –Age 41, has live in the U.S. for 6 years, has worked in agriculture for 5 years.

*"If you complain because they are being hard on you, the person in charge will tell you move your hands faster, they will say it is your problem if the other ones are not moving fast."* Age 29, has lived in the U.S. for 18 years.

*“We work many hours, almost 16 hours a day, once we worked 23 hours.”* Age 46, married, born in Mexico, has worked in agriculture for 19 years.

*“...if you go to the restroom more than three times per week, umm they start to deduct you 15 minutes every time you go to the bathroom after those three times per week.”* -Age 50, married, has worked in agriculture for 17 years.

For women who lack American residency or documentation to work, their status as undocumented workers represent one of the largest contributing factors in their inability to report their harassers. In the focus group discussions, supervisors were aware of this vulnerability and use it against women. Threats of deportation were common and threats of firing held more weight within this workforce, as chances of finding alternative employment options are severely limited.

*“The foreman told us before we started to work, he said, ‘If you complain or sue the farm, you will not win because this farm has very good lawyers and lots of money and you guys are poor.’”*  
-Age 50, born in Mexico, has lived in the U.S. for 20 years.

*“There was this man and I was very scared of him. Every time I saw him, I used to run. I even left the ladder, because on two occasions, he grabbed me and I couldn’t move, he covered my mouth and he told me to be quiet otherwise he was going to fire me. We have to tolerate everything, because without legal documents and without anything to protect us, they are not going to believe in you, they are going to believe what the foreman says. If they have years working there and you just arrived, they are not going to believe you. They consider you the liar.”* –Age 34, has lived in the U.S. for 14 years.

*“...they even joke about whether you have documents they tell you go someplace else to look for work and if you don’t have legal documents they threaten you for so many different things and they say many things if you don’t have legal documents.”* –Age 46, married, born in Mexico, has lived in the U.S. for 20 years, has worked in agriculture for 19 years.

*“In the warehouses we have had women that had miscarriages because of all the pressure, they get forced to do things because they don’t have legal documents, they get humiliated, they step all over them. For example, if one is having a miscarriage and you call the ambulance, they get very upset, and they say, ‘don’t you think that the company is paying for this.’ They always deny what happens there and they say ‘if you help her, no one is going to believe you.’”-Age 45, has lived in the U.S. for 26 years, has worked in agriculture for 26 years.*

Sexual harassment and subsequent threats of firing and deportation by foremen go unreported as female workers rely on their supervisors as translators to farm owners who often do not speak Spanish. This language barrier present between subordinates and supervisors is representative of additional systemic subjugation, often resulting in inappropriate workplace intimidation and coercion. It was mentioned in the discussions that employers were requiring their employees to sign paperwork which was not written in their language. The demographic survey filled out by focus group participants shows English reading proficiency was 0%, yet employers were requiring them to sign documentation written in English. Language barriers also represent additional reporting issues with respect to knowledge of U.S. laws regarding sexual harassment.

*“How we are going to tell the owner? Many times they don’t speak Spanish and the only one that speaks English is the foreman. How are we supposed to report anything?” –Age 29, divorced, has worked in agriculture for 4 years.*

*“Another person that was drunk, he wanted for us to take him to buy beer because he did not drive. I took him once and I told him ‘I come to work not to take the foreman to buy beer.’ There was another woman that would take him, but he always gave her extra hours. I said, ‘I came to work, I am not selling my time.’ He got mad and he told me that he did not want me to keep working there, but the*

*owner showed up at the time who told me, 'I like how you work.' But I could not understand what he said because he was an American [English-speaking Caucasian]. But the foreman was against me, and he fired me. Many different things happen.*" –Age 42, divorced, born in Mexico, has worked in agriculture for 13 years.

*"Sometimes they make you sign documents without reading them, because when you ask if you can take them home, they say no. How we are going to sign papers without reading them?"* –Age 50, born in Mexico, has worked in agriculture for 17 years.

Some participants expressed the need for legal or regulatory inspections to take place without prior knowledge of foremen and supervisors. Women reported seeing workplace conditions improve with knowledge of upcoming workplace inspections, and return to prior substandard conditions once inspections had finished.

*"When there is an inspection of a farm they should not be notified, because only when they have inspections, they provide clean water. This type of inspection should be secret so they can see how [the conditions are that] the workers work."* –Age 50, married, has lived in the U.S. for 20 years.

*"An inspector was going to be there and for that day, they put water where we were finishing and it was offered just for that day."* –Age 34, divorced, born in Mexico, has lived in the U.S. for 20 years.

*"The supervisors should visit as if they are anyone, and ask their workers some questions like 'what's happening, are they treating you well? Are you happy here?' And to the women, 'Are you having any problems [with the men]?' They should make their rounds and stop by once awhile because if they don't, well things will happen."* –Age 31, divorced, born in Mexico, has lived in the U.S. for 8 years.

