Regional Sociopolitical Values and Postsecondary Opportunities for Undocumented Students

by

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Abstract

The United States is home to 45 million foreign-born inhabitants, including naturalized citizens, resident aliens, visa holders, and undocumented immigrants with and without DACA authorization (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). Safeguarded by *Plyler v. Doe* (1982), nearly 65,000 undocumented students finish high school each year (Eusebio & Mendoza, 2015). As adults, this group contends with the limitations of their undocumented immigrant status while navigating paths to secure a future in the country they have known since childhood (APA, 2013). Determinants such as the age of arrival, country of origin, and subnational legislation either restrict their postsecondary options and future well-being or expand their pursuit of higher education to parallel the accomplishments of their documented peers (Batalova et al., 2014).

This study's framework originates from an empathic examination of agency or self-determination and the transactions between undocumented students and institutional agents or gatekeepers (see Murillo, 2017). These institutional agents appear as the mentors and authority figures who regulate the emotional, financial, and legal resources necessary to bring undocumented students into the fold of higher education successfully (Murillo, 2017). Despite being deemed ineligible for DACA due to interruptions in residency or sidelined by the provisional legitimacy of the program, many undocumented students are permitted to attend public, postsecondary institutions operating independently from the federal government in multiple states (Mwangi et al., 2019).

Regional political beliefs concerning controversial issues such as immigration continue to influence subnational legislation toward the undocumented population (see Davidai & Ongis, 2019). Authorization and funding for undocumented students to attend public universities, vocational schools, and adult education programs originate from state and local legislation

backed by constituents informed by divergent sociopolitical principles (see Garibay et al., 2015). This study examines the relationship between nonfederal enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for undocumented postsecondary students outlined by the Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration (PAHEI, 2021) and concurrent state-level political ideologies reported by Gallup (Jones, 2019). In addition, this study explores the relationship between the state-level enrollment figures for undocumented postsecondary students published by the Migration Policy Institute (Zong et al., 2017) and data gathered by Gallup's Survey of American Political Ideology by State (Jones, 2019).

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List of Abbreviations

AB540	Assembly Bill 540
CRT	Critical Race Theory
DACA	Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals
DREAM	Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
GED	General Equivalency Diploma
HB56	House Bill 56
IH	Intellectual Humility
K-12	Kindergarten through 12th Grade
MS-13	La Mara Salvatrucha
MTurk	Amazon’s Mechanical Turk
NASSP	National Association of Secondary School Principals
NCSL	National Conference of State Legislatures
NILC	National Immigration Law Center
PAHEI	Presidents’ Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration
SIH	Sociopolitical Intellectual Humility
U.S.	United States

Chapter 1

Introduction

Background of the Problem

The United States (U.S.) has been a nation of immigrants from its inception. Gutierrez (2017), former U.S. Secretary of Commerce, described their experience:

> These immigrants, for whom the reality of oppression or lack of freedom [was] not [a] so distant memory, [have] come not to undermine our values but to embrace them. What better reaffirmation [has existed] for the strength of our values than the validation we [have received] daily from people seeking to immigrate here? (para. 5).

Recent intensification in school-aged migrants fleeing hostility and ephemeral opportunity in their countries of origin has tasked municipalities with providing essential services and local school districts with increased enrollment numbers of the newly arrived (Chishti & Hipsman, 2015). As of 1982, federal regulations have been unequivocal in establishing all school-aged children's right to receive a K-12 education, regardless of immigration legal standing (*Plyler v. Doe*, 1982).

Federal lawmakers have addressed interruptions in educational opportunities between undocumented students and their naturalized counterparts at the national level for the K-12 years yet have remained legislatively silent in the postsecondary arena. Governmental support for postsecondary options for undocumented students has been wholly at the discretion of individual states and localities operating independently from federal oversight (see Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration [PAHEI], 2020). After graduation, residency conditions have become fundamental in accessing postsecondary opportunities (National Conference of State Legislatures [NCSL], 2021). Nearly 65,000 undocumented students have

graduated each year from public high schools in the United States (Eusebio & Mendoza, 2015). As of 2020, more than 450,000 undocumented immigrants have enrolled in postsecondary institutions throughout the United States (PAHEI, 2020).

Students who entered the United States as minors enrolled in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program initiated in 2012 have maintained a special status (Batalova et al., 2014). Under DACA, immigrants who arrived in the United States before the age of 16 and without documentation could apply for short-term, renewable reprieves from deportation (Neutuch, 2018). For this reason, there were 643,430 active DACA recipients, all considered undocumented yet representing a significant portion of students enrolled in college in 2020 (Svajlenka & Wolgin, 2020).

The variance in court rulings at the state and federal levels has complicated matters. For example, recent state and national challenges concerning the constitutionality of the DACA program temporally paused new applications and have continued to pose severe disruptions to participant compliance (Neutuch, 2018; Penichet-Paul & Lopez-Espinoza, 2020). Huo et al. (2018) reported that the United States has adopted over 300 subnational immigration policies annually since 2003. Some of these policies were undocumented immigrant-friendly in that they granted in-state tuition and state-level aid, while others specifically blocked admission altogether (Huo et al., 2018). To demonstrate, Patel (2018) noted that 21 states offered in-state tuition to undocumented students, six of which accorded state-level financial aid for DACA-eligible students.

Statement of the Problem

"The majority of undocumented students remain[ed] concentrated in a few traditional immigrant-receiving states" (Pérez, 2014, p. 13). The regional disparities in postsecondary

undocumented students' treatment indicated a legislatively divided nation lacking consensus, certainty, or predictability (see NCSL, 2021; Tsang, 2018). Garibay et al. (2015) asserted that the discrepancies between undocumented students' federal and state-level classification further complicated matters when planning for college. For example, California has permitted residents to enroll in public universities at a lower, in-state rate, regardless of documentation status (Person et al., 2017). In sharp contrast, Alabama, a state considered one of the most unreceptive to undocumented immigrants (Baxter, 2012), enacted legislation that expressly forbade undocumented students from attending any public university or community college (NCSL, 2012). However, the state has demonstrated a voluntary departure from some of its exclusionary practices (Penichet-Paul & Lopez-Espinoza, 2020; Pérez, 2014; Svajlenka & Wolgin, 2020).

Pérez (2014) from the Center for American Progress explained that "despite the ban on the enrollment of undocumented students in Alabama, the state's 3,262 DACA recipients . . . [could] enroll in community colleges at in-state tuition rates and in the state's eight public colleges and universities" (p. 12). Likewise, PAHEI's Penichet-Paul and Lopez-Espinoza (2020) explained that "a number of Alabama public community colleges and universities currently allowed DACA recipients to enroll and pay in-state tuition" (p. 2). These changes suggested that certain undocumented students have successfully enrolled in public postsecondary institutions even in one of the most ideologically conservative (Jones, 2019) and undocumented immigrant unfriendly (Mohl, 2016) states such as Alabama.

Gatekeepers of opportunity and researchers have articulated complex legal concepts riddled with nearly indiscernible shades of meaning and ideological nuance (see Aganza et al., 2018; Allen-Handy & Farinde-Wu, 2018; Bjorkland, 2018; Gámez et al., 2017). Students with

tenuous residency status have exercised agency or self-determination to circumvent barriers to attending public universities through duplicitous or life-altering measures (Wingall, 2015). For example, some adult students attending public postsecondary institutions have sidestepped conversations with authorities concerning residency, sometimes going as far as withdrawing from school and relocating to undocumented-friendly regions to obscure their status (Wingall, 2015).

In examining the transactions between agents, institutions, and individuals exercising agency (Murillo, 2017), critical concepts from Kolb's experiential learning theory (ELT) helped to clarify the supportive attributes of the actors in these transactions. Kolb's ELT encouraged students to be fully involved in the learning process and create meaningful relationships with mentors (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011). Kolb encouraged educators to approach students compassionately, building trust while fostering perseverance even under challenging circumstances (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011). While applying this compassionate encouragement to overcome adversity, advisors ultimately have had to persuade undocumented students to consider their status when choosing a region in the United States where public institutions would accommodate them (Morrison et al., 2016).

Natter et al. (2020) argued that assuming that left-leaning governments were pro-immigration while right-leaning were not was erroneous when examining overall policies yet accurate when addressing specific matters such as the integration of undocumented populations. The literature suggested that educational opportunities for undocumented postsecondary students fluctuated according to the dominant political ideology at federal and regional levels (Bergeron & Chishti, 2011; Garibay et al., 2015; Huo et al., 2018; Magaña, 2016). Public opinion influenced subnational policies, while governmental agencies have come to accept research-

based policy adoption (Pew-MacArthur, 2014). Support across the country has favored using the "best available research [to guide legislation] in a new era in responsible governance" (Pew-MacArthur, 2014, p. 2). Unfortunately, adopting researched-based governance has presented challenges wherein "political skew [could] manifest in the very measurement of key constructs in politicized areas" (Honeycutt & Jussim, 2020, p. 76).

Bias in research could lead to the assumption of prejudice as "primarily, or exclusively the province of majority groups" (Honeycutt & Jussim, 2020, p. 77). This belief could prove detrimental in that "only examining conservative biases" limited the broader understanding of intolerance (Wetherell et al., 2013, p. 664) and unfairly attributed exclusionary practices to conservative states. Considering that regional policy would rely on research-informed decision-making, care must be taken to not alienate those with values not in agreement with the researcher's outlook (see Davidai & Ongis, 2019). Researchers who considered an empathic treatment of readers assumed to oppose pro-immigrant initiatives could moderate resistance to threat-inducing topics (see Tsang, 2018) while heeding the call for civility by Executive Vice President Evans (2019) of the APA.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine if postsecondary educational opportunities (PAHEI, 2021) and participation numbers for undocumented young adults (Zong et al., 2017) varied with a state's reported ideological leanings, such as conservative, moderate, or liberal (Jones, 2019). This study will examine college enrollment figures specific to an estimated 241,000 DACA-eligible students (Zong et al., 2017). This study will analyze Gallup's state-by-state data summarizing the self-reported sociopolitical characteristics of 757,669 survey respondents (Jones, 2019). Additionally, this study will include state-level practices supporting

and restricting the postsecondary participation of undocumented students (PAHEI, 2021) to allow for the comparison of dominant regional sociopolitical identity and its possible influence on state-level policies affecting undocumented students pursuing postsecondary education.

The dominant political ideology described in Gallup's Survey of American Political Ideology by State will be indicated in the data set entered into IBM's SPSS. The dominant political ideology of each state will inform RQ1's independent variable. At the same time, PAHEI's (2021) description of state-level policies for postsecondary access for 2017 will be reflected in RQ1's dependent variables of postsecondary policies. The second analysis's dependent variable, postsecondary DACA enrollment numbers, will be compared to PAHEI's (2021) description of state-level policies for 2017, the independent variable.

The framework for this study is one of empathy, borrowing from Kolb's (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011) ELT while integrating the external or environmental constructs described by Murillo (2017). For this study, agency is synonymous with self-determinism, and institutional agents are the gatekeepers who control access to resources (Murillo, 2017). Using empathy while gathering and analyzing information strengthens the value of the research in that the author "will have felt and understood" (Brace & Strati, 2018, para. 22) the experiences of the populations being examined. Notwithstanding, "empathy is always at best an approximation of understanding" (Leake, 2016, p. 5)

Research Questions

The following research questions will be used in this study:

RQ1: Is there a relationship between subnational ideological values and the postsecondary enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for DACA-authorized and undocumented students in specific states?

RQ2: Is there a relationship between subnational enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for DACA-authorized students and their postsecondary participation rates in specific states?

Significance of the Study

The connection between the sociopolitical values of regional constituencies reflected in the legislative activity directly influencing undocumented young adults and their pursuit of higher education may yield valuable information. Counselors, researchers, government officials, postsecondary leaders, and the general population create, influence, or abide by subnational, postsecondary educational policies concerning undocumented immigrants. Relegating undocumented adults' inclusion in public, postsecondary academic pursuits to a liberal versus conservative argument is not a productive endeavor (see Beukboom & Burgers, 2019; Krumrei-Mancuso & Newman, 2020)

Beukboom and Burgers (2019) maintained that preconceptions about group membership characteristics could be riddled with overgeneralizations. Contentious debate sustained by demeaning language (Evans, 2019) and lacking in intellectual humility (Bowes, 2021) initiates a zero-sum mentality (Davidai & Ongis, 2019) wherein productive conversation ceases, and competing viewpoints are rejected (Krumrei-Mancuso & Newman, 2020). By analyzing the relationships between policy, practice, and political identity, I seek to determine if assumptions about regional values' influence on opportunities for undocumented students are warranted.

Limitations of the Study

One shortcoming of the secondary data described and analyzed in this study was that the original researchers collected them to support other, unrelated studies (Cheng & Phillips, 2014). In their critique of using secondary data sets, Longo and Drazen (2016) warned that "someone not involved in the generation and collection of the data [might] not understand the choices made

in defining the parameters" (p. 276). Moreover, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2017) conceded that determining the exact number of undocumented immigrants living in the United States was an arduous task. Accordingly, the figures provided by Zong et al. (2017) of the Migration Policy Institute estimating student participation by state contained a single, albeit a large subset of undocumented students, those who achieved DACA status yet excluded those who had not.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are to clarify the terminology used in this study.

1. Agency: "the ability to take action or choose what action to take" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

2. Agentic: "[adjective describing] self-directed actions aimed at personal development or personally chosen goals" (Medical Dictionary for the Health Professions and Nursing, n.d.).

3. DACA: "Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is a kind of temporary administrative relief from deportation. The purpose of DACA is to give eligible immigrants who came to the United States when they were children protection from deportation" (University of California at Berkley, 2021, para. 20).

4. Documentation status: lawfulness of an immigrant's presence in the United States (i.e., documented or undocumented).

5. Documented: "documented and undocumented refer to whether an arriving alien has the proper records and identification for admission into the [United States]. Having the proper records and identification typically requires the alien to possess a valid, unexpired passport and either a visa, border crossing identification card, permanent resident card, or a reentry permit" (Cornell Law School, n.d., para. 5).

6. Empathy: “the ability to share someone else’s feelings or experiences by imagining what it would be like to be in that person’s situation” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

7. Empowerment agent: an institutional agent who has the power and desire to help individuals confront structures (Murillo, 2017).

8. Experiential learning: learning model wherein the “student plays an active role in the experience, followed by reflection as a method for processing, understanding and making sense of the experience” (The Scots College, 2018, para. 7).

9. Experiential learning and the teacher as facilitator: “in this role, teachers adopt a warm and affirming style to draw out learners’ interests and intrinsic motivation . . . this approach is helpful to develop strong relationships with students” (The Scots College, 2018, para. 3).

10. Gatekeepers: like institutional agents, these individuals maintain the knowledge and authority to remove barriers (Murillo, 2017).

11. Identity: “who a person is, or the qualities of a person or group that make them different from others” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

12. Immigrant: “a person who comes to a country to take up permanent residence” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, n.d.).

13. Immigration status: sometimes called legal status, indicates whether a person is documented or authorized to be present in the United States or undocumented, not permitted to be present in the United States.

14. Institutional agent: “a person who has status, authority, and control of resources in a hierarchical system” (Dowd, 2013, p. 6).

15. Legal status: an individual’s classification (i.e., documented, undocumented) related to the lawfulness of one’s presence in the United States (Murillo, 2017).

16. Political identity: “an inner narrative of one’s political self [and] the story that we tell ourselves and others about who we are, who we were, and who we foresee ourselves to be” (Gentry, 2017, p. 19).

17. Political ideology: “a set of ideas, beliefs, values, and opinions, exhibiting a recurring pattern, that competes . . . [with] providing plans of action for public policymaking in an attempt to justify, explain, contest, or change the social and political arrangements and processes of a political community” (Kumar Arya, n.d. slide 1).

18. Political leaning(s): the likelihood of an individual favoring groups such as political parties based on a mutually perceived ideological worldview (i.e., conservative, liberal, or moderate).

19. Postsecondary education: educational pursuits after completion of high school in the United States.

20. Protective agents: family members and peers who are supportive of students (Dowd, 2013).

21. Self-determination: the “free choice of one’s own acts or states without external compulsion” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

22. Self-efficacy: “a person’s belief that they can be successful when carrying out a particular task” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

23. Social capital theory: “the benefits derived from . . . the human capacity to consider others, to think and act generously . . . [and] relat[ing] to social relationships and social structures [stemming from] positive relationships based on trust, respect, kindness, and reciprocity” (Social Capital Research, 2021, para. 2).

24. Social identity: “who [people] are in terms of the groups to which they belong. Social identity groups are usually defined by some physical, social, and mental characteristics of individuals” (Searle Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning, n.d.).

25. Sociopolitical: “adjective used to describe the differences between groups of people relating to their political beliefs, social class, etc.” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

26. Structure: “the external forces that constrain choice” (Murillo, 2017, p. 91).

27. Subnational: “relating to an area within a nation, often one that has its own cultural identity” (Macmillan Dictionary, n.d.).

28. Undocumented: “foreign-born people who do not possess a valid visa or other immigration documentation, because they entered the U.S. without inspection, stayed longer than their temporary visa permitted, or otherwise violated the terms under which they were admitted” (Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, n.d.)

29. Value: “an idea or principle that determines what is correct, desirable, or morally proper” (Open Education Sociology Dictionary, 2013).

30. Young adult: “a person . . . in his or her late teenage years or early twenties” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 introduces the study and describes the problem’s background, the problem, the study’s purpose, significance, limitations, and definitions of terms. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature concerning immigration terminology, subnational immigration and college enrollment policies, political leanings in the literature, regional and ideological differences, characteristics of welcoming regions, postsecondary practices of benefit to the undocumented population, coming to terms with undocumented immigrant status, and surveying regional values. Chapter 3 describes the data sources, data collection, and analysis for the two research questions. Chapter 4 summarizes the multiple Chi-square tests of independence to answer RQ1

and the one-way ANOVA test for RQ2. Chapter 5 reviews the conclusions and implications of this study and presents recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Background of the Problem

Of the 44.4 million non-native-born inhabitants in the United States (U.S.) in 2017 (Radford & Noe-Bustamante, 2019), legal residents, naturalized citizens, and current visa holders represented 77% of these individuals living within its borders (Budiman, 2020). The remaining 10.5 million (Budiman, 2020) were undocumented residents living in the United States, constituting a population exceeding 44 of the 50 states (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). As of 2020, more than 450,000 undocumented immigrants were enrolled in postsecondary institutions throughout the United States (Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration [PAHEI], 2020).

There were 643,430 active Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients in 2020, many of whom were enrolled in postsecondary institutions (Svajlenka & Wolgin, 2020). Many undocumented students arrived in the United States as small children, brought by their adult parents to the country they would now call home (APA, 2013). Although having granted permission for all school-aged immigrants to receive a public K-12 education, *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) has not "successfully dismantle[d] blockades obstructing social, economic, or political agency that students have inherit[ed] with their undocumented status" (Radoff, 2011, p. 437). Their "transition into adulthood [has been] accompanied by a transition into illegality that [has set] them apart from their peers" (Gonzalez, 2011, p. 605).

Young undocumented adults have faced the legal and financial hurdles presenting "intractable challenges while pursuing higher education" (Eusebio & Mendoza, 2015, p. 2). These challenges would vary by state, local, and institutional mandates conceivably informed by

regional sociopolitical beliefs. Public schools with undocumented populations have operated beyond the scope of immigration enforcement, suggesting that subnational empowerment agents (Murillo, 2017) viewed education as a fundamental right that transcended borders (Radoff, 2011). The literature presented evidence that regional and situational public opinion toward undocumented students was malleable, mainly when elicited in a context appealing to the humanity of those with opposing viewpoints (Orcés & Ewing, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

Murillo (2017) described the tension between the institutions defining limits and an individual's initiative, which he referred to as agency. An individual's self-efficacy or agency could be fully exercised when institutional agents, or gatekeepers, maintained the knowledge, desire, and authority to remove barriers (Murillo, 2017). Likewise, Kolb (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011) also emphasized the environment, ownership of one's educational aspirations, and the human relationships necessary to extend learning opportunities. Kolb's experiential learning theory called for students to fully engage in the learning process while building relationships with those promoting their growth (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011). Kolb also underscored the need for compassion, trust, and empathy to amass "positive emotional resources" (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011, p. 25) to create learning spaces, even under challenging circumstances.

