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Uncertain Futures:
Post-Graduation Career Search Experiences of Undocumented and Formerly Undocumented College Students in the University of California System

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
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in

Educational Leadership

by

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The dissertation of Belinda Zamacona is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically.

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DEDICATION

Le dedico este trabajo a mi familia, primeramente y, ante todo. Todo lo que hago, todo lo que soy, es por y para ustedes: Edelmira Zamacona Hernandez, Guillermo Zamacona Serna, Margarita Hernandez De La Rosa, y Guillermo Zamacona Hernandez.

También se lo dedico a mi pueblo, a mi querida La Venta en el puerto más bello del mundo - Acapulco. ¡Que viva La Venta!

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Abajo con los muros.

EPIGRAPH

“Ya me gritaron mil veces que me regrese a mi tierra, porque aquí no quepo yo.

Quiero recordarle al gringo: Yo no crucé la frontera, la frontera me cruzó”.

-Somos Más Americanos by Los Tigres Del Norte

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Uncertain Futures:
Post-Graduation Career Search Experiences of Undocumented and Formerly Undocumented College Students in the University of California System

by

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Professor Frances Contreras, Chair

The undocumented college student population in the United States reflects a similar pattern of growth relative to the overall population of undocumented individuals (Goo, 2015). While the undocumented population in the U.S. has not recently increased substantially, and in some cases the undocumented population has actually declined (Baker & Rytina, 2012), there is

a growing need to address the limited opportunities available to undocumented youth after graduation from college. College students face challenges finding a career path after graduation, they face the phenomenon of underemployment (Abel, Deitz, & Su, 2014) and these challenges become more difficult when a student is undocumented and lacks permanent work authorization to be employed, and face the threat of deportation (Autin et al., 2018). This study aimed to explore the post-graduation experiences of students who went to college while undocumented. Using a conceptual framework that includes Transition Theory (Schlossberg, 1981) and Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2005), the research design used narrative inquiry to gain a deep understanding of the experiences of these students and their journeys. A review of the literature in this study addressed the following domains of literature, as they relate to undocumented individuals: policy and legislation, demographics of undocumented communities, and a highlight of California-specific factors. This study includes a literature review of the following domains of knowledge: policy and legislation, demographics of undocumented students, a California-specific review, the focus of the study that highlights challenges and barriers for undocumented students, and a conceptual framework that includes Schlossberg's Transition Theory (1981), and Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2005). Participants included those who have successfully graduated from the University of California system and are or were undocumented during some or all of their time in college. The narratives of participants guided the inquiry and study findings.

Keywords: undocumented students, undocumented graduates, undocumented workforce, undocumented professionals, undocumented college students, undocumented immigrant students

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

Introduction

> "Only a handful of people knew I was undocumented, I thought the less I shared it, the less it became real that I would have to face not having a social security number, not being able to legally work, to travel, to see family on the other side of the border, possibly not even being able to go and stay in college. To this day, I don't know how to bring it up to friends I grew up that still don't know what I went through, because I haven't made sense of what my life was like back then, and how I survived. I put myself through a lot of risks, and even some dangerous situations because I didn't tell people I was undocumented for such a long time. It was worse when I got to college, people just didn't talk about it back then. I didn't want to be different, I already felt like an outsider. This work has made me reflect, it's still very hard. I still get scared when I cross the border, I don't know why. I don't know how to openly talk about all of it without being overwhelmed with emotions, even to my parents, to my own family. I don't want to put them through that. I'm now a naturalized citizen, but I still feel sad, I feel angry, and I feel robbed - robbed from experiences, from opportunities, and robbed of my humanity" (B. Zamacona, personal communication, December 2019).

This quote comes from my personal journal. I was undocumented when I began my undergraduate studies at San Diego State University in 2002. I benefited from the state AB540 nonresident tuition exemption without which I could not have attended college. Despite the tuition exemption, my family and I incurred tens of thousands of dollars of debt in order for me to pursue my undergraduate degree. I was undocumented until two weeks shy of my 21st birthday. Attending college somehow made me feel "less" undocumented.

The immigrant populations that have migrated to the U.S. throughout the nation's development have come as a result of different factors, including war (whether in their home countries, or civil war here in the U.S.), economic pushout, global political currents, or other crises in their home countries, to name a few. These conditions continue to the present day (Spickard, 2009).

Undocumented Individuals

Some immigrants enter the U.S. without documentation, while others stay beyond the term of their permitted presence. This population without legal immigration status is referred to as undocumented, because they do not fall into any U.S. immigration category (Passel, Capps, & Fix 2004). Another widely used term to describe undocumented individuals is unauthorized immigrants (Baker & Rytina, 2012). A vital change in terminology used to identify undocumented individuals occurred in 2016, when the U.S. Library of Congress followed the example of the American Library Association and removed the term illegal alien(s) from its headings, noting the dehumanizing effect of the terminology and the criminalization of individuals by this term (Aguilera, 2016). Nelson and Davis-Wiley (2018) further acknowledged that the use of the term illegal alien in media communicates a negative narrative of undocumented individuals, due to the presumption of criminality that is innate to the term. For purposes of this study, the term undocumented was used to refer to individuals lacking legal immigration status, and include those referenced by the 2004 Passel, Capps, and Fix study, as well as the terminology described by Nelson and Davis-Wiley in 2018.

Undocumented youth have immigrated to the U.S. from every part of the world, but especially from below the southern U.S. border, where waves of migration have been created by globalization and volatile political and social climates (Cornelius & Marcelli, 2001). The undocumented college student population (traditionally matriculated students ages 18-24) has followed a similar pattern of growth as the overall population of undocumented individuals in the United States and has grown proportionally (Goo, 2015).

In early research on undocumented individuals in higher education, Salsbury identified excessive dropout rates of high school age undocumented youth as attributable to a lack of access to postsecondary education. The researcher found that undocumented youth dropped out of high school as they became aware of limitations caused by their status (Salsbury, 2013). The limitations that the researcher identified in this study included admissions restrictions, reduced access to financial aid, and fear of deportation.

No significant federal immigration legislation existed as of the time of this study regarding the opportunities available for undocumented individuals residing in the United States who wish to pursue postsecondary education. Undocumented individuals aspiring to seek higher education have different levels of access depending upon where in the U.S. they reside (Roth, 2017). As of January 2020, two U.S. states – Alabama and South Carolina – explicitly deny college admission to undocumented individuals (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2019). In Alabama, where approximately 55,000 undocumented individuals make up 1.2% of the overall population (Pew Research Center, 2019), House Bill 56 ("HB 56") is one of several laws that have crippled the daily life of undocumented people. Mohl in 2016 summarized the provisions of HB 56, thirty in all, that "...attack every aspect of an illegal alien's life...so they will deport themselves (p.47)." One provision of HB 56 prohibits admission of an undocumented individual to a public postsecondary institution.

In South Carolina, House Bill 4400 (HB 4400), also known as the "South Carolina Illegal Immigration Reform Act," prohibits undocumented individuals from being admitted into public institutions of higher education or receiving any type of public financial aid (HB 4400, 2008). The text of HB 4400 states, "an alien unlawfully present in the United States is not eligible to attend a public institution of higher learning in this State" (HB 4400, 2008).

College students face rising tuition costs and limited access to financial resources to cover these costs (Ehrenberg, 2006, 2010). For undocumented students, these challenges are further compounded by various state laws that determine the cost of tuition and available resources to undocumented individuals. Available resources vary widely depending upon an individual student's particular immigration status, as well as their state of current residence and where they attended high school or community college. In some states, an undocumented student is considered a non-resident for tuition purposes, which may almost triple the cost of tuition (University of California Admissions, 2019). Additionally, federal financial aid is not available to undocumented students.

