MIGRANT STUDENT CHALLENGES IN EDUCATION AS PERCIEVED BY TEACHERS AND MIGRANT PARENTS

by

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CERTIFICATION OF PROJECT WORK

We, the undersigned, certify that this project entitled MIGRANT STUDENT CHALLENGES IN EDUCATION AS PERCIEVED BY TEACHERS AND MIGRANT PARENTS
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Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), is acceptable in form and content and demonstrates a satisfactory knowledge of the field covered by this project.

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Abstract

The number of migrant students that are being educated in schools across the United States continues to increase. Migrant students are defined as the child of a parent who works in an agriculturally related field or employed in those categories which the federal government has identified as qualifying as migrant work (Title I, Part C Education of Migratory Children, 2003). The following mixed-methods study focuses on identifying the challenges that migrant students face in regards to education in two school districts in Western New York. The study further investigates the perceptions that parents and teachers of migrant students have of those challenges and whether or not the perceptions are aligned with each other. Data's were solicited from teachers through an electronic survey and extended through semi-structured interviews. Data from parents were gained through a series of semi-structured interviews. The results determined that the parents and teachers of migrant students most often perceive the same types of challenges in education for migrant students. However both the parents and the teachers felt that the other party was more responsible for helping the student overcome the challenges. .Future research and implications are discussed.

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Introduction

The demographics of the United States are changing rapidly as more people are coming to this country from all over the world and from parts of the world previously not represented in the United States. Today in the United States the majority of immigrants come from South America and Asian countries (Wright, 2010). A result of the changing demographics there are many students who are being enrolled in schools across the United States that speak a different language than English. As a result of the different cultures and ethnicities that are coming to the United States school districts across the country are receiving students who are not able to speak, read or write at an academic level in English, putting these students at a disadvantage educationally (Luster, 2011; Wright, 2010). The largest ethnic group in the United States with children who speak languages other than English who are enrolled in schools are Hispanics, and within that ethnic group Mexicans are the largest group of Hispanics with students in the school system that are English language learners (ELLs) (Census, 2010).

Within the Mexican population there is a high percentage of people that travel throughout the United States following the agriculture of different regions. Mexican migrants that travel through the United States in search of work in many instances have families that include school aged children. Migrant children are becoming more populous in classrooms across the United States and bring with them a unique set of challenges (Batalova & Terrazas, 2010; Donlan & Lee, 2010; Green, 2003). The various challenges that may be faced by migrant students at some point in their educational career are documentation status, health issues, language barriers, poverty, parental education attainment, second language acquisition, and interrupted schooling (Ezell, Gonzales, & Randolph, 2000; Green, 2003; Napolitano & Goldberg; National

Commission on Migrant Education, 1992; Nieto, 2000; Passar 2006; Roemer, 2011; Romanski, 2003; Waldman, Cannella, & Perlman, 2010).

Problem

Mexican students are among the most educationally disadvantaged across the United States, among all ethnic groups (Green, 2003; Ream & Rumberger, 2008; Romanski, 2003; Trebbles, 2012). This appears to be true among the Mexican students who have immigrated to the United States or those that were born in the United States to parents that have immigrated to the United States (Green, 2003; Roemer, 2011). This often overlooked population is growing more each year and so educators will more than likely have migrant students in their classroom at some point in their teaching career. The need to understand the challenges that Mexican migrant students face that affect their educational achievement is crucial to the success of these students. Migrant students often face having interrupted education, a lack of school readiness, increase risk of dropping out of school, health issues, low socioeconomic status, a low level of parent education and a multitude of barriers related to having a different language and cultural background from the mainstream school language and culture (Cranston, Gingras, & Paul, 2008; Green, 2003; National Commission on Migrant Education, 1992; Salerno, 1991). These challenges require a response from teachers and parents as to what can be done to help migrant student achieve success in education. Educators and parents may not identify the same challenges as being an obstacle to the student successfully navigating through the educational system. If parents and teachers of migrant students have drastically different viewpoints on the challenges that migrant students face in education, it may be that they are not be working together toward providing the support needed in order to help the student to be successful.

Purpose

As more migrant farm workers come to the United States it will be imperative for educators and parents to work together to help the students to be successful in education. Migrant students have the potential to bring with them challenges that educators may not have dealt with before. The school systems that receive these students should have an understanding of where these students are coming from in order to effectively and successfully educate them. Therefore the purpose of this research study is to identify the challenges that Mexican migrant students face from the perspectives of both the parents and teachers of these children. The overarching goal of this research study is to determine if the educators of Mexican migrant students and the parents of migrant students recognize the same challenges that are faced by these students.

Significance

Mexican migrant students, a vast majority of whom are ELLs, are increasing in number in both urban and rural school systems and therefore schools are going to be responsible for educating these students (Lossa, 2010; Purcell-Gates, 2013; Waller & Crawford, 2001). This research has the potential of providing knowledge to educators who are working with or will work with Mexican migrant students. The knowledge used may help educators better understand these students and realize the challenges that many migrant students face due to their high rates of mobility. Furthermore, this study can provide parents and teachers of migrant students insight to the others' perception regarding challenges that migrant students face in regards to education. Additionally, this study will add to the limited body of knowledge of how teachers and parents perceive the challenges that are faced in regards to education by Mexican migrant students. The

knowledge that educators gain from this research may help them identify ways to provide support to the migrant students

Literature Review

Today there are more migrant students in schools in the United States than ever before. Migrant students are defined as the child of a parent who works in an agriculturally related field or employed in those categories which the federal government has identified as qualifying as migrant work (Title I, Part C Education of Migratory Children, 2003). Schools are faced with educating this population of students that often face additional challenges which might impact their educational experiences which other groups of immigrant students do not (Green, 2003; Romanski, 2003; Roemer, 2011). Many migrant students are English language learners (ELLs) and are struggling to learn the English language while being migratory, and this is just one issue added to the difficulties these children face because of their migrant lifestyle. Some of the challenges include school readiness (Branz-Spall, Rosenthal & Wright 2003, Crosnoe, 2006), health concerns (Conde, 2007; Hall & Greenman, 2010), documentation status (Passar 2006, Passar & Cohn, 2010; Pew Hispanic Center, 2007), and educational attainment of parents (Mangione & Speth, 1998; Spera, Wentel, &Matto, 2009). The teachers that work with these students will need to effectively understand the challenges that these students bring with them to better educate and support migrant students.

English Language Learners

In the United States one of the fastest growing populations in schools across the country are English language learners (ELLs), in fact the number of ELLs are increasing in both States that have had a limited number in the past and States that have had a higher rate of ELLs (Garrett & Holcomb, 2005). ELLs are students who do not have a mastery of the English language.

These students are unable to communicate fluently in English which makes learning academic content in English difficult, as they have to learn the English language as well as course material (Waxman, Rivera, &Powers, 2012). There are different labels attached to these students which include limited English proficient (LEP), English learners (ELs), language minority students and emerging bilingual students (Wright, 2010). In this study, students who speak English as a second language will be referred to as ELLs.

Between 2002 and 2009, the number of ELLs grew by seven percent, at about 4.65 million students in the United States (Lu, 2013). ELLs are a very diverse group of students. They are representative of different cultural, linguistic and educational backgrounds. In the United States, there are over 450 languages that are spoken as the first or primary language of ELLs (Beers, 2004; Roy-Campbell, 2013). In the past decade the majority of ELLs in the United States have come from Asian and Latin American countries (Wright, 2010). ELLs represent both United States citizens and new immigrants to the United States. Immigrant ELLs are in the United States for a variety of reasons and under an array of circumstances, such as family moving to United States for business, while others come as refugees. Still other immigrant ELLs arrive as migrants, who travel from place to place to find work and therefore each student brings with them their own experiences (Freeman, Freeman, & Mercuri, 2002).

When looking at ELL numbers in school, eighty percent of middle and high school ELLs were born in the United States. These ELLs are designated as such because they speak English as their second language, or the students may not possess the academic language in English necessary for academic achievement (Calderon, 2007; Freeman et al., 2002). Due to the increase in immigration, it is estimated that by 2030, over forty percent of the students enrolled in schools across the United States will speak English as a second or third language (USDOE,

2003). The rise in ELLs in schools in the United States increases the need for parents and educators to unite as partners to help the students succeed. One way for this partnership to occur is for educators and parents to understand the perceptions that the others' have of the challenges faced by ELLs in education.

Hispanic ELLs. It is true that ELLs in the United States are representative of every country in the world, however the majority (77%) speak Spanish as their primary language (Klingner, Artiles, & Mendez, 2006; Nordby, 2009). The Hispanic population is made up from people from many countries around the world, however the three major Hispanic groups in the United States are Puerto Rican, Cubans and Mexicans. Hispanics of Mexican descent make up the largest percentage of Hispanics in the United States, followed by Puerto Ricans (Census Bureau, 2010; Ennis, Vargas, & Albert, 2011).

Mexican ELLs. Mexican Americans are the largest Hispanic subgroup in the United States and this continues to grow each year (Capps et al., 2004). Currently 64% of Hispanics in the US are Mexican (Gandara, 1995; Lollock, 2001; Roemer, 2011). In 2009 there was estimated to be over eleven million people that were born in Mexico living in the United States. The Mexican population in the United States has been increasing yearly, mostly due to the proximity of Mexico bordering on the United States. There are between 170,000 and 300, 000 immigrants that come to the United States from Mexico yearly (Capps et al., 2004). The increase in population brings with it an increase in students from Mexico who do not speak English, and will most likely be considered ELLs. Mexican students are often behind their peers in academic and language development there are educational differences in Mexico that may hinder the educational success of Mexican ELLs. Perhaps the biggest difference between the education in Mexico and the United States is that in Mexico it is not mandatory to send your

children to school nor is education accessible to all students in Mexico due to the proximity of the schools (Roemer, 2011; Romanski, 2003; Vinton, 2008). Many immigrants that from Mexico have had little or no prior schooling making placing them at grade level in the United States problematic (Green, 2003; Ream, 2003; Romanski, 2003).

Mexican Migrant Students

Migrant students are those that travel from place to place with their families who follow seasonal crops and other farm work associated with agriculture. There are upwards of eleven million migrants in the United States, with 73% working in an agriculture related field (McHatton, Zalaquett, & Cranston-Gingras, 2006). The rate of immigrants from Mexico coming to the United States looking for more opportunities is expected to rise considerably (Batalova & Terrazas, 2010; Cranston-Gingras, 2003; Donlan & Lee, 2010; Passel, 2006). A high percentage of Mexican migrant students are considered ELLs due to their speaking Spanish or a dialect from Mexico as their first language. Adult Mexican migrant workers who come to the United States as adults are less likely than any other group of immigrants to learn the English language fluently. The children, even those that are born in the United States, have a difficult time learning the English language due to high mobility. The continual move to different areas and school districts make learning English difficult. There also may be differences in how certain school districts teach ELLs (Green, 2003; Reese, 2002; Salend, & Salinas, 2003). By today's estimates, fifty two percent of migrant farmworkers are married with children and travel with their families at all times. The high percentage will mean that migrant students will increase in numbers in schools in the United States and will need help in overcoming the unique challenges that are prevalent to high mobility (Green, 2003; Romanski, 2003).

Life Challenges of Migrant Families

Migrant families are often arriving in a new place or getting ready to leave to move to another place. They do not have consistency of having the same home, or having their children attend the same schools due to their occupations. The challenges that these families face ultimately affect their children in the classrooms. The challenges that many migrant families face are undocumented status, health issues, and low economic status. The migrant students that are in the school systems are often coming from families that struggle to overcome these challenges while living a mobile lifestyle (Green, 2003; Napolitano & Goldberg, 1998; Trebbles, 2012; Walker & Schulz, 2001).

Undocumented status. Mexican migrant students may face the challenge of being undocumented or having their parents undocumented (Green, 2003; Romanski, 2003). When a person is said to be undocumented that would mean that person is in the United States without the proper paperwork (Green, 2003). There are estimates to be upwards of a million undocumented migrant workers, with one in four United States farm workers an unauthorized immigrant from most often Mexico or another South American country. (Passar 2006, Passar & Cohn, 2010; Pew Hispanic Center, 2007).

Many children begin to have social problems involving identity when they are nearing adulthood due to the fact that when children are in school and underage they do not view themselves as undocumented, but when they reach adulthood and they cannot drive or apply for college it is apparent to them that they are not fully United States citizens, creating conflicts with identity and social order (Gonzales, 2011). The children in migrant families that are not documented but have come to this country as young children and have attended schools in the

United States may find that they have difficulty enrolling in college because of the documents needed upon enrollment (Gonzales, 2011; Loveland, 2013; Vargas, 2011).

Health. Migrant families work on farms and in agriculture related fields, exposing themselves and their children to pesticides and herbicides that are used in agriculture, as there are times when the children themselves are working in the fields to earn extra money or to assist in finishing a job (Conde, 2007; Hall & Greenman, 2010). Moreover, there are health risks that are associated with exposure to herbicides, pesticides and chemical spray that may affect the children in ways that may inhibit their success in education. The problems associated with exposure of chemicals from farm work is far ranging to the extent that it has the potential to affect the child's education (Napolitano & Goldberg, 1998). Further studies have shown that the neurological damage that may be done to a child's growing brain can affect the child's ability to process information and problem solve which are two very important tasks to be able to do in school (Hanke &Jurewicz, 2004;Kilanowski, 2009; Park, 2011; Stevens &Vollebergh, 2008; Waldman et al. , 2010).

Low socioeconomic status. Migrant families have an increased risk of living below the poverty line. The employment that is available for migrant farmworkers is often low paying and without much room for advancement. The cycle of poverty within migrant families is overwhelmingly generational and presents challenges to the families overall quality of life (Green, 2003; Rogers &Dagata, 2000). Romanski (2003), suggests that educational performance is affected by the parents' ability to provide literacy experiences and engaging learning experiences. Migrant families that are living in poverty are less likely to be able to spend the time and money providing their children with educational activities (Romanski, 2003).

Lack of knowledge of community supports. Community supports are programs that are put in place to help families and individuals overcome circumstances in their lives that may be challenging to their wellbeing. Migrant families due to their mobile lifestyle often are not aware of the community resources that could help them attain a better quality of life (Donato & Duncan, 2011; Romanski, 2003).Further studies have also indicated migrant families may be apprehensive in accessing these programs because of language barriers and a lack of community awareness. In addition migrants may fear that by applying for help from a social service agency for assistance with food or medical is that the agency will require proof of legal residency and if the family cannot provide it then the family may face legal issues (Coady, Cruz & Flores, 2008; Lossa, 2010).

Educational Challenges of Mexican Migrant Families

The most educationally disadvantaged among all ethnic groups in the United States are Mexican migrant students; these students are facing challenges that are inhibiting their ability to receive an education (Green 2003; Romanski, 2003). The migrant lifestyle of these students often leads to educational challenges, including interrupted schooling, lack of school readiness, low parental education attainment as well as linguistically and cultural issues are challenges that these students face on their journey to complete an education in the United States (Ezell et al.,.; Romanski, 2003; Spera &Matto, 2009; Valdes, 1996).