The concepts set forth by Murillo (2017) and Kolb (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011) complemented the characteristics of undocumented students pursuing postsecondary opportunities, helped to contextualize this literature review, and supported this research's theoretical foundation. I selected a framework of empathy emphasized by Kolb (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011) and the interrelatedness with the external or environmental constructs described by Murillo (2017). In short, I undertook an empathic analysis of agency versus agents and

institutional structures. Additionally, I examined variations in institutional structures and institutional agents' sociopolitical attitudes and practices restricting or amplifying undocumented immigrants' agency. More specifically, I explored if dominant regional sociopolitical values could influence undocumented immigrants' agentic experience expressed by their participation in postsecondary educational pursuits.

The following sections demonstrated the function of K-12 public schools as institutions promoting inclusion, encouraging empathy-building among institutional agents, and supporting the agency of the undocumented population in their pursuit of postsecondary achievement. The literature review continued with measuring sociopolitical identity, understanding regional differences, and illuminating discrepancies in the assumptions maintained by competing groups. Subsequent sections covered informing governance based on research, promoting intellectual humility, and minimizing threat perceptions between competing interests to garner support for immigrant adult education programs.

Building a Case for Empathy

Bjorklund (2018) lamented that research into how adults function without authorization to be present in the United States was sparse, especially concerning those arriving from outside the Americas. According to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2017), assessing the number of immigrants, their country of origin, and arrival date have been "surprisingly difficult" (p. 568). Most of the literature concerning undocumented adults navigating postsecondary education has described individuals from Spanish-speaking countries (Bjorklund, 2018). Mexico and Central America represented the most significant portion, 71%, of undocumented immigrants living in the United States (Rosenblum & Ruiz Soto, 2015).

Consequently, this literature review described the experiences of immigrants predominately from Central America and Mexico.

Searching for possibilities, undocumented immigrants have exercised personal agency by leaving one deficient structure, their homeland, to cross into the United States, a new and unfamiliar structure. Their efforts to avoid violence and exploitation have resulted in millions of individuals abandoning their countries of origin and seeking sanctuary in neighboring countries, and, as in the case of many Central Americans, the United States has been their destiny (Restrepo et al., 2019). Understanding how to traverse the mechanisms of the U.S. immigration system has proven to be an arduous undertaking (APA, 2013). "[The] pervasive impunity and indifference [of U.S. immigration practice] [have] sown hopelessness in societies already struggling with staggering violence and high unemployment" (Restrepo et al., 2019, para. 27). An empathic consideration of their plight has helped illuminate their motivation to reject the familiar and embrace the unknown.

Empathic Consideration for Those Traversing Institutional Structures

"Through agentic action, people [have] devise[d] ways of adapting flexibly to remarkably diverse, geographic, climatic, and social environments; they [have devised] ways to circumvent physical and environmental constraints" (Bandura, 2001, p. 22). Refugees fleeing violence perpetrated by Central American governments and gangs have been expected to wait in line for a visa. This bureaucratic hurdle was not commensurate with the grave risk of remaining in one's home country overwhelmed by extortion and violence (Bermeo, 2018). Immigrants have entered the United States based on reunification with family members, work needs, or humanitarian protection, yet the numbers allowed to enter legally have been strictly limited (American Immigration Council, 2019). Those who entered the United States without permission have

encountered severe hostility or even death at the hands of criminals and corrupt governments when forced to return to a homeland with which they were no longer familiar or welcome (Human Rights Watch, 2020).

North America's appetite for the illegal narcotics directed through Latin America has fueled much of the gang-related activity in the countries from which migrants have been fleeing (Shifter, 2012). Additionally, U.S. interventions in Latin American political structures, such as the overthrow of Guatemala's elected president in 1954, have factored into the decades of civil war and imbalances of opportunity that have continued to this day (Guereña, 2016). The Center for Latin American & Latino Studies (2021) indicated that at least 40 percent of recent murders in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras have been at the hands of criminal gangs. The most powerful of these groups has continued to be MS-13 (Adams & Pizarro, 2009). Initially formed in the 1980s as a heavy metal fan group in Los Angeles, MS-13 evolved into its current iteration, much in part due to the flawed immigration policy that has forced them to return to their countries of origin (Adams & Pizarro, 2009).

Upon the expiration of their refugee status, MS-13 members originally from El Salvador were expelled from the United States and returned to their Central American homeland (Adams & Pizarro, 2009). Unable to find employment in a country they no longer knew, members turned to criminal activity and transformed the group into an international enterprise (Adams & Pizarro, 2009). Immigrants without authorization to be present in the United States have historically been prohibited from getting a driver's license, attending many public universities, or acquiring lawful employment (Ellis & Chen, 2013). Responding to these gaps in opportunity, groups like MS-13 have enlisted the most vulnerable young adults, including those without documentation (Department of Homeland Security, 2021).

Describing Relationships to Institutional Structures Through Specific Language

Research and the Language of Legality

The language delineating the limits of personal agency articulated by institutional structures has confounded past researchers (Closson, 2010). However, understanding legal precedents and the terminology of immigration was critical to accurately appraise the concession of educational opportunities stemming from the complex hues of authorization status. Closson (2010) conceded that legal research's tedious and unfamiliar nature has often led authors to omit it entirely from their framework. Moreover, Closson (2010) asserted that "pulling legal findings into a research study [was not] an easy technical task . . . and a firm grounding in legal literature [was] necessary so that [a] study's outcome [did] not [become] lost in the detail telling the legal story" (p. 275). Beyond questions of legality, a consideration of the human element would also be revealed in modern academic journals presenting immigration-related language informed by an empathic treatment of those being researched.

A Departure From Dehumanizing Language

The United States has experienced a transformation in the official language informing immigration policy, as reflected in the 2021 executive ban on the term illegal alien within government organizations (Rose, 2021). Echoing a similar empathic consideration, illegal alien has fallen out of favor in the literature. Authors such as Autin et al. (2018) adopted undocumented immigrant to describe this population, while Pew Research Center's website opted for the term unauthorized immigrant (Budiman, 2020). Kayshap (2020) of the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project noted that those who avoided the term illegal alien recognized that crossing into the United States without permission was a civic rather than criminal offense. This was to say, entering the United States without documentation represented a minor infraction that

did not warrant the dehumanizing label indicating that the individual was inherently immoral for doing so (Kayshap, 2020). Multiple researchers in recent academic journals have chosen undocumented as a preferred descriptor that readers would generally understand (Butler et al., 2018; Ellis and Chen, 2013; Gámez et al., 2017; Green, 2019; Neutuch, 2018; Patel, 2018; Sahay et al., 2016; Sanchez & Smith, 2017).

DACA: Documented While Undocumented

Even though undocumented, DACA recipients have been afforded extra privileges such as attending public universities that would never have been an option without the program (Batalova et al., 2014). Conversely, undocumented students who have not earned DACA status have continued to be severely limited in their choice of public universities (Batalova et al., 2014). To demonstrate the importance of distinction in immigration status related to DACA, the state of Alabama has served as a fitting example. Alabama expressly forbade undocumented adults to attend any public postsecondary institution unless they had earned DACA status (Svajlenka & Wolgin, 2020). Contrary to the information provided by groups such as the National Conference of State Legislatures ([NCSL], 2021), undocumented students could attend certain public universities in Alabama provided they were DACA-eligible. Supposing that gatekeepers and institutional agents advising students in Alabama were unaware of the distinction between undocumented and undocumented with DACA status could unintentionally limit college choice.

Additional confusion could enter into college advising due to the inconsistency of immigration labels used in the literature. For example, authors frequently referred to DACA recipients as Dreamers, an allusion to the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act that failed to pass Congress before initiating the DACA program (Aganza et al.,

2018). Becerra (2019) applied the term dreamer without capitalization to describe any school-aged individual without documentation residing in the United States regardless of DACA status. Neutuch (2018) incorrectly referred to these immigrant students interchangeably as DACA recipients, undocumented students, and Dreamers even though each label had a clear, legal distinction of status and opportunity. From its inception, the term Dreamers applied only to undocumented California residents addressed by the failed pre-DACA immigration bill (Aganza et al., 2018). As with Becerra (2019), Neutuch (2018) did not consider the significant benefits provided by DACA unavailable to non-participants.

Sanchez and Smith (2017) offered their readers the recently conceived term DACAmented to describe those students successfully enrolled in the DACA program. Gámez et al. (2017) referenced the DACAmented's liminal legality, a category of immigration status wherein the recipient was legally present in the United States yet not officially recognized as a legal resident. Allen-Handy and Farinde-Wu (2018) referred to the National UnDACAmented Research Project, wherein an UnDACAmented immigrant was an undocumented student in compliance with DACA, an apparent contradiction of terms. Green (2019) used mixed-status to refer to families living in homes where some relatives may have been legally present in the United States while others were not. Bjorklund (2018) described the 1.5 generation as the student immigrants who arrived in the United States as children yet considered themselves American. St. Mary's College of California (2020) used the term under documented [*sic*] and undocumented to refer to its AB 540 student population. Assembly Bill 540, also known as AB 540, only applied to undocumented students living in California who were permitted to attend public universities and pay tuition at the in-state rate rather than the higher fees imposed on international students (Person et al., 2017).

Public K-12 Schools as Exemplar Institutions of Inclusion

The fundamental responsibilities of U.S. public schools appropriately served as the springboard for examining subsequent postsecondary avenues. Public schools have been a source of stability for those within their charge, and in the K-12 setting, they have been the first institutions to afford educational opportunities to undocumented students. While not residents with documented immigrant status, these students have participated in meal programs, school-sponsored functions, and educational interventions (National Association of Secondary School Principals [NASSP], 2020). More specifically, families affected by immigration enforcement and family separations would see their schools as a source of continuity and encouragement (NASSP, 2020). Public schools have been the singular, most influential institutional setting that has functioned as an all-encompassing source of knowledge and motivation for undocumented students striving to adopt and adapt to a bewildering array of possibilities and decisions (Murillo, 2017). "Although legal status [might have] impose[d] certain limitations on undocumented students' educational opportunities, their educational trajectories [would] still [be] highly determined by school structures" (Murillo, 2017, p. 106).

Freire, a pioneer of adult education in Brazil, believed that education "was the lever able to bring social transformation" (Murakami-Ramalho & da Silva, 2011). Murakami-Ramalho and da Silva (2011) asserted that the multicultural trends in educational equity in the United States had influenced other countries in the Americas. Like Brazil, contemporary teaching practices in the United States originated from a Eurocentric sensibility, yet affirmative action practices in North America turned toward more inclusive practices. Having had university experiences in both the United States and Brazil, researchers Murakami-Ramalho and da Silva were in an advantageous position to examine issues of equity in education that crossed national

boundaries by evaluating public documents and corresponding scholarly articles.

Emulating the Function of U.S. Public Schools in Post-Freire Brazil

The United States has advanced an influential educational model supportive of the immigrant student population. Brazil's Fonseca de Carvalho (2018) maintained that one function of public education was to invite foreigners into an unfamiliar world. He described education as inherently "about welcoming . . . [a] newcomer . . . even if this newcomer [was] not, from a legal point of view, an [authorized] immigrant" (p. 11). Fonseca de Carvalho outlined the persistent trepidation experienced by immigrants enrolling in an unfamiliar school setting and the ensuing acculturation process that would entail more than learning a new language. The recently arrived students served by schools have not only adopted a second tongue, but they have also done so in the context of absorbing and integrating into a tradition to which they have been unaccustomed. He stated that the "moral imperative for all educators [has been] . . . [making] school a place of welcome and hospitality through the initiation of the newcomers in . . . [the] practices and languages that . . . [have] render[ed] a possible meaning to their existences within it" (p. 21). While written from the perspective of a philosopher of education in Brazil, Fonseca de Carvalho's article posed the reader with the educational implications for schools and their function in integrating those perceived as outsiders.

Building upon a framework that viewed educational policy as "emerging from the compromises of competing interests" (p. 93), Murakami-Ramalho and da Silva (2011) concurred that opportunity in the United States was nearly universal at the elementary level, conforming to a model of equality promoting essential skills and civic responsibility. Postsecondary opportunities in the United States have been stratified through personal economic advantages,

while Brazil has experienced an inversion of this situation. Public K-12 offerings in Brazil have been inconsistent, and quality college preparatory schools were privately run, thus out of reach for many living in poverty. Ironically, the most esteemed universities in Brazil offered free tuition to all. Yet, inadequate preparation in the pre-secondary public system prevented the disadvantaged from meeting the minimum academic requirements for entry. The authors concluded that the "positive influence the U.S. [sic] and North American contexts exerted in Brazil . . . [ultimately leading to its government's recognition] of racial discrimination . . . was a landmark of similar magnitude to the abolition of slavery" (p. 98).

As with the United States, Brazil is home to a sizeable immigrant population, many of whom entered without legal documentation (Vinete dos Santos, 2016). Individuals from Africa, Latin America, Asia, and Europe have emigrated to Brazil and have been the source of similar challenges to those facing North American public schools (Wejsa & Lesser, 2018). Recognized as the last country in the Americas to abolish slavery, Brazil has had to confront lingering vestiges such as discrimination and classism issues, especially in terms of equity in the educational opportunities for minorities (Bucciferro, 2017).

Recent advocacy for the inclusion of all immigrants, documented or not, into Brazil's general culture has been evident, yet "progress has been irregular, and opportunity remain[ed] far from equal" (Bucciferro, 2017, p. 191). Rios-Neto (2005) asserted that Brazil had been increasingly receptive to immigration, even though undocumented residents frequently lacked essential medical care and educational services. Rios-Neto (2005) further acknowledged that Brazil's government had not preoccupied itself with foreign nationals yet sought to integrate the newly arrived into its broader society. This integration would channel through public schools.

Institutional Practices Beneficial to Undocumented K-12 Students

Eliciting Empathy From Institutional Agents Within Public Schools

As with Kolb's (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011) approach, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory recognized the environment's instrumental role in self-determinism. Approaching their research framed within Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, Todd et al. (2020) sought to uncover how "environmental context and personal characteristics intersect[ed] in the lives" (p. 11) of those without documentation. Todd et al. (2020) described the characteristics of undocumented students attending public K-12 schools and the "complex contextual factors such as culture, family, values, documentation concerns, fears, and trauma" (p. 11) that influenced their school experience.

Informed by their analysis of existing research, Todd et al. (2020) scripted two case vignettes about a high school student and an elementary student from Mexico. They described the students' experiences as an exercise in empathy-building and to inform school counselors of culturally responsive interventions. They argued that an ecological systems theoretical approach could better frame their struggles leading to a counseling response that appropriately matched their needs. In like manner, Todd et al. (2020) asserted that counselors needed to inform undocumented students of their rights while confronting and mitigating their fear that working with school officials would lead to their deportation.

Fostering Empathy and Familial Support

Todd et al. (2020) supported empathy-building exercises among school staff who worked with undocumented students, although the research indicated that many public schools were intrinsically supportive of this population (see Aganza et al., 2018; Nienhusser, 2013). Insulated from immigration enforcement, public schools have served as a shelter where undocumented

students could take advantage of the same beneficial services for postsecondary planning as their documented classmates. Similarly, pre-secondary students attending responsive schools have been invited along with undocumented family members to participate in the school community (Cross et al., 2019).

Cross et al. (2019) observed that previous research suggested increased parental involvement at their child's school yielded positive results. However, they were concerned that no study had explored the participation level of undocumented parents specifically. Enlisting the help from Latinos within the community, the researchers developed a survey and the methodology for its use. Drawing from a sample of 125 foreign-born residents living in the Midwest, the authors elicited these parents' elementary and middle-school students' perspectives. They described the associated benefits of parents volunteering at their children's schools, including improved attendance, increased achievement, and fewer discipline problems. Their study provided evidence that institutional agents could remove barriers to undocumented families expressing agency by creating meaningful interactions informed by an empathic orientation.

Starting in the 9th-grade, students have typically begun to take classes in preparation for post-high school life. College and career planning have entered the curriculum, and the remaining four years of coursework would complement the individual's vocational aspirations. There have been universal decisions most American high school students and their families have made, such as choosing where they would go for their postsecondary studies and how to fund their journeys. Compounding the financial and situational challenges of securing a college path, undocumented students would have to confront their documentation status and narrowed options (Jefferies, 2014). Regrettably, many undocumented students have not faced their documentation

status or internalized the abrupt interruption of educational opportunities they would encounter upon graduating from high school (Kam et al., 2018).

Teachers and administrators have recognized the burden placed on students who have experienced a family member's apprehension (NASSP, 2020). NASSP (2020) urged school communities to reinforce the local support that would ultimately return a sense of normalcy to those affected. Although students may have benefited from DACA-like programs or the protection of possessing a visa, the uncertainty of future eligibility would be a constant concern (Katsiaficas et al., 2019). The threat of terminating DACA has presented the program's beneficiaries with feelings of insecurity and a psychic malaise that further complicated their situation (Katsiaficas et al., 2019).

Addressing Educational Paths and Mental Well-Being in the Guidance Office

Undocumented students' unfamiliarity with the mental health and therapeutic resources offered within the community at large has placed schools and their guidance departments in a unique position (Aganza et al., 2018). Besides providing students with college and career planning services, guidance workers have implemented therapy sessions or enlisted community counselors hired on retainer to address mental health issues. Due to the lack of medical insurance with a counseling benefit, undocumented students may have never discussed mental health issues except within a public school's backdrop. Services offered through guidance offices have bolstered students' academic achievement and helped address their insecurity about the future.

Schools have needed to recognize that undocumented students have avoided seeking college-related resources out of fear of sharing their status (Walley & Knight, 2018). Morrison et al. (2016) noted that "it [was] imperative that school counselors [were made] aware of the various options available to undocumented students, especially as it relate[d] to career/college

attainment" (p. 6). Aganza et al. (2018) argued that schools typically have avoided discussing residency status with students due to the topic's sensitive nature. Yet, the mental health implications have warranted the need to address this within the academic setting. The authors described Elizabeth, a student who would bring the psychological trauma surrounding the threat of deportation to school with her daily. Being the daughter of an undocumented mother, Elizabeth experienced the chronic stress of not knowing whether her family would remain in the United States. Aganza et al. (2018) asserted that this anxiety presented mental health challenges with life-long consequences. They concluded that the school psychologist was the ideal employee for teaching students to self-advocate and navigate the additional stresses of being undocumented.

Walley and Knight (2018) discussed undocumented students' difficulties and how school officials could effectively address them. Based on the findings of their descriptive research, they introduced guidelines for school counselors that focused on the "identification and invisibility of undocumented youth, policy, and reform, and social/emotional preparations for college" (2018, p. 2). Citing the limited research into undocumented young adults' college attainment, they recommended school counselors view them as first-generation immigrant college students. They emphasized the similarities between first-generation immigrant college students and their undocumented counterparts, especially regarding familial expectations and their inexperience with educational planning outside of their country of origin. When tailoring college enrollment activities for their high school students, they recommended that school officials identify first-generation documented college students as a means to elicit the curiosity of undocumented students indirectly.

Encouraging Postsecondary Success

Nienhusser (2013) investigated public schools' relationships with undocumented students using a multiple case study approach. He noted that his investigation into the role of institutional agents and their influence on students without documentation within seven public high schools in New York City was the first of its kind. Recognizing the availability of in-state tuition for select members of this demographic, Nienhusser believed that school employees would guide them in selecting colleges and funding their decision. Identifying distinct areas of their interaction with students, Nienhusser elaborated upon the critical influence that institutional agents could have while guiding students into realizable academic channels. He divided the activity-based school responses into five categories: one-on-one counseling, presentations, outreach, scholarship, and curriculum.