As of 2020, there are seven states that offer state-based financial aid to undocumented individuals (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2019). Undocumented college students may also have access to certain private funding sources, including private scholarships and high-interest rate personal loans (Immigrants Rising, 2019). These resources vary depending upon an individual's state of residence and other factors.

The adoption of the federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy (DACA) in 2012 and the granting of in-state resident tuition (ISRT) by various states have increased the number of undocumented individuals who have been able to access public higher education institutions across the U.S. (Enriquez, Hernandez, Millán, Vera, 2019). However, as the population of undocumented individuals matriculating into and graduating from higher education institutions steadily grows, the public policies that have helped these students gain access to higher education have been increasingly challenged in court (Barnes, 2019).

As the scholarship on undocumented students continues to develop, and as the undocumented college student population continues to grow (Goo, 2015), a need to research the

journeys that students take after college graduation has emerged. In order to gain a better understanding of the undocumented student experience, it is necessary to examine what happens to these students after they graduate from college. Accordingly, the purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of undocumented individuals upon graduation from post-secondary education in the United States.

Statement of the Problem

Comprehensive research into the experiences of undocumented students requires an examination into what these students expect to find – and do find – after graduation from college. Undocumented individuals who pursue higher education are undoubtedly influenced throughout their educational careers by expectations of what opportunities may await them after college. It is therefore necessary to consider what their actual post-college experiences are.

One challenge that students face as they approach graduation from college is that of career opportunities and finding a job after graduation. In their job projections for 2018, Carnevale, Smith, and Strohl (2010) estimated that 63% of jobs would require at least some college education. They further projected that "about 33 percent will require a bachelor's degree or better" (p.13).

In 2014, Abel, Deitz, and Su found that the average unemployment rate of recent college graduates was 4.3 percent, while the unemployment rate of all college graduates was 2.9 percent. Recent college graduates in the researchers' analysis were defined as those ages 22-27 years old, in an attempt to capture college graduates within their first five years of graduation. Their research findings suggest that "finding a job tends to be more difficult for those just out of school than for those who have been out of school longer" (p. 2). The findings from this study did not specifically consider the additional challenges faced by undocumented individuals, nor did it

account for the experiences of what in higher educational literature is referred to as non-traditional student populations, that includes older students and transfer students. This study and others examining employment rates amongst college graduates typically define "recent" graduates based upon age and time since graduation, but generally do not factor in older students, or for transfer students – which many older students are.

Finding a job after graduation can be especially difficult for undocumented individuals, who cannot legally work in the U.S. without specific authorization such as DACA (Gonzales, Terriquez,& Ruszczyk, 2014). Most policies and advocacy efforts in support of access to higher education for undocumented individuals fail to address life after graduation. In states where undocumented individuals can obtain professional and vocational licenses through state legislation, individuals still face the challenge of work authorization, especially in the case of individuals who do not have DACA (Connell, 2016). Understanding the pathways that undocumented college students take upon graduation will help inform policy, will guide educators and advocates to better understand how to support undocumented students, and will aid students in identifying resources and practices that will assist them in navigating volatile political times while preparing for their post-graduation careers.

Theories Guiding Study

Undocumented individuals are a diverse population with varied life experiences (Gonzalez, 2009). The inability to obtain permanent work authorization is the overarching challenge that most often defines their career pathways and job options after college graduation. The guiding theories chosen to develop the conceptual framework for this study were geared to understand the transition undocumented college students experience after graduating aim to understand the time leading up to their transition, the transition itself, and their reality after the

transition. The theories guiding this study were Transition Theory (TS); and Community Cultural Wealth Model (CCW).

Research Questions

This study focused on the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of undocumented college students (formerly or currently undocumented) in finding a career path or job after earning a bachelor's degree?
2. What barriers do undocumented college students face after graduation, as they enter the workforce?
3. What is the role of an undocumented college student's campus in their ability to support them to enter the workforce after graduation?

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are provided to give clarity to their use in the study.

- DACA: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, an executive order enacted in 2012 by President Barack Obama. Sometimes recipients of the DACA program are referred to as DACAmented. DACAmented individuals receive work authorization.
- Environment: The context in which individuals find themselves; i.e., external influences.
- Marginalized: Individuals whose identities and/or statuses have caused them to be treated as less important or peripheral to society.
- Participants: Individuals participated in the study.
- Recently graduated: In this study the definition provided by Abel, Deitz, and Su (2014) for those who have recently graduated is used: individuals ages 22-27 years old. This age

range is used by the researchers, assuming that students begin college at the age of 18. This age range leaves out older students and transfer students.

- Underemployment: Refers to the phenomenon when an individual has a job or career that does not fully utilize their skills or education.
- Undocumented: Individuals who do not currently possess lawful immigration status.
- Undocumented college students: Individuals who do not currently possess lawful immigration status and presently attend a four-year degree-granting institution of higher education. Used interchangeably with undocumented students.

Methodology

This study was a qualitative narrative inquiry, relying on purposeful sampling, in-depth interviews, and narrative analysis of undocumented students who have successfully conferred a minimum of a bachelor's degree within the University of California system. Participants completed a survey questionnaire to determine eligibility for the study. Twenty individuals out of the 43 who completed the questionnaire were invited to interview over Zoom, and the remaining individuals were notified they were not eligible for the study, and the reasons why, mainly that they were outside of the time range of when they graduated (5 years from graduation). After being approved by IRB, this study was permitted to be exempt, and documentation was not needed. Those selected to be interviewed were asked to sign up for an interview time through the Calendly scheduling platform and asked to provide additional demographic information through the same platform. Twenty interviews ranging from 44-76 minutes were conducted in the span of three weeks. Transcription of the interviews was done through REV, and all transcripts were sent to the participants to review before finalizing the study. The researcher pre-coded and coded

transcripts of the interviews, as well as notes taken during the interview. Further analysis and coding were done using MAXQDA software, to confirm analysis findings.

Limitations

The limitations encountered in the study included: identifying and recruiting individuals who were hesitant to self-identify; the current legal circumstances of individuals interested in participating, some of whom may have been deported or are facing removal; the distress experienced by participants upon sharing their experiences: and the inability for the researcher to connect participants to resources and job opportunities. While the later limitation is uncomfortable, it was not necessarily a limitation of the study because the study was not setup as an applied intervention.

Additional limitations for the study included the researcher's inability to connect participants to career search resources that are specific to undocumented individuals. As previously stated in this chapter, there is no federal legislation aside from DACA, which is temporary and faces uncertainty while challenged in the courts, for permanent work authorization for individuals who are without legal status. If participants in the study found themselves without work authorization, the researcher was limited in the resources she could refer participants to regarding their legal situations. The researcher connected participants to national and regional resources, depending on what came up during the interview. The list of resources that was be used by the researcher included services from the following organizations:

- ACLU of San Diego
- Alliance San Diego
- American Friends Service Committee
- Border Angels

- Casa Cornelia
- Catholic Charities Diocese of San Diego (Immigrant Services)
- Immigrants Rising
- Jewish Family Services
- San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium
- San Diego Rapid Response Network
- UC Immigrant Legal Services

Significance of the Study

An examination into the experiences of undocumented students after graduation is needed because comprehensive legislation like DACA that provides work authorization is still fairly recent. Research on the educational careers of undocumented students cannot be considered comprehensive without some attention given to what these students expect to find - and do find - after graduation from college.