One woman noted the deficiencies within even the inspections:

*“Where I work the inspector came once to interview workers and the foreman (woman) sent another lady, one that does everything she wants, and when the inspector was asking questions they started to make fun of me, so the inspector doesn’t take you seriously.”* –Age 41, born in Mexico, has worked in agriculture for 5 years.

### Poverty status as a barrier to reporting WSH

Increasing the vulnerability of women in agriculture are economic issues and the stress of poverty. Lacking options for alternative employment given documentation status, limited English proficiency, and limited availability of educational attainment, women agricultural employees work long, arduous hours in exchange for minimal payment.

*“I even started to lose my hair, you get depressed, and what they pay is very low and of course you get depressed, it affects your health to see that the salary is so low, and it is too much pressure that you have.”* –Age 31, born in Mexico, has lived in the U.S. for 8 years.

*“That’s not right and no one said anything, all the workers started to work without even asking how much we were getting paid.”* –Age 34, married, born in Mexico, has worked in agriculture for 5 years.

The women discussed long work hours and low pay resulting in strong economic burdens. The constant stress and long hours in employment with many occupational health risks, contributed to overwhelming feelings of stress and ill-health. Most of the women lacked health insurance to remedy the toll of stress and occupational health concerns.

*"It does affect you, affects all your body."* –Age 46, married, has lived in the U.S. 20 years, has worked in agriculture for 19 years.

*"All this piles up."* –Age 41, divorced, born in Mexico.

*"We have the need to work and then we are living all of that, it is stress."* –Age 46, married, born in Mexico.

*"A lot of pressure, so much pressure that you get sick."* –Age 50, married, has lived in the U.S. for 20 years.

Women are heavily victimized when put in positions of low power and high susceptibility.<sup>30,31</sup> Within the agricultural industry this has resulted in high rates of verbal sexual harassment and physical violence. Supervisors have used the need for work and increased hours to exert dominance and abuse.

*"I was working by piece rate and one of the foremen told me if I wanted for him to give me more hours, I needed to sleep with him. I did not like the harassment, I only stayed one week and I left because he harassed me constantly.... But it's hard, they take advantage because they have the power there, and if you don't do what they want, they fire you, and I unfortunately had the necessity [to work].* –Age 31, born in Mexico, has lived in the U.S. for 8 years.

*"... He says, 'if you do not do what I want you to do, you're fired from work.' ...and to avoid losing their jobs, for a little money they might get, they let themselves get intimidated...and well, to not lose their jobs that's when the foreman takes advantage of the opportunity."* (# 2,6,9 agree) –Age 29, divorced, has lived in the U.S. for 15 years.

*"This happens I believe on all the farms, but no one says anything, because they want to continue working."* –Age 46, married, born in Mexico.

Participants often cited the need to support their children and familial obligations as reasons for continuing to work in such harsh environments. This represents an

important barrier to reporting WSH, as women were more likely to tolerate workplace abuses if they had young children to support.

(Emotional, begins to cry)

*“There is no place to move and they keep getting close to you and they tell you if you move I will tell your foreman to fire you. Well if you move they use every excuse to continue harassing you. Even if you don’t want to, they are always bothering you. We work because we need to work – we need to support our family, that’s why we work in those places.”* –Age 45, married, has lived in the U.S. for 26 years, has worked in agriculture for 26 years.

*“We have to put up with this because we have kids to support and their fathers don’t care for their children but we as mothers won’t leave them, and we have a responsibility to them. And we need to survive, and we don’t realize the risks to ourselves, so many humiliations so many things that we go through because we don’t think about getting hurt, we think about the responsibility we have. And what, what are we to do?”* –Age 34, has lived in the U.S. for 14 years.

*“This has compromised my health, at first I put up with everything because, as she said, I also have kids. I have four kids and I have to support them.”* –Age 41, divorced, has lived in the U.S. for 6 years.

*“I see that those who have small children struggle a lot in the fields, because the services have been discontinued and working in the fields they don’t get paid to be paying for a babysitter when they have two or three children already with a babysitter-- it is very hard.”* –Age 46, married, born in Mexico, has worked in agriculture for 19 years.

*“I’d like for the investigators that are studying this to know that this affects us not only as a person but as a family. You are so tired of this, that you can’t give your child all he needs, and maybe you are so hurt, so you need to know it affects our children and it is affecting the future of this country.”* –Age 31, born in Mexico, has lived in the U.S. for 8 years.