Nienhusser (2013) selected New York City for his research due to the city's "large and diverse undocumented immigrant population" (p. 9) thought to have been represented by over 500,000 in number. Choosing among 207 high schools located in Boroughs A and B in a city with nearly 400 high schools, the author successfully gathered samples from those with the most and the least number of undocumented students. Based on the data collected from multiple interviews, he learned that the most common activity was one-on-one counseling with individual students or additional sessions involving a relative. Fearful of revealing their status during the college application process and having a general lack of understanding of how postsecondary education could be pursued, these students opted for individual rather than group settings.

Developing Selectivity and Trust in Public Agents

Undocumented students and their families were often unable to discern the separation of institutional agencies that could block or buttress their exercise of agency. Echoing the findings

of Lad and Braganza (2013), Nienhusser (2013) recognized the undocumented population's apprehension toward government agents. One guidance counselor interviewed for his study described undocumented students' reluctance to consult with those in authority. Students found it challenging to separate the functions of those in power. Viewing government employees as a part of a more extensive system, the result of sharing sensitive information with a school official was interpreted as being no different than doing so with an immigration representative. Due to familial pressure not to reveal their status, the counselor approached undocumented students to offer her services instead of expecting them to appear voluntarily.

Nienhusser (2013) observed that only one of the seven high schools included college planning as part of their curriculum. In contrast, other high schools in the district preferred to invite guest speakers such as college representatives or offer presentations to inform students of their possibilities. Two school counselors used this group method to reveal the availability of in-state tuition rates for all students served by their school district regardless of documentation. As with Kam et al. (2018), Nienhusser (2013) noticed that students could find strength in numbers. He concluded that schools with the most undocumented students were more inclined to handle issues of immigration status than those with the fewest.

Gatekeepers' Perceptions and the Fear of Institutional Agents in Secondary School

Lad and Braganza (2013) researched high school personnel working with undocumented students and described their attitudes toward this population. Additionally, they interviewed former undocumented students served by the same high school personnel to compare the two groups' perceptions. They characterized their study as being "framed within the context of the intersection between social contract theory and social capital theory" (p. 2). Social contract theory was a philosophical concept that beings have behaved per the prevailing culture, and

social capital theory examined the value of interpersonal relationships and shared experiences. As with Bjorkland (2018), Lad and Braganza drew attention to the scarcity of studies exploring students' experiences living without documentation. Employing the assistance of leaders in a Northern California community, the researchers established trust among Latinos who volunteered to participate in their study.

To help contextualize the data and create relevant questionnaires and interview prompts, Lad and Braganza (2013) enumerated common issues among the initial participants. Upon quantifying these universal themes, they devised instruments to delve deeper into the undocumented immigrant experience. Later, the researchers administered questionnaires to the participants and followed up with hour-long interviews by telephone or in a public location such as a coffee shop. Additionally, Lad and Braganza administered surveys to teachers and administrators from the public high schools based near the Latino community they had previously interviewed in their study. A general area of concern elicited from the interviews, surveys, and questionnaires was the psychological stress of living without documentation.

Furthermore, immigrant students expressed the fear they and their families bore when dealing with school officials (Lad & Braganza, 2013). The teaching staff reported their awareness of the tenuous presence of undocumented students. Specifically, the possibility that these students' attendance would only be short-term made it difficult for some instructors to remain emotionally invested in them. On a positive note, the students found strength and support through the friends and families who made it possible to attend their respective schools. They concluded their research by suggesting that schools should develop a student educational bill of rights and appoint an advocate for immigrant students and their families. Additionally, they encouraged educating teachers through relevant professional development and provided outreach

services that encouraged school participation as a community. Lad and Braganza's recommendations echoed those of NASSP (2020). Both recognized the importance of creating an environment supportive of immigrant students and promoted professional staff development to achieve these means.

Expressing Agency Through Revealing Status to Institutional Agents

Divulging Status While in High School

Undocumented students have chosen to share their immigration status with school counselors while planning postsecondary endeavors. Awareness of a student's documentation status has helped institutional agents provide specific, actionable advice consistent with institutional restrictions and allowances. Kam et al. (2018) maintained that school counselors could serve as a "resource to draw upon for support should the adolescents decide to disclose their family status" (p. 267). As part of their study, the authors explored the psychological framing of a student's decision to reveal or guard their family's residency status. They selected an unidentified school district in the Southwest that supported three high schools housing a majority Latino population. The researchers then sent invitations to 700 families served by the school district to elicit their participation in the study, including volunteering their residency condition.

Drawing from a sample consisting of 410 respondents who self-identified as undocumented, Kam et al. (2018) classified their decision to disclose this information as emerging from one of four psychological profiles. Accordingly, the students were identified as indifferent nondisclosers, concerned revealers, anxious revealers, and secure revealers during the first phase of their study. They found that students from each profile would exhibit a varying level of anxiety or depression, depending on the time of the academic year in which they were

evaluated. Kam et al. (2018) approached the study through a latent profile and transaction analyses, a method to identify and examine subgroups' stability from a heterogeneous population. Upon analyzing longitudinal survey data, the authors concluded that school counselors must speak to undocumented students' varied experiences and consider the complexities of living among a hidden population.

As with Morrison et al. (2016), Kam et al. (2018) observed that research concerning guidance counselors working with undocumented students was sparse. Regardless, the authors indicated that the school guidance office was a fitting location for conversations about immigration (Kam et al., 2018). The authors also found that this student population generally preferred an indirect disclosure method noting that school officials were more likely to glean this information through a survey or by students offering a discreet hint rather than a more candid verbalization indicating their status. Further emphasizing the significance of an undocumented student's preferred method of disclosure, the researchers advised school counselors to be open to discerning subtle status revelations.

Although the *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) decision has prohibited public K-12 schools from impeding undocumented youths' enrollment, the question of documentation would ultimately have to resurface when preparing for postsecondary life (Autin et al., 2018). Accordingly, these students would eventually face their status and process the associated financial limitations and narrowed college choices stemming from their lack of documentation (Walley & Knight, 2018). Depending on where these students were living, the decision to share their undocumented immigrant status has been fundamentally linked to a school's administration's attitudes and practices. For instance, Jefferies (2014) described a circle of silence in which undocumented high school students avoided divulging their status to interested parties in fear of being deported.

Jefferies expounded upon the “distress that young migrants [have] experience[d] in schools when they [had to] interact and share information with gatekeepers and school officials whenever they disclose[d] their status” (p. 282). The “misinformation” (p. 279) perpetuated by undocumented parents, their children, and administrators when addressing residency status has further complicated receiving and sharing postsecondary advisement.

Navigating College Without Documentation

Pérez (2010) framed her study around the role social networks played in informing undocumented students of their options for securing resources to attend college. Recognizing the need for a more “holistic understanding of the Latino undocumented AB 540 college choice process” (p. 23) that could not be enumerated in a purely quantitative study, Pérez opted for a mixed-methods approach. She interviewed each participant for the qualitative side of her research and administered a demographics survey to inform the data’s quantitative collection. Her sample included seven students attending a state-run community college and seven attending a public university in California. These students found an opportunity through AB 540, the California law that provided in-state tuition for those without documentation who otherwise would have had to pay the non-resident rate.

Pérez’s (2010) study revealed that tuition costs were the single most influential factor in each student’s college choice. An additional theme in the study was these students’ initiative in identifying options and resources for attending the school of their choice (Pérez, 2010). This resourcefulness echoed the agency proposed by Murillo (2017) and the concept of self-directed learning among adults, as advocated by Knowles (TEAL Center, 2011). Furthermore, relatives served as a prime influence on the participants’ college choices while peer groups substituted for the family for students who entered the United States alone (Pérez, 2010). The researcher also

concluded that the school network and the encouragement from staff members who were aware of their immigration status to attend a specific college were instrumental in their decision-making process (Pérez, 2010).

Autin et al. (2018) performed a qualitative study to describe the immigrant experience of 12 self-described undocumented students who had enrolled in college at some point in their youth. Through interviews and questionnaires, the authors sought to measure the frequency in which these students revealed their undocumented immigrant status to those with whom they came into contact. They found that most participants became increasingly aware of their undocumented status upon becoming teenagers, yet revealing their status to others was uncommon. The participants described feeling "a chronic uncertainty" (p. 611) concerning their future as well as witnessing friends and family who had performed well in secondary school no longer having opportunities corresponding to their abilities.

Openly Undocumented in the Guidance Office and the College Campus

Neutuch (2018) described the story of Juan, a college student who openly revealed his residency status to his high school counselor, who then directed him to apply for a scholarship to a local community college. The award money and his part-time job packing boxes allowed Juan to achieve what would not have been possible had he not revealed his status (Neutuch, 2018). As students progressed into higher levels of postsecondary education, the question of immigration status ultimately resurfaced. Gámez et al. (2017) interviewed several college students with varying degrees of documented presence in the United States, including having lapsed student visas. They found that those students who successfully enrolled in college and graduated with a degree or even sought enrollment in Ph.D. programs had an identifiable mentor who was aware

of their documentation status and provided the necessary encouragement to help lead to their success.

Katsiaficas et al. (2019) argued that children who arrived in the United States at a young age typically thought of themselves as American, identifying more with the United States than their country of origin. The authors used a collective identity framework and theorized that "greater social support [would] be associated with [a] greater connection to an undocumented identity, which in turn [would] be associated with high levels of civic engagement" (p. 794). Their descriptive study used a survey administered to 790 self-identified undocumented undergraduate students of Latino origin, 80% of which were already in the United States by age 10. They found that 59% of students felt safe sharing their status with friends, 68% had friends supportive of their situation, and 46% received peer advice concerning their legal position.

Katsiaficas et al. (2019) learned that students found strength in self-identifying as undocumented while engaging with students from similar backgrounds. The authors cautioned that the young adults in their study were a convenience sampling of students participating in advocacy organizations and conceded that their results were most likely skewed. They also warned that their research results might not have been generalizable to all undocumented college students. T-test and Chi-square analyses suggested that DACA recipients and non-DACA recipients may have represented two unique subgroups, a potential consideration for future research. However, their study supported undocumented students sharing their status with interested parties when they recognized the benefit.

The Dynamics of Revealing Documentation Status

Murillo (2017) discussed an anonymous survey administered to secondary California students that served a significant undocumented population for his study. Slightly more than 30%

of the students indicated that they were at least somewhat concerned about residency status limiting their ability to go to the college of their preference. Murillo observed undocumented high school students living in Los Angeles to ascertain under what circumstances they shared their documentation status with school officials. His ethnographic research incorporated interviews with several faculty members and the multiple students he met at the college and career center. Murillo conceptually framed his study as one of agency and institutional agents. He further acknowledged the tension between a student's freedom to choose (agency) and the limitations imposed by external forces (structure). He explored the relationship between students revealing their status and how institutions elicited this information.

During his study, Murillo observed senior-level students seeking information about attending college while building relationships with them as they grappled with applications and sought advice from school counselors. He learned that students seeking guidance openly discussed their documentation status by voluntarily offering this information or while responding to the guidance counselor's questioning. Murillo also noted that students tended to reveal their status during casual conversations with trusted allies while school officials generally asked about immigration status in more formal, interview-type settings. Murillo asserted that schools with strong social supports were more inclined to have students and families volunteer their immigration status. This social support, however, could vary significantly among school districts, even within the same state.

Promoting Agency and Linking Structures for Undocumented Students

NASSP (2020) has unambiguously backed those without documentation to receive a meaningful public education. At the federal level, the association urged government officials to work with schools to reduce the negative impact of immigration raids and provide a clear-cut

direction for the national policy on undocumented students enrolling in U.S. colleges and universities. Furthermore, the group requested that the federal government afford a path to citizenship for those brought into the United States as minors. The organization asked that state leaders endorse enrollment practices that standardized district residency evidence needed for matriculation and build positive relations with law enforcement. At the district level, the organization encouraged professional development for staff members to clarify student rights and help employees navigate shifting immigration regulations. Lastly, the association challenged school leaders to include college planning in the curriculum, provide counseling services through the guidance department, and inform undocumented students of financial resources as they pursued postsecondary opportunities.

Regardless of federal-level institutional threats to agency, smaller institutional and social structures such as schools, family, and peer networks have strengthened undocumented students' self-determination. Dowd (2013) described these families and friends who supported a student's pursuit of achievement as protective agents. In congruence with the social capital theory supported by Lad and Braganza (2013), students could also find meaning through shared experiences. The presence of peers sharing a similar background helped mitigate the students' uneasiness (Lad & Braganza, 2013). As with the findings of Garibay et al. (2015), location and regional levels of the acceptance of those without documentation were crucial for how students approached the school as an institution. Additionally, Lad and Braganza (2013) established that students who perceived their community as accepting of their circumstances were more likely to divulge their legal standing.

Morrison et al. (2016) believed that school counselors were the employees within a school best equipped to serve undocumented students. Pérez (2010) also recognized the

importance of counselors addressing the family dynamic when working with students from other countries. She asserted that “familial, peer and [sic] school networks were instrumental in the Latino undocumented college choice process” (p. 24). School systems have typically housed counselors experienced in individual dynamics yet have not received training in working with families (University of San Francisco, n.d.). School administrators have relegated this function to community counselors rather than offer family counseling within the guidance department (University of San Francisco, n.d.). Both Pérez (2010) and Morrison et al. (2016) supported school counselors’ need to serve as mentors and include family members of undocumented students when planning for postsecondary life.

Kantamneni et al. (2015) noted that little information existed about how undocumented students devised plans for future work and education; thus, many counseling programs serving this population have dispensed advice incompatible with their legal and financial position. The authors noted that relevant research concerning this underserved community should have also addressed the “social, political, and cultural contexts that may [have] profoundly impact[ed] academic and work decisions” (p. 320). The researchers sought out college students who self-identified as undocumented as part of a multiple case study. They asked the participants 12 questions specific to college and career planning as a student without documented immigrant status. Using a cross-case analysis, the researchers identified six themes from the interviews: “(a) barriers; (b) emotional impact; (c) resiliency, supports, and coping; (d) discrimination; (e) familial and cultural influences; and (f) academic, work, and career factors” (p. 323). The participants described the barriers, support systems, and the winding rather than direct paths they took to retain college enrollment. Mirroring Murillo’s (2017) and Kolb’s (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011) theories, the students exhibited agency or self-determination, making life-altering

decisions such as changing majors and career plans to avoid revealing their status to institutional agents or gatekeepers.

Kantamneni et al. (2015) asserted that the interviews echoed the findings of social cognitive career theorists who supported a contextual framework when working with underserved populations. The authors advocated for counseling supportive of the unique barriers facing students without documentation. Moreover, they urged school counselors to handle this population with a compassionate understanding of their situation to serve their needs appropriately, providing the emotional investment supported by Kolb's (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011) framework.

The findings of Kantamneni et al. (2015) showed that students without documentation could attend college, yet the burden of hiding one's status was psychologically and emotionally taxing. Students would determine which institutional agents needed to be aware of their position and those not to be entrusted with this information during their exercise of agency. Murillo (2017) asserted that improvements in educational "policy and opportunities have encouraged undocumented immigrants to come out of the shadows" (p. 89). Murillo (2017) noted that most research concerning undocumented students has emphasized young, undocumented adults attending postsecondary institutions. At the same time, he viewed the expanding opportunities to attend college as an antecedent to revealing documentation status working with postsecondary advisors while still in high school.

Expressing Agency Through Selective Interactions with Institutional Agents

Becerra (2018) described the limitations placed on undocumented students by institutions during the application process. Private colleges have maintained the discretion to offer undocumented students support, while state-run facilities followed legal mandates imposed by

the government or risked losing funding (Becerra, 2018). Wignall (2015) studied young, undocumented adults' experiences transitioning from high school into university. She saw the passage of AB 540, the policy that would allow most college-aged Californians to attend at the in-state tuition rate, as an opportunity for students to confront their status and then improve upon their condition directly. She interviewed ten undocumented students who arrived as minors and then attended public high schools in Southern California. Eight of the ten students were undergraduates, and two had enrolled in graduate school at the same California university. All of those interviewed were originally from Mexico and remained undocumented.

Wingall's (2015) study revealed the high level of agency students expressed while circumventing institutional gatekeepers. The students described how they could function as quasi-citizens using their student identification cards instead of an elusive driver's license or working for employers who paid them off the books. Since they were not eligible for federal aid, they continued living with their mostly mixed-status families and commuted to class. Some of the students accredited having a student identification card granted them options that once were unattainable, and the sense of belonging they experienced while on campus fueled their optimism.

Adult students attending public, postsecondary institutions would sidestep conversations with authorities concerning their residency status, sometimes going as far as withdrawing from school and relocating to undocumented-friendly regions (Wingall, 2015). One student she interviewed, Javier, noted that institutional gatekeepers were often unaware of the limitations of being undocumented. He found himself having to educate them to move forward with his plans. "Consequently, students must claim cultural citizenship within the institution by coming out and educating others" (p. 60).

DACA as a Means to Bypass Institutional Limitations on Agency

Zimmerman (2011) observed that 26% of Hispanic youth born outside the United States would attend college, while 56% of Hispanics born in the United States pursued postsecondary education. Through their community-based participatory research project, Sahay et al. (2016) examined how earning DACA status allowed students to enroll in college without documentation. Selecting North Carolina as the location for their study based on its substantial undocumented population, the authors solicited community advocates' assistance to partner researchers with participants. Using a constructivist approach to creating research instruments, the authors drew from interviews with DACA recipients to jointly develop questionnaires. These questions were then posed using photovoice, a technique in which interviewees studied a photograph and then answered using suggested prompts. Like Wignall (2015), Sahay et al. (2016) learned from students that they had to "educate their educators" (p. 59) about their rights under DACA.

A formidable defense for undocumented students' right to enroll in public postsecondary institutions should have originated from postsecondary institutions' leadership (Patel, 2018). "States determine[d] [the] tuition residency and admissions policies [that] directly impact[ed] the accessibility of college for students" (Mwangi et al., 2019, p. 251). Young undocumented adult students and those without DACA status "[had] similar but also distinct needs" (p. 252) as their peers served by the DACA program (Mwangi et al., 2019). A given state's policies toward undocumented students affected the relationship between policymakers and educational leaders and the potential to advocate for postsecondary access (Mwangi et al., 2019).

Almost 40% of DACA beneficiaries were students (Federis et al., 2018). At the time of her study's publication, Patel (2018) noted that 21 states offered in-state tuition, six of which

additionally provided state-level financial aid for DACA-eligible students. The New England Board of Higher Education (2017) published a survey revealing that 72% of the 50 colleges that responded within Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island had admitted undocumented students during the 2015-2016 academic year. Drawing from scholarships and grants, 52% of the colleges had provided institutional financial aid to undocumented students (Patel, 2018). Although a private entity in Massachusetts, one college offered cost-free medical coverage and issued stipends to cover essential living costs (Patel, 2018).

Competing Institutional Structures Controlling Agentic Opportunity

Torlakson, California's State Superintendent of Public Instruction, declared in 2016 that public schools in his state would serve as havens welcoming all students and their parents, regardless of immigration status (California Department of Education, 2017). The sentiments of Torlakson were indicative of the competing interests among government institutions and, in this case, two federal entities—Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the U.S. Department of Education. Radoff (2011) stated that "*Plyler v. Doe*, the Court decision . . . [has] guaranteed education to students regardless of their immigration status . . . [perhaps] suggest[ing] education as a human right rather than a citizenship right" (p. 443).

This right to education has been universal in the K-12 arena at the federal level while abruptly divergent in the postsecondary realm. In other words, opportunities for the undocumented adult student have had to originate from subnational institutional structures exercising agency outside the auspices of the federal institutional structure. Competing interests have also been evidenced by the United States adopting over 300 subnational immigration policies annually since 2003 (Huo et al., 2018). Some of these policies were undocumented immigrant-friendly, while others were not (Huo et al., 2018).

A clear understanding of legal precedents and regional variations would be essential to providing undocumented students relevant information about their pursuit of postsecondary education. For example, a student categorized as undocumented, which included students conforming to the DACA program, was prohibited from receiving federal grants or loans to attend public postsecondary institutions (Regan & McDaniel, 2017). However, these undocumented students could have benefited from financial opportunities such as merit scholarships, in-state tuition in some instances, and support from private institutions (Sanchez & Smith, 2017). Since the *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) decision did not apply to postsecondary education, immigrant students without resident status have not been guaranteed acceptance into any public institution upon graduation from high school.