Organization of Study

This chapter served to outline the need to research the experiences of undocumented students after they graduated. Chapter Two reviewed key literature on policy and legislation, provided a demographic overview of undocumented individuals, undocumented college students challenges and barriers, and highlighted California-specific factors for undocumented communities. Chapter Two also covered theories that guided the study and offered a conceptual framework for the research. Chapter Three described the research design and methodology of the study. Chapter Four provided the results of the study, including data analysis. Chapter Five

offered a summary of the research findings, implications for practice and policy, and the significance of the study, along with a conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

College students face significant obstacles in seeking employment after graduation (Abel, Deitz, Su, 2014). The study conducted by Abel, Deitz, and Su in 2014 concludes that unemployment rates for individuals who have recently graduated from college are higher than those who have been out of college for some time. Additionally, with graduation from college come various expectations, including being employed soon after obtaining a degree, performing meaningful work, achieving job satisfaction, and earning a salary that pays a living wage (Smith, 2017). In the 2014 Abel, Deitz, and Su study, the researchers found that while unemployment rates are alarmingly high for those with recently conferred degrees, underemployment amongst recent college graduates is also prevalent, including many graduates who are working in positions that do not require college degrees. Unemployment and underemployment are even more prevalent amongst college graduates who lack work authorization or a social security number and are faced with the threat of deportation (Autin et al., 2018).

This study was concerned with the educational experiences and career pathways of individuals who went to college while they were undocumented.

Synthesis of Key Literature Areas

It is simply not possible to generalize every aspect of the experience of being an undocumented student, since no two educational journeys are alike. There is also substantial diversity and variation to the challenges and opportunities that are presented after graduation from college. To frame this study of undocumented college students in the University of California system, the following domains of literature were reviewed: existing policy and

legislation pertaining to the undocumented population in the U.S.; demographics of the undocumented population in the U.S.; a review of information regarding undocumented communities and their legislative environment in California; an introduction to the primary focus of the study regarding challenges and barriers for undocumented college students; and a conceptual framework that includes Schlossberg's Transition Theory (1981) and Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth (2005).

Policy & Legislation

Eight major laws and policies that created educational opportunities for undocumented individuals will be highlighted in this review: the 1982 *Plyler v. Doe* case, the 2007 California Dream Act, the 2001 California Assembly Bill 540 ("AB 540"), and the 2012 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals ("DACA") executive order. California Assembly Bill 2000 ("AB 2000"), Senate Bill 68 ("SB 68"), and Assembly Bills 130 and 131 ("AB 130" & "AB 131") will also be briefly summarized.

Plyler v. Doe. In Plyler v. Doe (1982), the United States Supreme Court struck down a legal challenge which attempted to prevent undocumented students from receiving a K-12 education and charging school districts a set cost for undocumented students to attend school (Herrera, 2004). The ruling required that K-12 institutions provide a public education for their students regardless of their immigration status.

AB 540. In 2001, California adopted Assembly Bill 540, authored by Assembly member Marco Antonio Firebaugh, which grants a tuition exemption for non-resident students who attended a California high school, thereby making them residents for tuition purposes (AB 540, 2001). The Bill applied to individuals other than those who were considered "nonimmigrants", thereby including undocumented students. "The classification as a state resident is significant

because it determines the amount of tuition a student must pay, and the difference between resident and non-resident tuition often means the difference between attending and not attending college" (Guillen, 2003, pp. 5-6).

AB 2000. AB 2000, passed in 2014, expanded AB 540 to include a greater range of eligibility criteria, thereby making more students - including undocumented students - eligible for the nonresident tuition exemption (AB 2000, 2014).

SB 68. Senate Bill 68 was passed by the State of California in 2017, and further expanded AB 540 and AB 2000 to increase the scope of students eligible for the nonresident tuition exemption. While AB 540 and AB 2000 addressed eligibility for the exemption to students attending California elementary, secondary, and high schools, SB 68 expanded criteria to include students matriculated at community colleges and other educational institutions. The expansion of SB 68 includes eligibility for matriculation at California community colleges, adult schools, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction schools, or a combination of all of these schools, as well as obtaining an associate's degree (SB 68, 2017).

CA Dream Act (Assembly Bills 130 and 131) & State-Funded Financial Aid. The CA Dream Act is a state-specific set of laws that allow for qualifying California students enrolled in eligible California colleges and universities to apply for state financial aid. The CA Dream Act is unrelated to DACA. The act was signed into law in 2011 and for the first time, eligible undocumented students were able to receive the state's financial aid (California Student Aid Commission, 2013). The CA Dream Act is made up of AB130 and AB131, which opens certain scholarships and funding at public institutions for students who are AB540, AB2000 and SB68 eligible who are undocumented, who are eligible for DACA, those with a T or U visa, U.S. citizens, and legal permanent residents that meet the criteria (AB 130, 131, 2011).

There are six U.S. states other than California that provide state financial aid to undocumented students: Colorado, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, and Washington (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2019).

ISTR.

In-state tuition residency provisions allow for undocumented individuals, but not limited to those who are undocumented, to establish residency for tuition purposes. Establishing residency for tuition has different criteria, depending on the state that an individual resides in (Immigrants Rising, 2019).

According to the National Conference on State Legislatures (2019), there are twenty-two states that have an ISTR provision, that are administered through different methods. There are currently at least 19 U.S. states that have ISTR provisions for students to be able to establish residency for tuition purposes through legislation. Seventeen states have ISTR through state legislation: Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Texas, Utah, and Washington. Oklahoma and Rhode Island extend ISTR to undocumented individuals through Board of Regents decisions. There are two states that have institution-specific policies for ISTR: University of Hawai'i (UH Systemwide Policies and Procedures, 2014) and University of Michigan (University of Michigan Office of Financial Aid, 2020). Both these institutions have in-state tuition rate criteria specifically for undocumented individuals. The state of Virginia in 2014 through their attorney general began ISTR for individuals that have DACA only (Herring, 2014).

There are three U.S. states that don't have ISTR, and they also "specifically prohibit in-state tuition rates" for undocumented individuals: Arizona, Georgia, and Indiana (National Conference on State Legislatures, 2019).

Professional and Vocational Licenses.

There are ten states have state legislation for vocational and professional licenses for undocumented individuals: Arkansas, California, Florida, Illinois, Mississippi, Nebraska, New York, Nevada, South Dakota, and Utah (Williams, 2019). In these states, undocumented individuals can have certain professional and vocational license such as a medical license, a license to practice law, real estate license, license to practice pharmacy, etc., but are not able to be legally employed if they do not have a work authorization card.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

DACA is an executive order that was signed in 2012 and implemented in 2013 that allows for eligible individuals who came to the U.S. before their 16th birthday, and who meet other guidelines that include being under the age of 31 as of June 15, 2012, to defer deportation. Recipients also receive a work authorization card. DACA does not grant lawful status (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2018).

The benefits of DACA include being eligible for work authorization. This study consists of undocumented college students, and it should be noted that not all undocumented college students are DACA-eligible. Additionally, there are individuals who are eligible for DACA, who do not apply for DACA (Manuel, 2019). Although work authorization is a current reality for undocumented students who are DACA-eligible, this opportunity is at stake while the future of

DACA hangs in the balance. The uncertainty of DACA holds those who are currently undocumented college students and DACA beneficiaries, hostage to the uncertainty of the program (Becerra, 2018).

Successful DACAmented applicants have specific time periods to apply, and renew their status through the program, and must apply for renewal every two years. During the Trump administration, this timeframe was particularly critical because of an attempt by the administration to rescind the program. Additionally, the fee to apply or renew DACA is $495 and cannot be waived, making it restrictive to individuals who cannot pay the fee (USCIS, 2021).