School readiness. School readiness refers to the cognitive social and emotional skills that allow children to be up to par with the skills that will help them succeed in the years ahead in elementary school; one of the best ways for migrant children to be successful in school is to receive a form of early childhood education (Branz-Spall et al., 2003; Crosnoe, 2006). Migrant children however often suffer cognitive and social delays that may be attributed to lack of early

childhood education (Green 2003; Romanski, 2003). Through early childhood education and meaningful activities children develop school readiness skills that help them succeed when they enter formal schooling. Students who live a migrant lifestyle often miss this very important part of early childhood. Those that are fortunate enough to be able to access early childhood education have a better educational outlook than do other migrant children who do not have access to early childhood programs.

Studies have shown that migrant children are one of the most disadvantaged groups in regards to being prepared for kindergarten , as the literacy and language skills are usually far behind their non-migrant peers (Green, 2003; Romanski, 2003; Walker & Schulz, 2001). In addition the migrant family's mobile lifestyle may impact the opportunities that children may access in the area of early childhood. Early childhood education, whether it be Head Start or another type of educational service available for the younger migrant children helps migrant students when they enter formal school and are expected to be on par with their peers. (Mather & Parmeswaran, 2011; St. Claire, Jackson, & Zweiback, 2012). The factors that were found to play a part in the lower level of school readiness is limited access to early childhood centers that are focused on school readiness, constant mobility, and lack of ability to apply for services due to documentation status of parents or children who are not citizens (Suarez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001).

Interrupted schooling. Interrupted schooling occurs when a student comes to the United States after the second grade, has two years less of schooling than their peers and functions at least two years below grade level math and English than their peers (Advocates for children of New York City, 2010). The time periods that students are out of formal education vary, as some students are out of school for years while some a few weeks to a few

months. Research indicates that migrant students on average move three to five times within a three year period depending on the work availability for their parents, and these students may experience interrupted schooling every few months (Green, 2003). As more migrant families immigrate to the United States following agriculture and related work, there are going to be more students who have not had the advantage of a systematic education that begins in kindergarten and continues uninterrupted until the twelfth grade. Additional studies have found that migrant students that move three or more times in a six year period are usually at least two full grade levels behind their peers (Freeman, Freeman & Mercuri, 2002;Zehr, 2010). Further research suggests that migrant students arrive in schools without school records and files that are necessary to ensure the students is correctly placed. The result of inaccurate or absent records for migrants migrant students often compounds the time it takes for migrant students to enroll in school after their educational has been interrupted(Green, 2003;Lossa, 2010; Salinas & Reyes, 2004; Wright, 2003).

Dropping out. Each year in the United States over a million students drop out of school before receiving a diploma, migrant students are among the highest percentage of these students (Ezell, Gonzalez, Randolph, 2002; Green, 2003). Upwards of ninety-two percent of migrant students do not graduate from high school and fewer than five percent go on to college (Cranston-Gingras, 2003; Ream & Rumberger, 2008). The dropout rates among Mexican migrant students are even higher for those students that come to the United States as high school students. The language and content area knowledge that is taught in high school is a progression of prior knowledge that these students may not have. Numerous studies have found that low academic achievement among migrant youth in the elementary school years is an indicator of dropping out of high school (Palardy, 2005; Rumberger & Thomas, 2000; Romanski, 2005;

Rumberger). As these students struggle with the content of high school there is little chance for them to get into college, which places them at a disadvantage in the workforce (Seif, 2004; Walker & Schulz, 2001). Many high school age migrant students are expected to leave school in order to help supplement the family income. The income that a migrant family earns is well below the poverty level and often times the need to survive economically surpasses the need to finish school (Hartman & Frank, 2003). An even bigger obstacle is when the students come to the United States as high schoolers and have a very limited time to learn the English language as well as content. Due to the limited time high school students have to learn the English language they may begin to feel as if they will not succeed and stop going to school (Ream, 2003; Roemer, 2011).

Parental educational attainment. The educational attainment of parents is instrumental in student educational achievements, and is one of the most consistent indicators of a student's success (Mangione & Speth, 1998; Spera et al., 2009). Parents of migrant students generally have attained a lower level of education than parents of mainstream students. Migrant farmworkers who have emigrated from Mexico may have had very little or limited formal educational opportunities. In many regards, parental education is seen as a resource, to help with schoolwork or provide their children with high expectation and aspirations about the value of education (Driessen, Smit, & Sleegers, 2005). Additional research by Gibson (2003) and Green (2003), point to the fact that when parental education is higher migrant students often show academic gains and generally have more of an interest in school the less educated migrant parents are the less likely it is that they will have had a chance to develop a strong English skills, especially academic English (Gibson, 2003; Green, 2003). Further, migrant parents who are able to communicate in English, generally are more comfortable speaking to their children's teachers,

and in doing so have an understanding of the school environment (Gibson, 2003; Lopez, 2001; Reese, 2002; Valdes, 1996). These parents also have a higher rate of literacy in their primary language and are more likely to read to their children, which is very helpful in developing language and literacy skills in children (Lopez, 2007; Lorea, Rueda & Nakamoto, 2011; Magnuson, et al., 2004; Portes & Rivas, 2011). Migrant parents that have had access to formal education are more likely to be able to foster their child's literacy and language skills and project a higher regard for education in general.

Cultural differences. Cultural barriers are differences between two or more cultures that lead to communication breakdowns and misunderstandings. The cultural barriers that exist between Mexican migrant students and their families and the school system often lead to educational challenges for migrant students. These cultural barriers may include students who do not make eye contact out of respect or parents who do not go to the school because they feel that would be disrespectful to the teacher. In these instances cultural barriers between two groups created misunderstandings that often prove challenging for migrant students. Valdes (1996) found that families valued education and know that education is important in helping their children obtain a better life. However it was apparent through her interviews and observations that the families did not understand their role in the education of their children, often leading to misunderstandings and school personnel perceiving the migrant parents to be uninterested in their children's education due to their lack of involvement. According to Valdes (1996), "none of the parents knew about PTA, about volunteering to work at the school, or about other ways in which they might become involved in their children's education" (p. 162).

Schools with language minority students of Mexican descent, are often unrepresented by parents who visit the school to talk to teachers about progress. Parents are intimidated by the

fact that they cannot communicate easily with the teachers. As a result the children believe they are expected to construct subordinate identities because they have received institutional messages that their language and culture are defective or deficient when measured against the majority (Valdes, 1996). The students are getting the message, from their parents, and the mainstream culture, that their culture is wrong and needs to be changed; this happens often according to the study with migrant students who are learning English and the norms of American society (Reese, 2002).

Migrant students have a culture and lifestyle that is unique among most other populations in the classroom. The use of materials, stories and curriculum that has aspects of the life of a migrant student could provide the motivation for the student to feel as if they are a part of the classroom community (Nieto, 2000). Teachers in United States schools are overwhelmingly White Europeans, who may lack preparation in teaching students from culturally diverse backgrounds. The lack of understanding and knowledge of cultural norms can make a student feel isolated and alone in a classroom. Mexican migrant children may be in several classrooms a school year and may be receiving the message that their culture is incorrect when compared to the representation of the majority culture (Brown, 2011, Nieto, 2002). Migrant students are at times given the message that their out of school literacies and language practices do not matter. When schools allow students to bring their experiences into the classroom the students are much more apt to write and their English acquisition improves as well (Blake, 2001; Purcell-Gates, 2013). Representations of Mexican, migrant culture in the classroom can often lead to better peer interaction, increased language acquisition and an overall better experience for the Mexican migrant student in the classroom. (Ezell et al., 2000; Manchaca, 2001; Whitaker et al.,)

Language acquisition. A large number of Mexican migrant students speak a language other than English as their first language. The majority upward of 95% speak Spanish as their first language while others may speak a dialect of the town that they are from in Mexico (Green, 2003; Migration Policy Institute, 2010; Rodriguez, Montoya & Valenzuela, 2014). Learning English presents challenges for migrant students as they are enrolled in different schools throughout the school year, some in different states. The curriculum and policies regarding ELLs, across states and school districts may not be aligned making English acquisition a difficult task because of different approaches and guidelines. Second language acquisition (SLA) for migrant students is usually a slow process that involves the students learning the social language of their peers first through social interactions. The academic language needed for content area subjects often takes longer, by most counts five to seven years (Bylund, 2011; Wright, 2010).

Further studies indicate that migrant students frequently take longer to learn academic language than their peers who are also learning English as a second language. This is due primarily to each school district has its own policy about teaching ELLs, when migrant students are learning English they are also enrolling in different schools sometimes several times a year. Migrant students may encounter vastly different teaching strategies in regards to learning English. In some school the students may have English support while learning grade level content, in other schools they may only be learning English, and in still others they may be learning English with a simplified curriculum. The types of language support and availability of bilingual education that migrant students receive is crucial to how they learn English (Ezell et al., 2000; Monzo, 2005; Salinas & Reyes; Wright, 2010).

Literacy development. The development of strong literacy skills is vital to achieving academic success in school. Reading, in fact may be the most important skill that all students

learn in school as it is required for almost all subject areas. The skills that are needed to be able to read and write at an academic level are built upon year after year, starting in the preschool years (Wright, 2010). Mexican migrant students do not have the regularity of the same school and curriculum to foster the important skills necessary to be effective readers. The fact is that Mexican migrant students have the lowest literacy rate among all other ethnic groups in the United States (Ezell et al., 2000. Freeman et al., 2002; Zehr, 2010). Further research suggests that the home literacy of migrant students is often dissimilar from the literacy of the school. Migrant students may not have gained the foundational literacy skills need to read their grade level content increasing the educational gap between migrants and their peers (Ezell et al, 2000; Green, 2003; Roemer, 2011). Moreover older migrant students may not have had the educational opportunity in their formative years to learn literacy in their primary language, which more than likely will make it harder to learn literacy skills in English (Salinas & Reyes, 2004; Loera et al., 2011; Purcell, 2013).

Understanding Challenges

Migrant students face many challenges that impact their success in education 9Conde, 2007; Green, 2003; Hall & Greenman, 2010; Mangione & Speth, 1998; Passar, 2006; Passar 7 Cohn, 2010). Quite often the two most influential parts of a student's life is home and school. The challenges that Mexican migrant students face educationally are often altered by the response or lack of response that teachers and parents have to these challenges. The perceptions and responses that teachers and parents have to the challenges migrant students face in education can be a determining factor in the educational success that migrant students have in school.

Teacher perceptions. Teachers who work with migrant students often see migrant students struggle academically and socially but may be unaware of the challenges that migrant

students face in their classrooms. Research by Coady, Cruz, and Flores (2008), indicates that of the teachers who took part in their research study, overwhelming cited high mobility, lack of parent involvement and language barriers as being the biggest challenges that migrant students faced in education (Coady, et al., 2008). Further research conducted by Romanski (2003), points to language barriers as being the challenge that teachers most often associated migrant students as having in education. In contrast the study, also identified cultural barriers as being a challenge to migrant students (Romanski, 2003).

Parent Perceptions. Parents of migrant children in the United States also have their own views on what the challenges are that their children face academically. Studies have shown that migrant parents cite low teacher expectations as a challenge to migrant students in education (Green 2003; Posada, 2008). It was discovered that the parents did not feel that their children were held to the same expectations that other students were held to by educators. The parents felt that the teachers did not have high expectations for the migrant students and did not encourage them to be successful. Additional research on parental perceptions of challenges that migrant students have in education found that overall migrant parents viewed challenges that their children had in education as temporary and felt that despite the challenges that their educational experiences were mostly positive (Borjian & Padilla, 2010; Lopez, 2007; Vinton 2008).

Mexican migrant students are one of the most educationally disadvantaged ethnic group in the United States (Green, 2003; Ream, 2003; Romanski; 2003). These students face unique family challenges that include health issues, documentation status and low economic status. These students also face challenges in education that impact their chance to be successful. These challenges are school readiness, low parental attainment, language barriers, cultural barriers, literacy development, interrupted schooling and dropping out (Cranston, Gingras & Paul, 2008;

Green, 2003; National Commission on migrant Education, 1992; Parra-Cardona et al., 2006). Furthermore, the challenges are often complicated by the fact that the perceptions that the teachers and parents of migrant students have of the challenges that migrant students face may not be aligned with each other.

This research study will focus on identifying the challenges that migrant students face in Western New York in regards to education. In addition the research will attempt to identify the educational challenges that parents and teachers perceive migrant students as having in Western New York. Further, this research study will focus on how these perceptions are similar and different and how this knowledge may be used to help migrant students successfully overcome these educational challenges. This research study asks the following questions in an attempt to gather data to add to literature concerning educational challenges of migrant students and the perception of their parents and teachers.

1. What are the educational challenges that Mexican migrant students face in Western New York?

2. What are the perceptions of teachers and parents of migrant student's challenges in education?

3. Do the parents and the teachers see the same challenges in the education of migrant students?

Method

There is a vast amount of research available on the challenges that migrant students face in education (Cranston et al., 2008; Green, 2003; National Commission on Migrant Education, 1992; Salerno, 1991). This research study will expand on that research to include the challenges that migrant students face in Western New York in regards to education. Furthermore this study will attempt to add to the literature by including the perceptions that the teachers and parents of migrant students have of the educational challenges these students face. Therefore this study was a mixed-method study that included both quantitative and qualitative measures that identified the challenges migrant students face in Western New York from the perceptions of their parents and teachers. The purpose of this mixed method study was to identify through research the challenges that migrant students face in education. In addition the perceptions of the parents and teachers on what the challenges are were also examined.

This study therefore included two groups: teachers and parents. There were two parts to the teacher component: an online survey in Phase 1, and a semi-structured interview in Phase 2. The parental group was interviewed on similar semi-structured interview questions.

Sample

The samples were both obtained using purposive sampling, which is defined by Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012) as "a nonrandom sample selected because prior knowledge suggests it is representative, or because those selected have the needed information" (G-7). The sample of parent participants was gained through the use of purposive sampling for this research study. The participants were invited from a local migrant Head Start Center. Prospective participants in the parent component were asked to invite other migrant parents to the meeting if they were interested, in this regard snowball sampling did occur. The participants

were included in the sample if they were the parent of a school age migrant student, had been migratory in the past two years and were at least eighteen years old.

The sample of teachers was drawn two school districts in Western New York where migrant students are known to attend school. The teachers sampled were surveyed electronically and therefore the race, ethnicity, and gender were unknown to the researcher. The areas of certifications well as grade level and subjects taught were also not known during the research study.

Setting

The research study was conducted in the Western New York area. The teachers were surveyed from two specific school districts. School A is located in an urban district and School B is located in a suburban district. Student population varied in size, SES, ethnic/racial background, and percentage of migrant students enrolled from district to district. Districts' socioeconomic statuses (SES) were determined by eligibility for free or reduced lunch. The schools within these two districts were included in the sample only if the researcher was able to gain permission from the building principal.

School A was the urban district that was surveyed. The school district is made up of four elementary schools, one middle school and one high school. The percentage of students that were eligible for free lunch in this district was between 58% and 74% among the six schools that were surveyed[1]. School A has a higher student population than School B. School A also has the highest African American and Hispanic population between the two school districts. The three largest race represented in School A is White (77.5%), Hispanic (26.4) and African American (6.1%); with 0.5% representing all other races (USA city facts, 2013).

[1] School district information reflects the 2010-2011 school year and was taken from https://reportcards.nysed.gov/.