## **DISCUSSION**

This research aimed to develop an understanding surrounding the barriers to reporting workplace sexual harassment that are specific to women working in agriculture. Focus group discussion analysis revealed considerations contributing to the cycle of worker vulnerability and the subjugation of women who work in agriculture. Three overarching factors were found to represent barriers to reporting WSH: workplace power differentials, poverty status, and systemic vulnerability. These discussions shed light on many issues present in the lives of women farmworkers which keep them in a place of increased susceptibility to WSH. In particular, reinforced vulnerability and the social determinants of health represent many sociocultural challenges among this population. Many of these issues exist with deep-seated historical contexts, making intervention efforts challenging, yet critical and long overdue.

### ***Consequences regarding power inequities***

Issues relating to the distribution of power within the agricultural workplace were discussed repeatedly in focus group conversations. Women farmworkers felt that unfair advantages were given to foremen, who often abused their positions of superiority. Research on the health impacts of imbalanced social hierarchies reveals detrimental health consequences among individuals experiencing years of subordination, particularly in individuals with little opportunity for movement or advancement among their position on the socioeconomic ladder.<sup>32,33</sup> Implications of this are present in the lives of the focus group participants who cited issues such as nepotism which keep them from advancing within their workforce and contribute to the continual cycle of subjugation. The combination of a male-dominated work environment and language

barriers represent dangerous power differentials and place women in vulnerable predicaments. Focus group participants explained these power dynamics frequently throughout their conversations.

The application of several theoretical frameworks may be useful in explaining how power differentials influence an individual's decision to report her harasser. In particular, the feminist theory framework often focuses on power domination by gender within the constructs of a patriarchal society.<sup>18</sup> Previous studies have examined the issue of sexual harassment through the lens of feminist theory, however, none to date have used this framework within the agricultural population.<sup>34,35,36,37</sup> This theory is particularly useful within the context of marginalized communities due to its focus on power inequity.<sup>26,38</sup> Feminist theory advocates the importance of identifying the relationship of power to an individual's position in society.<sup>18,26</sup>

Author Hani Henry writes, "Feminist theory posits that sexual harassment should be treated as a sexist act that aims to subjugate and disempower women, and punish their efforts to compete with men over jobs and status."<sup>34</sup> Data from the focus group analysis revealed that the workplaces of study participants exhibit conditions of patriarchy which result in dangerous power hierarchies.<sup>18</sup> Given the power differentials coupled with historical sociocultural implications, some women working in agriculture have accepted these mistreatments as societal norms. Research in this area has noted the response of some communities of heavily subjugated women to hold beliefs of *internalized oppression*.<sup>39</sup> One study links this phenomenon closely with the idea of *false consciousness*- that is the "holding of beliefs that are contrary to one's personal or group interest and which thereby contribute to the maintenance of the disadvantaged

position of the self or the group.”<sup>40</sup> Feminist theory seeks to “correct both the invisibility and distortion of female experience in ways relevant to ending women’s unequal social position.”<sup>18,25</sup>

Some study participants who have spent significant time in these devalued conditions (inclusion criteria mandated a minimum of 2 years working in the agricultural sector), exhibited this internalized oppression in the form of victim blaming. Some research has identified the presence of victim blaming within oppressed communities to act as a coping mechanism for those at risk of victimization.<sup>37</sup> Findings from this study show victim blaming to be a common occurrence among many of the focus group participants. Women explained their belief that coworkers brought this type of harassment upon themselves, specifically through the way they dressed. Despite working in extremely high temperatures, some women felt that working in tank tops encouraged male coworkers and prompted verbal sexual responses. Likewise, the women felt that dressing discretely would protect them from many types of harassment. Some women even mentioned strategies of protecting themselves by dressing as men for work.

Additional signs of victim blaming were revealed in focus group discussions relating to topics of gender roles and the responses given to women who had been harassed. Women were often held responsible for provoking men, while men were seen as largely incapable of controlling themselves around women. Numerous participants made statements alluding to the fault of the women who had been victimized within their workplaces. Additional blame was placed on them for the subsequent destruction of marriages that may occur. Concern was raised by some who had been harassed

regarding how their harasser's wives would view them, as promiscuous. In communities where this type of mistreatment becomes commonplace, women may feel a false sense of safety if they hold the belief that other women are responsible for their own mistreatments.

These findings are consistent with the feminist theory framework, which finds that issues of blame are largely placed at the fault of the victim of sexual harassment and violence, rather than the perpetrator. Additional research on WSH from the perspectives of male farmworkers may be useful in recommending gender and culturally-specific intervention approaches.

### ***Poverty status as a determinant of vulnerability***

Economic vulnerabilities represent high levels of stress for women who work in agriculture. Given the difficult nature of agricultural work and the lack of opportunities for career advancement, many farmworkers work their entire lives in stagnant work positions without the ability to achieve economic security. Extremely long work hours and an inability to access many resources and social services, make it difficult if not impossible, to achieve improvement in English proficiency, let alone educational attainment to advance job opportunities, even if documentation status is achieved. As one woman pointed out in the focus group discussion, these cycles often continue with additional generations of Latina women working in the same farms as their mothers and facing the same subjugations.