Just as some subnational institutions have extended educational opportunities to those without documentation, others, such as the state of Alabama, have accomplished the opposite. Alabama has been considered the state representing the most extreme anti-undocumented immigrant legislation in recent history due to House Bill 56 in 2011 (Baxter, 2012). Notably, Alabama's House Bill 56 blocked undocumented students from enrolling in any publicly funded postsecondary institution in the state (Bergeron & Chishti, 2011). The ruling proved unpopular with the many Americans who called for boycotting the state (Mohl, 2016). However, despite its reputation, Alabama has extended educational access to certain undocumented immigrants enrolled in DACA, a significant gesture of hope for the state's estimated 4,030 participants (Svajlenka, 2019). This sharp contrast to the original intent of House Bill 56 demonstrated that even in the most challenging situations, students without resident status could pursue postsecondary studies at one of several public universities or numerous in-state community colleges (Svajlenka, 2019).

Institutional Agents and the Immigration Debate

Ovink et al. (2016) argued that politicians have previously introduced legislation that had little chance of becoming law as a symbolic means to support the interests of a demographically shifting voter base. This symbolic legislating was evident in high-visibility attempts to limit and expand postsecondary educational opportunities to the undocumented population (Ovink et al., 2016). The United States has been morally divided in its practice of granting access to immigrants seeking to improve their conditions. "Americans have been debating immigration since colonial times" (Gries, 2016, p. 33). "Unfortunately, in the United States, hyperbole, and high drama [have] often poisoned any attempt at reasoned discussion of the issue of immigration" (Johnson, 2010, p. 584). Due to the lack of a national consensus on immigration matters, a DACA recipient's ability to participate in postsecondary education varied by state and institution (Enyioha, 2019). Legislation at the federal level allowing those without documentation (which included DACA recipients) to attend postsecondary institutions in all 50 states has yet to be enacted. Moreover, Congress has failed to propose a novel way to legalize those without documentation while placating such legislation's opponents (Nowrasteh & Bier, 2019).

Perhaps the right questions for consensus-building have not been asked. According to Jawetz (2019), "the conversation has been predicated on a false dichotomy [from which] America [could] either honor its history and traditions as a nation of immigrants or live up to its ideals as a nation of laws by enforcing the current immigration system" (p. 1). Popular belief has held that immigration issues have been characterized by political party affiliation wherein liberals were more pro-immigrant than conservatives. For example, Sanderson et al. (2021) observed that the General Social Surveys results and the American National Election Survey

administered from 1996 to 2018 revealed that opposition to immigration was more evident among Republicans. Hajnal (2021) asserted that modern-day Republican politicians had exploited anti-immigrant sentiment to gain political victories since abandoning the more immigrant-friendly policies supported by the party during the Ronald Regan Era.

The Expediency of Overstating Threats to Established Structures

Hajnal (2021) asserted that Republican leaders specifically leveraged the fear of immigrants to secure positions of power. As Orcés & Ewing (2019) studied, economic uncertainty could intensify anti-immigrant sentiment, and party lines have been evident in policies described as immigration reforms. Combining the increased visibility of undocumented residents, economic woes, and political maneuvering created a volatile scenario, ultimately leading to federal intervention in two states in 2011. Attributing the financial troubles of Alabama and Arizona to undocumented workers rather than decreased tax revenue opened the door for the passage of two of the strictest immigration bills in modern U.S. history (Magaña, 2016). Arizona's Senate Bill 1070 and Alabama's House Bill 56, both Republican-sponsored bills, passed along party lines and were enacted to deny entry to immigrants without documentation and complicate public-school enrollment for minors (Magaña, 2016). As a result, the clear division between the two states' Republican and Democratic Parties and their policies concerning those without documentation came to the forefront of American politics (Magaña, 2016).

Contradictions to Assumptions of Political Membership of the Gatekeepers

The leadership from states identifying as conservative was not consistently antagonistic toward undocumented students entering into the fold of public postsecondary education. Even in recent history, "conservative political leaders often saw the need to allow immigrants, including

undocumented immigrants, to be full-fledged participants in American institutions, including education" (Rojas, 2018, para. 5). Moreover, attributing non-inclusive practices to a specific region of the United States has become a tenuous proposal. Lending credence to the residual influences of the Southern Strategy, liberals have contended that Southern states have continued to be manipulated into adopting oppressive legislative practices favoring a conservative Republican elite's agenda (see Maxwell & Shields, 2019). Despite Maxwell and Shields' (2019) assertion, recent developments in Southern states have provided contradictory evidence. For example, Georgia, a conservative state (Jones, 2019), has been the home of a considerable undocumented adult population who have participated in postsecondary education (Lee, 2019). Georgia even offered its 2,808 DACA participants in-state tuition, which further "bolster[ed] the economy by [helping] the state meet its skilled workforce goals" (Lee, 2019, para. 4).

Clarkston, a town near Atlanta, Georgia, has maintained the title as the most diverse square mile in the United States due to its high proportion of immigrants (City of Clarkston, 2020). Many were adults enrolled in postsecondary institutions such as Emory (City of Clarkston, 2020). McDaniel (2016) described Chicago, Illinois; Dayton, Ohio; and Nashville, Tennessee, as welcoming foreign-born populations. Despite being located in states identified by Gallup (Jones, 2019) as conservative-leaning states, Dayton and Nashville have worked to attract immigrant entrepreneurs and their families to curtail the economic and population decline the two cities have experienced (McDaniel, 2016). McDaniel (2016) noted that cities "could not do much about federal immigration laws and policies, or . . . the official immigration status of members of its community . . . [yet could present] a welcoming environment for all members of the community, including immigrants and refugees" (para. 6). North Carolina, a conservative state (Jones, 2019), was home to the Latino Migration Project, which worked directly with city

governments to foster positive relationships between the newly-arrived and their host communities (Kallenbach et al., 2013).

Bipartisan Ambiguities to Maintaining Institutional Structures

Recent studies have revealed that a conservative identity has not been universally indicative of the unenthusiastic reception of undocumented immigrants. Pew Research Center's polling from 2019 indicated that Republicans were increasingly more supportive of the United States taking in refugees than they had been just three years earlier (Daniller, 2019), the timeframe in which Gries (2016) published contradictory findings. Yet Kahn and Morgan (2021) described Republican voters as becoming more adversarial toward undocumented immigrants since President Biden has taken office, substantially more so than indicated in a Reuters' poll just two years earlier. This was not to say, however, that advocates for undocumented immigrants have not crossed party lines.

Joppke (1998) defined the United States as a "settler nation [having a] highly institutionalized [process of immigration] wherein pro-immigrant forces have held [a] legitimate, entrenched role in policy-making" (p. 273). He described pro-immigrant legislation from the 1990s backed by advocacy groups comprised of individuals spanning the sociopolitical spectrum from conservative to liberal (Joppke, 1998). Bell (2013) stated that Reuters' Public Religion Research Institute poll from 2010 revealed that most White evangelical Christians, a predominately conservative and Republican demographic, supported immigration reform allowing undocumented immigrants to become U.S. citizens. Furthermore, Representatives Brooks, Diaz-Balart, Davis, King, Amodei, Stefanik, Stewart, Smith, Kizinger, Upton, Fitzpatrick, Hurd, and Senators Collins, Rubio, Graham, and Tillis were among the numerous

Republicans in Congress who have voiced their support for DACA-like programs, expressing an empathic consideration of the undocumented population (Becoming American Initiative, 2021).

Minimizing Threat Perceptions in Support of Undocumented Students

Brooks et al. (2016) asserted that feelings of group rivalry influenced attitudes toward immigrants and examined if ideology could have a moderating effect. Brooks et al. (2016) also noted that "political ideology[was] a recurrent influence on attitude formation" (p. 2). Working under the assumption that individuals tend to adhere to prior perceptions and beliefs when met with conflicting information, Brooks et al. (2016) sought to determine if political ideology was interconnected with receptivity toward immigrants.

As with Orcés and Ewing (2019), Brooks et al. (2016) questioned how perceived threats to the majority population's well-being played into levels of acceptance for immigrants. They analyzed data from a 2013 administration of an attitudes survey concerning American foreign relations policies and two additional surveys measuring attitudes toward immigrants. The authors found that liberals and conservatives exhibited disparate acceptance levels of foreigners, especially when dissimilarities (i.e., surnames that appeared to be Arabic or Spanish) were emphasized between dominant and immigrant populations. Those self-identifying as liberals were more inclined to accept immigrants regardless of ethnicity, while conservatives were more likely to welcome families with Anglo-sounding names.

Sanderson et al. (2021) studied the General Social Surveys and American National Election Survey administered between 1996 and 2018 to ascertain if anti-immigrant sentiment rose. The authors described the immigrant threat model wherein economic slumps, increased feelings of nationalism, and an influx of foreigners would provoke heightened anti-migrant sentiments. Contrary to these assumptions of the immigrant threat model, the researchers found

the results “in the context of the U.S. [sic] [were] quite intriguing” (p. 28). As reflected in the growing body of research described by Sanderson et al. (2021), the United States has experienced a decrease in opposition to immigration, with a slight majority of Republicans and a more significant proportion of Democrats expressing the value of immigrants filling the country’s need for workers. The authors revealed a shortcoming in the research stemming from repeated cross-sectional data sets to measure variance in immigration-related attitudes instead of harvesting panel data from national samples.

Brooks et al. (2016) mentioned the importance of prior social interaction between native-born and immigrant populations in attitude development. Similarly, Orcés and Ewing (2019) hypothesized that native-born North Americans’ contact quality and regularity with those from other countries would be critical to shaping personal opinions about immigration. When majority groups felt economically threatened by an inflow of immigrants, their view was generally negative, regardless of the frequency of prior interactions (Orcés & Ewing, 2019). The authors surveyed 1,280 native-born U.S. citizens about their attitudes toward undocumented immigrants; the participants were enlisted through Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (MTurk), a virtual crowdsourcing platform. They found individuals who valued empathy over authority and patriotism over nationalism, and those who lived in suburban rather than rural settings were generally more pro-immigrant. Those identified as liberal or Democratic favored undocumented immigrants more than conservatives or Republicans, although the distinction was not clear-cut in every case. The authors suggested creating opportunities for native-born citizens to have positive interactions with immigrants to promote acceptance.

Beukeboom and Burgers (2019) have argued that “many complex societal problems [have resulted] from social category stereotypes and the affective reactions and behavioral

tendencies towards category members they may [have] elicit[ed]” (p. 28). “Given [the] marginalization based on immigration status, the challenges that undocumented students [have] faced [could] be understood as social oppression” (Cadenas et al., 2018, p. 564). At 66%, most Americans have a favorable view of immigrants (Budiman, 2020). Political affiliation was indicative of the positions taken. (Budiman, 2020). Democrats and Democrat-leaning independents believed that immigrants were a strength to the country at a rate of 88%, while Republican and Republic-leaning independents numbered at 41% (Budiman, 2020).

The Imperfect Science of Probing Political Ideology

In 2018, most Democrats identified themselves as liberal for the first time in U.S. history (Saad, 2019). Conversely, 73% of Republicans identified as being conservative (Saad, 2019). Jones (2019) observed that conservatives were the majority in 19 states. However, this was not to say that the dominant political ideology of a given region has not been consistently associated with the frequency of opportunity extended to undocumented students (see also Lee, 2019). Presuming that a liberal identity predisposed an individual to support undocumented populations might have distorted prior research. Janus (2010) asserted that immigration scholars incorrectly assumed that the ostensibly better-educated political liberals were universally more supportive of pro-immigration policies than their conservative counterparts. Connors (2020) observed that individuals “high in self-monitoring . . . desire[d] to be similar to certain types of people or associated with positively-perceived groups in hopes of achieving a positive self-presentation” (p. 964). Similarly, Janus (2010) suspected that the tension to be viewed as socially progressive impelled liberals to suppress their true feelings to gain the approval of the pollster.

Janus (2010) hypothesized that immigration scholars based their assumptions about political party affiliation on bias-prone survey techniques. To demonstrate, Janus utilized a list

experiment survey method to test this theory wherein participants in two groups were presented with three or four sensitive statements. A control group was exposed to an additional item specifically concerning immigration. The participants were instructed to indicate how many ideas they agreed with rather than reveal specific opinions to reduce approval bias. Janus then performed linear regression on the data to "calculate unobtrusive estimates of support for immigration restrictionism" (p. 936). Finding that 31% of participants who favored restricting immigration suppressed this sentiment, Janus concluded that future survey methods needed to address social desirability's effects on the data.

Gries (2016) argued that national surveys measuring political ideology's relation to issues of immigration and foreign aid have been "misrepresented [by] political scientists and pollsters" (p. 24). Accordingly, Gries characterized prior surveys administered by Pew, the Chicago Council, and the Program on International Policy Attitudes as inherently flawed and of little benefit for their failure to query the participant's attitudes toward international issues when addressing personal ideology. Gries employed YouGov, a polling firm from Palo Alto, California. YouGov administered an original, internet-based survey to 1,000 participants, thus creating a new set of data that could inform how ideologies held by Americans shaped their attitudes toward immigrants from foreign regions such as Latin America.

Gries (2016) found that conservatives and liberals were ideologically divided on immigration issues. Simultaneously, the depth of the survey questions provided nuanced indicators as to why an individual would be willing to help those in foreign countries. Gries suggested that conservatives might have had an ulterior motive in approving aid to countries such as Haiti. Their altruism could have been less about helping others and more about incentivizing refugees to remain in their own countries. Gries concluded in his study that many

Republicans in government represented social conservatives who viewed any compromise on immigration issues to be “abhorrent” (p. 43) and any disruption in “the racial hierarchy” (p. 42) as unacceptable. He averred that attempts by moderate Republicans to relax migration policy to favor those without documentation would be met with strong resistance from their conservative base, thus costing votes during primaries.

Reciprocal Support for Undocumented Students on Campus and in the Community

Documented students’ attitudes and beliefs toward those without documented immigrant status appeared to represent the country’s region in which they lived (Garibay et al., 2015). As with Huo et al. (2018), Garibay et al. (2015) recognized that an immigrant’s sense of belonging to a community factored into their psychological well-being, and welcoming populations influenced local postsecondary educational policies and practices for those without documentation. In other words, positive interpersonal relationships between citizens and non-citizens were indicative of local regulations that were of benefit to those without documentation. The researchers found that the area’s public policy often shaped students’ expectations and postsecondary institutions’ official stances. The “issue of postsecondary educational access for undocumented students has remained one of the most contentious debates facing American higher education” (p. 602). Postsecondary educational institutions that addressed students’ documentation status who sought to enroll in college differed significantly from the K-12 setting and varied by state. Garibay et al. (2015) asserted that citizens’ opinion toward undocumented students attending public institutions was indicative of the regional and institutional contexts of their outlook. Huo et al. (2018) mentioned that “[p]olitical orientation also play[ed] a key role in shaping views about immigration” (p. 946).

Summarizing data from multiple sources, Garibay et al. (2015) collected the opinions toward undocumented students of over 12,000 undergraduate college students attending 103 institutions in 35 states who self-identified as citizens of the United States. The authors drew from the UCLA Higher Education Research Institute's Cooperative Institutional Research Program's 2005 Freshman Survey administered during orientation for first-year students and the 2009 College Senior Survey administered during the fourth year of college to a national sampling of university students. Additionally, the authors gathered data from the Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System, state data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey.

Similar to Huo's (2018) findings, Garibay et al. (2015) found that students who considered themselves liberal were more open to allowing undocumented students to attend public colleges. Also, students attending colleges that permitted students without documentation to pay in-state tuition rather than the international rate had a more favorable opinion of undocumented students. The researchers concluded that institutions located in states that do not permit in-state tuition for undocumented students would find it difficult to promote positive attitudes toward these students without additional support at the state level.

Assessing Regional Attitudes Toward Immigrants and Maintaining Structures

Gallup's Survey of Political Ideology by State administered via telephone in 2018 to 75,699 adult participants in all 50 states revealed that conservatives were the majority in 19 states (Jones, 2019). Comparing the postsecondary policies for undocumented students, which included DACA recipients, revealed that the majority ideology of a given state did not consistently indicate the level of benefits available. For example, in 2017, notably conservative states such as Kansas, Oklahoma, and Utah provided in-state tuition to undocumented students

regardless of DACA status (PAHEI, 2021). In contrast, liberal dominant states such as New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine either did not offer in-state tuition or had no policy approaching the topic (PAHEI, 2021). In other words, a state's generosity was not invariably associated with being liberal nor its parsimony for being conservative.

Huo et al. (2018) compared the immigration attitudes of Latino residents, Latino nonresidents, and non-Latino White residents living within two regions of the United States that adhered to conflicting immigration policies. They selected New Mexico and Arizona due to geographic and racial similarities and political divergence encountered within these two states. Their experimental study began with a telephone survey administered to 1,903 respondents to record and measure the sense of belonging experienced by the three demographic groups in the two Southwestern states. Additionally, the authors contended that the attitudes concerning those without documentation would vary locally, resulting from regional immigration practices. The researchers had previously considered New Mexico a state that welcomed undocumented immigrants, while Arizona did not. Consequently, they sought input from established community members and those present without documentation.

Huo et al. (2018) randomly exposed the participants to two opposing immigration policies—one friendly to undocumented residents and one not. Whether documented or not, the participants indicated if they viewed themselves as being socially liberal or conservative. They found that most Latinos felt a stronger sense of belonging in a state with welcoming policies regardless of ideology. Additionally, White liberals from their community were more open to undocumented individuals' immigration than were conservatives. They concluded that "policies [welcoming to] immigrants [were] not likely to receive broader support than public discourse [has] suggest[ed], but [could] have a profoundly positive effect on both immigrants, and the

established populations that [have] receive[d] them" (p. 949). Predicated upon measuring opposing policies' reactions, Huo et al. (2018) acknowledged that their study did not incorporate a control group that would receive neutral information concerning immigration practices. They also stated that their key findings indicated that local immigration policy influenced regional attitudes toward undocumented immigrants and that public discourse on the topic had the power to alter attitudes.

Informed Governance and Challenging Institutional Permanence Through Research

Jefferies (2014) recognized the inadequacy of the *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) decision, especially when considering postsecondary options for undocumented students. "The aftermath of this ruling . . . [lagged] far behind the intended role of incorporating these young migrants into society [and] educational inequity . . . [would] still [be] the norm" (Jefferies, 2014, p. 279). Governmental agencies have come to accept research-based policy adoption (Pew-MacArthur, 2014). For example, North Carolina's Latino Migration Project, based out of the University of North Carolina, worked directly with city governments to aid immigrants' integration (Kallenbach et al., 2013). Supporters across the country have favored using the "best available research [to guide legislation in a] new era in responsible governance" (Pew-MacArthur, 2014, p. 2).

Divisive Tone in Immigration Research and Endangering Bipartisan Support

Informed decision-making would invariably obligate interested parties from both sides of the political spectrum to examine modern research potentially containing language and attitudes counterproductive to consensus building. As an illustration, Martin (2015) argued that "the empathic understanding of non-liberal ideologies [has been] inhibited . . . [and the data have been] truncated to hide facts that [could] subvert a liberal narrative" (p. 115). Some of the

literature supported Martin's allegations. Contrary to popular belief, fewer deportations occurred during the Trump administration than in previous years; the data revealed 2013 as the peak year for removals, meaning undocumented immigrants were less likely to be deported under President Trump than under President Obama (Gramlich, 2019). Advocates for these at-risk individuals should have seen the significant decrease in deportations as a reduction in the intensity of enforcement practices, yet some of the literature published since 2016 (Green, 2019; Allen-Handy & Farinde-Wu, 2018; Torres, 2017; Burkett & Hayes, 2018; Sherkat & Lehman, 2018; Geron & Levinson, 2018) made no mention of the marked decrease in deportations and instead opted to amplify what they viewed as the then-current administration's anti-immigrant policies.