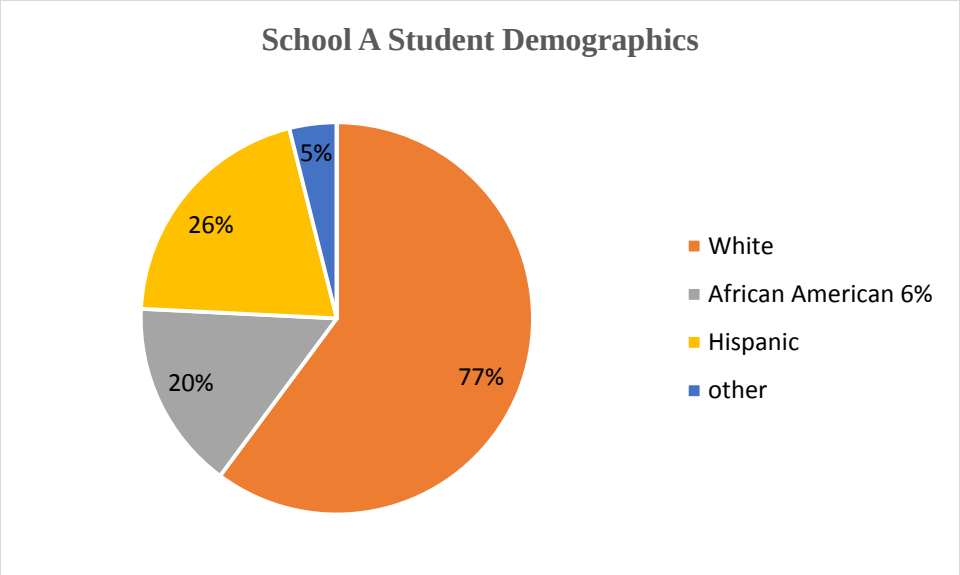

Figure 1. Student demographics in school A.

School B is a suburban school district that has its entire school centralized. Students from kindergarten through twelfth grade are in the same building, although there are different principals for the elementary, middle and high school. The percentage of students that receive free or reduced lunch is 25% qualified for free lunch while 8% qualified for reduced lunch. School B had a higher percentage of White students than any other ethnicity/race. The three largest races in the school B is White (93%) African American (12%) and Hispanic (16%)

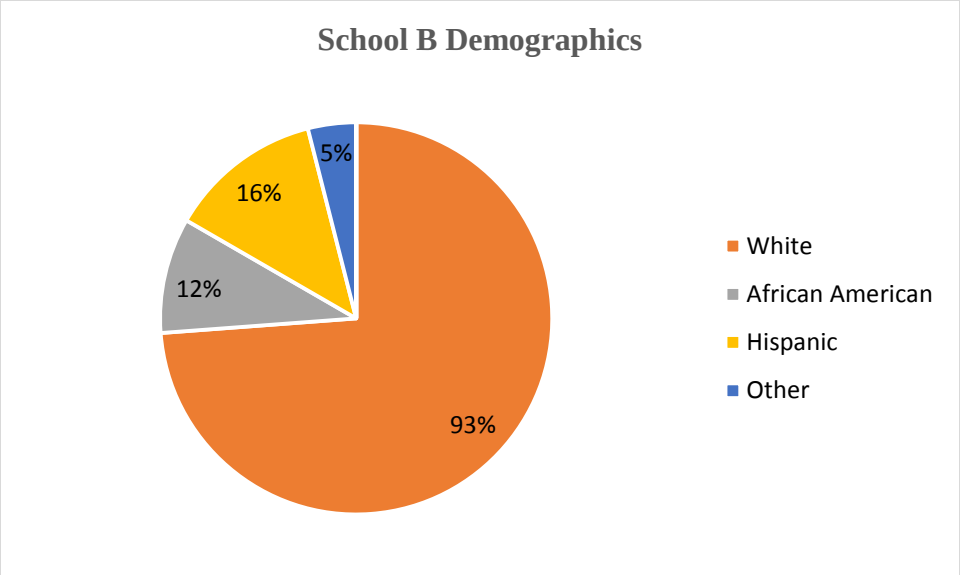

Figure 2. Student demographics of School B.

Participants

The study consisted of two separate groups of participants, the first being migrant farmworkers who were the parents of a student that was enrolled in the public school system in Western New York. The second groups of participants were teachers in either School A or B which are both located in Western New York. Very little specific information was known about the teachers who took part in the electronic survey, other than at the time of the study there were employed as teachers in either District A or District B.

Parents. Participants in the parent component of the study included seven females and one male (see Table 1). All participants had at least one child enrolled in either School A or School B and were migratory within the past two years. All parent participants were at least eighteen years old. Pseudonyms were used for all parent participants to ensure confidentiality. Table 2 displays the parent's country of origin, education level, pseudonym and number of children.

Table 1
Parent Participants

Pseudonyms	Education	Employment	Number of Children	Moves Per Year	Country of Origin
Juana	Functionally literate	Agriculture	2 pre-K and one middle school	Twice a year	Mexico
Gabriela	No formal education	Agriculture	3 children one in Preschool 2 in middle school	Migrates every other year	Mexico
Sara	High school graduate	Agriculture	3 children 1 elementary, 2 Head Start	Every year in May, return in Oct.	Mexico
Felix	Educated in US since age 10	Agriculture	2 children one middle school one high school 1 preschool	Migrates to Florida for oranges, then returns	Mexico
Sophia	School in both Mexico and US	Agriculture	2 children 1 preschool 1 middle school	Migrates every year in Oct	Mexico
Ana	School in US	Agriculture			

Teachers. All the participants in the teacher sample were surveyed for Phase 1, the participants that chose to take part in Phase 2 of the research did so after completing the first Phase of the research. In Phase 1 the teachers participating were emailed a survey via survey monkey forwarded to them by their principal. The researcher does not have access to the sex or ethnicity of the teachers surveyed. Included in *Table 3* are the number of teachers within each school district that could have chosen to take part in the study.

Table 2
Teacher Sample

School	Approximate # of teachers	Approximate # of students
A	58	617
A	32	471
A	41	502
B	60	616
B	47	435
B	27	232
B	29	277
B	29	247

In Phase 2 the teachers were chosen based on their willingness to comply with an interview. There were three participants who took part in the interview process, the grade levels and subject areas that they teach as well as the school district that they are employed in are listed in *Table 3.*

Table 3
Teachers participating in Phase 2

School District	Pseudonym	Grade Level	Subjects Taught
A	Jane	2nd	Multi-subjects
A	Bridget	8th	Math/ELA
B	John	6-8th	ELA/RIT

Procedure

The procedure for the research had two parts. The parent component consisted of semi-structured interviews. The teachers consisted of an electronic survey, which gave the option of participating in Phase 2, which consisted of semi-structured interviews.

Phase 1. The procedure for the parent component of the research study began with a letter sent out (see Appendix C) that invited the prospective participants to an informational meeting, where the researcher explained the research study and asked the prospective participants if they would be willing to take part in a semi-structured interview. The participants that agreed to partake in the research discussed with the researcher a suitable time that the

interview would take place. Each participant was required to sign a consent form (see Appendix D) establishing that the participants were at least eighteen years old, could withdraw from the interview at any time and that they were willing to take part in the research study. The participants then were interviewed using the semi-structured interview questions in an unoccupied classroom at a migrant Head Start.

The procedure for Phase 1 began with the researcher contacting two school districts via the principals at each school in Western New York requesting permission to survey the teachers. The researcher contacted the principals through an email to gain permission to administer an electronic survey to teachers employed in their schools. Nine principals within the two school districts granted the researcher permission via email response. Once permission was granted by building principals, a cover letter and link to an online survey on www.surveymonkey.com (see Appendix E) was sent via email to approximately 325 teachers within the two school districts. Each principal opted to forward the email with the online survey link to the teachers themselves. A statement of consent was included in the email to ensure that all participants were at least eighteen years of age. The email also provided the participant with the information regarding the purpose of the study, how confidentiality would be maintained, and a statement that participation in the study is voluntary and that the participants may withdraw at any time. A link to the six item survey was included in the email. By clicking on the link to the survey, subjects verified their consent to participate in Phase 1 of the study.

The researcher collected survey information electronically via www.SurveyMonkey.com in the form of response counts for each of the six survey questions (see Appendix F). The sixth item on the survey asked the participants if they would be willing to take part in a semi-structured interview for Phase 2 of the study. Participants were directed to contact the researcher

via the email address provided. The researcher then responded back to the participants who indicated through email that they would like to be a part of Phase 2 to set up a date and time for interview to take place.

Phase 2. Teachers who were interested in being a part of Phase 2 emailed the researcher and then a date and time was set up for a semi-structured interview. The teachers were asked to sign a consent form prior to the interview, indicating that they were at least eighteen years old, understood that the interview was voluntary and could be stopped at any time and that they were willing to participate in the interview (see Appendix G). The consent form also indicated that the confidentiality of the participants would be respected at all times. The three teachers that agreed to be interviewed set up times that coincided with their planning times during the school day. The researcher met with the teacher in their classroom and conducted the interview. Finally, after completing the interview the researcher thanked the participants and agreed to forward results from the study to the school principals.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation that was used in this research study involved using two different forms of instrumentation to gather data from the parents and teachers. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the parents, and an online survey was conducted for the teachers. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with teachers that agreed to participate in Phase 2 of the research study.

Parent interviews. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with individual parent participants. The researcher took notes and audio recorded some of the interviews when the participants did not object. Each individual was asked to answer questions about what they felt were the challenges that their children faced in education. Individuals were asked questions

that were pre-constructed (see Appendix H), as well as questions that emerged because of the participant's answers to pre-constructed questions.

The interviews allowed the researcher to gain more information from the parent perspective then would have been derived from surveys or questionnaires as the parents frequently expanded on subjects that the researcher would not have asked through other avenues. Table 4 displays the themes that were identified through the interview process with the parents and then aligns the themes with the literature review.

Teacher surveys. Nominal and descriptive data for Phase 1 of the study was collected in the form of an online survey. This survey consisted of six selected response questions. The first response item was designed to collect the information about the experience that the teachers had with migrant students in their classrooms. Since the purpose of this research was to identify challenges of migrant students have in education as well as compare the perceptions of these challenges between parents and teachers, the first question was used to categorize the teachers that had never taught a migrant student. The questions two through five were designed to gage the perceptions that the teachers had of the challenges that migrant students faced in education. The sixth question served as an invitation to participate in Phase 2 of the study by agreeing to be interviewed. The participant upon selecting yes to number six would be able to email the researcher about being interviewed. In this way the participants were able to contact the researcher via email and their responses to the survey were kept confidential, rather than the participants having to leave their name and email for the researcher at the end of their survey.

Table 4
Question for parents aligned with literature review

Themes	Literature Review	Example of Parent Questions
School readiness	Migrant children often suffer cognitive and social delays due to lack of early childhood education (Green, 2003; Romanski, 2003).	Did your child have access to early childhood education and school readiness skills? Was your child enrolled in Head Start?
Language Barriers	Curriculum and language policies are often different for migrant students when they enroll in different schools. It takes migrant students longer because of high mobility to lean English than their peers (Bylund, 2011; Reese, 2002; Urrieta& Quach, 2000).	Do you feel that your child's language is represented in the classroom? Are provisions made for your child to learn English?
Community Resources	There are resources that are available to help migrant students, such as migrant education service (Migrant Education)	Are you aware of the community resources that are available in Western New York for migrant students and families?
Parent-Teacher relationship	When parental education is higher migrant students often show academic gains. Mexican migrant parents who are able to communicate in English, they are generally more comfortable talking to their child's teacher (Lopez, 2001, Reese, 2002; Valdes, 1996).	Do you feel as a parent you have access to the teacher to discuss your child's progress?
Parent Perception	Parents feel language barriers and the lack of expectations are the biggest challenges their children face in schools (Posada, 2008).	What do you feel is the biggest challenge your child faces in school?
Interrupted Schooling	Migrant students that move at least three times in six years are behind at least a grade(Freeman, Freeman &Mercuri, 2006)	How often are you migratory? Has your child experienced interrupted schooling?

Teacher interviews. Phase 2 consisted of semi-structured interviews with the teachers. The interview questions consisted of pre-constructed questions that were designed to engage in the perceptions that the teachers had in regards to challenged that migrants face in education (see Appendix I). As in the parent interviews, questions were at times extended upon or altered depending on the participant's response. The interviews were designed to engage the participant the parents and teachers of migrant students. More with the subject of the challenges of migrant students in education, and were more revealing than the survey questions as teachers went into more depth when answering the questions.

Data Analysis

Data collected from the semi-structured interviews from the parent participants were coded and analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Nominal data derived from the survey answers of participants were dummy coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics in Excel. In addition to the survey data the researcher gathered the information from the semi-structured interview questions from the teacher and parent component of the research. After transcribing all of the audio-recorded interview sessions, from both groups, data was coded for themes (see Appendix J). Responses were then analyzed using the constant comparative method (Frankel et al., 2012). A table was created in order to compare general themes in responses to interview questions from both the parent and teacher component of the research.

Results

The results from the study were gained from an electronic survey that was made available to the teachers in schools A and B. In addition results also were gained through semi structured interviews that were conducted with the teachers and parents of migrant students.

Table 5

Themes identified through the surveys and interviews

Theme	Teacher	Parent
Life challenges of migrant families	Language, documentation status	Housing, weather, health care, documentation status
Education challenges	Language barriers, school readiness, interrupted schooling, literacy development, cultural differences, dropping out	Discrimination, language barriers, dropping out, literacy development,
Discrimination	Teachers indicate that some colleagues treat migrants differently, problems between other groups of Hispanics, name calling and alienation toward migrant students	Children are called border jumper, dirty Mexican, told to go home, called aliens
Communication between parents and teachers	Teachers stated parents are difficult to get to the school, at times siblings are used to translate	Letters sent home in English make it difficult for parents; parents avoid situations where there is no translator,
School readiness	School readiness skills were	Children did better when they were enrolled in early childhood, English acquisition better and school readiness skills were good
Knowledge of community resources	Teachers knew of social service agencies as well as migrant tutorial	Parents knew of migrant tutorial, migrant head start, WIC, ESL,
School records/enrollment	Teachers did not have access to the records of newly arrived students nor were they themselves sable to send records to a new school	Parents said that enrollment takes between two weeks and one month depending on the time of year and school district. Parents did not have access to records, sometimes did not know the name of school their child would be attending.

Teacher Surveys

A cover letter, consent form and link to an online survey were emailed to 325 teachers in two school districts in Western New York. The principals in the nine schools in the two districts gave their permission and forwarded the survey to the teachers. Of the 325 teachers to whom the

survey link was sent, 34 individuals submitted responses. Thus the response rate was low at only 10.5%. Of the 34 respondents to the survey, 32 teachers were currently teaching or had taught a migrant student in their class. All responses were included in the survey data because the researcher was looking for the perceptions that all teachers have of the challenges that migrant students face in education.