Given the improbability of finding work outside of agriculture, and the need to provide for their children, many of the women in the focus groups discussed their

inability to report their harassers because their need to maintain their employment was so critical. This vulnerability was well-known among foremen and supervisors who made repeated threats to fire women if their demands were not met. Given the poverty status of many women working in U.S. agriculture, even a period of short-term unemployment would result in drastic consequences.

The Social Ecological Model of Health (SEM) is useful for providing an understanding of the relationship between poverty as a barrier to reporting WSH. In particular, SEM is a useful framework in examining societal levels which interact in various ways between individuals and their environment.<sup>27,28</sup> This is helpful in public health prevention approaches for identifying the social norms which may exist among a population, in order to incorporate these factors into intervention efforts. Specifically, SEM seeks to understand the interactive effects of individual, interpersonal, community, organizational, and policy-level environments which impact individual decision-making.<sup>27</sup>

At the individual level, focus group participants discussed economic issues and feelings of limited self-efficacy in their ability to develop economic security. Focus group participants cited interpersonal factors as their primary need for work, specifically familial obligations to their children. At the organizational level, issues involving farmworkers being paid even lower than their fair piece-rate earnings have been reported.<sup>41</sup> Lastly, many policy-level issues exist which make economic security for farmworkers difficult to attain, including laws which make agricultural work exempt from U.S. overtime labor policies.<sup>41</sup> Each level of the SEM framework results in accumulating barriers to reporting WSH that exist in the socioeconomic contexts of agricultural women's lives.

It is known that economic insecurity increases risk of sexual harassment.<sup>8</sup> In a recent study, 80% of participants reported their decision to come to the United States was due to a need to support their families and escape poverty.<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately, after having endured the dangerous process of crossing the border into the United States, women farmworkers continue to remain in poverty within the U.S.<sup>8</sup>

### ***Systemic vulnerability and the structural denial of resources***

The analysis of the subjugation and societal hardships placed upon a group of individuals would be incomplete without a discussion of the role and considerations of the systemic forces that have placed them there. Micro level systemic issues of subjugation impact women in agriculture through their existence within their own workplaces, as well as within larger, macro level societal and governmental structures which hold historical and policy-level implications for this population. Systemic issues present in agricultural worksites include the lack of WSH prevention training, a lack of WSH prevention enforcement, and an overall workplace environment that breeds ill-health and isolation. These issues hold great possibilities for impactful interventions through the development and dissemination of culturally-appropriate worksite prevention training programs. Increased farm owner education may be useful in explaining the deleterious consequences of sexual harassment, as well as the economic costs occurring as a result of WSH legal settlements. Efforts are currently underway in these areas, through the work of the *Sexual Harassment Prevention in Agriculture: Development of a Training Video Program*, a CBPR endeavor currently

carried out in a partnership between the University of Washington and key state and national stakeholders, including Yakima Valley farmworker women.

Larger societal structures which reinforce vulnerability and contribute to the issue of WSH in agriculture are more complicated to address. Immigration status and fear of deportation among women farmworkers may be the most critical factors contributing to their inability to report their harassers. A consideration of structural context and its implication on eliminating individual choice is critical in the case of U.S. migrant farmworkers. Importantly, the political climate surrounding immigration rights in the U.S. has drastically heightened fear of immigration. The current political administration and increased anti-immigrant rhetoric works to substantially impair women's ability to report their abuse.

Previous studies on migration have termed the "push and pull" scenario, the dichotomy existing between a voluntary migration influenced by the possibility of greater economic attainment, and a forced migration brought on by political consequences.<sup>41</sup> Many studies assume the process of immigration as a chosen path rather than a coerced one. The recent ethnographic research of Dr. Seth Holmes acknowledges a more realistic narrative. As Dr. Holmes' work points out, many U.S. immigrants view their migration as "anything but voluntary,"<sup>41</sup> the consistent narrative repeated in his work revealing that migrants felt forced to risk crossing the border for the survival of themselves or their families. Indeed, this recounting feels more logical as we ask ourselves why a person would endure the brutal journey of attempting a border crossing if the act of doing so was merely voluntary. "The calculus involves slow but certain death on one side of the equation and immense risks on the other."<sup>41</sup> Those who

attempt the border crossing between the U.S. and Mexico expose themselves to heat stroke, dehydration, violence, Mexican and American assailants, kidnappers, robbers, snakes, cacti, American vigilantes, rape and extortion by Mexican border guards, and rape and extortion by U.S. border guards.<sup>41,42,43</sup> The U.S.-Mexican border was described by one scholar as the “most violent border in the world between two countries not at war with one another.”<sup>41</sup>