Walsh (2019) asserted that "Trump's persistent anti-immigration rants have left even those who felt secure under the previous administration's policies and programs, such as DACA, questioning their future" (p. 3). Jones (2020) alluded to "the current climate of political polarization in the United States, with legislative gridlock at the federal level that has especially hampered immigration bills" (p. 160). He then described the state and local pushback against stricter immigration requirements as the "Trump effect" (p. 160). Allen-Handy and Farinde-Wu (2018) maintained that the "Trump administration zero-tolerance immigration policies [have continued] to rip [apart] immigrant families seeking asylum" (p. 797). Knopf (2017) stated that the newly-elected administration "reneged on . . . [DACA], and advocates [were] afraid it [would] use the information to deport [undocumented individuals] back to countries they [had] no memory of and no ties to." (para. 1). Dabach and Fones (2018) averred that "[t]oday more than ever, issues of migration and the politics of immigration [have been] front-page news" (p. 328). The authors continued that Trump disparaged "immigrants from Central America, the Caribbean, and Africa" (p. 330).

Burkett and Hayes (2020) researched the effect of President Trump's election on the perceptions of immigrants and their advocates. They contended that "Trump's policies and rhetoric have created a culture of fear in schools that serve[d] Hispanic students and their families" (p. 107). The authors described Alicia, an administrator at a public high school with a significant Hispanic population. She was "disturbed by Trump's policies and rhetoric [and expressed] that they had to combat [his] hate and bigotry through education" (p. 117). Cross et al. (2019) described how Latino parents who wanted to volunteer at their children's schools were reluctant to do so because their worries concerning the possibility of deportation "[have been] amplified in the current sociopolitical climate of anti-immigrant rhetoric" (p. 30). Even more, Sherkat and Leham (2018) described the base who elected President Trump as "exclusivist" (p. 1801) and charged that the President's policy was "militantly anti-immigrant [and] xenophobic" (p. 1801).

Eliciting Feelings of Empathy in the Literature

In her study of hostile media and reader empathy, Tsang (2018) asserted that "partisan individuals from opposing sides of an issue [were] likely to perceive the exact same [sic] news story as being biased against their personal point of view" (p. 809). She researched how reader sensitivity influenced a group's responsiveness to the controversial topic of immigration reform. Tsang (2018) saw Donald Trump's election and the ensuing political division between liberals and conservatives in the United States as an opportunity for her research. Her study presented survey data from 723 participants who read news articles and were then directed to indicate whether they observed bias in the literature. Later, a narrowed group of participants read articles intentionally written to elicit or suppress empathic feelings. Tsang (2018) found that "empathy

[could] help reduce Hostile Media Phenomenon by [minimizing] the perception gap between opposing sides of an issue" (p. 826).

As demonstrated in Tsang's (2018) research, the perception of an emotionally challenging topic could potentially determine a reader's value assessment of literature. When presented with the contentious immigration issue, the study participants consistently interpreted the information presented as biased against their personally held beliefs. How a particular author approached the presentation of controversial material influenced the readers' perceptions and subsequent literature critiques. She found that information consumers were less inclined to react negatively to a published article when the authors presented their points of view within a framework of empathy.

Empathic Treatment of Attachment to Regional and Ideological Structures

The funding and the authorization for undocumented students to participate in postsecondary education have generally originated at the state level rather than through the federal government (Mwangi et al., 2019). Consequently, garnering support for educational opportunities for those without documentation required considering regional attitudes when informing subnational policy. Government agencies have come to value research to carry out informed decision-making, much of which has been accomplished through polls and surveys (Pew-MacArthur, 2014). Accurately measuring local support would require an empathic consideration of those questioned, even within the construction of survey tools (see Gündüz & Süleyman, 2016).

Gündüz and Süleyman (2016) evaluated the need to modify survey classifications based on the selected respondents' regional values. "[C]urrent classifications [could] change constantly because of values gaining a different dimension and importance every single day" (p. 212). For

their descriptive research problem, the authors made use of semi-structured interviews targeting a group of 1,394. They solicited individuals' participation associated with values education, many of whom were teachers, teacher candidates, or students residing in Turkey's Isparta province. They found that "geographical regions and country lands play[ed] a great part in constituting values and culture [and] [p]eople, by nature, [were] emotionally tied to the place [in which] they [were] living" (p. 216).

Sullivan and Artino (2017) asserted that survey questions asked neutrally were less likely to irritate the participant or elicit a biased response. On the other hand, provocative questioning could threaten participants and distort the intent of a survey instrument. By the same token, when discussing values, respondents have attempted to please the survey maker and selected answers that were "socially acceptable [so] careful attention to neutral language [has been] critical" (Sullivan & Artino, 2017, p. 411). Likewise, research conducted by Connor (2020) concluded that people, especially those who valued positive self-representation, revised their declared political values to appear open-minded to the survey administrator.

"Ideologically committed people are similarly motivated to avoid ideologically crosscutting [sic] information" (Frimer et al., 2017, p. 1). When approaching sociopolitical matters, people have generally sought out information confirming their beliefs, interpreting material already in front of them as a means to substantiate their values and retain information that corroborated their principles. Frimer et al. (2017) studied the differences between liberals and conservatives and the tendency to avoid opposing opinions. The researchers conducted a series of five studies and learned that both sides avoided opposing viewpoints for nearly identical motivations regardless of sociopolitical preference. Participants in their first study went as far as refusing the chance to win a small sum of money if it required confronting contradictory

information. Frimer et al. (2017) concluded their study with a warning that “liberals and conservatives live[d] in ideological information bubbles, and what could [have] ultimately [been] a contest of ideas [has been] replaced by two, non-interacting monopolies” (p. 11).

Davidai and Ongis (2019) reported that political ideology expressed itself as a “zero-sum game [that hindered] bipartisan legislation” (p. 1). Confirming the findings of Frimer et al. (2017) and Tsang (2018), Davidai and Ongis (2019) argued that both liberals and conservatives were prone to reject competing ideas and took great lengths to preserve their ideology. The researchers conducted six studies, the first of which gathered secondary data from the World Value Survey. The authors interviewed participants recruited through MTurk for the remaining five studies. The participants reviewed hypothetical economic and social scenarios intended to elicit a zero-sum response, the idea that a gain for one side was contingent upon a loss for the competition.

The researchers found conservatives opted for a zero-sum solution when the power structure’s status quo was challenged. At the same time, liberals chose an opposing zero-sum solution when the power structure was not challenged. This phenomenon was evident when participants answered questions concerning immigration policy. Davidai and Ongis (2019) suggested that policy-makers could “strategically frame contentious policies” (p. 5) and adjust their constituents’ zero-sum mentality. In addition, they recommended that politicians consider the sociopolitical leanings of an audience to elicit a more favorable reception of policy proposals to promote bipartisanship.

Research, Governance, and Alliance Building Through Thoughtful Language

Viewing immigration as simply an issue of labor rather than narcotrafficking, spreading disease, or terrorism has not made for exciting newscasts (Johnson, 2010). Immigration policy

has been a contentious affair fueled by sensationalism and fraught with irrationality when discussed in "mixed [political] company" (Johnson, 2010, p. 586). Johnson (2010) has urged "responsible people including academics, politicians, and the media . . . to take great care to fairly, reasonably, and thoughtfully discuss the issues in a balanced fashion" (p. 587). He insisted that any discourse about immigration should abandon harsh language and focus on the high human cost of not finding a remedy and shutting out the most vulnerable people.

Researchers into the passionate subject of immigration should have considered the politically diverse audience of policymakers, opting for neutral language over the charged innuendo that could deter potential advocates for undocumented adults' postsecondary inclusion. Advocating for careful consideration of immigration-related terminology while contemplating policy, Hoops and Braitman (2019) asserted that "immigration representations . . . have [had] concrete effects on the laws that [have been] passed, and the ways that they [have been] enforced" (p. 152). "Political skew [could] manifest in the very measurement of key constructs in politicized areas" (Honeycutt & Jussim, 2020, p. 76). For example, biased research could lead to the assumption of prejudice as "primarily, or exclusively the province of majority groups" (Honeycutt & Jussim, 2020, p. 77), including anecdotal expectations that predominately conservative regions were fiercely anti-immigrant. Likewise, in the garnering of public support for those without documentation, Núñez (2014) emphasized that the "words [used] in the realm of immigration and citizenship law and rhetoric [have been] a formidable challenge to . . . views of membership" (p. 1561).

Fostering Empathy Between the Gatekeepers Through Intellectual Humility

Bowes (2021) noted that there has been "a profound lack of respect and open-mindedness in political discussions due largely to an increase in political polarization" (para. 1). She

described differing views on public policy as ideological division and the related affective divide in which those holding different opinions were deemed ignorant and unethical. The researchers studied intellectual humility (IH), a concept wherein individuals willingly examined their personal beliefs' truthfulness and adapted their ideas when presented with new information. Recruiting over 400 participants through MTurk, volunteers completed three separate surveys totaling 37 Likert-type questions to self-report political party affiliation, willingness to adapt to another's viewpoint, and perceptions about opposing outlooks. They found that participants high in IH were less likely to feel negatively toward members of the outgroup and less inclined toward politically polarizing attitudes and practices. Bowes et al. (2020) asserted that their results could be generalizable to other populations yet conceded that future researchers should seek participants through a platform other than MTurk.

Krumrei-Mancuso and Newman (2020) said that previous studies "have demonstrated links between IH and several positive interpersonal benefits that might [have] extend[ed] to the sociopolitical domain" (p. 990). The researchers presented the Sociopolitical Intellectual Humility (SIH) construct or an individual's understanding that their political beliefs might be flawed, especially when given additional opposing ideas. For their study, the authors solicited the participation of 587 adults in the United States via MTurk. They administered a 22-item survey to quantify the participant's independence of ego and intellect, openness to revising personal beliefs, and respectfulness for differing opinions. They found that participants who were "primed to think about the fallibility of their knowledge specific to immigration, having higher trait levels of SIH was associated with more responsiveness to information on the topic of immigration" (Krumrei-Mancuso & Newman, 2020, p. 989). The authors acknowledged that the data collected

were limited to a cross-section of a single sample, a weakness that should be addressed in future research.

The American Psychological Association (APA) recently investigated political differences and their effect on productive conversations between those maintaining opposing viewpoints. Evans (2019) saw the merit in researching and openly discussing the partisan chasm that has become an area of concern and examination within Pew Research and the APA. Partnering with the National Institute for Civic Discourse, the APA co-sponsored A National Conversation on Civility in 2018 (Evans, 2019). The organizers and keynote speakers explored and promoted research-based solutions to the deterioration of amity between professional associates and the nation. Evans (2019) explained that understanding differences of opinion and diverse values would be fundamental for the continued acceptance of his colleagues' expertise and future studies. He asserted that "research [could] be a starting point for helping Americans understand their political differences and discuss them in civil, productive ways—a topic APA has championed in recent years" (para. 2).

As described earlier, policy toward undocumented students and its influence on their higher education paths has manifested at the state rather than federal level (see NCSL, 2021). The national landscape has not been ideologically monolithic (Bowes, 2021), so gathering accurate data must begin at the local and state levels (see also Gündüz & Süleyman, 2016). Recognizing regional sensibilities from an empathic standpoint should ultimately lead to a more positive reception of immigration research and, hopefully, a more accurate representation of current local practices' effects (see also Tsang, 2018). However, the immigration debate's passionate nature could alienate research participants and evoke the dehumanizing language known to haunt both sides of the issue (see Johnson, 2010).

Public Support for Lifelong Learning for the Adult Immigrant Population

English and Mayo (2019) studied the challenges migrants experienced pursuing meaningful employment and lifelong learning opportunities. They described the perilous journeys immigrants have taken and recognized that those without documentation were the most at risk for missing out on a “dignified basic living” (p. 214). English and Mayo supported establishing lifelong learning programs in lower-income countries to minimize the need to relocate yet recognized that education alone could not counter economic deficiencies. The authors noted that the level of fluency in the host country’s language served as an exclusionary gauge even when mastery of the language was not essential for many occupations. They also observed that “overseas experience and education [have been] often undervalued and misused, resulting in deskilling, underemployment and alienation” (p. 224). They maintained that countries such as the United States and Canada have verbally supported prior learning and competencies yet have “not negotiated transfer of skills well” (p. 224).

Functions of Adult Education Programs for Immigrants

“Adult immigrants [have been] motivated to enroll in postsecondary education to increase their competitiveness by building their occupational skills and obtaining a certificate or degree in the United States” (National Immigration Forum, 2016, p. 9). Adult education programs have helped to cultivate human capital in the immigrant population by serving as potential “on-ramp[s] to postsecondary education” (Migration Policy Institute, n.d., para. 1). Kallenbach et al. (2013) indicated the abundance of local-level adult education programs that integrated immigrants into the community throughout the United States. However, the literature concerning the function of adult education programs serving immigrant students presented

contrasting philosophies such as linguistic and cultural assimilation, workforce development, general education attainment, and racial dynamics.

Vanek et al. (2020) supported assimilation efforts yet argued that adult education programs were not adequately addressing English acquisition because of a primary emphasis on workforce development. The authors recognized the function of public opinion and policy when rallying "support for the linguistic, economic and civic integration of refugees and immigrants" (Vanek et al., 2020, p. 41). Guo (2015) asserted that adult education programs should seek to "balance freedom of mobility with protection, recognition, and membership" (p. 15). He emphasized that adult education programs needed to affirm the immigrant student's prior learning and work experience and value rather than suppress cultural identification (Guo, 2015).

Vanek et al. (2020) argued that collaboration between adult education programs and social service providers was essential to promote English proficiency and the continued integration of migrants. Duval-Couetil and Mikulecky (2011) studied the impact of limited English proficiency on manufacturing jobs in the United States and the willingness of companies to invest in training programs for adult immigrants. They articulated that immigrants seeking opportunity in the United States needed to be encouraged to enroll in programs emphasizing English acquisition and workplace skills that improved productivity and secured financial stability through advancement within the organization (Duval-Couetil & Mikulecky, 2011).

Vanek et al. (2020) viewed strong support for majority language acquisition and civic education as a prerequisite for success. Kallenbach et al. (2013) asserted that Adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs could be instrumental in the "civic and

economic integration of immigrants” (p. 37) when paired with additional community support services. Viewing integration as an essential function of adult education programs, Kallenbach et al. (2013) recommended that ESOL programs evaluate each student’s English fluency level to determine postsecondary readiness or ability to begin contributing to the community at large.

Hooker et al. (2015) explained that adult education programs could serve undocumented adults who have not earned a high school diploma. They noted that adult immigrants who were too old to attend a public high school could instead enroll in general equivalency diploma programs offered by community colleges as a means to conform with the educational requirements of the DACA initiative. Shortly after the 2012 debut of DACA, demand for adult education increased dramatically. Young adult immigrants promptly enrolled in ESOL courses, high school completion programs, career certification courses, and postsecondary credit-bearing classes. “Despite pervasive capacity limitations and the challenges of serving high-need groups, local adult education providers have played a key role in the implementation of DACA” (Hooker et al., 2015).

Hooker et al. (2015) interviewed 85 participants residing in California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, and Texas to ascertain the career and educational paths of DACA recipients. They described the New York City DACA Initiative, a notable program that began in 2013 to provide immigrant adults with educational opportunities, legal services, and community outreach. The program prioritized adult education services, delivering generous funding to directly address these young adults’ learning needs by securing the essential personnel and supplies for their success. Similarly, Chicago inaugurated a program that allowed immigrant adults to attend both ESOL and college classes concurrently, the city’s take on a tuition-free, dual enrollment plan.

Engendering Federal and Regional Support for Immigrant Adult Education

Historically, federal financial aid policies have supported "traditional education models" (National Immigration Forum, 2016, p. 10). Federal assistance for educational pursuits has been extended to many immigrants who were not U.S. citizens but have been classified as a resident non-citizen, refugee, emergency visa eligible, or asylum granted (studentaid.gov, n.d.). Public and private support for adult education programs for those without documentation has been contingent upon measurable outcomes in English acquisition, the enhancement of job skills, and even civic engagement (National Immigration Forum, 2016). Gnanadass et al. (2021) have rejected this method of accountability.

Standing in sharp contrast to Duval-Couetil and Mikulecky (2011), Gnanadass et al. (2021) maintained that the prevailing model of adult education was one of economics designed to perpetuate rather than dismantle "White supremacy" (p. 47). Like Gnanadass et al. (2021), Guo (2015) operated within a Critical Race Theory (CRT) framework. Guo (2015) argued that adult education programs needed to cease being machines of assimilation of the dominant norms of the host country and reject the traditional "deficit model" (p. 15). As with Guo (2015), Gnanadass et al. (2021) encouraged adult education practitioners to underscore their students' ethnic and cultural differences shared through written personal narratives or autoethnographies.

Closson (2010) studied CRT perspectives in adult education literature and indicated that some practitioners chose issues of "racism, not inclusion, [as their] primary concern" (p. 277). Gnanadass et al. (2021) encouraged the adult educator's use of autoethnography to unite minorities oppressed by the colonial structure of their home countries and encourage "new learners [to]subvert [the] romantic narratives of bourgeois success" (p. 47). The assertions of

Canada's Guo (2015) contrasted those of Brazil's Fonseca de Carvalho (2018), who stressed the role of schools as crucial to the welcoming and integration of the immigrant student. Likewise, Fonseca de Carvalho (2018) asserted that immigrants had found meaning and experienced belongingness in an unfamiliar world through modes of assimilation. Juxtaposing the assumptions of theorists such as Gnanadass et al. (2020), Núñez (2014) argued that highlighting "vulnerability and cultural differences [could have] impede[d] full acceptance of immigrants as members of the broader community" (p. 1559).

CRT has operated distinctly outside the boundaries of traditional models supported by federal aid policies. Due to its neo-Marxist beginnings (Walton, 2020), the CRT framework has met strong resistance from moderates and conservatives, an influential majority voting block (see Saad, 2021). To demonstrate, a May 2021 letter from Indiana's attorney general addressed to Secretary Cardona of the U.S. Department of Education signed by 20 state attorneys general urged the withdrawal of funding for programs supporting CRT (Utah Office of the Attorney General, 2021). The recent escalating condemnation of the framework prompted Ray and Gibbons (2021) to argue that "gross exaggerations [have made] CRT . . . a new boogie man" (para. 1). Nevertheless, public opinion has continued to influence the political and financial support for adult education programs for immigrants (Vanek et al., 2020).

Gaps in the Research

The postsecondary educational structures for undocumented adults have historically operated outside the oversight of the federal government. As a result, any opportunities for enrolling into a credit-awarding institution have originated at the state, local, or organizational level (NCSL, 2021). Since a public postsecondary education has not been guaranteed at the national level, decisions to enroll undocumented students have been determined by subnational

policies enacted by individual states (Huo et al., 2018; Wingall, 2015). As of 2020, 33 of the 50 states have permitted DACA recipients to attend public universities at the in-state rate, independent of the federal government's financial support (PAHEI, 2020).

Advocates within individual states have gathered local legislative support for undocumented immigrants' integration into the greater community (Brooks et al., 2016; Kallenbach et al., 2013). Constituents have expected their elected legislators to make executive decisions reflecting their will, which personally held sociopolitical values have informed (Davidai & Ongis, 2019). The research has shown that appealing to an individual's empathy using thoughtful, fear-mitigating language led to the improved reception of provocative issues (Davidai & Ongis, 2019; Tsang, 2018). Recognizing increased conservative support for undocumented immigrants in the United States (Rojas, 2018) and numerous conservative states offering in-state tuition for undocumented students has contradicted assumptions about conservative states being inherently anti-immigrant (see Reich & Barth, 2012).

Evolving attitudes concerning immigration and postsecondary educational benefits for undocumented students needed to be explored in more detail. Adhering to a governance model encouraging informed decision-making (see Pew-MacArthur, 2014), advocates should have ascertained if a given state's sociopolitical identity was indeed related to the level of support for the undocumented population. Assessing the circumstances under which conservative state governments have extended benefits, and liberal states have limited benefits to this population could have contributed to the body of knowledge augmenting future legislation. Armed with such data, advocates needed to have targeted their appeals to government agents and constituents through respectful language backed by intellectual humility and empathy to improve public reception of a fundamentally divisive topic.