The Regulatory Review (2020) outlines the timeline of the challenge to the DACA program, and the conclusion by the Supreme Court, in late 2017, give years after DACA begun, the Trump administration challenged the program and tried to rescind it. The DHS announced new applications would be rejected and renewals would be phased out. Challenges to the Trump administration's attempt to rescind the program quickly came, including one from the Regents of the University of California. The Supreme Court concluded the attempt to rescind DACA was illegal, and as of December 2020, USCIS began accepting new applications, renewals, and requests for advance parole again.

Limitations of DACA

Some of DACA's limitations were outlined by Teranishi et al. (2015). Most notably, the staunch limitations are the fact that DACA is a provisional measure, there is a lack of clarity and misinformation on what DACA means, and that there are individuals that are not eligible for it. Not all undocumented college students are eligible for DACA, each individual's circumstance is different, varied, and complex. Undocumented college students are not a homogenous group

(Teranishi et al., 2015). Although DACA has had an overwhelming positive effect on many undocumented students, it falls short of addressing their needs (Teranishi et al., 2015).

The insecurity of DACA and other policies aimed at undocumented and immigrant communities will affect and are affecting many undocumented students maneuvering the education system (Becerra, 2018). The ambiguity of where DACA is headed affects undocumented college students, those who are currently in college, and students for whom college is currently still just a dream. Undocumented college students who are in the education system have already felt the weight of the looming fate of DACA, and how their futures are at stake. For many students who are not DACA eligible, their futures have remained on hold. There is an additional layer of intricacy in navigating the future as an undocumented student in the current political climate if you belong to the 1.5 generation (Cebulko, 2014). DACA does not provide a path to citizenship, and until legislation to provide those without legal status the ability to gain a path to citizenship, any measure like DACA will intrinsically come with the same limitations and insecurity (Rodriguez, 2020).

The 1.5 generation are undocumented individuals who are not considered first-generation immigrants because they did not conscientiously make the choice to migrate to the U.S., but also are not entirely second-generation immigrants. They lie between those who make a conscientious choice to migrate, and second-generation immigrants. Members of the 1.5 generation receive most of their primary and secondary school education in the U.S., are mostly assimilated to the U.S., and possess bilingual and bicultural skills at high levels (Cebulko, 2014). A painful insight into the conflicting, confusing, and frustrating state individuals in the 1.5 generation finds themselves in was revealed by Gonzales and Chavez (2012). These young individuals find themselves in a familiarity from growing up in the United States, while knowing that their very

presence in the country puts them at odds with the place, they call home (Gonzales & Chavez, 2012).

An Orange County participant of their study shares, “I [don’t] want to break the law, but everything you do is illegal because you are illegal. Everything you do will be illegal” (p. 255). The implications for social justice educators, policy makers, and the United States government are to fix a broken system that does not acknowledge a population that contributes to the nation’s economy (Chomsky, 2018), labor force (Hsin & Ortega, 2018), and everyday life (Spickard, 2009).

Summary of Policy & Legislation

Less than two decades ago, as early as 2002, school administrators, and the United States in general questioned whether undocumented students were even eligible to apply or attend college, and few sources had answers to very complex questions that hinge on state policy, federal policy, and institutional policies and resources (Badger & Yale, 2002). For example, undocumented students in California have different resources and policies that support applying and attending college, than undocumented college students in Alabama or South Carolina.

Although there is no federal law banning an undocumented student from applying to and attending college, Alabama and South Carolina are the only two states that as of 2019 explicitly prohibit undocumented students from attending public colleges. Some DACA recipients can attend certain public institutions in these states (HB 56, 2011). Section one of article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations General Assembly, 1948) states that everyone has the right to education. For higher education specifically, it is declared that “… higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit” (p. 7). The fact that a student who has been admitted to an institution of higher education based on their merit today

can be denied the ability to even apply highlights the challenges undocumented college students face. The inconsistencies from state-to-state on legislation affecting undocumented college students add to an already anti-immigrant intolerant national sentiment in the United States, to a population of students who have spent most of their lives in the country. In fact, as of 2016 Passel and Cohn (2018) confirm that, "the typical unauthorized immigrant adult had lived in the U.S. for nearly 15 years – that is, half had lived in the U.S. for longer and half for less time" (pp. 22-23).

Legal status also has significant implications for educational attainment, which is a critical correlate of economic mobility (Abrego & Gonzales, 2010). However, depending on where they live, undocumented youths experience different levels of access to college. Although undocumented youths are permitted to attend public primary and secondary schools because of the Supreme Court decision in *Plyler v. Doe* (1982), court-mandated equal access to education does not extend beyond high school. Therefore, undocumented immigrant access to public colleges and universities largely depends on state-level policies related to tuition rates, state financial aid (undocumented immigrants are not eligible for federal aid), and enrollment. These policies differ considerably from one state to the next, and some states have laws and policies that are more favorable to college access for undocumented students (Immigrants Rising, 2019).

Prior to the policies reviewed in this proposal, undocumented students faced additional challenges than they do now related to having access to college, as well as other public services because of their legal status. California legislation like Propositions 187 and 227 sought to add additional challenges to undocumented youth by restricting their access to public education (Escobedo, 1999). Now, eight years into DACA, it continues to be the only effort that has

granted work authorization to undocumented individuals. This is a critical challenge for those who are undocumented because DACA is not permanent, and is not a pathway to citizenship (Becerra, 2018).

Demographics

Undocumented Communities

The U.S. Census does not currently ask for immigration status, and neither do other population surveys. Other survey and data collection mechanisms throughout educational systems and government agencies do not collect this type of information. Disclosing legal status information brings about fear in undocumented populations because of the dangers that come with exposing their status. The dangers that come with disclosing legal status makes it difficult to deduce definitive numbers on the undocumented population in the United States. According to a report authored by Passel and Cohn (2019) for the Pew Research Center, there are approximately 10.5 million undocumented people in the United States. As of the 2019 report, about 4.9 million come from México, no longer being the majority of the undocumented population. There are rising numbers of undocumented individuals from Asia and Central America. The Pew Research Center report also states a decline for the first time in the overall population, with the total undocumented population shrinking 14% between 2007-2017.

There are less unauthorized immigrants in the workforce than a decade ago, with the 2019 report stating that the number is approximately 7.6 million undocumented individuals working or looking for work. According to the Pew Research Report (2019) by Passel and Cohn, "unauthorized immigrants made up 4.6% of the labor force in 2017, down from 5.4% in 2007."

Data on undocumented college students are as complex as data on the undocumented population in the U.S. in general. In general, tracking this population is problematic because it is

tied to risks of being identified, which come with the risk of being deported, amongst many other risks. It must be underscored that disclosing an undocumented individual's status puts them in harm and at high risk, this is a high-risk, vulnerable population. The risk of being part of a marginalized group increased exponentially after the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States (Huber, 2016).

Undocumented College Students. It is difficult to estimate the overall size of a population whose safety and well-being relies on their living in the shadows, and under the radar. Passel's (2003) effort to assess the numbers of undocumented college students in public colleges and universities is the closest that has repeatedly been used in past and current literature pertaining to undocumented college student enrollment figures. The formula he used in 2003 looks at a snapshot of the overall undocumented population in the United States and is based on data taken from the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a survey jointly conducted and sponsored by the U.S. Census Bureau and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. It is the primary source of monthly labor statistical data. Passel takes the data from the CPS and uses a method developed by the Urban Institute to infer which individuals in the labor force from the CPS data sets are undocumented, and relies primarily on an individual's occupation, among other characteristics. Passel notes that the method used might produce a sum for undocumented college students that is too large. He adds, "because college students may work (either full-time or part-time) in the types of jobs often held by undocumented immigrants, the imputation process seems to erroneously assign legal immigrant college students as undocumented aliens" (p. 2).