A consideration of some of the factors that may have led to these societal implications is important in understanding the lives and decisions many U.S. immigrants are forced to make. This is especially true in evaluating current and historical trade agreements and our need for cheap labor in the United States. “Systems of labor migration involve economic forces inviting and even requiring the cheap labor of migrants at the same time that political forces ban migrants from entering the country. Such systems must include a set of political and legal mechanisms that presuppose that the migrant is without citizenship rights and has only limited power in the state of employment. The reproduction of a system of migrant labor hinges on the inability of the migrants, as individuals or as a group, to influence the institutions that subordinate them to the other fractions of the labor force and to the employer. Ever renewed and updated legal, political, and symbolic separations produce the maximal extraction of labor as well as the inherent suffering and danger linking one side of the border to the other. Such separations include Proposition 187 in California and similar initiatives in Arizona and Colorado that make it legal for U.S. companies to pay workers only enough for daily survival and illegal for government money to go toward their health care, education, or other social services.”<sup>41</sup>

It is critical to understand the factors and consequences that exist for undocumented women in the U.S. when threats of deportation are made against them. It is estimated that hundreds of people die each year attempting to cross the border into the United States, although estimates are likely skewed as they do not account for the number of individuals who end up missing and are never found.<sup>41,45</sup> These actions point to the consequences of a population of people who are living in societal subjugation, rather than the popular push and pull narrative believed by many Americans.

These findings are consistent with the narratives provided by this study's focus group participants. The women revealed that their documentation status was repeatedly used against them in coercion or threats of retaliation. Foremen were acutely aware of the consequences of deportation and used that to perpetuate their control over women, resulting in the occurrence of many workplace abuses. In addition to the economic consequences that could occur as a result of deportation, more impactful is the potential for separation that may result as many migrant women have U.S. born children.<sup>44,49</sup> The U.S. is currently home to more than 5 million children under the age of 18 who have at least one undocumented parent.<sup>44,49</sup> Nearly 80% of these children are legal U.S. citizens.<sup>44,49</sup> The threat of deportation is a threat of separation between these women and their children, making them extraordinarily vulnerable to their harassers.

Unfortunately, documentation status is not the only systemic issue existing for migrant women, which keeps them from reporting WSH. Language barriers and the improbability of educational attainment are societal consequences that limit farmworker's possibilities for employment outside of the U.S. agricultural system. This is a powerful representation of farmworker subjugation, one in which their need for

employment within this industry furthers their vulnerability. Focus group participants revealed additional systemic issues, particularly the lack of health insurance which could assist in ameliorating some of the psychological consequences of verbal sexual harassment, as well as the physical consequences of physical sexual violence. These health concerns are not only a result of the conditions that arise from sexual harassment and violence, but are also larger occupational health concerns that are widespread in the agricultural industry, such as pesticide exposure, heat stroke, and musculoskeletal injuries.<sup>46,47,48</sup>

Tenets of the critical race theory (CRT) framework reveal implications of these systemic barriers for this population of women, and may contribute to an understanding of the barriers to reporting sexual harassment. In particular, CRT recognizes the ingrained presence of institutional racism within the dominant American culture.<sup>23,24</sup> This framework exists within the analytical lens under which power structures are standardized by race and gender.<sup>18</sup> Undocumented farmworker women residing in the U.S. represent a population of people who exist within the bottom rungs of the socioeconomic ladder, a position which limits their autonomy, access to resources, and prevents them from social advancement. Furthermore, the need for cheap farm labor in the U.S. perpetuates the systems which eliminate a migrant worker's capacity for self-determination. Foundations of CRT reveal the impactful nature of racialized policies within the U.S. legal system, and the beliefs held by many that place people into racialized categories of privilege and vulnerability.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, this is the case with regard to undocumented U.S. agricultural workers, who have been deleteriously impacted by failures in our legal system and misconceptions held by many. CRT seeks to challenge

the dominant discourses that perpetuate privileged complacency and suppress the narratives of those who remain at the margins of society.<sup>18</sup>

The cumulative marginalization of an entire population of individuals does not happen overnight, but rather, exists with regard to deep-seated historical contexts. These issues do not have simple options for public health prevention interventions, but rather represent the need for much work to be done at the advocacy and policy levels to ensure our migrant laborers are able to attain services which result in better health and socioeconomic mobility.