Challenges migrant students face in education. One of the first questions respondents were asked was regarding what challenges they believe that migrant students face in education due to their lifestyle. The respondents had the option of choosing more than one answer when they took the survey. Figure 1 shows that of the 34 respondents of which, 85% (*n=29*) indicated they believed that language barriers and interrupted education were the biggest challenges facing migrant students. Seventy-three percent (*n* = 25) of respondents indicated that literacy development; school readiness and cultural differences were also challenges that migrant students face in education. Knowledge of community resources, low parental educational attainment, and dropping out of school were indicated by a little over half of the respondents (*59%, n =20*) to be challenges to migrant students. Only 8 respondents chose health as a challenge for migrant students.

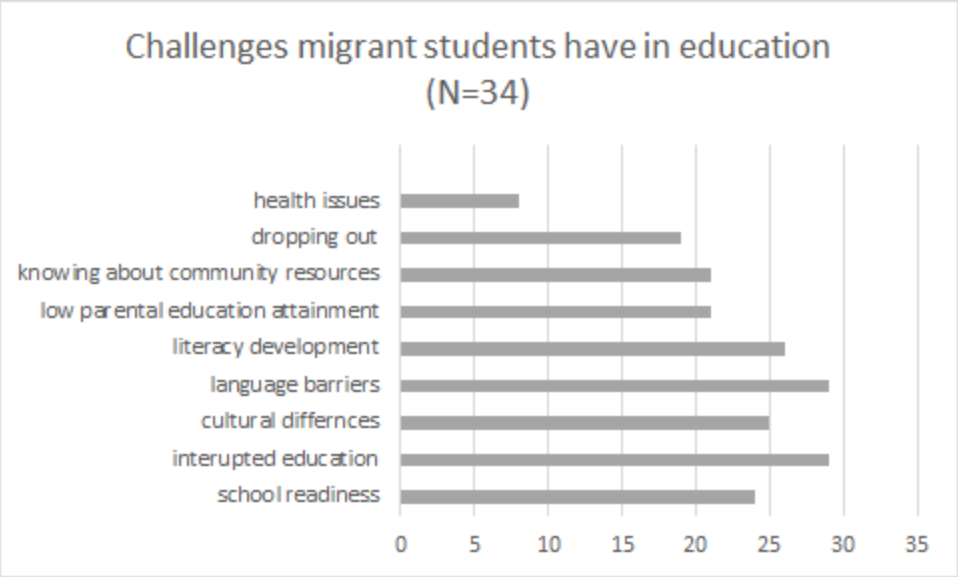

Figure 3. Challenges migrant students have in education.

English acquisition. Respondents were asked to rate the extent that they think that English acquisition has on the educational success of migrant students. The teachers were asked to rate the extent from a little extent to a great extent. Figure 4 shows the respondents' perceptions of the extent that English proficiency has on the academic achievement of migrant students. Overall the majority of teachers surveyed felt that English proficiency had no effect on the academic success of migrant students. In addition responses were equal in the categories of to a great extent and to a good extent that English proficiency has on academic success for migrant students.

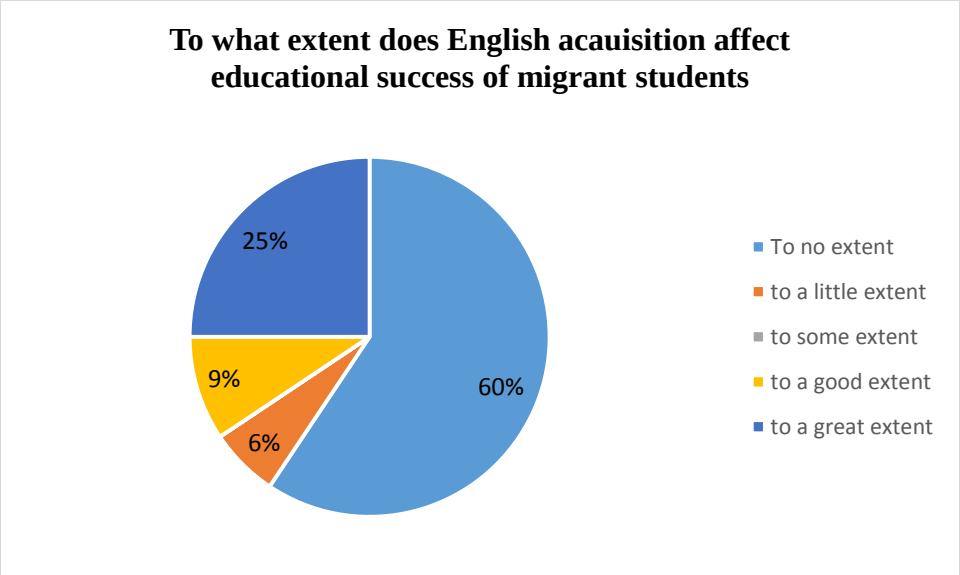

Figure 4. Extent at which English acquisition affects education success

How migrant preform academically. The results that are shown in Figure 5 are indicative of the respondents' views on how migrant students perform as opposed to non-migrant students. Of the 32 respondents 6% indicated that they felt that migrant students performed much worse than non-migrant students academically. In comparison 70% felt that migrant students would perform worse than non-migrant students. None of the respondents indicated that they felt migrant students would perform academically better than non-migrants and 21% felt that migrant students would perform about the same as non-migrant student scholastically. Three respondents chose other as an option, with two indicating that they felt the question was unanswerable because the attitudes of the students as well as other variables that were not named, would be a factor in whether or not a student was more successful than another student. One respondent indicated that question was "too generic to answer, as migrant students may not have negative variables in their lives".

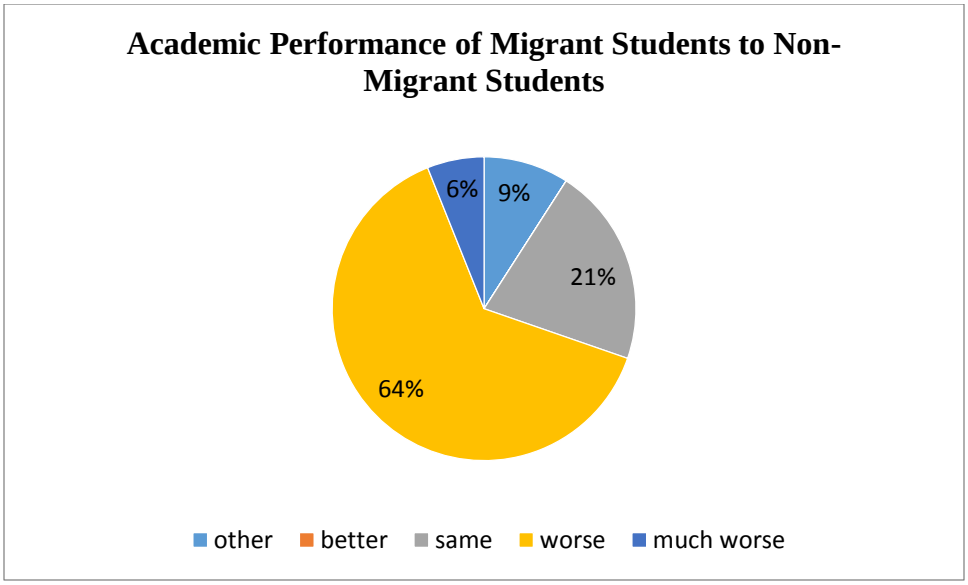

Figure 5. Perceptions of differing academic success between migrant students.

Phase 2 interviews. The participants that took part in the online survey were asked if they would be willing to be interviewed for the Phase 2 of the research study. Of the 32 respondents that took the online survey 6 respondents, 19% indicated that they would be willing to take part in Phase 2. There were 25 respondents, 81% that indicated that they would not be willing to partake in the Phase 2 of the research study. Of the six respondents that indicated that they would be willing to participate in Phase 2 of the study only three contacted the researcher to schedule an interview. Figure 4 depicts the number of respondents who initially agreed to be interviewed and those that did not want to continue on in the research.

The three teachers that were interviewed were asked a series of questions derived from a semi-structured interview schedule (see Appendix I). The researcher began with the same question for each participant: What do you think are the challenges facing migrant families? The researcher then attempted to follow the interview questions, but sometimes altered, added, or skipped questions in order to maintain the flow of the interview and ask questions relevant to the context and previous responses of the participant. The three respondents had similar views on

what they perceived as challenges to the migrant family. Language barriers as well as high mobility were themes that each respondent talked about. Documentation was also talked about with John and Bridget.

Language barriers. In response to the first question, all three of the interviewees reported that they believed that language barriers were a challenge to the families, and indicated that many of the caregivers to the students that they teach are not able to communicate at all in English. John stated that "migrant family challenges are immense, they have language barriers that affect every aspect of their life as well as the migrant lifestyle which affect the way their children preform in school" (John, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Jane discussed the language barriers as "being a challenge that holds the family back from being able to work in better places and also keeps them locked into a cycle of poverty "(Jane, personal communication, March 26, 2014). Bridget discussed the language barriers as "something that is generational with the migrant people, they just never develop a firm grasp of the language, and then their children are left to be the translators and such in their family" (Bridget, personal communication, March 27, 2014).

High Mobility. The respondents also identified high mobility as being a challenge to migrant families. John discussed that the families very rarely have a home "they just have a room, sometimes a room in a house or an apartment, but the whole family has one room because they move so much they do not think it necessary to have a permanent place of their own" (John, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Bridget talked of high mobility on the sense that it affected their sense of community "they move around so much they don't have a sense of belonging, no ownership in the community, the kids they say to us that they don't have a home like we do, they don't have the material things we take for granted like furniture and beds

because they cannot move the stuff back and forth" (Bridget, personal communication, March 27, 2014). In addition Jane talked of how the high mobility of migrants affects everything else in their life "they are always moving so they do not have a home, the kids are in and out of school, and they do not get the proper care because they are on the road so much" (Jane, personal communication, March 26, 2014).

Documentation. Documentation was identified by john and Bridget as being a challenge to migrant families. John talked of the students who are afraid of the police officers or anyone in uniform that they do not know because they think it is immigration. John stated" the kids get afraid when they hear sirens, they get afraid if they see someone in a uniform, everyone to them is a threat, they think that immigration is looking for them and their parents, and these kids are in middle school" (John, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Bridget also talked of the fact that students end up leaving because they see the immigration vans around "we lose students when a parent gets in trouble for being undocumented , they run somewhere else, sometimes we never see them again they are so afraid to come back here" (Bridget, personal communication, March 27, 2014).

Community resources. The second question asked about the teacher's knowledge of community resources that were available to migrant families. All three responded yes, they were aware of the resources. Bridget talked of migrant resources in the schools, such as migrant tutorial programs and after school help. She stated "the schools have an excellent migrant tutorial program that works with the families and the students" (Bridget, personal communication, March 27, 2014). She also responded that although she knows of community resources available to the families, rarely does she have an instance where a family requests information or she see the need at her level in the classroom. John mentioned that he believed that there was community

resources available to the families for health care and food assistance in addition to the services that migrant students receive in the schools, in regards to tutorials. John stated "most of our migrant students receive free lunch and breakfast, however I have no idea if they are aware of the fact that there is a social service agency that may help the with that aspect of their lives" (John, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Jane although she indicated that she was aware of the community resources did not specifically name or describe an agency.

Migrant students in classrooms. The next couple of questions focused on whether or not the teachers had migrant students in their classrooms. The discussion entailed the enrollment patterns of the migrant students as well. Each responded that this year they have migrant students in their classrooms daily. John stated that he had migrant students in his classes during each period. He has some students that left at the end of May last year and returned in October. John stated:

> Most of the migrant students that I have do not start in my classroom until October or November, when they come back from wherever they were, most of them will again leave in May. The problem is that they miss out on the beginning and the end, both crucial points (personal communication, March 24, 2014).

Students often will tell him that they have to leave because their family has work in another State. John added "I am not sure if the students were enrolled in another school when they left, I can only hope that they were but most were behind their peers academically when they returned" (John, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Bridget responded that she has migrant students in two of her classes and that she believes that they leave in the spring and return to the area in the late fall. Jane responded that she works with migrant students daily and know they leave but is unsure of when but that it is usually at the end of the school year. Jane stated "I have migrant students that are her one day and gone the next, and then they show up

two weeks later because something didn't pan out wherever they went, this is very frustrating for all involved" (Jane, personal communication, March 26, 2014).

Enrollment and school records. The fifth and sixth question that were asked during the interview were on the subject on enrollment and school records. The respondents were asked if they knew of the process of how migrants are enrolled in school or what happens when they leave for another school and how school records are forwarded or received. All three respondents stated that were not aware of the process of enrolling a migrant student, John however stated that"I believe the process is fairly easy as long as the families had the paperwork and health requirements in place, which I would guess may be a problem" (John, personal communication, March 24, 2014).As for the school records Bridget responded that she thought the administrative office would have access to all student records and more than likely sends them to the new school. John stated that he has had to prepare grades and test scores for migrant students but never sent them, he assumed that the office personnel at the school sent the records. John discussed that "many time the families do not plan on sending their child to school for the time they will be gone from the area, and if they do plan on enrolling their child they may not know the name or location of the school; this makes it difficult for the school to have records ready" (John, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Jane when asked about school recorded said she has never been asked to prepare them or send the records out, but she has requested them from schools and has had a difficult time in receiving a response. Jane added that receiving records from Mexico was very difficult and sometimes the process takes a month or more. She stated "it is like pulling teeth trying to get records from Mexico, sometimes we don't even know how old these children are or if they have ever been to school, and they are nine or ten" (Jane, personal communication, March 26, 2014). The responses of the teachers

indicated a lack of control over the school records that are sent and received from the school migrants attend.

Challenges in school. The interview questions seven, eight and nine all were focused on what the teachers felt were the biggest challenges that migrant faced in education, and how these challenges impacted their education. The researcher asked the teachers specifically what they thought were challenges that migrant students faced in education. The results show that the teachers that were interviewed identified language barriers, interrupted schooling, discrimination, dropping out, and low parental involvement as being the challenges that migrant students face in education from their perspectives.

Language barriers. John discussed the factors that he thought greatly impacted the success migrant students had in education. John states "I feel the biggest challenge is the language, as most migrant students can function socially but they do not have the academic language needed for school" (John, personal communication, March 24, 2014). In addition John discussed the fact that the language barriers and low academic achievement leads to dropping out. John stated "I see the frustration that the migrant students have when they come back from a move with their families, they are behind in language and have more than likely missed information and content that they will not be able to make up, and this leads to them giving up" (John, Interview, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Bridget identified language barriers as being a challenge to migrant students because they "never grasp the academic language enough, they usually do not have the full access to ESL because they move so much so they are always behind their peers in language skills, which make them not want to participate " (Bridget, personal communication, March 27, 2014).

***Interrupted schooling*.** The fact that migrant students move often leads to interruption sin their schooling, which both John and Jane identified as being a challenge that migrants faced in education. John referred to the modules and the Common Core curriculum and said "the modules are so new and we as teachers have to follow the modules so when a student misses six weeks of a unit, who is going to have the time to go back to catch them up, there is really no one" (John, personal communication, March 24, 2014).

Jane spoke of the interrupted education as one of the biggest challenges that migrant students have in regards to education. She states "when the students do not have a consistency with their education, they miss out on the core concepts that are essential to being successful in school, they miss the foundations and they rarely catch up" (Jane, personal communication, March 26, 2014). In addition Jane further stated " "the migrant students move often, some go every three or four months, when they are here in our school, they are at least a grade level behind and it will get worse now that we have the modules" (Jane, personal communication, March 26, 2014).