Summary

This literature review focused on several components of immigration status and postsecondary education attainment for young adults. The review upheld an empathic inquiry into the undocumented student experience. It explored the varied and complex immigration status terminology presented in the literature and the motivation for leaving one's country of origin. The agency versus institutional agents concept framed how undocumented students explored the possibilities for enrolling in postsecondary programs. The literature illustrated the stress of knowing one's documentation status and how it influenced building trust with those capable of expanding agency.

Several researchers described K-12 public school activities and postsecondary institutional practices supporting undocumented students in their charge. Additional studies demonstrated how public opinion toward sensitive topics such as unauthorized immigration was malleable and influenced by the tone of the literature, the concept of competing interests, and empathic appeal. Understanding regional differences and approaching interested parties with respectful language and intellectual humility could help garner support for extending educational opportunities to the undocumented adult population.

Chapter 3

Methods

"States determine tuition residency and admissions policies directly impact[ing] the accessibility of college for students" (Mwangi et al., 2019, p. 251). A given state's enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies directed toward undocumented students, including DACA recipients, affect the relationship between policymakers and educational leaders while advocating for postsecondary access (Mwangi et al., 2019). In addition, there exists a "strong link between constituents and legislators in the representative relationship" (Waggoner, 2019, p. 713). Analyzing the connection between the sociopolitical values of regional constituencies reflected in the legislative activity directly influencing undocumented young adults and their pursuit of higher education may yield valuable information. This chapter contains seven sections: the purpose of the study, research questions, design of the study, populations and sample sizes, instrumentation utilized by primary data collectors, data collection of secondary sources, and data analysis.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine if postsecondary enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies and participation numbers for DACA-authorized young adults vary with a state's reported ideological leanings (i.e., conservative, moderate, or liberal).

Research Questions

The following research questions will be used in this study:

RQ1: Is there a relationship between subnational ideological values and the postsecondary enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for DACA-authorized and undocumented students in specific states?

RQ2: Is there a relationship between subnational enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for DACA-authorized students and their postsecondary participation rates in specific states?

Design of the Study

As described in the literature review, compiling primary data concerning the undocumented population is no easy task. Panchenko and Samovilova (2020) emphasize that researchers can reevaluate secondary sources in isolation to answer a new research question. Secondary data sets from separate studies can also be combined to investigate relationships between variables (Panchenko & Samovilova, 2020). The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM, 2017) recognize that surveying the undocumented population is complicated. Assessing the number of immigrants, their country of origin, and arrival date is "surprisingly difficult" (NASEM, 2017, p. 568). Well-funded survey publishers such as Pew Research and the Census Bureau grapple with the elusiveness in measuring this often-hidden demographic (NASEM, 2017). Applicable information can come from census research, organizational inquiries, and "regular and continuous" surveys (Panchenko & Samovilova, 2020, p. 2). Consequently, this study will analyze four secondary data sources.

The first source is Gallup's Survey of Americans' Political Ideology by State, administered in 2018 to 75,699 randomly-selected adult participants in all 50 states via telephone to quantify the number of states expressing a dominant conservative, moderate, or liberal outlook (Jones, 2019). Saad of Gallup (2021) explains that state-level identification has remained constant between 2014 and 2019; therefore, the survey conducted in 2018 would mirror attitudes expressed in 2017. The participants include the smallest sample size, 232 from Alaska, and the largest, 8,116 from California (Jones, 2019). The second data source consists of a state-by-state breakdown of undocumented, postsecondary student policies in place during 2017 delineated by

the Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration (PAHEI, 2021). PAHEI includes the year of adoption for specific postsecondary policies in their interactive website, allowing researchers to narrow practices to a particular timeframe. The third data source comes from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center's (NSCRC) report on Spring 2017 postsecondary enrollment data. NSCRC's (2017) numbers include precise, state-level enrollment figures submitted by 97% of post-secondary institutions permitted to accept federal student aid and are updated multiple times per academic term in any given year.

The fourth data set is from the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) and is the first-ever comprehensive estimate of undocumented students' participation numbers (Zong et al., 2017). Even though the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services requires DACA participants to demonstrate compliance with the program, the organization does not publish information concerning their postsecondary educational paths (Beneson, 2020). Accordingly, the sparseness of related data necessitates approximations (Zong et al., 2017). MPI's estimates were first published in November 2017 to reflect active membership in the DACA program for the same year. Compiling information from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey and Survey of Income and Program Participation, MPI has employed a proprietary methodology to approximate documentation status (Zong et al., 2017).

Zong et al. (2017) explain that MPI can estimate the number of undocumented students eligible to participate in the DACA program by merging five years of data gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey with information for the Survey of Income and Program Participation. The American Community Survey contains "detailed characteristics of noncitizen populations at the national and state levels" (p. 2). At the same time, the Survey of Income and Program Participation helps determine the authorization status of immigrants living

in the United States. In 2017, MPI calculated how many immigrants could enroll in the DACA program based on their level of education and age upon entering the United States. MPI then reweighted the population by "state of residence in 2017" (p. 3) while considering their educational and employment patterns.

Population and Sample

This study will examine the state-level enrollment figures of the estimated 241,000 DACA-eligible students attending postsecondary institutions in 2017 (Zong et al., 2017). This study will compare the self-reported sociopolitical characteristics of each of the 50 states as gathered by Gallup to PAHEI's (2021) state-by-state policy description toward this same population during 2017. Additionally, this study will examine if the state-level practices that either support or restrict undocumented students' postsecondary participation are related to undocumented students' estimated enrollment numbers for specific states.

Instrument

The 2018 Survey of Americans' Political Ideology by State administered by Gallup gathered data through interviews conducted via a predetermined mixture of 70% cellular and 30% landline telephones (Jones, 2019). Of the 75,669 randomly selected adult participants, the smallest sample size, 232 came from Alaska, and the largest, 8,116 from California (Jones, 2019). Each participant described their political outlook as liberal, moderate, or conservative (Jones, 2019). All 50 states will be listed for this study, and the participants' political ideologies will be expressed as percentages across the descriptors of conservative-leaning, moderate, and liberal-leaning (see Table 1).

Table 1

Americans' Political Ideology by State, 2018

Ideological identity	Conservative %	Moderate %	Liberal %	*n*
Mississippi	50	29	12	666
Alabama	46	34	14	1,275
South Dakota	44	37	13	303
Louisiana	43	35	15	1,117
Wyoming	46	31	18	286
West Virginia	45	31	17	445
Tennessee	43	34	17	1,692
Arkansas	41	38	15	758
Utah	41	40	15	952
South Carolina	41	37	16	1,262
Oklahoma	43	35	18	1,073
Idaho	40	37	17	591
Alaska	40	38	17	232
Indiana	39	38	17	1,575
Kansas	39	38	18	746
Montana	39	38	18	427
North Dakota	39	41	18	241
Missouri	41	34	20	1,532
Georgia	39	35	19	2,214
Kentucky	39	35	20	1,124
Texas	38	36	20	5,898
New Mexico	38	37	20	653
North Carolina	39	33	21	2,433
Arizona	37	36	21	948
Ohio	37	35	22	2,629
Nebraska	36	38	22	507
Florida	36	36	22	4,709
Iowa	35	39	21	825
Wisconsin	35	37	24	1,447
Michigan	33	38	23	2,319
Nevada	33	38	23	647
Pennsylvania	34	36	24	3,272
Virginia	33	37	24	2,022
Colorado	33	37	26	1,549
Minnesota	32	37	25	1,507
Delaware	29	43	24	250
Rhode Island	29	40	25	298
Illinois	31	36	27	2,374
Oregon	32	35	28	1,316
Connecticut	30	38	27	927
New Jersey	29	37	27	1,860
Maine	35	29	33	412
Maryland	29	39	28	1,337
California	29	36	29	8,116
New Hampshire	28	36	30	350
New York	27	35	30	4,591
Washington	28	37	31	1,980
Vermont	28	36	32	249
Hawaii	22	45	28	301
Massachusetts	21	38	35	1,623

Note. Adapted from Jones, J. M. (2019, February 22). Conservatives greatly outnumber liberals in 19 U.S. states. *Gallup*. (https://news.gallup.com/poll/247016/conservatives-greatly-outnumber-liberals-states.aspx). Copyright 2019 by Gallup.

PAHEI (2021) maintains data concerning current and historical state-level enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for all 50 states. The availability of retroactive data concerning these policies allows for concurrent comparisons to the other data sets described in this study. State-level enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies are divided into seven distinct categories and include the number of states conforming to each policy ($N = 50$):

- in-state tuition extended to DACA recipients and undocumented students, plus state-level financial aid is offered ($n = 9$)
- in-state tuition extended to DACA recipients and undocumented students ($n = 11$)
- in-state tuition to limited public institutions for DACA recipients and undocumented students ($n = 2$)
- in-state tuition to limited public institutions for DACA recipients only ($n = 5$)
- no in-state tuition available, but DACA recipients and undocumented students are permitted to attend ($n = 12$)
- no-instate tuition available, and only DACA recipients can attend ($n = 1$)
- state has no expressed policy ($n = 10$)

The data gathered concerning the enrollment policies of state-run postsecondary institutions for the year 2017 are described in Table 2.

Table 2

Policies for DACA Recipients and Undocumented Students in Effect in 2017

	In-state tuition for DACA recipients and undocumented students plus state-level aid offered
California	
Hawaii	
Minnesota	
New Mexico	
Oklahoma	
Oregon	
Texas	
Utah	
Washington	
	In-state tuition for DACA recipients and undocumented students but no state-level aid offered
Colorado	
Connecticut	
Florida	
Illinois	
Kansas	
Kentucky	
Maryland	
Nebraska	
New Jersey	
New York	
Rhode Island	
	In-state tuition for DACA recipients and undocumented students but no state-level aid offered and limited to specific institutions
Delaware	
Michigan	
	In-state tuition for DACA recipients only but no state-level aid offered and limited to specific institutions
Alabama [a]	
Idaho	
Indiana	
Massachusetts	
Ohio	
	DACA recipients and undocumented students can attend but at an out-of-state tuition rate
Arizona	
Arkansas	
Georgia	
Iowa	
Maine	
Mississippi	
Missouri	
New Hampshire	
North Carolina	
Pennsylvania	
Tennessee	
Wisconsin	
	DACA recipients only can attend but at an out-of-state tuition rate
South Carolina	
	State does not have an expressed policy
Alaska	
Louisiana	
Montana	
Nevada	
North Dakota	
South Dakota	
Vermont	
Virginia	
West Virginia	
Wyoming	

Note. Adapted from Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration. (2021, July 24). *Higher ed immigration portal.*

(https://www.higheredimmigrationportal.org/states/). Copyright 2021 by Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration.

[a] Alabama was recategorized as granting in-state tuition to DACA recipients to limited institutions (cf. Penichet-Paul & Lopez-Espinoza, 2020)

Each state with an expressed policy will be sorted into seven categories based on postsecondary policy and entered into SPSS to inform the seven dependent variables. The seven policy-based dependent variables will be analyzed to describe their relationship to the independent variable of the sociopolitical identity of each state.

The seven categories of expressed policy serving as dependent variables are as follows:

- in-state tuition extended to DACA recipients and undocumented students, plus state-level financial aid is offered
- in-state tuition extended to DACA recipients and undocumented students
- in-state tuition to limited public institutions for DACA recipients and undocumented students
- in-state tuition to limited public institutions for DACA recipients only
- no in-state tuition available, but DACA recipients and undocumented students are permitted to attend
- no-instate tuition available, and only DACA recipients can attend.
- has no expressed policy

The third set of data combines figures from two sources—the NSCRC's (2017) enrollment numbers for all students in postsecondary institutions and MPI's (Zong et al., 2017) estimates for DACA recipients by state and postsecondary participation rates. NSCRC's (2017) data summarize the enrollment figures from 97% of all degree-granting institutions that accept federal student aid; the information is updated multiple times per academic term in any given year. The data from MPI include 2017 estimates of the "educational and workforce characteristics of the nearly 690,000 [then] current DACA holders" (Zong et al., 2017, para. 2). The figures published by MPI (2017) include high school and postsecondary enrollments from

the top 34 states; the remaining 16 states lacked sufficient participation numbers to report. The enrollment figures from NSCRC (2017) present a list narrowed to the 34 states described in MPI’s (2017) estimates (see Table 3).

Table 3

DACA Recipients and Postsecondary Enrollment

Enrollment figures	DACA recipients in 2017 [b]	DACA recipients enrolled % [b]	DACA recipients enrolled [b]	All postsecondary students [a]	DACA students per 1,000
Alabama	3,900	10	390	271,131	1.4
Alaska	–	–	–	–	–
Arizona	25,500	14	3,570	413,453	8.6
Arkansas	4,700	9	423	145,213	2.9
California	197,900	20	39,580	2,382,402	16.6
Colorado	15,500	10	1,550	290,225	5.3
Connecticut	3,800	21	798	183,116	4.4
Delaware	–	–	–	–	–
Florida	27,000	18	4,860	953,439	5.1
Georgia	21,600	13	2,808	460,509	6.1
Hawaii	–	–	–	–	–
Idaho	–	–	–	–	–
Illinois	35,600	17	6,502	613,902	1.1
Indiana	9,000	15	1,350	337,564	4
Iowa	–	–	–	–	–
Kansas	5,900	16	944	176,187	5.4
Kentucky	2,800	15	420	220,783	1.9
Louisiana	1,800	9	162	208,264	.8
Maine	–	–	–	–	–
Maryland	8,100	23	1,863	332,639	5.6
Massachusetts	5,900	26	1,534	434,696	3.5
Michigan	5,400	21	1,134	509,139	2.2
Minnesota	5,500	21	1,115	368,029	3.1
Mississippi	–	–	–	–	–
Missouri	3,300	21	693	334,793	2.1
Montana	–	–	–	–	–
Nebraska	–	–	–	–	–
Nevada	12,400	12	1,488	102,622	14.5
New Hampshire	–	–	–	–	–
New Jersey	17,400	16	2,784	362,379	7.7
New Mexico	6,000	20	1,200	113,495	10.6
New York	32,900	25	8,225	1,077,832	7.6
North Carolina	25,100	12	3,012	497,176	6.1
North Dakota	–	–	–	–	–
Ohio	4,000	16	640	585,627	1.1
Oklahoma	6,100	13	793	175,746	4.5
Oregon	10,200	17	1,734	224,247	7.7
Pennsylvania	4,900	24	1,176	654,727	1.8
Rhode Island	–	–	–	–	–
South Carolina	6,000	11	660	219,425	3
South Dakota	–	–	–	–	–
Tennessee	7,900	7	553	274,282	2
Texas	113,000	17	19,210	1,394,069	13.8
Utah	8,900	18	1,602	292,994	5.5
Vermont	–	–	–	–	–
Virginia	10,100	19	1,919	480,073	4.0
Washington	16,300	14	2,282	328,305	7.0
West Virginia	–	–	–	–	–
Wisconsin	6,700	16	1,072	293,178	3.7
Wyoming	–	–	–	–	–

Note. [a] Adapted from National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. (2017, May 23). *Current term enrollment-Spring 2017.* (https://nscresearchcenter.org/currenttermenrollmentestimate-spring2017/). Copyright 2017 by National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.

[b] Adapted from Migration Policy Institute. (2017). *A profile of current DACA recipients by education, industry, and occupation* [Fact sheet]. (https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/profile-current-daca-recipients-education-industry-and-occupation). Copyright 2017 by Migration Policy Institute.

Dividing the number of DACA recipients attending postsecondary institutions by the total number of postsecondary participants will yield the percentage of all students who are also DACA recipients. Each state with a reported undocumented student population will be listed referencing the number of DACA recipients per 1,000 students enrolled, thus informing one dependent variable for analysis in SPSS.

Data Collection

This study will compare information from four secondary data sources:

- Gallup's Survey of Americans' Political Ideology by State administered in 2018 to 757,669 survey respondents (Jones, 2019), a data set that has remained constant between 2014 and 2019 (Saad, 2021)
- MPI estimates of the number of DACA recipients enrolled in college by state in 2017 (Zong et al., 2017)
- PAHEI's (2021) state-by-state analysis of policy toward undocumented, postsecondary students with data matched to the year 2017
- NSCRC's (2017) report on postsecondary enrollment figures for the general population

The four data sets will be enumerated and summarized in tables to facilitate the comparison of the information and its entry into SPSS.

Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

The dominant political ideologies from Gallup's Survey of Americans' Political Ideology by State will be indicated in the data set entered into SPSS and Table 1. The dominant political ideology will inform the independent variable for the first analysis. PAHEI's (2021) description of state-level policies for postsecondary access for 2017 will be reflected in the first analysis's

dependent variables (postsecondary policies) and Table 2. The second analysis's dependent variable (postsecondary DACA enrollment numbers), as enumerated in Table 3, will be compared to PAHEI's (2021) description of state-level policies for the year 2017, the independent variable.

Inferential Statistics

The data will be analyzed with IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 28). The independent variable of political orientation used in the first analysis is ordinal with three levels—conservative-leaning, moderate, and liberal-leaning. Postsecondary policies will be treated as seven separate dependent variables. Each state's policy will be entered into SPSS to inform the seven dependent variables to analyze their relationship to the independent variable, the sociopolitical identity of each state.

The seven dependent variables for the first analysis are as follows:

- in-state tuition extended to DACA recipients and undocumented students, plus state-level financial aid is offered
- in-state tuition extended to DACA recipients and undocumented students
- in-state tuition to limited public institutions for DACA recipients and undocumented students
- in-state tuition to limited public institutions for DACA recipients only
- no in-state tuition available, but DACA recipients and undocumented students are permitted to attend
- no-instate tuition available, and only DACA recipients can attend.
- no expressed policy

The Chi-square statistic is commonly used to test the relationship between two categorical variables (Statistics Solutions, 2020). Based on the characteristics of the variables, the first analysis will be performed using the Chi-square test for independence (UCLA Institute for Digital Research & Education Statistical Consulting, 2021). The initial output will appear in 3x2 contingency tables but could generate an alert in SPSS, thus requiring a reduction of the independent variable from three to two levels. According to Kanji (2006), Fisher's Exact test is customarily used with dichotomous variables having "expected frequencies [of]. . . less than 5 [sic]" (p. 83). In SPSS, Fisher's exact test will necessitate recoding the independent variable, political orientation, into a dichotomous format to produce 2x2 tables (UCLA Institute for Digital Research & Education Statistical Consulting, 2021).

The second analysis will attempt to determine if there is a relationship between the independent variable of state policy for undocumented students and the dependent variable of postsecondary participation numbers of DACA recipients. The dependent variable of postsecondary participation is specified as the number of students per 1,000 and is, therefore, a ratio. The independent variable is categorical. Since the independent variable is categorical with two or more levels, and the dependent variable is a ratio or interval, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is an appropriate test (UCLA Institute for Digital Research & Education Statistical Consulting, 2021).

Summary

This chapter presented the purpose of the study, the research questions, the design of the study, the population and sample, the instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. Additionally, Tables 1, 2, and 3 detailed the four data sources for analyzing in SPSS.

Chapter 4

Findings

This chapter contains the results of a study conducted to answer the research questions:

RQ1: Is there a relationship between subnational ideological values and the postsecondary enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for DACA-authorized and undocumented students in specific states?

RQ2: Is there a relationship between subnational enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for DACA-authorized students and their postsecondary participation rates in specific states?

Populations and Sample

The analyses described in the chapter included three populations from four secondary data sources, none of which elaborated upon the participants' specific age, gender, race, ethnicity, or marital status. The first data source was the 2018 Survey of Americans' Political Ideology by State administered telephonically by Gallup included a population of 75,669 randomly selected adult participants, the smallest sample size, 232 from Alaska, and the largest, 8,116 from California (Jones, 2019). The second data source for comparing DACA recipients per 1,000 student population came from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center's (2017) report on the 18,071,004 students enrolled in postsecondary credit awarding institutions. The estimated 241,000 DACA-eligible students for 2017 constituted the third data source's population. Lastly, the Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration (PAHEI, 2021) included a state-by-state breakdown of undocumented postsecondary enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies in place in 2017.