Although a review of Passel's report is the most accurate estimate based on the formula used for the calculation, his 2003 demographic report includes antiquated xenophobic inaccurate language that refers to undocumented individuals as aliens. This language has since been

generally disputed in the public arena as well as academic and replaced with humane language (Núñez, 2013). The term alien was previously widely accepted and evokes a negative connotation and is reflective of the anti-immigrant sentiment that was and is present in the United States. It can still be found and heard in some publications but has been rebuked as vitriol when used to identify undocumented individuals. The term is still unfortunately used in legal fields and very much in immigration courts and paperwork as part of their procedures. In 2019 Representative Joaquin Castro (D-TX) introduced the CHANGE Act (H.R. 3776), proposing to correct hurtful and alienating names in government expression, including the term illegal alien.

Passel takes into account the completion rates for the population and notes that, "…about one-sixth to one-fifth of each cohort fails to complete high school, leaving roughly 65,000 undocumented immigrants who have lived in the United States five years or longer who graduate from high school each year" (2003, p. 1). As with the rest of the United States' population of high school graduates, not all enroll in colleges or universities, and the same holds true for undocumented college students. The estimate of roughly 65,000 undocumented young people who graduate from high school also served as a base estimate for a potential DACA-eligible pool. It is important to reiterate that because of the fallible assumption of simply estimating the number of high school graduates for undocumented college student enrollment, the estimate that was taken in 2003 is likely too high. With ISRT policies now in 22 states, alternative methods can be used to estimate the more accurate numbers of undocumented college students by state. These alternative methods include using the number of students applying for the CA Dream Application and with characteristic information from students eligible for the AB540 tuition exemption.

Passel notes further from this complex network of data sets from individuals not looking to be identified for fear of deportation that, "the best estimate for undocumented college students in California is probably about 15–20% of the CPS estimate." From these data sets, the percentages are 3,000-3,750 for 15% of the estimate, and 4,000-5,000 for 20% of the estimate. In other words, it was estimated that there were anywhere between 3,000 (on the lower end) to 5,000 (on the higher end) undocumented college students in the state of California at the time the report was published in 2003. The estimate in the report excludes data from the University of California (UC) system. A 2002-2003 report on the University of California's Office of the President (UCOP) website on AB540 tuition exemptions states that 719 students requested the exemption, and of those "93 (13%) of those exemptions went to potentially undocumented students" (p. 1). The UCOP report does not provide a number that would significantly change the estimate Passel proposes. With the information Passel gathered and published in 2003, a range can be calculated of anywhere between 3,000-5,000, undocumented college students. The state of California accounts for 40% of the nation-wide estimate, which translates to a range anywhere between 7,500-12,500 undocumented college students at the time these figures were evaluated. Because Passel's report was published in 2003, the figures noted in this review are from that same time period. There is no congruency in the available data for recent numbers for all the same data sets mentioned in Passel's report.

Immigrants Rising is a non-profit organization that gathers resources and does advocacy work for undocumented communities. The organization produced a demographics report the following estimates gathered from the Pew Research Center, the Department of Homeland Security demographic report, the Migration Policy Institution, and the American Immigration Council (Immigrants Rising, 2018):

TABLE 1. Population

Figure	Population Segment
11 million	Undocumented immigrants of all ages living in the U.S.
1.2 million	Undocumented immigrants ages 18-24 living in the U.S. (college-aged population)
1.3 to 3.6 million	Undocumented youth in the U.S. potentially eligible for various legalization bills
1.3 million	Undocumented youth in the U.S. potentially eligible for DACA
65,000	Undocumented students who have lived in the U.S. for 5 or more years graduate from high school each year; only about 5 to 10 percent go on to college
408,000	Undocumented students age 18-24 are enrolled in school (e.g. college) throughout the U.S.

The demographic report gathered by Immigrants Rising (2018) and its figures was used for this study. Note that the 11 million overall population figure is different from the Passel and Cohn (2019) report with updated numbers as of 2017, which did not include a breakdown of undocumented youth.

California

In the state of California, efforts to create access for undocumented youth began with the push for in-state tuition residency (ISTR) through AB540, AB2000, and SB68. These policies have allowed for students to be able to establish residency for tuition purposes, regardless of legal status. College students can be considered residents of the state for tuition purposes by meeting a set criterion. These exemptions are not exclusively for undocumented college students. The exemption that ISTR provides has now expanded at the national level, and according to the National Conference of State Legislatures (2019), California is one of eighteen states that provides ISRT to undocumented individuals.

The introduction of AB540, AB2000, and SB68 are all efforts to increase access for undocumented college students through in-state tuition residency. Before this, undocumented students were not able to establish residency for tuition purposes and would be applied international student fees (University of California, 2015).

California Senate Bill 1159 (SB 1159) permits undocumented individuals to receive professional licenses (SB 1159, 2014). Additionally, according to the bill, if an individual does not have a social security number, they can use a Tax Identification Number for their license. Previous to this state law, schools, such as medical schools, were denying admission to undocumented individuals because they were unable to receive a vocational or professional license after attending finishing their license requirements (Connell, 2016).

According to a review and calculations produced by the Education Trust-West (2018) that includes data from the Pew Research Center, the Migration Policy Institute, and California Student Aid commission, the following demographic information is current as of 2018:

TABLE 2. Population, Continued

Figure	Population Segment
More than 1 in 5	Undocumented people in the U.S. reside in CA
1 in 13	Californians is undocumented
750,000	K-12 students in California have undocumented parents
250,000	Undocumented children 3-17 are enrolled in California high schools
240,000	Young people in California have applied for DACA

The Education Trust-West report also notes that California's undocumented immigrants hail from: México (68%), El Salvador (6%), Guatemala (4%), Philippines (4%), India (3%), China (3%), South Korea (2%), Vietnam (1%), Honduras (1%), and Other (8%).

Because of the large numbers of undocumented individuals in the state of California, this study focused on students who attended college in the University of California (UC) system. The researcher for this study had an established 12-year career in the UC system, and was familiar with the processes, resources, and students within the UC system, and within the state of California. Nine of the 10 UC campuses offer both undergraduate and graduate degrees, while 1 (San Francisco) only offers graduate and professional degrees (University of California, n.d.). The population for the study included master's and Ph.D. students. An important distinction to note is also that California State University (CSU) campuses predominantly only have master's students, except in the case of joint doctoral programs. CSU's primary focus is on educating undergraduate students (California State University, n.d.).

California offers state-based financial aid to undocumented students. Undocumented students must meet certain requirements and qualify for state-based aid and institutional scholarships to pay for educational costs (California Student Aid Commission, 2013). According to the California Student Aid Commission (2013), state-based aid through the CA Dream Act includes: Cal Grants, UC Grants, State University Grants (CSU), California College Promise Grant, EOP/EOPS grants, the Middle-Class Scholarship, school-specific scholarships, and access to loans.

The state-based aid California offers its undocumented students is important, because this is aid that does not have to be paid back. In combination with the ISTR policies that are in place in California, this is a pathway to pay for college once admitted for undocumented students.

According to EdSource (2019), there is an estimated 4,000 undocumented students enrolled systemwide in the UC, and an estimated 9,500 in the CSU system. The UC system includes 9 undergraduate campuses, and 1 graduate campus. The CSU system is made up of 23 campuses throughout the state. For this study, participants from all 10 UC campuses, including the graduate campus, will be researched.