Lack of parental involvement. Bridget responded that she felt lack of parental involvement and low parental expectations were the biggest challenges migrant students faced and that these challenges certainly impact their educational success. Bridget stated "the parents of migrant students do not really know what their children are doing in school, they seem to be alright with the fact that many are not going to finish school and will be continuing the cycle" (Bridget, personal communication, March 27, 2014). John talked of parental involvement as well he stated "it is difficult to get the migrant parents here, they are busy or working but even after school hours they do not come, my phone calls are never answered, I feel they care but they

are certainly less involved than they should be" (John, personal communication, March 24, 2014).

Dropping out. All three respondents identified dropping out of high school as being an educational challenge that migrant students face. Bridget she felt the parents of some of her migrant students do not fully understand the importance of graduating from high school and she finds that they do not push their children to continue with their education but allows them to drop out and work in the fields. Bridget stated "students tell me that they are going to work as soon as they are old enough not to have to come to school, they want the money and see the farm work as a way to have material things" (Bridget, personal communication, March 27, 2014).

Jane discussed how migrants drop out in the district at a very high rate "it is rare that we have migrant students that are old enough to legally drop-out, when they do not have to be here they do not stay" (Jane, personal communication, March 26, 2014). Jane also talked about the frustration that migrant students have that ultimately leads to them dropping out, she states" migrant students are usually behind a grade level, sometimes more, when they get to high school they seem to give up and resign in the fact that they will not graduate so they stop coming an eventually just quit altogether" (Jane, personal communication, March 26, 2014).

John talked of trying to convince the students at the middle school level to stay in school, he stated "I try to be proactive and tell them I know that they can do it, for some it is only four years away, but they are counting the days that they can quit and we cannot force them to come to school, it so frustrating" (John, personal communication, March 24, 2014).

Discrimination. Discrimination was a theme that was brought up by each of the three teachers during their interview. John discussed how migrant students are made fun of in class and called derogatory names in the halls. John stated "there is a lot of name calling and students

that are referred to as aliens, the worst part are the migrant students are afraid to tell" (John, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Jane talked about the segregation of the migrant students from other Hispanic groups who do not want to associate with the migrants. She stated "other Hispanic groups, mostly Puerto Ricans, do not want to be associate with being Mexican or migrant, they often are the worst when it comes to name calling, many fights have broken out over someone calling someone eels a Mexican as a dig" (Jane, personal communication, March 26, 2014). Both talked about the migrant students being ostracized in the lunchroom. John brought up a point the teachers that work with migrants are not always exempt from being discriminatory to the migrant students. He spoke of a teacher that was very negative toward the migrants and said that the students do notice it and it does affect the attitude and perceptions that the migrants have in school. John stated "she makes it clear that she does not have time for the migrant students, she has said the parents do not care why I should? the students they can feel when someone treats them different, they know" (personal communication, March 24, 2014).

Bridget talked of how the other students have a very negative view on migrant students in general and often alienate them during time when the students are supposed to be working together. She has noticed that when other students of other ethnic groups join the migrant students they are often made fun of by their peers. Bridget stated "a young black girl was sitting next to a Mexican child in the gym, they were talking, and a girl came over and asked the black girl "why are you sitting with a Mexican? (Bridget, personal communication, March 27, 2014).

Communication with families. The results from the interview indicated that the ability to communication with families of migrant students was not solely based on language barriers but a combination of factors such as work, transportation as well as understanding the written language. The teachers were each asked if they can easily communicate with their migrant

student's families. John responded that rarely do the migrant student's parents come into the school for conferences or meetings. John did indicate that there were translators available if he had a parent who only spoke Spanish. He stated "I do not see the migrant parents often however when I do have a parent that speaks Spanish we usually have translators, especially for conferences and planned events" (personal communication, March 24, 2014). Bridget responded that she had difficulty gaining responses from parents and did not know if language differences were the reason parents did not respond. Bridget stated "perhaps the difficulty results more from the parents working long hours and cannot get away to meet with the teachers" (Bridget, personal communication, March 27, 2014).Jane responded that most of the parents of migrant students often bring an older child or a family member that is fluent in Spanish so she felt that she did not have much difficulty communicating with parents and families. Jane stated "I do not like to do it but I will use a sibling or another family member when there is no one else to translate, the parents do not come often and when they do I need to talk to them so I will use someone like a sibling" (Jane, personal communication, March 26, 2014). Jane in addition stated that she felt transportation was an issue of getting the families to the school for conferences and meetings as many do not drive. Jane stated "so many of the migrant families do not have transportation and often rely on other migrant families with cars to take them places, so I think that may be a factor as well that influences communication between the school and the migrant families" (Jane, personal communication, March 26, 2014).

Teachers and school districts. The last question that was asked during the interview was what the teachers felt school districts and teachers could do to help meet the needs of migrant families. John responded that he felt that educating the teachers on what the migrant students face in their daily lives would go a long way in helping teachers to understand why issue arise

from migrant families. John stated “if teachers knew how these students lived, what some of them have to go through before school, they would be so much more understanding” (John, personal communication, March 24, 2014). He also responded that the school districts could make it easier for families by providing them with their child’s records and transcripts so that they have them on hand when they arrive at their new school. Lastly John responded that he believed reaching out to migrant parents of high schoolers in the ninth grade was important to help them realize the importance of their child completing high school. John stated “we as teachers need to catch them early, let them know that they can do it, encourage them to stay in school and get involved in sports or activities, anything to hook them into wanting to stay” (John, personal communication, March 24, 2014).

Bridget's response to the question was that school districts can develop online courses that migrant students can continue with when they migrate to other areas. The school district that they were enrolled in would be their home base and they would participate online so that they have continuity in their education. Bridget stated “if we could use the technology that we have to create an online network for these students to continue learning even if they are in another State, it may be difficult at first but then we would say why didn’t we do this years ago” (Bridget, personal communication, March 27, 2014).

Jane responded that she thought teachers should make home visits so that they fully understand the physical environments that the migrant students come from and the challenges that many are facing in their own homes. In addition she added that the school could offer more programs for migrant high school students such as Saturday tutoring or summer enrichment programs to encourage these students to stay in school. Jane stated “we need to involve the community more in the education of migrant students, maybe have tutors, or college students

work with them during off hours for credit, it may be a start" (Jane, personal communication, March 26, 2014).

The responses from the teachers indicated that there is a need for teachers to understand the many challenges that migrant students face in the daily lives, and perhaps visiting the home may help teachers to be more understanding of migrant students. In addition, the teacher indicated that the system of records and transcripts between school districts could be handled more efficiently.

Parent Interviews

The parents that agreed to be part of this research study took part in a semi-structured interview that was audio taped and transcribed. A table was created to compare the responses of the parents and to identify trends among those responses. Each of the parents interviewed were asked a series of questions from a semi-structured interview schedule (again, see Appendix H).

The researcher began with the same three questions, which specifically dealt with finding out about the family, for each participant: How often do you migrate? Are the moves to the same places? And what are some challenges that are related to your family's lifestyle? The researcher then attempted to follow the interview questions, but sometimes altered, added, or skipped questions in order to maintain the flow of the interview and ask questions relevant to the context and previous response of the participant.

Migration patterns. In response to the first group of questions, all eight of the interviewees reported that they migrate at least once a year, each one also stated that their moves depended primarily on the availability of work and the financial resources that they had on hand. Felix stated "sometimes there is a lot of work somewhere like Florida and we go because the money is good, but other times we go and there is not enough work" (Felix, personal

communication, March 25, 2014). Seven out of the eight respondents stated that the moves were to the same places due to work availability and relationships that have been construed with employers; as some respondents stated that they had jobs waiting for them when the time came to plant or harvest the agriculture in which they worked. Martina stated "we go to Ohio for the potatoes and we come to New York for the grapes, we have steady work in both places "(Martina personal communication, April 4, 2014). One, Gabriela. stated "since we are new here we do not have the promise of a job we have to wait and see, we wait week to week and when there is no job then we go somewhere else" (Gabriela, personal communication, March 28).

Challenges related to migrant lifestyle. The respondents were all asked to identify challenges that they felt were related to their migrant lifestyle. The responses indicated that housing, immigration, health care, weather, and language barriers were identified among the parents of migrant students.

Housing. Four of the respondents stated that housing was a challenge as they needed to find a place to live for only a few months or as long as the work was available and many times landlords would require a lease for up to a year making it a financial hardship when the families had to break the lease because of no more work and the need to move on. Martina stated "finding a place to live is hard , everyone want you to sign a lease but if you live like we do it is hard , next week we may have to go, people who rent do not like us much" (Martina, personal communication, April 4, 2014). Ana further discussed the challenge of finding housing "we live with other families sometimes because we cannot find a place to live; none wants to rent to us, unless we are hired by a farmer who has houses" (Ana, personal communication, March 24, 2014).

Immigration. All the respondents also stated that immigration was a challenge to migrant families. Juana responded that although she has proper documentation not everyone that she travels with does and that makes it difficult because there is always that fear of being stopped and arrested. Juana stated "when we travel it is hard, some of the families we travel with do not have the papers they need, we could all get in trouble, when a person without papers get caught then they are deported" (Juana, personal interview, March 28, 2014). Haley discussed immigration "they pull us over for like nothing, then they ask us are you legal, there are so many immigration people here now that my kids get afraid every time they see a van, because the vans are white that are the immigration police" (Haley, personal communication, April 4, 2014). Felix discussed further how immigration affected his family 'every time we leave the house my wife she tells the kids always remember we love you, in case we get picked up, because she is undocumented" (Felix, personal communication, March 25, 2014). Martina discussed how migrant families are afraid to leave the house because of immigration "we do what we have to and stay home, work, school for the kids, store and home, we have to stay out of sight especially in the summer, they seem to really look for us in the summer" (Martina, personal communication, April 4, 2014).

Language barriers. Language barriers were also identified by all the respondents as being a challenge for their families. Sophia stated "we don't know all the words, and sometimes I say them wrong and people look at me like they don't understand, it is difficult here because of the language" (Sophia, personal communication, March 28, 2014). Everyday life for migrants who do not speak English was addressed by Sara "I can read and write in English, but my parents cannot and they have a hard time sometimes with the littlest things, like mailing a letter or asking for help in the store," (Sara, personal communication, March 24, 2014).

Health care. Three of the respondents; Sara. Felix and Martina also stated that finding health care was a challenge because their work takes them from State to State and often they have no way of obtaining and keeping a doctor. Felix stated "no doctor will usually see us unless it is a clinic because we do not have a specific DR., because we move around so much" (Felix, personal communication, March 25, 2014). Further discussion about health care was addressed by Martina who stated "many of the migrant families do not have insurance, because they are afraid they will be turned in, it all comes back to immigration, all the time with everything" (Martina, personal communication, April 4, 2014). Sara also talked of the problems with migrant families obtaining health care, she states "when some migrant families are traveling they cannot get their medicine because they do not have e Dr., when you move around a lot then you do not really have a settled place where you can have a regular Dr. and dentist, for some of us it is very difficult, especially the adults, the kids most get Medicaid" (Sara, personal communication, March 24, 2014).

Weather. Three respondents cited weather as a challenge. Ana stated "we have to work in all kinds of weather and we do not mind but sometimes the weather makes the vegetables and fruit not grow and then for us there is no work" (Ana, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Felix talked of how the weather affects the work of migrants "our job is outside so when it rains and snows we are outside when it is too bad out then we lose money because we cannot work" (Felix, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Sophia also talked of how the weather affected many aspects of the migrant families life "when we move to a new place because we hear there is work and then it rains too much we have to move, the kids leave school and we move to a better place, the weather really is the key to how long we can stay" (Sophia, personal communication, March 28, 2014).

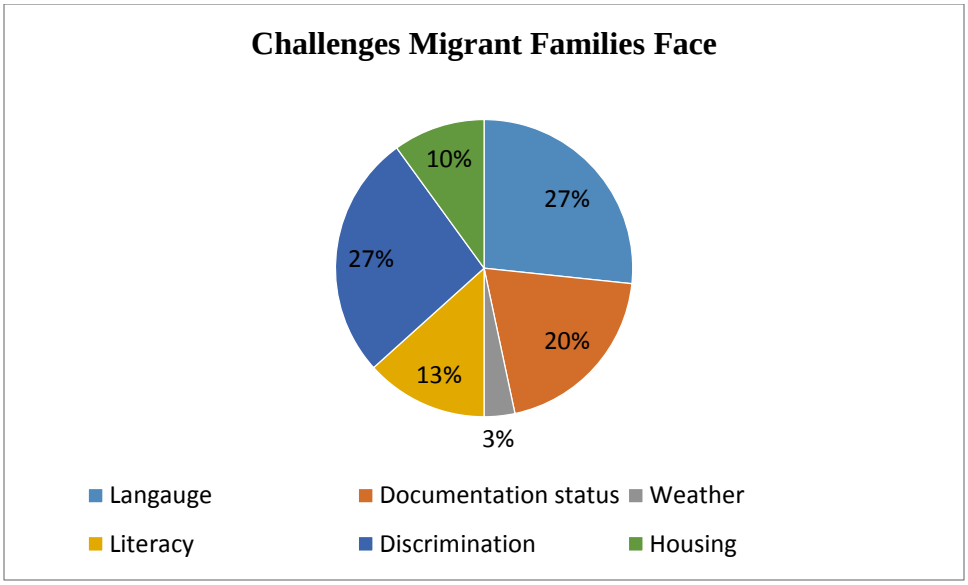

Figure 6. Challenges migrant families face.

Community resources. The next question asked whether or not the respondents were aware of **co**mmunity resources that were available for migrant families. Seven of the eight respondents stated that they were aware of the community resources. Martina and Juana both mentioned the migrant tutorial that helped their children at school and made educational visits to their homes. Martina stated "the migrant lady stops by to help the kids, with their English, sometimes she helps with their homework because I cannot read it, and she sees most of the migrant kids" (Martina, personal communication, April 4, 2014). Juana discussed the migrant summer program that her children attended "they would pick the kids up an take them to nice places and help them learn, most of the time they let them have fun and be like kids" (Juana, personal communication, March 28, 2014). Ana and Juana spoke at length about the afterschool programs such as ESL that helps their children learn English. Ana stated "the ESL teacher helps the kids learn English so they can do the school work, even though the kids speak English with their friends they need help with school" (Ana, personal communication, March 24, 2014).

Sara, Haley and Sophia also talked of the migrant head start program that their children attended prior to public school. Sara stated “my kids went to the migrant head start program, which helped the kids and families with learning English and school stuff” (Sara, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Haley further discussed the migrant head start “when we were in other places that had a migrant head start we had a place for the kids, it made working easier than finding someone to take care of the kids while we work” (Haley, personal communication, April 4, 2014). Sophia also talked of migrant head start programs “they would pick the kids up and take them to the center, feed them and keep them safe all day, when you work outside you want to know your kids are ok so you can work and make money to take care of them” (Sophia, personal communication, March 28, 2014).The responses show that most of the parents are knowledgeable about some of the community resources that are available to them but none of the respondents named all the same resources showing that there is a lack of knowledge about the entirety of the resources available. Gabriela discussed WIC and how that program helped her feed the baby “the WIC program made sure that the little eons had the formula and food like fruit and vegetables, they had people who spoke Spanish and asked if we needed anything like someone to watch the children’ (Gabriela, personal communication, March 28, 2014). Only one of the respondents Felix stated that he was not aware of the community resources that were available in the community. Felix stated “I do not really know what is available to help migrant people” (Felix, personal communication, March 25, 2014). Figure 7 shows the types of community resources that were identified by parents of migrant students.