### Implications for Future Studies

Many studies reviewing the implication of sexual harassment and subjugation reveal consequences to the mental health of the victim.<sup>51,52,53</sup> A common approach in mental health prevention interventions is to simultaneously reduce risk factors and increase protective factors.<sup>52</sup> This presents opportunities for intervention utilizing recent research that identifies the risk and protective factors of WSH among this population.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, there is great need for creating and disseminating a culturally-appropriate public health intervention. University of Washington researchers have begun to employ a worksite prevention training program utilizing the work within the larger *Health and Safety of Women Agricultural Workers in Yakima Valley* Study. This intervention seeks to address the dire need for worksite policies and training to be implemented within agricultural worksites, as requested by numerous farmworkers, supervisors, and owners. This project hopes to address this issue through the creation and dissemination of training materials, including the production of a worksite prevention video, which are specific to the needs and circumstances of those who work within this field. Additionally,

it is critical that these interventions employ rigorous evaluation methods, as there is currently little evaluation of WSH training programs, and none to date exist specific to the agricultural sector.

### Limitations

Study limitations may include issues of generalizability among different populations of agricultural workers in the United States. Participant exclusion criteria included agricultural workers who had not worked within the Yakima Valley area for less than two years. This potentially excluded those migrant workers who may relocate following the end of each growing season. Additionally, this inclusion criteria excluded the participation of those women who have recently immigrated to the United States. Additional groups of indigenous women may have been excluded who did not meet Spanish-fluency requirements. Lastly, the method of purposeful sampling limits the selection of study group participants to only those who are within the research team's networks. Although important, generalizability was not the purpose of this study. Future research may want to examine this issue among a much larger sample of women, to further strengthen our understanding of the experiences of farmworker women.

Analysis and data interpretation conducted from translated focus group discussions may have resulted in the possibility of omissions, although bilingual research team members worked to meticulously translate and then back-translate all transcripts in order to minimize the possibility of omissions. Importantly, the decision to conduct focus group discussions in the primary language spoken by study participants was more critical than the risk of omissions.

## Conclusions

The barriers to reporting workplace sexual harassment for women in agriculture represent important social determinants of health that must be addressed in order to provide equitable social and health outcomes for this population. This thesis provides insight into the unique struggle of socioeconomic hardships resulting in power hierarchies, economic insecurity, and systemic subjugation among farmworker women.

The United States' reliance on cheap migrant labor is evidenced in the estimate that 95% of all our agricultural workers were born in Mexico, with more than 50% of them still unauthorized to work in the U.S.<sup>41</sup> Our dependence on this population has resulted in migrant laborers living within a system of policies which reinforce their illegal status and limited power. Our system is crucially dependent on this labor force, yet we fail to provide them with basic living and working conditions. Unfortunately, structural subjugation in the U.S. is still heavily socially stratified by race, gender, and citizenship, leaving women farmworkers at the bottom of these hierarchies. Future research and advocacy should work towards opportunities for social advancement, while ensuring migrant voices are included in these conversations.

The absence of social and economic opportunities in the lives of undocumented migrant women place further importance on their need for work in agriculture and represent an important distinction as to why a woman might allow herself to be repeatedly victimized. Previous studies have outlined common responses to sexual harassment among workplaces comprised of educated, white women. These studies show women of higher socioeconomic status may respond to sexual harassment by either reporting their harassers or finding alternate employment. This distinction is

critical in comparing women of low socioeconomic status and ethnic minorities who may likely respond to WSH through processes of internalized oppression. This relationship can be seen in the drastic contrast between privilege and vulnerability. As socioeconomic forces provide some groups with the advantage of a safety net, it condemns those who lack structural protection.

## **Acknowledgements**

*Thank you to the Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety & Health Center and El Proyecto Bienestar for the research and advocacy carried out on behalf of women farmworkers. This study was possible thanks to the Washington State Medical Aid and Accident Fund grant, which supports Washington's agricultural worker's health and safety. Thank you to the EEOC and the Washington State Human Rights Commission for your work supporting the legal rights of our farmworkers.*

*Thank you to my thesis chair, Dr. Clarence Spigner, for sharing your expertise on qualitative research methodology and for your encouragement in this project. I'm thankful to have learned from you, both in this research and in your work advocating for the Black Lives Matter Movement. I'm honored to have had you chair my research.*

*Thank you to my thesis committee, Dr. Victoria Breckwich Vásquez. Your work in migrant advocacy changed the trajectory of my graduate work. I'm so thankful to be a part of this work with you and am beyond grateful for your guidance, mentorship, and influence in my life.*

*Lastly, thank you so much to the women who took the time to participate in this study. Your opinions and feedback are invaluable as we move forward in future advocacy together.*

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APPENDIXES

Figure 1: Social Ecological Model of Health (SEM)