Data Collection

This study compared information from four secondary data sources:

- Gallup's Survey of Americans' Political Ideology by State administered in 2018 to 757,669 survey respondents (Jones, 2019), a data set that has remained constant between 2014 and 2019 (Saad, 2021)
- MPI's estimates of the number of DACA recipients enrolled in college by state in 2017 (Zong et al., 2017)
- PAHEI's (2021) state-by-state analysis of policy toward undocumented, postsecondary students with data matched to the year 2017
- NSCRC's (2017) report on postsecondary enrollment figures for the general population

The four data sets were summarized in tables included in Chapter 3 to compare the information and simplify its entry into SPSS.

Data Analysis

Findings for Research Question 1

Initially, the Chi-square test of independence was selected to determine a relationship between subnational ideological values and the postsecondary policies for DACA-authorized and undocumented students in specific states. The null and alternate hypotheses for RQ1 were as follows:

H_0: There is no relationship between subnational ideological values and the postsecondary enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for DACA-authorized and undocumented students in specific states.

***H_a*:** There is a relationship between subnational ideological values and the postsecondary enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for DACA-authorized and undocumented students in specific states.

Due to the small sample size and anticipation of having multiple cells with fewer than five instances, the variables were narrowed from three levels to two (Kanji, 2006). Each of the 50 states was entered into SPSS. The seven possible policies maintained by each state were entered as seven separate variables, each with a dichotomous choice indicating yes or no for the presence or absence of each specific policy in the state.

Each of the seven policies required a separate analysis comparing political orientation to the presence or absence of each distinct policy. The number of states exhibiting and not exhibiting each of the seven policies informed the dependent variable for the analyses. The independent variable of dominant political ideology was narrowed from three levels, conservative, moderate, and liberal, to two, by omitting the moderate category. Ten states classified as moderate were excluded from the calculations to facilitate the computation of Fisher's exact test in SPSS.

The data used for RQ1 met the first two assumptions of the Chi-square test of independence in that there were two categorical variables, and the observations were independent (Kent State University, 2021). The third assumption wherein most data cells should have had a count of five or more was violated, however, requiring Fisher's exact test to be employed instead (Kent State University, 2021). An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests. Contingency tables for all seven policies were created in SPSS (see Table 4).

Table 4

Contingency Tables for Chi-Square Analyses of State Policies

		Conservative (n = 25)	%	Liberal (n = 15)	%
In-state tuition for DACA/undocumented plus state-level aid?					
	Yes	4	16	4	26.7
	No	21	84	11	73.3
In-state tuition for DACA/undocumented and no state-level aid?		Conservative (n = 25)	%	Liberal (n = 15)	%
	Yes	2	8	6	40
	No	23	92	9	60
In-state tuition for DACA/undocumented to specific institutions?		Conservative (n = 25)	%	Liberal (n = 15)	%
	Yes	0	0	1	6.7
	No	25	100	14	93.3
In-state tuition for DACA only and to specific institutions?		Conservative (n = 25)	%	Liberal (n = 15)	%
	Yes	4	16	1	6.7
	No	21	84	14	93.3
DACA/undocumented permitted to attend but pay out-of-state rate?		Conservative (n = 25)	%	Liberal (n = 15)	%
	Yes	7	28	2	13.3
	No	18	72	13	86.7
DACA only permitted to attend but pay out-of-state rate?		Conservative (n = 25)	%	Liberal (n = 15)	%
	Yes	1	4	0	0
	No	24	96	15	100
This is a state with no expressed enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policy?		Conservative (n = 25)	%	Liberal (n = 15)	%
	Yes	9	36	1	6.7
	No	16	64	15	93.3

Four of 25 conservative-leaning states and four of 15 liberal-leaning states extended state-level financial aid with in-state tuition to undocumented students and DACA recipients. Fisher's Exact test revealed no significant relationship (p = .44) between state-level political orientation and the in-state tuition policy for DACA/undocumented students plus state-level aid. There was no statistically significant association between a state being liberal and maintaining an in-state tuition policy for DACA/undocumented students plus state-level aid or conservative in maintaining an in-state tuition policy for DACA/undocumented students plus state-level aid. Cramér's V was not utilized to measure an effect size as Fisher's Exact test showed no statistically significant association between the two variables.

Two conservative-leaning states allowed undocumented students and DACA recipients to attend public, postsecondary institutions at the in-state tuition rate but without state-level aid, while 23 conservative-leaning states did not. Six liberal-leaning states allowed undocumented students and DACA recipients to attend public, postsecondary institutions at the in-state tuition rate without state-level aid, while nine liberal-leaning states did not. Fisher's Exact test (p = .036) revealed a significant association between state-level political orientation and the policy of in-state tuition for DACA/undocumented students and no state-level aid. Per Frey (2018), a Cramér's V = -.387 indicated a moderate effect size of state-level political orientation on the in-state tuition policy for DACA/undocumented students and no state-level aid. Being a liberal state had a moderate effect on expressing a policy of allowing undocumented students and DACA recipients to attend public, postsecondary institutions at the in-state rate without financial aid. Being a conservative state had a moderate effect on not offering this policy.

None of 25 conservative-leaning states and one of 15 liberal-leaning states offered in-state tuition for a narrowed choice of institutions to undocumented students and DACA

recipients. Fisher's Exact test (p = .375) revealed no statistically significant association between state-level political orientation and the policy of in-state tuition for DACA/undocumented students narrowed to specific institutions. There was no statistically significant association between a state being liberal and maintaining a policy of in-state tuition for DACA/undocumented students to specific institutions or conservative in maintaining a policy of in-state tuition for DACA/undocumented students to specific institutions.

Four of 25 conservative-leaning and one of 15 liberal-leaning states offered in-state tuition for a narrowed choice of institutions to only DACA recipients. Fisher's Exact test (p = .633) showed no statistically significant association between state-level political orientation and the policy of in-state tuition to specific institutions for DACA recipients only. There was no statistically significant association between a state being liberal and maintaining a policy of in-state tuition to specific institutions for DACA recipients only or being conservative and maintaining a policy of in-state tuition to specific institutions for DACA recipients only.

Seven of 25 conservative-leaning and two of 15 liberal-leaning states had a policy requiring undocumented students and DACA recipients to pay out-of-state tuition rates. Fisher's Exact test (p = .440) revealed no statistically significant association between state-level political orientation and the DACA/undocumented pay out-of-state tuition policy. There was no statistically significant association between a state being liberal and maintaining a policy requiring DACA/undocumented students to pay out-of-state tuition or conservative in maintaining a policy where DACA/undocumented students pay out-of-state tuition.

One conservative-leaning state maintained a policy wherein only DACA recipients could attend public, postsecondary institutions but at the out-of-state tuition rate. Twenty-four conservative-leaning and 15 liberal-leaning states did not have this policy. Fisher's Exact test (p

= 1.000) revealed no significant relationship between state-level political orientation and the policy of DACA only permitted to attend but at the out-of-state tuition rate. There was no statistically significant association between a state being liberal and maintaining a policy in which only DACA recipients were permitted to attend but at the out-of-state tuition rate or conservative with only DACA recipients permitted to attend but at the out-of-state tuition rate.

Nine of 25 conservative-leaning and one of 15 liberal-leaning states had no expressed policy. Fisher's Exact test ($p = .219$) revealed no statistically significant association between state-level political orientation and having or not having a defined policy. There was no statistically significant association between a state being liberal and not expressing a policy or conservative and not expressing a policy. Additionally, there was no statistically significant association between a state being liberal and expressing a policy or conservative and expressing a policy.

Findings for Research Question 2

The descriptive statistics associated with DACA students per 1,000 postsecondary students across the three groups of beneficial practices extended to DACA recipients are reported in Table 5.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for DACA Participants per 1,000 Across Policy Groups

	n	*M*	*SD*	Shapiro-Wilk
In-State Tuition and Financial Aid Offered	8	8.60	4.71	$W(8) = .94$, $p = .564$
In-State Tuition to at Least One Public Institution Offered	14	4.02	2.25	$W(14) = .93$, $p = .261$
In-State Tuition Not Offered	12	4.63	3.82	$W(12) = 0.82$, $p = .017$

Tiered DACA-specific policy served as the independent variable, and DACA students per 1,000 postsecondary students the dependent variable. The categorical independent variable of state policy was separated into three groups based on tiered beneficial practices extended to DACA recipients. Group one was In-State Tuition and Financial Aid Offered, group two was In-State Tuition to at Least One Public Institution Offered, and group three, In-State Tuition Not Offered.

The list of 50 states was narrowed to 34 since 16 had no reported figures for DACA-eligible students for 2017. The Participation Rate per 1,000 Students in Each of the 34 States Served as the dependent variable. An alpha level of .05 was used for this statistical test. Group In-State Tuition to at Least One Public Institution Offered was associated with the smallest mean level of DACA recipients per 1,000 students (*M* = 4.02, *SD* = 2.25). The In-State Tuition and Financial Aid Offered group was associated with the numerically highest mean of DACA recipients per 1,000 students (*M* = 8.60, *SD* = 4.71). In-State Tuition Not Offered was associated with a numerical mean falling between the highest and smallest number of DACA recipients per 1,000 students (*M* = 4.63, *SD* = 3.82).

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was used to determine a relationship between state enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies specific to DACA-authorized students and their postsecondary participation rates. The null and alternate hypotheses for RQ2 were as follows:

H_0**:** There is no relationship between state enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies specific to DACA-authorized students and their postsecondary participation rates in each state.

H_a**:** There is a relationship between state enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies specific to DACA-authorized students and their postsecondary participation rates in each state.

The first three underlying assumptions for the one-way ANOVA were met. The dependent variable was continuous, the independent variable was categorical with two or more groups, and the observations were independent (Laerd Statistics, 2018). An SPSS boxplot analysis revealed case 28, Nevada, as the lone outlier in the data; therefore, the fourth assumption of no outliers was violated. The presence of outliers has not always been indicative of an error on the researcher's part, and extreme responses could have been to blame (Chiang et al., 2015). Chiang et al. (2015) recommended performing statistical tests both with and without outliers, arguing that retaining them was justifiable if the results were similar in statistical significance. For this present analysis, the outlier was included.

A Shapiro-Wilk test showed that one of the three groups of the independent variable exhibited a significant departure from normality, W(12) = 0.82, $p = .017$ for In-State Tuition Not Offered. This indicated a violation of approximate normal distribution presumed by the fifth assumption (Laerd Statistics, 2018). However, In-State Tuition to At Least One Public University, W(14) = .93, $p = .261$, and In-State Tuition and Financial Aid, W(8) = .94, $p = .564$, demonstrated normal distributions. The sixth assumption for the one-way ANOVA was satisfied (Laerd Statistics, 2018). Levene's statistic of variances revealed a homogeneity of variance for the present analysis, $F(2,31) = 2.47$, $p = .101$.

Results of the ANOVA showed a significant difference between the tiered groups of DACA-specific policy (In-State Tuition and Financial Aid Offered, In-State Tuition to at Least One Public Institution Offered, and In-State Tuition Not Offered) and DACA-Authorized Students per 1,000 Postsecondary Students; $F(2,31) = 4.69$, $p = .017$, $\eta_p^2 = .232$. A partial eta-squared value of .232 indicated a large effect size between the groups of DACA-specific policy and DACA-Authorized Students per 1,000 Postsecondary Students. The null hypothesis of no

differences between the means was rejected; 23.2% of the variance was accounted for by group membership. To evaluate the nature of the differences between the three means further, the statistically significant ANOVA was followed up with Scheffe's test for post hoc analysis rather than Tukey's due to the sample sizes being unequal (Frey, 2018).

Scheffe's test revealed that policy tier In-State Tuition and Financial Aid (n = 8, M = 8.60, SD = 4.71) indicated significantly more DACA students per 1,000 Postsecondary Students than policy tiers In-State Tuition to at Least One Public Institution (n = 14, M = 4.02, SD = 2.25) and In-State Tuition Not Offered (n = 12, M = 4.63, SD = 3.82). The policy tiers In-State Tuition to at Least One Public Institution and In-State Tuition Not Offered were not significantly different from each other.

Summary

In Chapter 4, findings and statistical analyses were presented for this study. Data analyzed included four secondary data sources. The first source summarized data from Gallup's 2018 Survey of Americans' Political Ideology by State. The second source described the estimated 241,000 DACA-eligible students for 2017. The third data set included the reported 18,071,004 students enrolled in postsecondary credit awarding institutions. The fourth source of data was PAHEI's examination of state-level policies for undocumented postsecondary students.

RQ1 asked if there was a relationship between subnational ideological values and the postsecondary enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for DACA-authorized and undocumented students in specific states. Fisher's Exact tests were conducted for seven separate examinations of state-level policies compared to dominant subnational political ideologies. One of the seven tests revealed a statistically significant association between state-level political orientation and the in-state tuition policy for DACA/undocumented and no state-level aid.

RQ2 asked if there was a relationship between subnational enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for DACA-authorized students and their postsecondary participation rates in specific states. Two of the six assumptions for performing a one-way ANOVA were violated. One wherein an outlier was identified and a second where the Shapiro-Wilk test revealed that one of the three groups of the independent variable exhibited a significant departure from normality. Results of the ANOVA showed a significant difference between the tiered groups of DACA-specific policy and DACA-Authorized Students per 1,000 Postsecondary Students.

Chapter 5

Discussion

Governance has been closely linked to the ideology of decision-makers (Davidai & Ongis, 2019; Ritov et al., 2017). McLendon et al. (2011) stated that "issues at the intersection of immigration and education have ascended to prominence on the legislative agendas of many states" (p. 588), and state ideology could influence economic policymaking (Potrafke, 2017). At the same time, Natter et al. (2020) maintained that political ideology had minimal influence on general immigration legislation yet determined policy specific to extending social benefits supporting the integration of undocumented individuals. These social benefits included opening viable paths to postsecondary learning (Pérez, 2014).

Given that postsecondary enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for undocumented students were not determined at the federal level, examining state-level practices independent from national mandates was possible. The connection between regional sociopolitical values reflected in the legislative activity directly influencing undocumented young adults and their pursuit of higher education could yield valuable information about the conditions necessary to inform and support future legislation. This study searched for such a connection, and the findings for RQ1 echoed, in part, the assumptions of Natter et al. (2020) regarding political ideology influencing the subsidizing of educational pursuits for immigrants.

Research Question 1

Is there a relationship between subnational ideological values and the postsecondary enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for DACA-authorized and undocumented students in specific states? Gallup's Survey of Americans' Political Ideology by State administered in 2018 identified 25 states exhibiting a majority conservative and 15 majority liberal ideological

outlook; ten moderate states were excluded from the analysis to facilitate the use of Fisher's Exact test (Jones, 2019). The enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policy for each state ($N = 50$) fell into seven distinct categories:

- in-state tuition extended to DACA recipients and undocumented students, plus state-level financial aid is offered ($n = 9$)
- in-state tuition extended to DACA recipients and undocumented students ($n = 11$)
- in-state tuition to limited public institutions for DACA recipients and undocumented students ($n = 2$)
- in-state tuition to limited public institutions for DACA recipients only ($n = 5$)
- no in-state tuition available, but DACA recipients and undocumented students are permitted to attend ($n = 12$)
- no-instate tuition available, and only DACA recipients can attend ($n = 1$)
- state has no expressed policy ($n = 10$)

RQ1 required seven separate Fisher's Exact tests, one of which yielded significant results. Notably, two conservative-leaning states permitted undocumented students and DACA recipients to attend public, postsecondary institutions at the in-state tuition rate but without state-level aid, while 23 conservative-leaning states did not. Six liberal-leaning states allowed undocumented students and DACA recipients to attend public, postsecondary institutions at the in-state tuition rate without state-level aid, while nine liberal-leaning states did not.

Fisher's Exact test ($p = .036$) showed a significant association between state-level political orientation and the policy of in-state tuition for DACA/undocumented students and no state-level aid. Cramér's $V = -.387$ revealed a moderate effect size of state-level political orientation on the in-state tuition policy for DACA/undocumented students and no state-level

aid. Being liberal had a moderate effect on a state allowing undocumented students and DACA recipients to attend public, postsecondary institutions at the in-state rate without financial aid. Being conservative had a moderate effect on a state not offering this policy.

A liberal identity was associated with the states permitting in-state tuition while excluding additional financial assistance to undocumented students irrespective of their DACA status. This is to say, a liberal state was more likely than a conservative one to grant in-state tuition, albeit without financial assistance, to undocumented students with and without DACA status. Simultaneously, requiring undocumented students irrespective of DACA status to pay a higher, out-of-state tuition rate was not significantly associated with a state's dominant liberal or conservative ideology. Extending state-level aid to undocumented students was not associated with as state's political identity either. The statistically nonsignificant results from six of the seven Fisher's Exact tests contrasted previous research attributing undocumented-friendly legislation to liberals and restrictive policy to conservatives (see Natter et al., 2020), while the overall findings of RQ1 did reveal a significant difference between the two groups.

Research Question 2

Is there a relationship between subnational enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for DACA-authorized students and their postsecondary participation rates in specific states? Non-resident tuition has been out of reach for most undocumented students (Stone, 2017). The average cost of college tuition in 2021 was $9,580 per year at the in-state rate and $27,437 for non-residents (Hanson, 2021). "Undocumented students [have required] the financial support . . . [necessary to realize] the investments . . . already made in their primary and secondary educations [sic] and positioning them to contribute meaningfully to our future economic stability" (Eusebio & Mendoza, 2015, p. 13). Prior research showed that undocumented students

experienced unique financial adversity remedied only by state, regional, and institutional initiatives (Eusebio & Mendoza, 2015). Established forms of relief to these hardships include in-state tuition and subnational financial aid (NCSL, 2021), a subject examined in RQ2's analysis.

RQ2 explored the relationship between DACA recipient-specific enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies and the estimated enrollment figures for the 34 states reporting on this population. Given these variables, the analysis of RQ2 suggested that states offering both in-state tuition and financial aid experienced the greatest participation rate at 8.6 students per 1,000 (n = 8, M = 8.60, SD = 4.71). Interestingly, states offering in-state tuition to at least one public institution without financial aid averaged slightly fewer students at 4.02 per 1,000 (n = 14, M = 4.02, SD = 2.25) than states not offering in-state tuition with a rate of 4.63 students per 1,000 (n = 12, M = 4.63, SD = 3.82). Thus, states offering in-state tuition and state-level financial aid attracted nearly twice the number of participants per 1,000 as states withholding financial support or charging out-of-state tuition.

Implications

Research has suggested that lawmakers were inclined to support immigration-related legislation in communities with significant immigrant membership where voters expressed interest in doing so, regardless of regionally dominant political ideology (Ovink et al., 2016). Moreover, as shown in the analyses for RQ1, the political orientation of a state was not a statistically-significant determinant of most aspects for enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policy directed toward undocumented students, especially those who maintained DACA status. As an illustration, a considerable expansion of state-level opportunities for undocumented students occurred between the years 2017 and 2020 (see PAHEI, 2021), a time which many researchers (Green, 2019; Allen-Handy & Farinde-Wu, 2018; Torres, 2017; Burkett & Hayes,

2018; Sherkat & Lehman, 2018; Geron & Levinson, 2018) thought to be the most restrictive toward immigrants in recent U.S. history.

This current study has contributed to the literature by revealing, through the data, the plausibility for undocumented students to attend public, postsecondary institutions in states identified as conservative and presumably adverse to extending social benefits to non-citizens (see Natter et al., 2020). To clarify, a state's dominant sociopolitical identity (i.e., liberal or conservative) was not a clear determinant for the level of access in pursuing a postsecondary education as an undocumented student. Additionally, this study demonstrated that variations in an institution's enrollment, tuition, and financial aid policies for students without documentation affected participation rates. As revealed in the analysis of RQ2, postsecondary participation rates per 1,000 among a subgroup of undocumented students, DACA recipients, were highest in states providing both in-state tuition and financial aid. Discerning which financial aid and tuition policies were utilized most by the DACA-registered student population could help determine suitable offerings by states seeking to create a solid tax base of degreed high-income earners (see Eusebio & Mendoza, 2015).