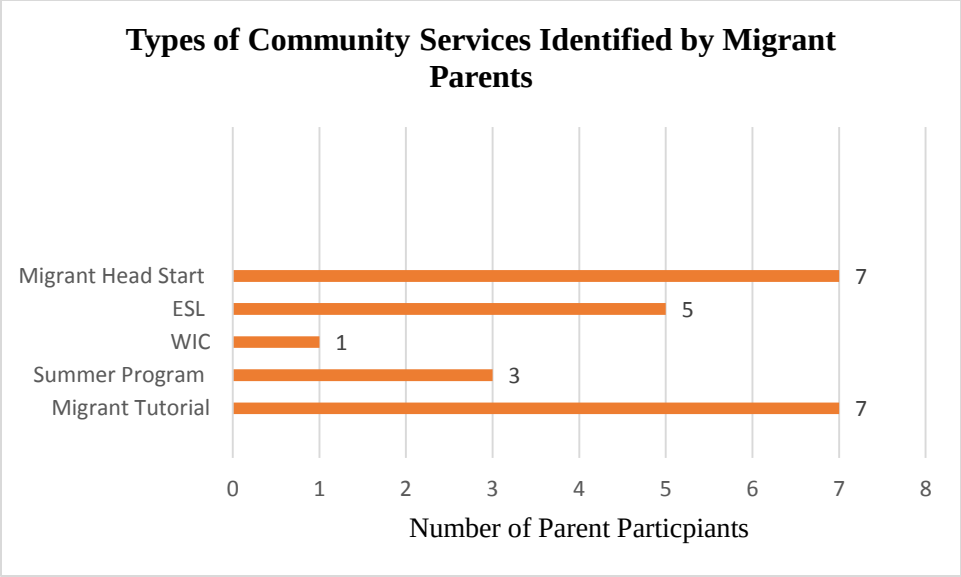

Figure 7. Identified community resources.

School records and enrollment. The next two questions of the interview dealt with the school records and the ease at which migrant children are enrolled in their new schools when they migrate. When asked how long it took to enroll their children at a new school, six of the respondents answered about two weeks. Sara added that "I always bring current shot records and physicals to the new school upon enrollment because it tends to speed things along" (Sara, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Juana added that she has the school guidance counselor call the new school to let them know that her children will be arriving, she feels that by doing this the schools are aware that her children are coming and will ask for records to be sent then; making the enrollment go faster. Juana stated "if I know where I am going then I tell the school so that they have the records sent to the new school, sometimes I don't know where I am going so the school does not have a school to send the records to" (Juana, personal communication, March 28, 2014).

Two of the respondents, Martina and Ana said that it takes about a month to enroll their children. Martina added that "it has always taken about a month to enroll the kids, with the need to have physicals, and sometimes depends on the time of year, May is harder to enroll kids the school does not want to because it is too late in the year so sometimes I do not bother" (Martina, personal communication, April 4, 2014). All respondents stated that they have never been given school records to take with them to a new school. Sophia stated "the schools tell us that they will fax the records if we can give them a name, sometimes we just do not know" (Sophia, personal communication, March 28, 2014). The records are mailed from the previous school to the new school after the parents make an attempt to enroll their children. The responses shown that it takes about two week stop a month for parents to enroll their children in a new school when they migrate. School records are not given to parents but mailed or faxed by the school.

Early childhood education and school readiness. The next question asked the parents if their child was enrolled in any type of early education; and if yes did that did their enrollment in early childhood education help them with their school readiness skills. All eight of the participants stated that their children were enrolled in a migrant Head Start center. Gabriela stated "my oldest children did not have school when they were younger and they did not know the thing they needed for kindergarten, they did not know English" (Gabriela, personal communication, March 28, 2014). Sophia added to the discussion about early childhood education and stated that she "wanted her children to learn how to read and write and talk in English and the migrant head start helped them learn how to talk" (Sophia, personal communication, March 28, 2014).

All eight participants felt that the experience helped with the school readiness skills that their child needed for kindergarten. Haley stated "when my children went to kindergarten they

knew their letters and could talk to the teacher in English, they could talk in English better than my older one who did not go there" (Haley, personal communication, April 4, 2014). Felix added that his children were comfortable around English speakers and were bilingual when they left the program. He stated "when the kids were small everyone talked to them in Spanish and when they went to the head start everyone talked in Spanish and English, they learned both and speak very well in both languages now" (Felix, personal communication, March 25, 2014). Juana and Martina reported that their children learned to like school and learning. Martina stated "it was a good time there everyone treated the kids well, in the big school not so much the kids are not the happy like they were to go to school" (Martina, personal communication, April 4, 2014; Juana, personal communication, March 28, 2014).

Challenges in education. The next three questions that were asked during the interview process with the parents were about the challenges that parents perceive their children to have in education. What they feel is the biggest challenge and whether or not these challenges affect the academic success of their children.

Language. When the respondents were asked what they think are the challenges their children face in education, all stated that the language presented a challenge, even if their children were good in English they had a hard time with the language needed for the subjects. Gabriela stated "the language is the biggest challenge for the kids, they don't know how to say all the words and get embarrassed" (Gabriela, personal communication, March 28, 2014). In addition Sara stated "my kids know English but they do not have the same level of skills as the other kids do and they feel like they are dumb" (Sara, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Martina talked about how she knows English but "when it comes to the Science stuff I do not know the words and I cannot read well in English" (Martina, personal communication, April 4,

2014). Martina talked at length about her fears of having her child drop out of school as even now she has to push the child to go to school. She talked of how the one factor that would help the migrant students in their life is" to get an education and learn the language" (Martina, personal communication, April 4, 2014). Felix talked about the language barriers that prevent him from helping his children with their homework "my kids know English and Spanish but we cannot help them with the homework because we do not know the words and that makes them feel bad when they go to school and have to say no one can help me at my house" (Felix, personal communication, March 25, 2104). Haley talked of how the older migrant students have it harder in regard to language "when you are older you do not have the support to learn the language, many of the migrants cannot learn the language to pass a grade that is why they just quit" (Haley, personal communication, April 4, 2014).

***Discrimination*.** Discrimination was another challenge that each parent talked about in their interviews. Ana who dropped out of school at age sixteen stated "I could not wait to drop out because every day they called me names and told me I was a dirty Mexican; the other kids called my family aliens and said we were border jumpers" (Ana, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Ana now sees that her children are being treated badly as well. She talked of being worried that her children will drop out as she did and have limited job opportunities. Ana stated "I want my kids to finish I tell them to not listen to the kids I want them to finish so that they can have a better life not working on the farm" (Ana, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Felix also discussed discrimination in regards to the challenges that his children face in school, he stated "they hate to go to school, they say that the other kids call them names and say that they are aliens, I tell them to not listen but when it is your kids it makes you mad that they are treated like that" (Felix, personal communication, March 25, 2014).

Juana also shared a situation in which her child was called a "border-jumper" in the hallways at school, adding she said "to his feeling that he does not belong at the school and should drop out when he is sixteen" (Juana, personal communication, March 28, 2014). Juana believes that most of the teachers and students think that every Mexican student is illegal and doesn't deserve to be in school. She talked of the way that some teacher treat her children "they act like she is diseased, they think that we do not care we care but we have to work and we do not know anything else" (Juana personal communication, March 28, 2014). The students have a hard time convincing their peers that they are legal citizens and just become angry and detached, Juana concluded that both her older sons left school because of the way that they were treated and the fact that they just could not catch up academically. She has two children in school now that she is working very hard to keep in school. "I just want them to finish to be somebody, the older ones they have it hard they will have to work on the farm for their whole life" (Juana, personal communication, March 28, 2014). Gabriela also has seen her children struggle with discrimination she states "the older one is already talking about being called names and told to go back to Mexico", she talked of the irony of that as her youngest children "have never been outside of the Western NY city they were born in" (Gabriela personal communication, March 28, 2014). In addition Sophia's children have been told that if they are bad then they will "be sent back, and "we will call immigration on you" (Sophia, personal communication, March 28, 2014).

***Low teacher expectations*.** Through the parent interviews low teacher expectation was also identified as a challenge to migrant students in education by three of the parent respondents. The parents interviewed talked of how they felt their children were not help to the same expectations as the other students. The teachers did not seem to think that their children could achieve success. Ana stated "the teacher does not think that the migrant kids are smart, you can

tell she just gives them work to keep them busy "(Ana, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Gabriela talked of how the teachers do not expect the migrants to do well in school, she stated "the teachers think the kids are just going to be farmworkers and do not say to them they can be better" (Gabriela, personal communication, March 28, 2014). Sara discussed how the teachers seemed surprised that she knew English and that she graduated from High school "when I tell them I graduated from high school they look at me like really how did that happen" (Sara, personal communication, March 24, 2014).

Literacy development. Literacy development was identified as being a challenge to migrant students by four of the parents interviewed. Martina discussed how her children had difficulty reading books "they send home books every day in English cannot read in English, I cannot help them read so they fall behind in school" (Martina personal communication, April 4, 2014). Ana discussed how migrant struggle with reading and writing because of the different schools they may attend "the kids learn one way in this school an another way in that most of the time the migrant students are behind, I know I was a migrant and I did not learn the basics stuff that kids need to learn" (Ana, personal communication, March 24, 2014).

Dropping out. Dropping out of school was identified as a challenge to migrant students by six of the respondents. Juana discussed that her children dropped out because of frustration and discrimination she stated "my kids dropped out because they were not going to graduate the teachers told them with the school they missed and their grades they were going to fail, so they just dropped out" (Juana, personal communication, March 28, 2014). Dropping out of school had to do with having better things and helping their families as Sophia stated "the migrant kids see that they get hired and make money so they quit, they know that they need to help the family and they want to buy the clothes and the car so they drop out and work on the farm it is all they

know" (Sophia, personal communication, March 28, 2014). Felix stated that dropping out was a challenge for migrant students because the schools did not try to keep the kids there "they do not care if the migrant kids go, they were not going to do much anyway, that is how the school thinks" (Felix. personal communication, March 25, 2014).

The biggest challenges that the parents perceived to affect their children academically was language barriers as most of their children were able to communicate with their peers and speak enough English to get by, they do not understand the language needed to do well in school. Language barriers was about equal with low teacher expectations in relation to the parent perspectives on educational challenges that affect migrant students. Discrimination was a challenge that all of the parents interviewed named as a challenge and indicated that the challenge affected their child academically as well as socially and led to dropping out. Figure 6 is representative of the challenges as identified by migrant parents.

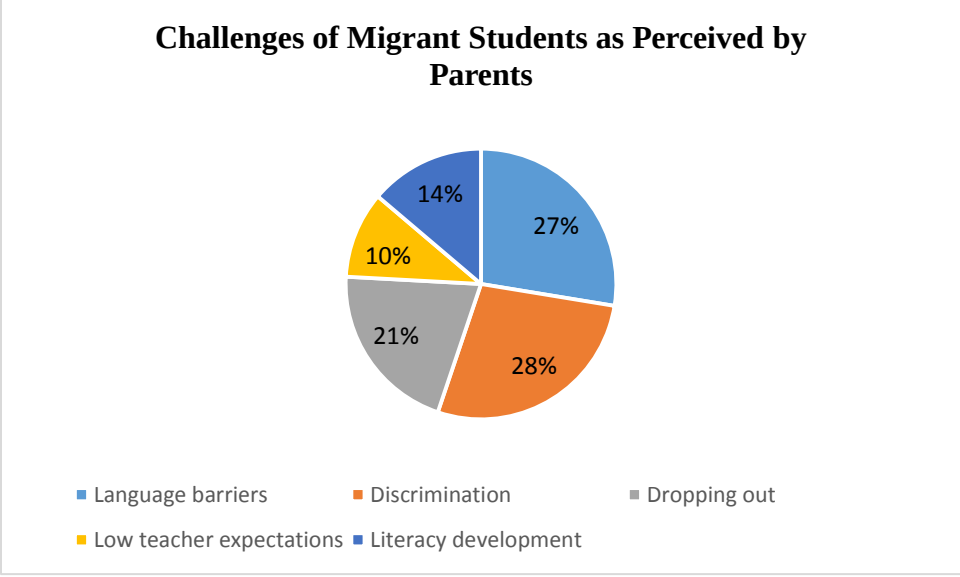

Figure 8. Challenges migrant students face in education

Communication with teachers. The researcher asked the parents if they were comfortable communicating with their child's teacher and why or why not. The response was mixed as five respondents, Ana, Martina, Felix, Gabriela and Sophia, responded that they know enough English to talk to the teachers but have a difficult time reading the letters that are sent home in English. When asked how often letters are sent home in Spanish, Ana replied that unless "the letter is specific and important to your child's situation, then the letter would not be in Spanish" (Ana, personal communication, March 24, 2014) Sometimes if the letter is important enough the teacher will have it translated. Ana discussed how the letters are translated using the internet websites, such as Google as a translator. Rarely did she say does the translation make sense when Google is used. "English, according to Ana, is the language that most letters go the homes" (Ana, personal communication, March 24, 2014). Haley and Juana both responded that they can talk to the teachers but their husbands cannot. Haley stated that "my husband cannot communicate at all with the teachers and relies on the seven year old to interpret what the teacher is saying to him when he takes the children to school" (Haley, personal communication, April 4, 2014).. Haley went on to say that her husband avoids going in the classroom because he doesn't want to be rude but he cannot understand what the teacher is saying. He also does not go to the parent teacher conferences because there is usually no one there to translate.

Sara stated that she can communicate fine with the teachers because she went to school in the United States and knows English well and can read and write it better than Spanish. She is often asked to help other parents at school functions by translating. She said" at times this is uncomfortable because I do not know the family and the teachers are telling me things to say that are confidential" (Sara, personal communication, March 24, 2014). She said she is often told that there is not enough translators in the school district. Sara also added that she has seen young

children being asked to tell their parents something by the teacher and doesn't feel that the teacher should do this in practice. The reason she gave was that "the children are really not able to fully translate correctly and if they are they sometimes leave out important information on purpose so they do not get in trouble or have to do something they do not want to do" (Sara, personal communication, March 24, 2014).

Teachers and school districts. The parents were asked what they feel that teachers and school districts can do to help meet the needs of migrant families. Of the eight respondents all stated that they believed move bilingual programs and more translators were needed in schools. All respondents also stated that having notes that are sent home in Spanish would be helpful to the parents as well. Not surprising as each parent talked of the challenges that they themselves have had with communication in the schools as well as recognizing that their children are also struggling with language and literacy.

Felix added that "having teachers prevent other students from being racist toward migrants would help keep the migrant students in school" (Felix, personal communication, March 25, 2014). He went on to say that teachers and school districts should put "rules in place so that all kids are treated well by other kids" (Felix, personal communication, March 25, 2014). Gabriela added that she felt that the school districts could create programs that would help migrant students keep from dropping out, she suggested "having them work in different places so that they see there is more to than farm work available to them" (Gabriela, personal communication, March 28, 2014). Gabriela went on to say that she thinks that the teachers do not think that the migrant students are able to be something other than farm hands, and thinks that the students can pick up on this and do not try.