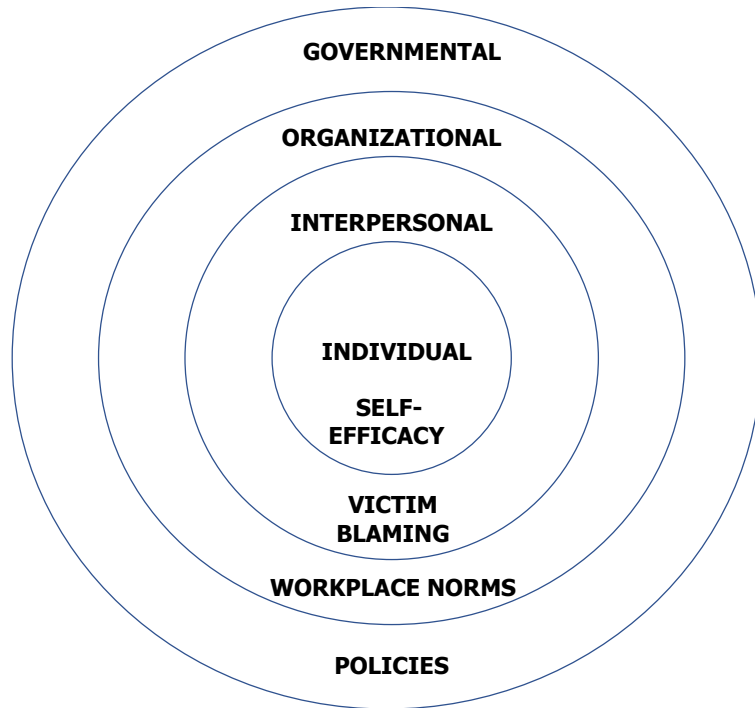


Figure 2: Conceptual Model: *Barriers to Reporting WSH for Migrant Women in Agriculture*