The literature review presented multiple areas in which the challenges to postsecondary education for students without documentation could be remedied by addressing the incongruence of information affecting interested parties. Within high schools, guidance counselors have been uniquely positioned to create positive learning spaces (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011) in which undocumented students and their families could speak freely about the options available to them in light of their immigration status (Kam et al., 2018). For example, most states that permitted undocumented students to claim in-state tuition status required them to submit an affidavit indicating that they would apply for residency when legally permissible (Núñez & Holthaus,

2017). This could serve as a workaround for these students to enroll in online college classes based in one state while residing in another more prohibitive state. Counselors, including those in college admissions, would need to stay abreast of the ever-changing state-level extensions and limitations on opportunity as well as potential non-federal postsecondary funding sources (Nienhusser, 2013). Employees working directly with undocumented students should be afforded opportunities to participate in empathy-building professional development activities focusing on the challenges of navigating educational paths that they have faced (Todd et al., 2020).

In gathering support for postsecondary educational opportunities in regions where gaps exist, advocates should appeal to voters and legislators in practical, non-threatening language (see Tsang, 2018). Civil discourse (Evans, 2019) buttressed by an empathic consideration of the needs and fears of voters is vital for threat reduction (see Orcés & Ewing, 2019). Constituents should be informed about the potential return on their community's investment in extending educational benefits to students without documentation through the increased revenue of an educated workforce (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2021) while also learning of the high human cost of not finding solutions (Johnson, 2010).

The campus-based safety nets comprised of peer groups and mentors disappeared for most undocumented students upon graduation from college (Perez, 2020). Malik (2015) noted that college graduates could find work in fields corresponding to their expertise, but students without DACA status would find it difficult to do so. Enriquez et al. (2019) argued that "undocumented students . . . face[d] uncertainty about their future ability to be legally employed" (p. 9). Without documentation permitting legal employment, many undocumented college graduates faced joblessness and immobility in the same states that have invested in their future (Perez, 2020). The chasm between the employability of DACA recipients and remaining

undocumented graduates has demonstrated the necessity of legislative solutions to immigration mandates disenfranchising an educated workforce due to unfavorable residency status.

Vanek et al. (2020) recognized the importance of public opinion and policy when rallying "support for the linguistic, economic and civic integration of refugees and immigrants" (p. 41). Upon introducing the DACA program in 2012, adult education programs experienced a spike in enrollment as undocumented immigrants sought to conform to the program's continuing education requirements (Hooker et al., 2015). Adult education programs have cultivated human capital beyond high school equivalency courses and English as a second language classes and have served as a bridge to college enrollment (Migration Policy Institute, n.d.). Public and corporate backing of adult education programs has been evident when workplace skills, civic engagement, integration, and English acquisition were emphasized (Duval-Couetil & Mikulecky, 2011; Fonseca de Carvalho, 2018; Núñez, 2014).

Limitations of the Study

The secondary data described and analyzed in this study were initially collected to support unrelated analyses (see Cheng & Phillips, 2014). Longo and Drazen (2016) warned that researchers using secondary data sets may not have been aware of the parameters defining these original studies. An additional shortcoming of this current study was its dependence on the Migration Policy Institute's (Zong et al., 2017) estimates of the undocumented population's participation in postsecondary education. The data were tied exclusively to the year 2017 and based on estimates rather than precise figures. This data would not be particularly helpful in informing forthcoming studies until they reflected later trends.

Recommendations for Further Research

Kamarck and Stenglein (2019) understood that gathering data on the undocumented population was challenging due to the reluctance of study participants to reveal their residency status. Webber-Ritchey et al. (2021) supported qualitative research methods when working with vulnerable populations. Although costlier than traditional survey methods, qualitative research predicated upon establishing trust with leaders in the targeted community can yield valuable data reflective of the participants' lived experiences (P. Harris, personal communication, November 10, 2021). Several researchers cited in the literature review (Aganza et al., 2018; Cross et al., 2019; Lad & Braganza, 2013; Murillo, 2017; Nienhusser, 2013) performed qualitative studies but only in states with left-of-center political ideologies (Jones, 2019) and significant undocumented populations. Future qualitative studies should examine the postsecondary experiences of undocumented students residing in states deemed restrictive. Studies should also explore how regional sociopolitical identity influences legislation directed toward immigrants and its effects on this population expressing agency or self-efficacy.

Paralleling the experiences of minors in homeless communities, undocumented adolescents have struggled to meet their own basic needs and those of younger siblings due to situational estrangement from caregivers. The adultification of these youths being "thrust into traditional markers of adulthood" (Schmitz & Tyler, 2017, p. 10) demonstrates the resiliency and self-determinism contrasting the experiences of many of their citizen peers. The immense burdens placed upon undocumented youth navigating an unfamiliar, sometimes hostile world may challenge the parameters of what exactly constitutes the adult in adult education, a potential topic for future studies.

When calculating the population of the United States as a whole, figures concerning undocumented residents vary based on the methodology used (Kamarck & Stenglein, 2019). As discussed in this study's limitations, the Migration Policy Institute's numbers specific to undocumented students attending postsecondary institutions are static and not indicative of trends after the year 2017. Given this point, informed governance is driven by data (Pew-MacArthur, 2014). A research organization with adequate financial and human resources should consider surveying all credit-awarding postsecondary institutions in the United States to ascertain the actual number of undocumented students enrolled, with and without DACA status. This data could then be used to inform future research and shape public policy.

The challenges inherent to studying hidden populations warrant further research. Even within these vulnerable communities, subsets of undocumented immigrants experience even less representation in the literature. For example, most studies concerning undocumented students emphasized individuals from Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean, with very little information published concerning students from Africa, Asia, Canada, Europe, or the Middle East (Bjorklund, 2018). Another critical point is that undocumented students have difficulty finding work commensurate with their postsecondary learning experiences due to differences in immigration status (Malik, 2015). With this in mind, additional research should consider the need to balance the human and financial capital at stake when degreed undocumented students are barred from participating in the U.S. labor force.

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Auburn University Human Research Protection Program

EXEMPTION REVIEW APPLICATION

For information or help completing this form, contact: **THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE**
Phone: 334-844-5966 **Email:** IRBAdmin@auburn.edu

Submit completed application and supporting material as one attachment to IRBsubmit@auburn.edu.

1. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION **Today's Date** 1/26/2021

a. Project Title Subnational Socio-political Identity and Post-Secondary Participation of Undocumented Adults

b. Principal Investigator Curtis Alan Rowe Degree(s) PhD Adult Education
Rank/Title Graduate Student Department/School College of Education
Phone Number 334-477-2590 AU Email car0075@auburn.edu

Faculty Principal Investigator (required if PI is a student) Dr. Leslie A. Cordie
Title Committee Chair/Associate Professor Department/School Educational Foundations, Leadership & Technology
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Dept Head Dr. James W. Satterfield Department/School Educational Foundations, Leadership & Technology
Phone Number (334) 844-3060 AU Email jws0089@auburn.edu

c. Project Personnel (other PI) – Identify all individuals who will be involved with the conduct of the research and include their role on the project. Role may include design, recruitment, consent process, data collection, data analysis, and reporting. Attach a table if needed for additional personnel.

Personnel Name ________ Degree (s) ________
Rank/Title ________ Department/School ________
Role ________
AU affiliated? ☐ YES ☐ NO If no, name of home institution ________
Plan for IRB approval for non-AU affiliated personnel? ________

Personnel Name ________ Degree (s) ________
Rank/Title ________ Department/School ________
Role ________
AU affiliated? ☐ YES ☐ NO If no, name of home institution ________
Plan for IRB approval for non-AU affiliated personnel? ________

Personnel Name ________ Degree (s) ________
Rank/Title ________ Department/School ________
Role ________
AU affiliated? ☐ YES ☐ NO If no, name of home institution ________
Plan for IRB approval for non-AU affiliated personnel? ________

d. Training – Have all Key Personnel completed CITI human subjects training (including elective modules related to this research) within the last 3 years? YES ☑ NO ☐

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this Document for use from
02/08/2021 to --------------
Protocol # 21-070 EX 2102

e. Funding source – Is this project funded by the investigator(s)? ☑ YES ☐ NO
Is this project funded by AU? ☐ YES ☑ NO If YES, identify source ____________________
Is this project funded by an external sponsor? ☐ YES ■ No If YES, provide the name of the sponsor, type of sponsor (governmental, non-profit, corporate, other), and an identification number for theaward.
Name____________________Type____________________Grant # ____________________

f. List other AU IRB-approved research studies and/or IRB approvals from other institutions that are associated with this project.
None

2. Mark the category or categories below that describe the proposedresearch:

☐ 1. Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices. The research is not likely to adversely impact students' opportunity to learn or assessment of educators providing instruction. 104(d)(1)

☐ 2. Research only includes interactions involving educational tests, surveys, interviews, public observation if at least ONE of the following criteria. (The research includes data collection only; may include visual or auditory recording; may NOT include intervention and only includes interactions). **Mark the applicable sub-category below (i, ii, or iii).** 104(d)(2)

☐ (i) Recorded information cannot readily identify the participant (directlyorindirectly/linked);
OR
- surveys and interviews: no children;
- educational tests or observation of public behavior: can only include childrenwhen investigators do not participate in activities beingobserved.

☐ (ii) Any disclosures of responses outside would not reasonably place participant at risk; **OR**

☐ (iii) Information is recorded with identifiers or code linked to identifiers and IRB conducts limited review; no children. **Requires limited review by the IRB.***

☐ 3. Research involving Benign Behavioral Interventions (BBI)** through verbal, written responses (including data entry or audiovisual recording) from adult subjects who prospectively agree and ONE of the following criteria is met. (This research does not include children and does not include medical interventions. Research cannot have deception unless the participant prospectively agrees that they will be unaware of or misled regarding the nature and purpose of the research)
Mark the applicable sub-category below (A, B, or C). 104(d)(3)(i)

☐ **(A)** Recorded information cannot readily identify the subject (directly or indirectly/linked); **OR**

☐ **(B)** Any disclosure of responses outside of the research would not reasonably placesubject at risk; **OR**

☐ **(C)** Information is recorded with identifiers and cannot have deception unless participant prospectively agrees. **Requires limited review by the IRB.***

■ 4. Secondary research for which consent is not required: use of identifiable information or identifiable bio-specimen that have been or will be collected for some other 'primary' or 'initial' activity, if one ofthe following criteria is met. Allows retrospective and prospective secondary use. **Mark the applicable sub-category below (I, ii, iii, or iv).** 104(d)(4)

■ (i) Biospecimens or information are publically available;

☐ (ii) Information recorded so subject cannot readily be identified, directlyorindirectly/linked; investigator does not contact subjects and will not re-identify thesubjects;OR

☐ (iii) Collection and analysis involving investigators use of identifiable health information when use is regulated by HIPAA "health care operations" or "research or "public health activities and purposes" (does not include biospecimens (only PHI and requires federal guidance on how to apply); OR

☐ (iv) Research information collected by or on behalf of federal government usinggovernment generated or collected information obtained for non-researchactivities.

☐ 5. Research and demonstration projects which are supported by a federal agency/department AND designed to study and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (i) public benefit or service programs; (ii) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs;(iii) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (iv) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs. (must be posted on a federal web site). 104(d)(5) (must be posted on a federal web site)

☐ 6. Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (i) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (ii) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The research does not involve prisoners as participants. 104(d)(6)

New exemption categories 7 and 8: Both categories 7 and 8 require Broad Consent. **(**Broad consent is a new type of informed consent provided under the Revised Common Rule pertaining to storage, maintenance, and secondary research with identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens. Secondary research refers to research use of materials that are collected for either research studies distinct from the current secondary research proposal, or for materials that are collected for non-research purposes, such as materials that are left over from routine clinical diagnosis or treatments. Broad consent does not apply to research that collects information or biospecimens from individuals through direct interaction or intervention specifically for the purpose of the research.) **The Auburn University IRB has determined that as currently interpreted, Broad Consent is not feasible at Auburn and these 2 categories WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED at this time.**

***Limited IRB review* – the IRB Chairs or designated IRB reviewer reviews the protocol to ensure adequate provisions are in place to protect privacy and confidentiality.**

*****Category 3 – Benign Behavioral Interventions (BBI)* must be brief in duration, painless/harmless, not physically invasive, not likely to have a significant adverse lasting impact on participants, and it is unlikely participants will find the interventions offensive or embarrassing.**

3. PROJECT SUMMARY

a. Does the study target any special populations? (Mark applicable)

Minors (under 18 years of age)	☐ YES ☑ NO
Pregnant women, fetuses, or any products of conception	☐ YES ☑ NO
Prisoners or wards (unless incidental, not allowed for Exempt research)	☐ YES ☑ NO
Temporarily or permanently impaired	☐ YES ☑ NO

b. Does the research pose more than minimal risk to participants? ☐ YES ☑ NO

Minimal risk means that the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or test. 42 CFR 46.102(i)

c. Does the study involve any of the following?

Procedures subject to FDA regulations (drugs, devices, etc.)	☐ YES ☑ NO
Use of school records of identifiable students or information from instructors about specific students.	☐ YES ☑ NO
Protected health or medical information when there is a direct or Indirect link which could identify the participant.	☐ YES ☑ NO
Collection of sensitive aspects of the participant's own behavior, such as illegal conduct, drug use, sexual behavior or alcohol use.	☐ YES ☑ NO
Deception of participants	☐ YES ☑ NO

4. Briefly describe the proposed research, including purpose, participant population, recruitment process, consent process, research procedures and methodology.

I will attempt to determine if a relationship exists between regional socio-political values and public, post-secondary policies regarding the enrollment of undocumented adult students in public institutions. Additionally, I will look for a relationship between regional socio-political values and enrollment figures in a state-by-state analysis. The purpose of this study is to determine if post-secondary educational opportunities and participation for undocumented adults vary with a state's reported ideological leanings, i.e., conservative, moderate, or liberal.

This study will examine college enrollment figures specific to an estimated 454,000 undocumented students both with and without DACA status. There will be no need for a recruitment or consent process since this study will make use of secondary data sources.

That data enumerated in the Gallup Panel Survey of Political Orientation and the New American Economic and the President's Alliance on Higher Education Immigration post-secondary, undocumented student participation figures will be analyzed using the chi-square distribution test.

5. Waivers

Check any waivers that apply and describe how the project meets the criteria for the waiver. Provide the rationale for the waiver request.

- ☐ **Waiver of Consent (Including existing de-identified data)**
- ☐ **Waiver of Documentation of Consent (Use of Information Letter)**
- ☐ **Waiver of Parental Permission**

All retrospective information will be de-identified.

This does not apply since no human subjects will be involved.

6. Describe how participants/data/specimens will be selected. If applicable, include gender, race, and ethnicity of the participant population.

I will use secondary data sources concerning undocumented participation figures and regional, socio-political leanings of all 50 states.

Gallup Survey Information:

https://news.gallup.com/poll/247016/conservatives-greatly-outnumber-liberals-states.aspx

New American Economic and the President's Alliance on Higher Education Immigration data:

https://www.presidentsalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Undocumented-Students-in-Higher-Education-April-2020.pdf

National Conference of State Legislatures' data for undocumented college student policies:

https://www.ncsl.org/research/education/undocumented-student-tuition-overview.aspx

7. Does the research involve deception? ☐ YES ■ NO If YES, please provide the rationale for deception and describe the debriefing process.

8. **Describe why none of the research procedures would cause a participant either physical or psychological discomfort or be perceived as discomfort above and beyond what theperson would experience in daily life.**

   This does not apply as using secondary data.

9. **Describe the provisions to maintain confidentiality of data, including collection, transmission, and storage.**

   The data provided by Gallup and New American Economic and the President's Alliance on Higher Education Immigration do not indicate any information related to the personal identity of the respondents.

10. Describe the provisions included in the research to project the privacy interests of participants (e.g., others will not overhear conversations with potential participants, individuals will not be publicly identified or embarrassed).

This does not apply.

11. Will the research involve interacting (communication or direct involvement) with participants?
☐ YES ☒ NO If YES, describe the consent process and information to be presented to subjects. This includes identifying that the activities involve research; that participation is voluntary; describing the procedures to be performed; and the PI name and contact information.

12. Additional Information and/or attachments.

In the space below, provide any additional information you believe may help the IRB review of the proposed research. If attachments are included, list the attachments below. Attachments may include recruitment materials, consent documents, site permissions, IRB approvals from other institutions, etc.

NA

Principal Investigator's Signature Curtis Rowe Digitally signed by Curtis Rowe Date: 2021.01.27 15:43:12 -06'00' **Date** 1-27-2021

If PI is a student,
Faculty Principal Investigator's Signature Leslie A Cordie Digitally signed by Leslie A Cordie DN: cn=Leslie A Cordie, o=Auburn University, ou=ELFT, email=lesliecordie@auburn.edu, c=US Date: 2021.01.27 16:20:38 -06'00' **Date** 1-27-01

Department Head's Signature James Satterfield, Jr. **Date** 2/5/21

AU Exemption Form Version 07.14.2020 Version Date (date document created): 1-26-2021 page 8 of 8

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)

COMPLETION REPORT - PART 1 OF 2
COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS*

* NOTE: Scores on this Requirements Report reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. See list below for details. See separate Transcript Report for more recent quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

- Name: Leslie Cordie (ID: 2905745)
- Institution Affiliation: Auburn University (ID: 964)
- Institution Email: lesliecordie@auburn.edu
- Institution Unit: EFLT
- Phone: 334-844-3089

- Curriculum Group: IRB Additional Modules
- Course Learner Group: Social, Behavioral and Education Sciences
- Stage: Stage 1 - Basic Course
- Description: Choose this group to satisfy CITI training requirements for Investigators and staff involved primarily in biomedical research with human subjects.

- Record ID: 38525693
- Completion Date: 07-Jan-2021
- Expiration Date: 07-Jan-2024
- Minimum Passing: 80
- Reported Score*: 100

REQUIRED AND ELECTIVE MODULES ONLY	DATE COMPLETED	SCORE
Belmont Report and Its Principles (ID: 1127)	07-Jan-2021	3/3 (100%)
Students in Research (ID: 1321)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
Research with Children - SBE (ID: 507)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
Internet-Based Research - SBE (ID: 510)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
Auburn University (ID: 12239)	07-Jan-2021	No Quiz

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

Verify at: www.citiprogram.org/verify/?k11508e53-6f5e-4897-8fb9-15c989085cbc-38525693

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program)
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Phone: 888-529-5929
Web: https://www.citiprogram.org

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)

COMPLETION REPORT - PART 2 OF 2
COURSEWORK TRANSCRIPT**

** NOTE: Scores on this Transcript Report reflect the most current quiz completions, including quizzes on optional (supplemental) elements of the course. See list below for details. See separate Requirements Report for the reported scores at the time all requirements for the course were met.

- Name: Leslie Cordie (ID: 2905745)
- Institution Affiliation: Auburn University (ID: 964)
- Institution Email: lesliecordie@auburn.edu
- Institution Unit: EFLT
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- Record ID: 38525693
- Report Date: 07-Jan-2021
- Current Score**: 100

REQUIRED, ELECTIVE, AND SUPPLEMENTAL MODULES	MOST RECENT	SCORE
Students in Research (ID: 1321)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
Belmont Report and Its Principles (ID: 1127)	07-Jan-2021	3/3 (100%)
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
Research with Children - SBE (ID: 507)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
Internet-Based Research - SBE (ID: 510)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)	07-Jan-2021	5/5 (100%)
Auburn University (ID: 12239)	07-Jan-2021	No Quiz

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

Verify at: www.citiprogram.org/verify/?k11508e53-61fe-4897-8fb9-15c989085cbc-38525693

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