Martina shared that she would like to see directions for helping her child with homework in Spanish. She added she does not read English and that it is difficult for her to help her child with the homework because she doesn't understand what is being asked. She stated that "I am embarrassed to tell the teacher because I do not want her to think I cannot take care of my children" (Martina, personal communication, April 4, 2014).The results of what the schools and teachers could do to help migrant families were wide ranging but followed the themes of providing translators, literacy in the language of the family and to address discrimination of migrant students. The results indicate that the teachers and parents of migrant students identify the same challenges that the migrant student face in education, such as language barriers, discrimination, literacy development and dropping out. There were however differences in the perception of why migrant students were facing these challenges and who was responsible for the challenges.

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the challenges that migrant students face in education. In addition the study further investigated the perceptions of the parents and teachers of migrant students as to the challenges that migrant students face in education. The overarching goal of this study was to see if the parents and teachers of migrant students had the same perceptions, and if not to see where the perceptions differ. The hypothesis of the study was that the challenges that migrant students face would be perceived by parents and teachers in a totally different way. This hypothesis was not fully supported by the findings of this study. Overall, the findings of this study indicate that many of the challenges that migrant students face in education were identified by both the parents and teacher participants. However there were differences in how the challenges were defined, mainly due to points of view, and

some challenges were not identified by either group as impacting the migrant student's education.

Challenges of Migrant Students.

Data gathered from the surveys and interviews with both the parents and the teachers identified several challenges that migrant students and their families have as a result of their migratory lifestyle. Each of these challenge affect the education of migrant students in its own manner. In the sections below the data will be discussed to determine the similarities and differences of these challenges that were identified by both the parent and teacher components.

Language barriers. Both the parent respondents and the teacher respondents, through both the survey and the interviews, discussed how language barriers presented a challenge to migrant families. Many of the parents indicated that they or their spouses do not talk to the teacher because of not being comfortable speaking English. The parents identified language barriers as not only a challenge to their child's success in school but as a barrier to their own participation in their child's education. The parents that were interviewed all spoke English to a good extent, yet it was discussed that the other parent, in these cases the father, could not speak English and felt that they could not fully participate in their child's education. Interestingly the fact that migrant parents are often not involved in their child's education was a theme that was identified by the teachers during the interview, although the teachers did not associate the lack of parental involvement with language barriers.

Academic language. Language barriers were identified as a challenge to academic achievement by both the parents and the teachers. The teachers, both in the survey and through the interview process cited a lack of knowledge of academic language as one reason migrant students are behind their peers academically. Parents also talked of the fact that although their

children spoke English well, they did not have the specific language skills necessary to understand all the content in school. The similarities in the data between the parents and the teachers which identify academic language as a challenge for migrant students is supported by research that academic language takes longer than social language, usually taking five to seven years for students to have a grasp on academic language (Bylund, 2011). This presents a problem for migrant students as they are in and out of different schools and may be receiving vastly different instruction that may inhibit their ability to learn the academic language.

Communication between teachers and parents. Language barriers were discussed also with both teachers and parents when the topic of communication between the two groups came up in the interviews. Both the parents and the teachers cited language barriers as an obstacle when asked about the communication between home and school. Parents and teachers alike stated that they have had to use children as translators when the parents and teachers needed to talk. This would seem to be an uncomfortable practice as one parent indicated that the children are not always honest about what needs to be translated. A parent also discussed having to translate for families that she did not know, making her feel uncomfortable. The lack of translators available to assist parents and teachers may be the reason why there is difficulty in establishing and maintaining a solid partnership between teachers and migrant parents.

In addition to the language barriers, many parents could not read the notes and homework that was sent home in English. The parents stated that the majority of the time all information comes home in English, except very specific notes, pertaining to a specific child. Some of the parents, even those that were able to speak enough English to have conversations, could not read and write in English. The fact that some migrant parents cannot read the homework assignments more than likely have an effect on the academic performance of migrant students. It

is essential to the success of migrant student's success in school that their parents and teachers can communicate both verbally and in writing to maintain a home and school connection.

Discrimination. Discrimination was a theme that was discussed by everyone interviewed in this research study. The fact that the discrimination was not specifically asked about in any part of the survey and interviews but still developed as a theme was interesting. Parents discussed how their children were treated at school, called names and threatened with calls to immigration by other students. The fact that there were parents in the study who themselves had that had been treated this way as students and now see their children going through the same indicated that discrimination against migrants has been going on for a while. The parents also discussed feeling that some teachers often treated their children differently than they did other students. One reoccurring theme was that parents felt that teachers did not have high enough expectations for their children and therefore their children did not think they could achieve success in education.

Discrimination was also discussed by the teachers. The teachers interviewed each shared stories of how they themselves had witnessed students acting discriminatory towards migrant students. One teacher interviewed spoke of how certain teachers treat the migrant students differently and the fact that the migrant students can tell when they are being treated differently by a teacher. The teachers interviewed were sympathetic to the migrant students but did not seem to be working towards any solutions to the problem of discrimination, such as strategies to promote respect and acceptance. Parents did not seem to be proactive either in helping to stop the discrimination against their children. All of the parents were angry that this was happening but none had contacted the school, or made any formal complaints to address the issue. Discrimination against migrant students appears to be widespread, at least in the districts that

were sampled for this research study, and the need to formally address the issue by both the parents and teachers is crucial to the wellbeing of the migrant students who are being subjected to the discrimination.

Documentation. The documentation status of families of migrant students was identified as being a challenge to migrant families by both the teachers interviewed as well as the parent respondents. The researcher did not make documentation an option on the survey nor was documentation brought up by the researcher during the interviews with the parents or the teachers. The teachers and parents both identified that students are apprehensive about their parents being deported and that affected to some degree how they performed in school. Again, it was interesting that both the parents and the teachers identified problems such as anxiety, and fear that some migrant students were facing and there was no talk of resolution. The teachers did not bring up the fact that the students may need to discuss their fears with a school psychologist or that perhaps a meeting with a trained translator may be needed to discuss how to effectively make the migrant students feel comfortable about being in school. Parents did not address the issue of a meeting or having their child talk to the school psychologist yet this may be due to their own fear of being undocumented or being thought of as such. The documentation status and the fear of immigration is a real challenge to migrant student's success in school. The fact that their parents can be deported makes them uneasy and more than likely inhibits their concentration and likely leads to migrant students generally not wanting to be at school away from their families. This is an area that like discrimination needs to be addressed in a manner that is respectful to the students and their families.

Community resources. Knowledge of community resources was discussed during the interviews with the parents and the teachers. Both the parent and the teacher participants were

asked if they were aware of the community resources that were available for migrant families. The teachers were aware of the educational aspect of the community resources, such as the migrant tutorial that works with students in the school setting as well as the home. John, in his interview, discussed the afterschool program and the enrichment programs that were available for migrant students. Parents also reported knowing about the migrant tutorial because that resource also works in the home environment with the students. Surprisingly, neither the teachers nor the parents discussed the social services agencies that are in the area. There are places to go for food, clothing, medical assistance and housing. It was interesting also that the teachers all mentioned that the language barriers were a challenge to migrant families, yet none of the teachers talked about the adult literacy and language programs that are available in the area. The parents themselves did not mention attending any program that would assist them in learning English, which again is surprising since the migrant tutorial that works with many of their children offer adult literacy and language classes for migrant farmworkers.

School records and enrollment. The parents and teachers all were in agreement that school records were not given to the parents when they left for another school. The teachers all stated that they did not know the exact nature of how the records were transferred. John was the only teacher who mentioned that he was asked to provide test scores and transcripts before the records were sent to another school district. Through the interviews with the parents it was discussed that there are times when the family leaves and they are not aware of what school district they are going to, so this may be the reason that school records may take a few weeks to arrive to the new school. Through the interviews teachers talked of having migrant students in their classrooms without having any records or information on previous grades or placements due to not receiving records. The time spent determining the placement of the students figuring

out the grade level and content ability could be lessened if there was a system in place that was consistent in the transfer of records. It is shocking that with the advanced technology that we have in the United States that any student would have to wait more than twenty-four hours to have their school records transferred to another school district.

School readiness. Through the teacher survey lack of school readiness was identified as a challenge for migrant families. The amount of information students need to be successful in kindergarten is immense. The teachers that were surveyed indicated that lack of school readiness was a challenge for the migrant students. The parents that were interviewed were parents that had a child at the migrant center so therefore these particular families had access to early childhood education and because of a few that had been a part of the program for several years, understood the importance of early childhood education. However there are many migrant children that quite possible do not have access to a migrant center and therefore would not have the early childhood education that the children of these participants had and would ultimately lack in school readiness skills. Students that come from Mexico may not have had the access to early childhood education that their migrant peers that were born in the United States or arrived during the early childhood years have had access to.

Dropping out. Migrant students have a very high rate of dropping out of school, this is evident even through third generation migrant families (Ezell et al., 2002; Green, 2003). Migrant students dropping out of school was identified as a challenge by both the parents and the teachers. Both the parents and the teachers spoke of the frustration that the migrant students have in regards to keeping up academically with their peers. Parents that were interviewed overwhelming blamed the teachers for the fact their children were dropping out or wanting to drop out. The reasons that the parents gave were not having high enough expectations, and not

showing the students that there was something better for them then farm work. The parents that were interviewed did not seem to advocate for their children to stay in school, they seemed to be resigned to the fact that many of the students would not be able to make it academically and give up. Although it was apparent that they wanted more for their children, as Juana stated "we are here working day and night in a country that does not consider us much at all for our children, so that they will not have to do the work on the farm" (Juana, personal communication, March 28, 2014).

The teachers interviewed also conveyed a sense that they did not know what to do to keep the migrant students in school. The teachers discussed not having the support of the parents when it comes to retaining the students in school. The teachers perceived the parents as not caring about the education and supporting their child's decision to drop out. It was apparent during the interviews that each group blamed the other for the high dropout rate of the migrant students. It was also apparent that both the teachers and the parents that were interviewed saw the need to help these students to stay in school so that they had a better future. The need for communication and collaboration with the teachers and the parents of migrant students is crucial to finding a solution to the high dropout rate among this population.

Teachers and school districts. The parents and teachers were both asked what they think teachers and school districts can do to help migrant students. The data that was gained through the interviews with the parents and teachers show a need for more communication and awareness of the other's point of view. The suggestions that both groups gave, more translators, higher expectations for students, help with dealing with racial issues and discrimination and a better system for record transfers all point to the need for a better understanding of migrant families and the challenges that their lifestyle presents to migrant students. When school

districts and teachers understand the challenges that migrant families face then it will be easier to come up with solutions that will help migrant students be successful in school.

Limitations

A limitation to this study was the low return rate of surveys that were sent to teachers in two schools districts, 325 surveys were emailed to the teachers and only 32 responded. Of the 32 teachers 6 indicated that they would like to be interviewed for Phase 2 of the study, yet only three emailed the researcher. The method in which the researcher had the participants email if they were interested may not have been fully understood by the some of the participants. Asking for contact information from those interested in being interviewed may have been the better option, in this way the researcher could have made contact and followed up for interviews.

An additional limitation is that the information cannot be generalized to include all migrant families and students; this study just had a glimpse at a very large and wide ranging population. The migrant families interviewed for this study may or may not reflect the opinions and challenges that other migrant families across the country may reflect. The migrant parents interviewed are not new migrant s, as they have been living this lifestyle for a while, other migrants newer to the migrant lifestyle may have differing views. Lastly, researcher bias could possibly have played a part in interpreting the data and answers from the teacher and parent groups as the researcher has worked with the migrant population in this area for fifteen years and has some familiarity with the challenges that migrant families face in everyday life, however the researcher was not aware of the public school experiences of the migrant student.

Implications & Conclusion

This study was conducted to investigate the challenges that migrant students face in education. In addition the study also looked at the perceptions that parents and teachers had of

those challenges. The overarching goal of this study was to determine whether or not the educational challenges affecting migrant students were aligned between both the parents and teacher samples. The study concluded with the findings that migrant students face many challenges in the pursuit of their education. The challenges identified included poverty, lack of school readiness skills, cultural and language barriers, high rates of dropping out, lower literacy rates and low parental educational attainment. Parents and teachers of migrant students in this study identified the same challenges that affect migrant students in the pursuit of their education. However the two groups differed on who was responsible for helping migrant students overcome the challenges. An implication of this study could be to promote widespread implementation of dropout prevention programs that would involve both the parents and the teachers as collaborators. Creating programs that reach out to out of school youth that have already made the decision to leave school but are looking for a way to return may benefit from community programs that are designed to specifically target their population. In addition further research is needed in creating better system of tracking migrant students as they travel from school to school. An organized system that tracks the student s's progress and records grades could greatly reduce the time that students wait to be placed in the correct setting. Furthermore having information about the community resources that are available for migrant families, such as English classes, childcare and food supplemental programs would help to increase the teacher's awareness of the services so they may suggest resources if family requests them. Moreover another implication of this study could be to increase the awareness of school districts that there is a growing need for translators, not just for parent teacher conferences but for daily conversation with families as well. Having translators available may serve to increase the parental involvement and strengthen the parent teacher relationship. Lastly, school

administrators may increase the professional development that is given to teachers, specifically in the area of migrant students.

Future research may be needed in the area of non-migrant student's attitudes toward migrant students, and how these attitudes affect the dynamics of the school achievement of migrant students. This could be extended to include community members as well and discuss the issues of discrimination and stereotyping and the effects that they have on migrant student achievement. Finally, future research may further this present study by conducting a three way comparison study on the student perspectives on what their own challenges are in education as compared to their parents and teachers, which may provide further information on the educational challenges of migrant students.

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Appendix A

Group 1. - Basic Course

Your Score81%

Note: Your completed gradebook is provided for your general interest and suggested reading only!

You do not receive "extra credit" for completing them.

They do not show up on any completion reports.

They will be credited in a grade book if you subsequently enroll in a course that includes them.

Appendix B

HSR Approval

Dr. Lillie:

Thank you for the Instructor's Approval and Blanket Exemption of Class Research request for EDU 690-01, Master's Thesis/Project (TESOL) for Spring 2014.

The following student project has been determined Category 1, Exempt, under the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46, 46.101, Subpart A (b) (1) and/or (2). This email is your approval and your student's research may proceed based on your declaration.

- **Danielle Yuengert**
  - **Title**: Challenges Faced by Migrant Families Which Impact Education: Teacher and Parent Perspectives

Thank you for keeping the high standards relating to research and the protection of human subjects on the Fredonia campus

Appendix C

Recruitment Letter to Parents (About Information Meeting)

Hello,

My name is Danielle Yuengert and I am a teacher at Fredonia Child Development. I am also a Graduate student at SUNY Fredonia, working on my Master's Thesis. My research study is on the challenges that migrant students face in school.

I would like to invite you to an information meeting about the study and talk with you about your possible participation in the study. The meeting will be held on Friday morning, March 14th, at 9:00am in the cafeteria. The meeting should take between 30 and 45 minutes.

Attendance at the meeting is strictly voluntary and in no way obligates you to participating in the research study.