Focus of the Study

Undocumented college students face daunting challenges to attend and thrive in college, and those obstacles become even more untenable when it comes to career and job opportunities after earning their degrees. Most notably, highly qualified undocumented college graduates are unable to enter the workforce and have minimal to no opportunities in their academic fields (Ortiz & Hinojosa, 2010). These students also challenge traditional career advising models and norms, and these practices are not currently integrated to consider undocumented students.

There are many challenges and barriers that undocumented college students face after graduation. Undocumented college students are not a homogenous group, and the layers of their identity coupled with their legal status makes for sometimes insurmountable challenges that begin even before they step onto a college campus. This summary highlights three major challenges: financial aid, campus climate, and post-college pathways. Although this summary highlights challenges that happen during an individual's time in college, it highlights the

pathway to a career does not begin immediately after graduation, but rather as a streamed process that happens before, during, and after college.

The 2020-2021 systemwide tuition and fees for a California State University (CSU) campus is $5,742, and $12,570 for a University of California (UC) campus (California State University, 2021; University of California, 2021). These systemwide fees do not include campus fees. The fees for the UC system are more than double those of the CSU system. An undocumented student can quickly be priced out to pay UC tuition fees. While ISRT provides an opportunity for undocumented college students to pay in-state tuition fees, it does not address the limited access to financial aid sources (which vary from state to state), and limited job opportunities if a student or their families do not have access to a work authorization permit.

In an interview with an undocumented college student in 2009, Gonzales captures the experience of a student continuously facing abrupt stops in their college experience, to navigate the challenge of paying for their tuition and fees without access to financial aid sources, "…she expects to finish her degree in eight years. It has taken her twice the usual amount of time to complete her course work because she frequently takes time off to find ways to pay for her studies" (p. 8). The experience described in Gonzales's student interviews were at a time when undocumented college students in the state of California still did not have access to in-state financial aid sources. The California Dream Act was not passed until 2011 and gave way for the establishment of the California Dream Application (California Student Aid Commission, 2013).

ISRT facilitates undocumented college student access by administering in-state tuition fees to an otherwise exorbitant out-of-state tuition rate that is not accessible to most students, let alone undocumented college students that don't always have access to state aid or scholarships,

depending on their location and individual circumstance. Six undocumented college students in California, all from different countries of origin and experiences, were interviewed in 2007 by Huber and Malagon. One of the challenges they all stated was paying for college. Not all of them had prior knowledge of ISRT policies in the state of California. One interview revealed the following:

> …one student described how she was able to fund her first year at a top-tier UC campus through the sum of various small scholarships. Currently in her second year, she described how she was going to pay for her first quarter with money saved up from working. She was unsure how she was going to pay for tuition for the following terms. Most students in this study pay for their education through small scholarships that do not have citizenship requirements and through earned wages. (p. 853)

Eleven years after the interviews were conducted, undocumented college students face the same challenge of paying for college (Serna, Cohen, & Nguyen, 2017). This is an additional difficult task to the already grueling financial situation for college students who are part of the United States' college debt crisis (Popescu & Ciurlau, 2017).

In a large-scale study funded by the Ford Foundation, a sample of 909 undergraduate college student participants were surveyed across 34 states (Teranishi, Suárez-Orozco, & Suárez-Orozco, 2015). They were enrolled in two-year, four-year, and private colleges and universities, varying in selectivity. Responses to questions regarding their campus experience pointed to students feeling like they didn't know who on campus they could trust, and who they could disclose safely their status to without fear of repercussions or feelings of being ostracized for being undocumented. Students surveyed also shared that a physical space on campus helped them identify institutional staff, resources, and physical spaces where they could build a sense of trust. Students' responses also indicated high levels of isolation and experiencing being treated unfairly or negatively due to their status.

A study of Latino/a/x undocumented college students found that, “not only do these [undocumented] students endure the same stressors and risk factors as other Latino and immigrant youth, they also face constant institutional and societal exclusion and rejection due to their undocumented status” (Perez, Espinoza, Ramos, Coronado, & Cortes, 2009, p.150). College students already face a difficult time transitioning into college. Being an undocumented college student is especially difficult because one of your identities (whether internally accepted or not) makes you the target of a historically marginalized and oppressed group of people.

Minimal career opportunities after graduation was a finding uncovered in a study examining the experience of undocumented college students. In this study, close to 70% of participants shared they felt their institution would help them achieve their educational goals. That percentage fell to 53% for belief that their institution could help them achieve their career goals (Person, Gutierrez Keeton, Medina, Gonzalez, & Minero, 2017).

Undocumented college students use a hodgepodge of jobs to fund their education, sometimes and often with jobs that pay under the table because they do not have a work permit. When an undocumented college student finds themselves in the position of working multiple jobs, or too many hours, they often must cut back on their school workload, delaying their time to degree. Students shared working waitressing jobs, and other positions outside of their academic fields or fields of interest, because limited opportunities exist for them (Gámez, Lopez, & Overton, 2017). If the career and job development opportunities are already limited for undocumented college students while they are in college, it is not likely that more opportunities will be available once they attain their degree.

Pathways are limited, and undocumented students continue to face some of the same challenges if they remain undocumented after earning a college degree (Abrego & Gonzales, 2010). Limited job opportunities based on legal status, structural racism, poverty, and the threat of deportation continue being barriers even after receiving a college education. The current political climate as a result of the 2016 elections has furthered the uncertainty of the future for undocumented students, and all undocumented individuals (Martin, 2017). As Abrego and Gonzales (2010) outline, federal policies like DACA, and state policies like AB540 and the CA Dream Act have been challenged and make for an uncertain path for undocumented college students. The paths that have been opened for students through these policies will no longer be options for undocumented college students if they are overturned.

Attributes of Achievement and Success Factors

A deficit model of thinking links deficits to minority populations in the United States, including undocumented college students. In the cultural deficit model way of thinking, assets that are lacking are the foci. Cultural traits and characteristics are looked at as detrimental and lacking to advance and succeed. Although there are claims that this model of thinking has for the most part been eliminated from our educational institutions, the prevailing thought still exists to look at what is not there, or the deficits in marginalized populations (Solorzano, 1997). The review of literature pertaining to undocumented college students points to a much more robust multitude of assets, skills, and innate abilities that are necessary to thrive as an undocumented individual living in the United States. The review of literature unearths resilience, high academic achievement, civic engagement, and a strong network of support as being critical components of the success of undocumented college students.

Repeatedly, undocumented college students themselves identified their own resilience as being a key factor in their success, especially when the odds are stacked against them (Gámez et al., 2017). Even through tumultuous pathways getting to college and staying in college, undocumented college students exhibit higher GPAs than their documented counterparts (Perez et al., 2009). This is despite having to find alternative forms to fund their education, often through a mishmash of jobs while they're attending college.

Students also use a network of support that includes their family members. Students indicate they receive motivation and moral support from their family members, and their family member's hard work and dedication as a motivator to navigate the college experience as an undocumented college student (Perez et al., 2009). Recently, physical spaces specifically setup to support undocumented college students at an institutional level have been recognized as a high impact practice to support this population. In the University of California system, a program or space of some sort exists (Simjee, 2017) on every campus. In one study, students reported that they utilized centers for undocumented students 73.1% of the time to find support and resources (Teranishi et al., 2015). Students share it is these social networks of support that they utilize for relief from the stressors that come with being undocumented. These networks consist of professional staff members at their institutions, members of their community, family members, and many others (Perez et al., 2009). Undocumented college students share that being civically engaged is a form of sharing their narratives and advocating for changes that will support their current realities is a way to participate that is not limited by their status (Perez et al., 2009).