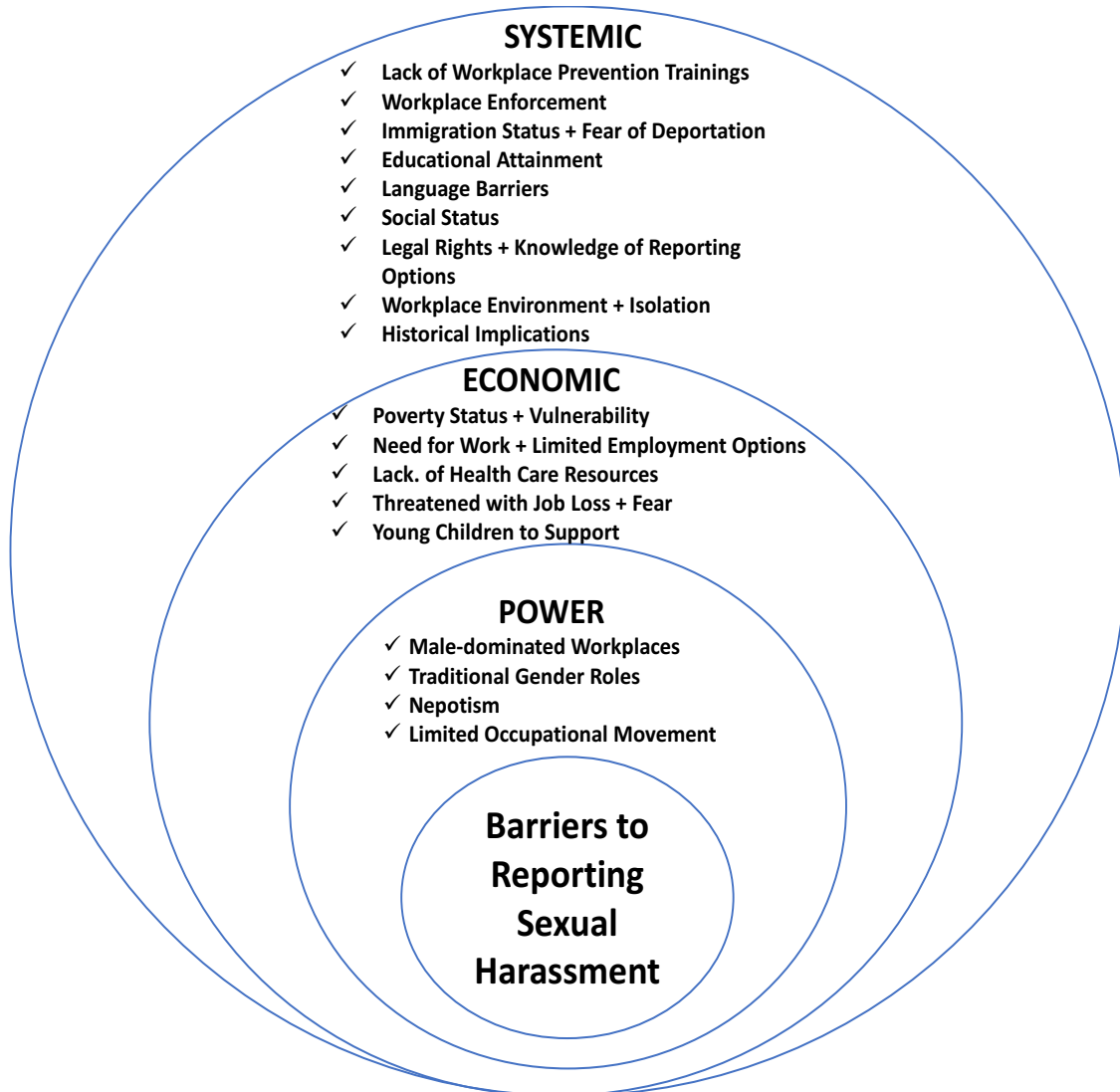


Table 1: Theories and Recommendations

Results	Theory	Intervention and Policy Recommendations
Power Hierarchies	Internalized Oppression, False Consciousness, Feminist Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage strong social capital and support between female co-workers.</li> </ul>
Poverty Status	Social Ecological Model of Health (SEM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statewide policies to grant access to health care and services for undocumented workers.</li> <li>• Provide materials to women farmworkers with procedures and resources for reporting WSH.</li> </ul>
Systemic Subjugation	Systemic Subjugation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for WSH policies in place within every agricultural worksite.</li> <li>• Need for worksite training on preventing the occurrence of sexual harassment, specific to the needs of this industry.</li> </ul>

Table 2: Focus Group Discussion Questions

<b>FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS</b>	
<b>General Health-Related Questions:</b>	
Q1	What is most important to you about your health?
Q2	How does working in the fields or packing houses impact your health?
<b>Questions Regarding Sexual Harassment:</b>	
Q3	What is your understanding of sexual harassment?
Q4	Sexual harassment means any unwanted sexual attention, including sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or verbal/physical harassment based on sex. Have you or someone you know ever been sexually harassed at your agricultural workplace?
Q5	In what ways has sexual harassment at work affected you or someone you know? Potential probes: physically, psychologically, emotionally
Q6	What makes sexual harassment more likely at work?
<b>Questions Regarding Sexual Harassment Prevention:</b>	
Q7	What might prevent sexual harassment at work?
Q8	What do you think other women should be told to help them prevent sexual harassment in the agricultural workplace?
Q9	What do you think supervisors/ managers/ foremen should be told to prevent sexual harassment at work?
Q10	What do you think farmers/ owners/ growers should be told to prevent sexual harassment at work?

Table 3: Participant Demographic Survey

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY	
1.	Age:
2.	Current marital status (circle one): Never Married      Married      Divorced      Widowed
3.	How many people are in your family?
4.	What is your religious preference, if any?
5.	Where were you born?
6.	How many years have you lived in the United States?
7.	How many years have you lived in this community (Yakima Valley)?
8.	What is the highest level of education you have completed? (select one) Some primary school Finished primary school Some middle school Finished middle school Some high school High school graduate Some college College degree Graduate school or more
9.	Which language/s can you speak? (Circle all that apply) Spanish      English      Other (please specify)
10.	Which language/s can you read? (Circle all that apply) Spanish      English      Other (please specify)
11.	Which languages can you write? (Circle all that apply) Spanish      English      Other (please specify)
12.	How many years have you worked in agriculture in this community (Yakima Valley)?
13.	What type of agricultural work have you done?
14.	Where do you currently work?
15.	How would you rate your overall health compared to other women your age? Poor      Fair      Good      Excellent
16.	What is your biggest concern for your health related to your work?

Table 4: Demographic Survey Results

<b>PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS (n=20)</b>		
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Range</b>
Age	41	19-68
Family size	4.25	1-7
Years lived in the U.S.	18.2	6-34
Years lived in Yakima Valley, WA	15.8	4-26
Years worked in Yakima Valley, WA	12.6	3-26
<b>Socioeconomic Demographics</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Participants</b>
Marital status		
<i>Never married</i>	3	15
<i>Married</i>	9	45
<i>Divorced</i>	6	30
<i>Widowed</i>	1	5
Religious preferences		
<i>Catholic</i>	15	75
<i>Christian</i>	2	10
Birthplace		
Mexico	18	90
U.S.	1	5
Educational attainment		
<i>None</i>	2	10
<i>Some primary school</i>	4	20
<i>Primary school</i>	6	30
<i>Some middle school</i>	2	10
<i>Middle school</i>	1	5
<i>Some high school</i>	1	5
<i>High school</i>	2	10
Language literacy		
Oral		
<i>Spanish</i>	17	85
<i>Spanish &amp; English</i>	3	15
<i>English</i>	0	0
Reading		
<i>Spanish</i>	17	85
<i>Spanish &amp; English</i>	2	10
<i>English</i>	0	0
Written		
<i>Spanish</i>	14	70
<i>Spanish &amp; English</i>	1	5
<i>English</i>	1	5
* Percentage of participant responses does not equal 100 due to incomplete response rates		