If you have any questions, or if you cannot make the information meeting but would like to hear more and possibly participate, please contact me at 785-5287 or yuen0971@fredonia.edu

Thank you,
Danielle Yuenge

Appendix D

Consent Form for Parents

Dear Parent or Guardian,

My name is Danielle Yuengert and I am a graduate student at SUNY Fredonia. I am enrolled in the TESOL program and am beginning the research for my Master's Thesis. The purpose my research is to compare the perceptions that parents of migrant students and teachers of migrant students have concerning any educational challenges that the students might face.

I would like to ask you to participate in an interview which will last about 60-90 minutes. The interview will take place in an empty classroom at Fredonia Child Development. You may answer all, some, or none of the questions.

There are no risks to you if you choose to take part in this research study. All information will be kept confidential. I will be audio-taping the interviews, but I will be transcribing the interview on paper afterwards and giving you a fake name to maintain your anonymity. The audiotapes will be destroyed after the interviews are transcribed.

Participation in this interview is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time without fear of reprisal. At any time during the interview, you have the right to end it simply by saying so.

If you choose to take part in this interview please sign below. By signing you are confirming that you are at least eighteen years old, are aware of the voluntary aspect of this survey and are willing to participate. If you prefer not to participate then you do not have to sign this.

I _____, do hereby give my consent to participate in the interview. I acknowledge that I am 18 years of age or older. I understand that participation in this study is voluntary; therefore I have the right to withdraw at any time and with no penalty. I understand that all the information gathered through the interview process will be coded, securely kept and remain confidential.

_____ _____

Signature of participant Date

Any questions, feel free to contact:

Danielle Yuengert, SUNY Fredonia
Phone: 716-785-5287; email: yuen0971@fredonia.edu

Dr. Karen Lillie, Assistant Professor, SUNY Fredonia
Phone: 716-673-4656; email: karen.lillie@fredonia.edu

Appendix E

Email to Teachers with Link to Survey

Hello,

My name is Danielle Yuengert and I am a graduate student at SUNY Fredonia. I am enrolled in the TESOL program and am beginning the research for my Master's Thesis. The purpose my research is to compare the perceptions that parents of migrant students and teachers of migrant students have concerning any educational challenges that the students may face.

There are two parts to my research. The first part of this study consists of six-question, online survey, which should only take 10 minutes of your time. This survey is designed to gather information about teacher perceptions about the educational challenges of migrant students. This online survey (link below) will begin March 10, 2014 and be open until March 22nd.

There are no risks to participants that take part in this study. All information is anonymous and confidential. This survey will be used for research purposes only. All information will be stored securely and after the research is completed will be destroyed by myself.

Participation in this research study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without fear of reprisal. Participants can simply exit the browser and stop the survey at any time. Participation in Phase 1 of this study in no way obligates you to participate in Phase 2, which will be explained later.

If you choose to take part in this survey, simply click on the link below. By clicking that link you confirm that you are at least eighteen years old, are aware of the voluntary aspect of this survey and are willing to participate in this survey.

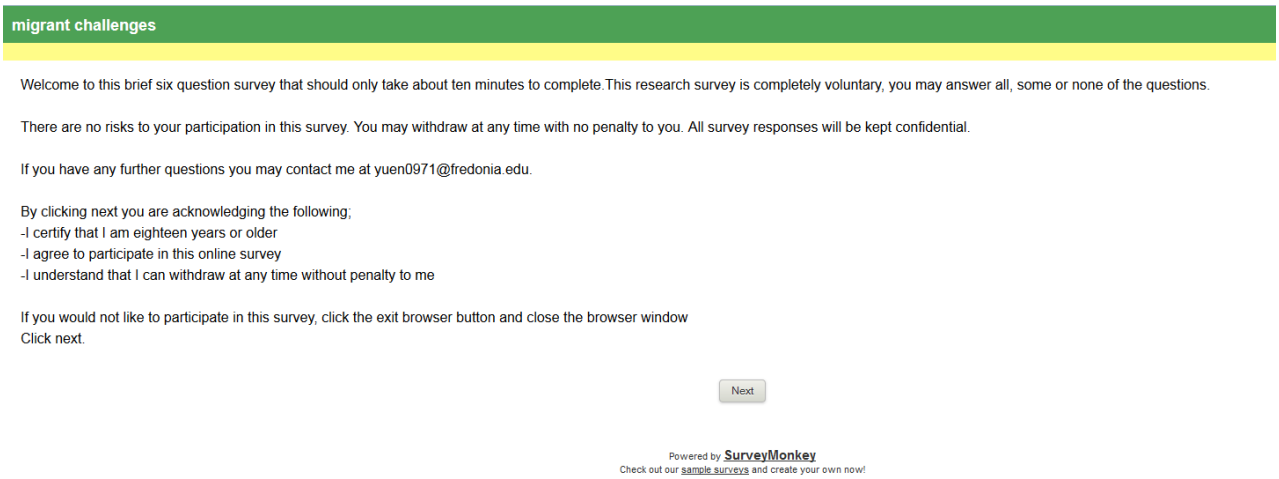
If you prefer not to participate you need not click on the link.

Thank you,
Danielle Yuengert

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PSHP8YD

Appendix F

Survey Items



migrant challenges

Welcome to this brief six question survey that should only take about ten minutes to complete.This research survey is completely voluntary, you may answer all, some or none of the questions.

There are no risks to your participation in this survey. You may withdraw at any time with no penalty to you. All survey responses will be kept confidential.

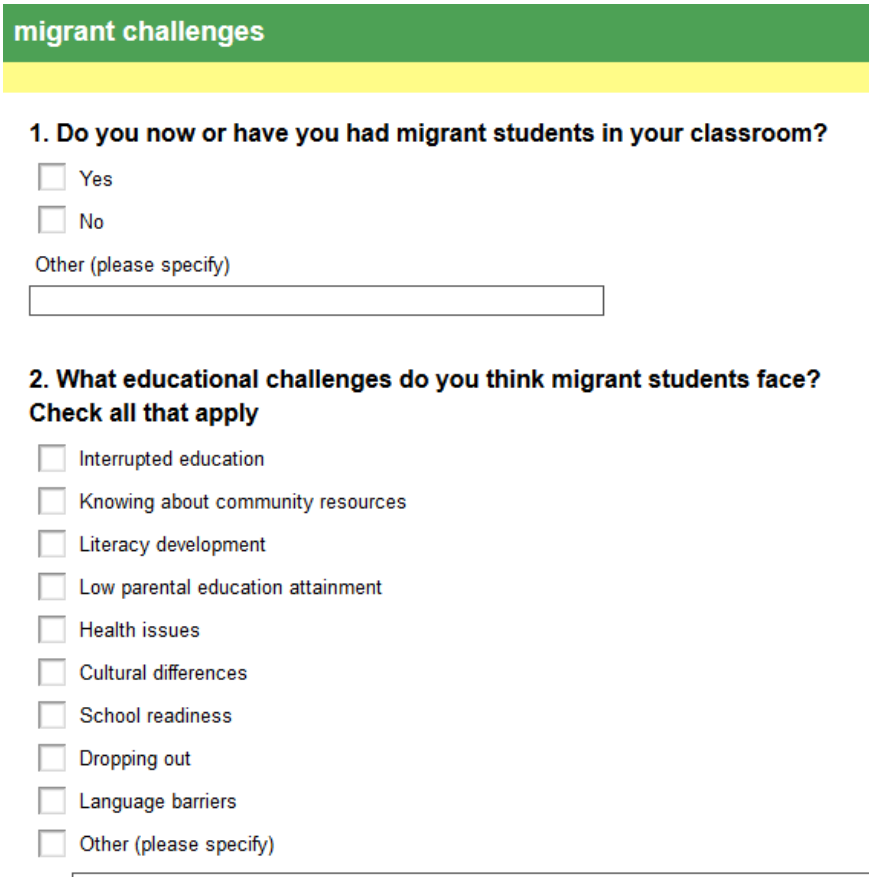
If you have any further questions you may contact me at yuen0971@fredonia.edu.

By clicking next you are acknowledging the following;
-I certify that I am eighteen years or older
-I agree to participate in this online survey
-I understand that I can withdraw at any time without penalty to me

If you would not like to participate in this survey, click the exit browser button and close the browser window
Click next.

Next

Powered by SurveyMonkey
Check out our sample surveys and create your own now!



migrant challenges

1. Do you now or have you had migrant students in your classroom?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Other (please specify)

2. What educational challenges do you think migrant students face? Check all that apply

- [ ] Interrupted education
- [ ] Knowing about community resources
- [ ] Literacy development
- [ ] Low parental education attainment
- [ ] Health issues
- [ ] Cultural differences
- [ ] School readiness
- [ ] Dropping out
- [ ] Language barriers
- [ ] Other (please specify)

3. To what extent do you feel that English proficiency has on the academic achievement of migrant students?

- To no extent
- To a little extent
- To some extent
- To a good extent
- To a great extent

4. Given the circumstances of most migrant students, how would you expect them to perform academically in relation to non-migrant students?

- Much worse
- Worse
- About the same
- Better
- Other (please specify)

5. Is there anything that you would like to share that pertains to migrant students and their educational experiences?

6. Would you be willing to participate in Phase II, which includes an interview session to continue the discussion on your perceptions of migrant students?

- a. Yes! I am willing to participate further in an interview. I will contact the researcher by email at yuen@fredonia.edu
- b. No thank you, I am NOT willing to participate in an interview.

Done

Appendix G

Consent Form for Phase 2 Teacher Participants

Thank you for participating in my online survey and indicating that you would be willing to be interviewed for the Phase 2 of the study. As previously stated my name is Danielle Yuengert and I am a student at SUNY Fredonia, enrolled in the TESOL program and working toward my MSED.

The purpose of my research is to compare the perceptions that teachers of migrant students have and the parents of migrant students have of the educational challenges that these students face. This research may help educators learn more about the dynamics of the migrant student's family and how the families' perceptions of challenges that their child faces may impact the overall success of the migrant student. This researcher will share the results with both the parents and the teachers after the data is collected, keeping any identifiable information confidential, so that both groups will have the perceptions of the other group available to them.

Phase 1 of the study consisted of an online survey that you completed, designed to gather initial information about how teachers perceive the challenges that migrant students face in schools.

In Phase 2 of the study, I would like to interview you at your place of work or in another convenient location. The interview will consist of at least ten semi-structured interview questions and will be audio-recorded. I am estimating that the interview will take approximately 60-90 minutes of your time. The interviews will start March 23rd and will continue through April, 2014.

There are no risks to the participants involved in this study. Information gathered during this study will not be disclosed to anyone apart from me and my faculty advisor, Dr. Lillie. All information will be stored securely and any identifiable information, such as names or school districts, will be coded (using pseudonyms) during transcription of the interviews and will not be revealed to ensure confidentiality.

I _____, do hereby consent to participate in the second phase of this research study. I acknowledge that I am 18 years of age or older. I understand that participation in this study is voluntary; therefore I have the right to withdraw at any time and with no penalty. I understand that all the information gathered through the interview process will be coded, securely kept and remain confidential.

_____ _____

Signature of participant Date

Any questions, feel free to contact:
Danielle Yuengert, SUNY Fredonia, Phone: 716-785-5287; email: yuen0971@fredonia.edu

Dr. Karen E. Lillie, Assistant Professor, SUNY Fredonia, Phone: 716-673-4656; email: karen.lillie@fredonia.edu

Appendix H

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Parent Participants

"I have some questions about what it's like to be a migrant family…"

1. How often do you migrate? Are there moves to the same places?
2. What are some challenges you think are related to your family's migrant lifestyle?
3. Are you aware of community resources that are specifically designed to help migrant families?

"Now let's talk about school, specifically…."

4. When you migrate how long does it take for your children to be enrolled in their new school?
5. Are you given school records when you move, or are they sent ahead by the previous school district?
6. Were your children enrolled in any type of early education? If yes do you feel that their enrollment in early childhood helped teach school readiness skills?
7. As a parent, what are some of the challenges you think your child faces in school?
8. What would you say is the biggest challenge?
9. Do you feel that these challenges impact the educational success of your child?
10. Are you comfortable talking to your child's teacher? Why or why not?
11. How do you think that teachers and the school districts can help to meet the challenges of migrant families?

Appendix I

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Teachers (Phase 2)

"I have some general questions about migrant families…"

1. What are some challenges you think are related to a family's migrant lifestyle?
2. Are you aware of community resources that are specifically designed to help migrant families?

"Now let's talk about school, specifically…."

3. How often do you have migrant students in your classroom?
4. What is their enrollment like in your class? (For example, are they there for a very short time, do they leave and come back repeatedly, and such).
5. Do you know anything about the process of how migrant families enroll their children in school, or of what happens when they leave to go to another school?
6. Are you ever asked to send school records when your migrant students move, or are they sent ahead by your school district?
7. What do you feel are some of the challenges that migrant children face in school?
8. What would you say is the biggest challenge?
9. Do you feel that these challenges impact the educational success of the child?
10. Are you comfortable talking to the child's families? Why or why not?
11. How do you think that teachers and the school districts can help to meet the challenges of migrant families?

Appendix J

Code Book for Data Analysis

Code	Lit Review	Parent	Teacher
Language Barriers	The majority speak Spanish as their first language while others may speak a dialect of the town that they are from in Mexico. In the year 2000, the number of Spanish speaking students considered ELLs in the United States was well over three and a half million, including Mexican migrant students (Green, 2003; Migration Policy Institute, 2010).	Parent Interview: students know enough English to talk to peers but do not know all the school language (Gabriela)	Teacher Interview: Language is a challenge as many students do not learn the academic language needed for success in academics
Discrimination	Teachers in United States schools are overwhelmingly White Europeans, who may lack preparation in teaching students from culturally diverse backgrounds. The lack of understanding and knowledge of cultural norms can make a student feel isolated and alone in a classroom. Mexican migrant children may be in several classrooms a school year and may be receiving the message that their culture is incorrect when compared to the representation of the majority culture (Brown, 2011, Nieto, 2002).	My son was called a border jumper (Sara); teachers and other students bully migrant students and threaten to call immigration if they tell (Martina)	migrant students are called names and made fun of (John), Migrant students are often not played with or included in group time (Jane)
Dropping out	Mexican migrant students are among a high percentage of these students (Ezell, Gonzalez, Randolph, 2002; Green, 2003). Upwards of	Teacher do not have high enough expectations for migrants so they drop out (Gabriela)	The students miss so much when they migrant that when they come back they are too behind and

	ninety-two percent of migrant students do not graduate from high school and fewer than five percent go on to college (Cranston-Gingras, 2003; Ream &Rumberger, 2008).	I couldn't wait to drop out because of the way I was treated" (Ana) The migrant students get frustrated when they see their friends doing better and dropout (Felix)	they get frustrated and drop out (John)
Documentation	There are estimates to be upwards of a million undocumented migrant workers, with one in four United States farm workers an unauthorized immigrant from most often Mexico or another South American country. (Passar 2006, Passar& Cohn, 2010; Pew Hispanic Center, 2007).	It is difficult to travel because all of our family is not documented(Juana)	Students are living with babysitters and other family because their parents have been deported (Bridget) The parents are afraid to come to school functions and do not trust the school officials because some are undocumented (Jane