In an interview conducted for a College Board report, Roberto Gonzalez (2009) interviews a former undocumented college student. The interview took place after AB 540 has been in place for 7 years and before the implementation of DACA. Gonzalez interviews Rosalba,

a former undocumented college student who arrived in the U.S. when she was ten. In the interview he documents how Rosalba directly benefited from ISRT and was able to secure scholarships to cover her in-state tuition fees. Rosalba conferred an undergraduate degree in Mathematics, in addition to a Master of Science, and met all the requirements for a teaching credential. Rosalba did not have any options to teach because she did not have a work permit and was still not a legal permanent resident. However, on Valentine's Day of 2007 her life took a drastic turn from an otherwise bleak future. She received a work permit after waiting twelve years to receive legal permanent residency through her father's status:

> Because Rosalba had prepared herself with education and volunteer experience, she was more than qualified once she was allowed to work. By the end of the week, she had three separate job offers to teach math from three schools. Because of teacher shortages in California, good, qualified teachers are at a premium. By the spring, Rosalba was teaching in the classroom at a school not far from her home. (p. 15)

Rosalba's experience highlights the different paths undocumented college students experience. Their experiences are varied and rely on a lot of factors that are out of their control. In Rosalba's example, her options would have been limited had she not been able to attain legal permanent residency.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework used for this study was transition theory, and social capital as introduced in the community cultural wealth model (CCW). Both theories framed the researcher's understanding of an undocumented student's career journey after they graduated and their attempts to transition from college to career. Although both theories were used for further understanding, particularly in the decision-making progress of those who participated, the focus

was mainly on CCW as the lens for the analysis and discussion post-data gathering. Transition theory came up minimally and was not used for the analysis of the study.

Transition Theory (TT)

In 1981 Nancy Schlossberg introduced a model to analyze how adults' transitions happen, and the experiences they have through different types of transitions. She explains in her model that individuals go both through positive, negative, and uneventful transitions, and that these transitions can be experienced ordinarily, or very dramatically. It is important to note that in Schlossberg's model, there is a call to use the model to analyze the individual's transition for the purpose of formulating an intervention. The options for undocumented individuals are extremely limited, there are very little to no options for obtaining status for individuals who are undocumented (Gonzalez, 2009; Abrego & Gonzalez, 2010; Chomsky, 2018).

In Schlossberg's research, she investigates transitions and how they occur in adulthood. The researcher addresses that transitions do not occur in sequential order, can at times be unanticipated, or experienced in any particular manner or order. In TT, new networks and relationships are tracked, and are stated to be required by each new transition an individual experiences. An individual's ability to adapt to the transition is also recorded in TT. A transition in TT is also defined as an event, or a non-event. The transition as defined by TT can also happen in the inverse, the change in relationships, routines, and networks can account for the transition itself.

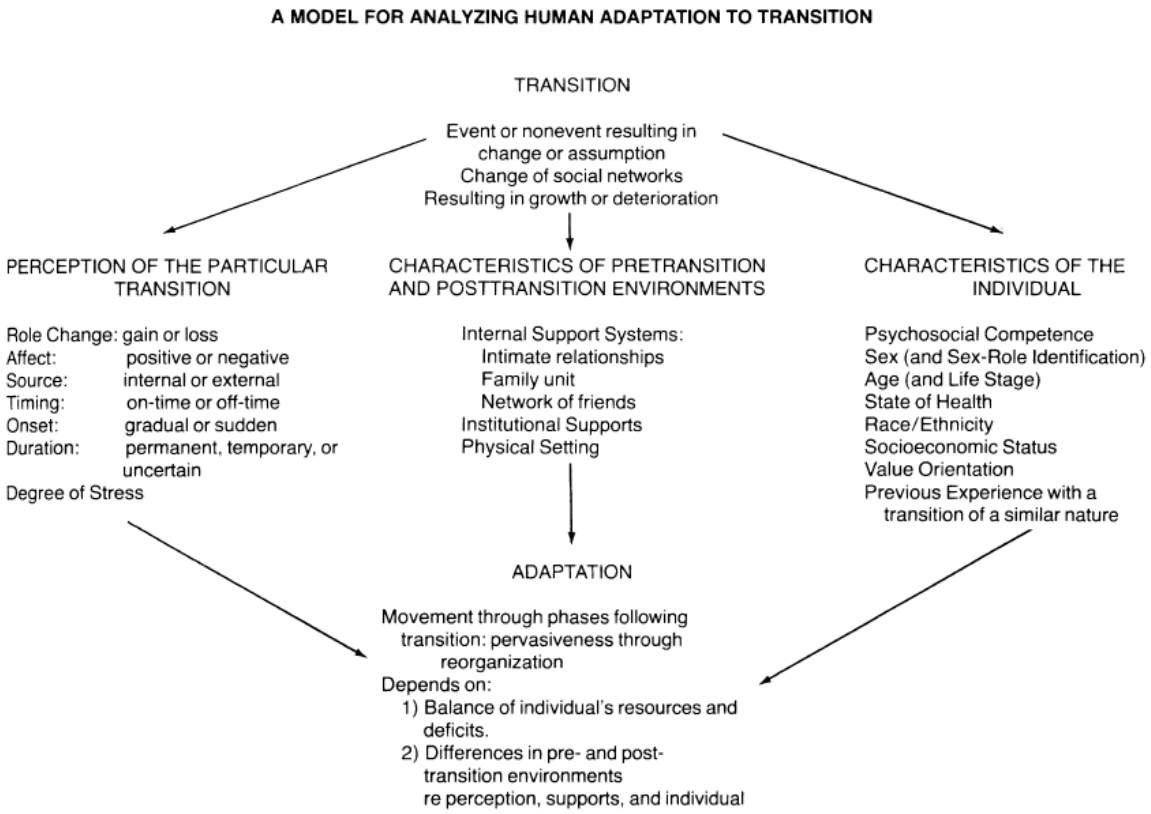

FIGURE 1: Transition Theory (Schlossberg, 1981, p.5)

Transition theory describes different types of transition, those that are anticipated transitions are those that occur predictably. For this study, the transition is graduating from college. The experiences of undocumented college students might also have unanticipated transitions like deportation of a family member or acquaintance, a legal setback, or gaining legal permanent status.

In the TT model context refers to one's relationship with the transition, whether by an event or non-event, and the environment the transition takes place in. The impact of the transition is also measured, and the degree to which the transition impacts the individual, and one's daily life is measured. Schlossberg identified four sets of factors that influence an

individual's ability to handle transitions: situation, self, support, and strategies. These four factors are known as the 4 S's.

Community Cultural Wealth (CCW)

The juxtaposition of being undocumented and being a college student means expanding one's domains of knowledge, creating broader networks, and giving visibility to the limitations of our current immigration policies (Abrego & Gonzales, 2010). Because undocumented college students must navigate the legal complexities of career exploration while potentially being unauthorized to work, the social capital they possess can be a critical component of their journey.

Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) work (2005) uses Critical Race Theory (CRT) in the context of education to ground the understanding of where we see cultural capital unearthed. For this study, the CCW framework, and its CRT lens is meaningful because of the origins of CRT. Critical Race Theory has its basis in legal scholarship. Legal scholars critiqued critical theory conversations were being isolated from conversations about race and racism, and the "role of racism in American law" (p. 71). Critical race theory intersects legal scholarship and social science literature, and is relevant to this study because an undocumented individual's lack of legal status is the basis of their reality within the U.S.

