

## **RIG Symposium E5: Theory RIG: Transitions from Phenomenon to Program of Research**

### ***A Situation-Specific Theory of Migration Transition for Migrant Farm Worker Women***

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**Purpose:** The purpose of this study was to develop a situation-specific theory of migration transition (STMT) for farmworker women of Mexican-origin.

**Background:** Women of Mexican-origin are disproportionately represented in farmwork and in spite of intervention attempts, their health outcomes have not noticeably improved over the past three decades. Theory is needed to explain how beliefs and values interact with contextualizing factors to influence migrant women's health.

**Methods:** This qualitative descriptive study employed a feminist perspective and used an integrative approach from multiple sources: a mid-range theory of transition, a literature review, and empirical findings. Using purposive theoretical sampling, the investigator conducted semi-structured interviews with 21 farmworker women in migration residences on two occasions. Recorded data were transcribed and analyzed using content analysis.

**Results:** Identified themes included: 1) migration patterns; 2) awareness of critical markers; and 3) need for time between awareness and engagement; 4) decision-making; 5) outcome differences; and 6) personal identities.

**Conclusions:** The women's transition experience was characterized by multiple contextual factors that were uniquely different from their male counterparts and because the transitions were linked to their health perceptions, the STMT provides essential information for the development of culturally sensitive interventions. Further testing of the STMT should be considered in farmworker women from different regions and in various developmental stages.