For undocumented communities, the experiences and knowledge they bring with them into higher education institutions after navigating complex bureaucracies and government systems in order to get to college is powerful. The CCW framework shifts from a deficit view to an asset-based perspective, noting that Communities of Color bring with them cultural wealth. Although undocumented communities are not exclusively made up of Communities of Color, they do make up the great majority of the population (Passel, 2008) . Additionally, the CCW

framework acknowledges marginalized communities and the capital that they accumulate as a result of their marginalization.

To better support undocumented college students, a closer look at the components that make up their networks of support is needed, especially for those that have been able to attain degrees, and further, those who have been able to secure employment after college. The Community Cultural Wealth model is one that provides a comprehensive framework to begin to dissect the complex types of networks, assets, and abilities that undocumented college students possess that are critical to their triumphs. The model challenges traditional accepted forms of attaining cultural wealth: by one's family and formal schooling. She states that "…community cultural wealth is an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed and utilized by Communities of Color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression" (p. 77). In the case of undocumented college students, they use their community cultural wealth to survive and resist the very challenge of their existence in the U.S., without many of the day-to-day documents and access, and continuous threat of deportation. At a micro level on their campus, they challenge being a marginalized community that continues to be forced to live in the shadows with a constant fear of deportation and being separated from their families.

The Community Cultural Wealth model is a representative framework that provides an understanding of how underserved students access and experience college from a strengths-based perspective. To focus on an asset-based approach, the approach of how we engage students of underserved populations needs to be adaptive.

Lastly, in this study, the forms of capital that Yosso in 2005 researched can be used to take a closer look at the experiences of undocumented students after they graduate. These forms of capital are aspirational (maintaining hopes and dreams), navigational (maneuvering through

social institutions), social (networking and establishing community resources), linguistic (using various language skills), familial (drawing upon cultural knowledge) and resistant (striving for equal rights) (Yosso, 2005). Although this concept has traditionally been used to understand identity as it pertains to race and ethnicity, this concept is now widely used to understand other types of identity such as class, and legal status.

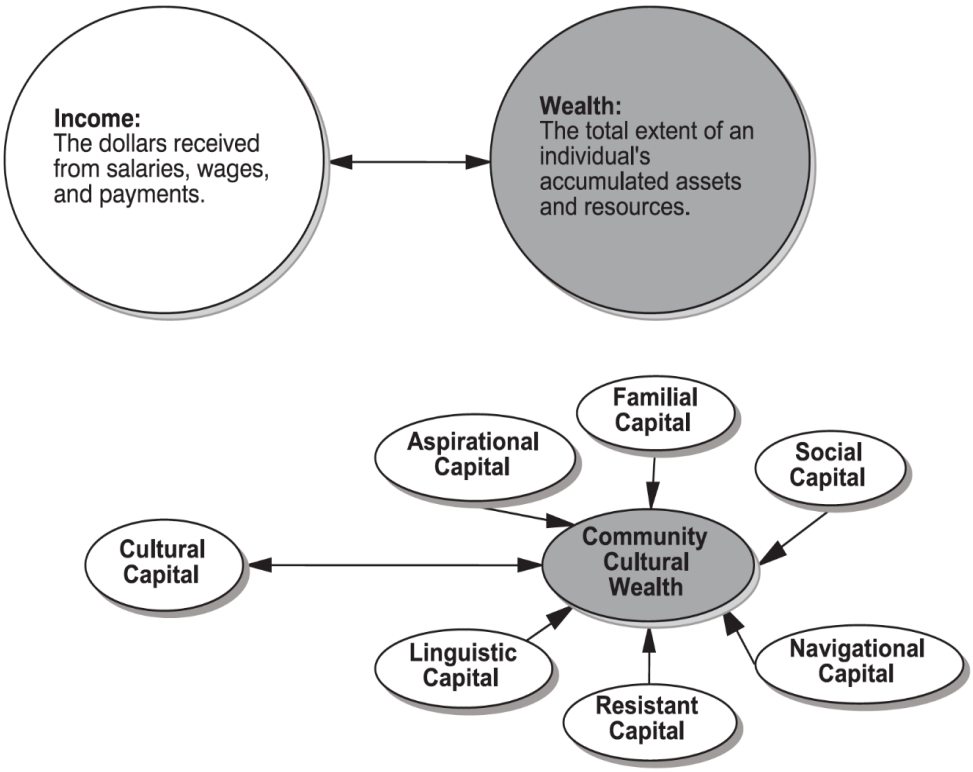

FIGURE 2: Community cultural wealth. (Yosso, 2005, p. 78)

Summary of Conceptual Frameworks

The long-term effects of living a life in the shadows without ever being truly integrated and accepted into society or normalized experiences has yet to be fully captured by scholarship.

The uprooting of a family to migrate from one country to another to search for a better future is possibly one of the most difficult experiences we have been able to gain insight to with the narratives of undocumented communities in the United States (Bacon, 2018). Undocumented individuals come from many different countries and carry with them numerous wide-ranging experiences. Scholarship has just uncovered the tip of the iceberg of the multitude of accounts of undocumented individuals, and how this experience is exacerbated in the college student experience. The election of Donald Trump as President of the United States and the avalanche of racism it revealed presented a bleak forecast for undocumented college students. Within his first 100 days, Donald Trump challenged DACA. Although limited, DACA has been the first type of legislation that directly supports access for undocumented college students (Teranishi et al., 2015). The United States post-Trump presidency under the leadership of President Joe Biden still presents an uncertain future for DACA, undocumented college students, and undocumented individuals (Cuic, 2022). The aftermath of the Trump regime still presents everyday challenges for undocumented college students to find opportunities for economic and social integration (Rangel, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic added to the challenges that those in power have created for undocumented communities has created a reality that remains unclear for undocumented college students (DeLuca, Bessaga, Velázquez, & Mendoza, 2022).

A normalization of the experience that was otherwise not within the reach of undocumented college students begun (Teranishi et al., 2015), and now hangs in the balance. The future for undocumented college students is uncertain.

The theories that make up the conceptual framework for this study will center research questions that tie into an individual's experience leading up to graduation (Transition Theory), what attributes they possess that helped them in their transition(s) (Community Cultural Wealth),

and questions exploring how their experience has been after graduation. These theories lay the conceptual groundwork for the study, addressing the circumstances of an individual before their transition, during, and after their transition from college to the workforce.

Purpose of the Study

The public education school system, specifically K-12 system has been the principal institution that integrates and educates the undocumented youth population. While life-course scholars note that most U.S. youth face some difficulty managing adolescent and adult transitions, undocumented youth face added challenges. (Abrego & Gonzales, 2010) The Abrego & Gonzalez article addresses critical issues of social and institutional importance for education because of the significant policies that have been introduced, developed, and implemented since it was published in 2010. Moreover, the research and questions raised were especially critical because of the political climate of the time the interviews were conducted. Undocumented college students have experienced exponential growth (Contreras, 2009) in college campuses and in higher education, and there is no clear data suggesting they are finding career paths or jobs if they are not DACA- eligible. Undocumented college students face uncertain futures after conferring their degrees after they began gaining more and more access after the introduction of AB540, and now face even more uncertainty because of the current political climate.

Research Questions

This study centered the following questions that were grounded in a qualitative approach:

1. What are the experiences of undocumented college students (formerly or currently undocumented) in finding a career path or job after earning a bachelor's degree?

2. What barriers do undocumented college students face after graduation, as they enter the workforce?
3. What is the role of an undocumented college student's campus in its ability to support them to enter the workforce after graduation?

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the lived experienced of individuals who attended a University of California while undocumented. In their own words, this study explored the different pathways, experiences, opportunities, triumphs, and tribulations individuals experienced during the transition from graduation into a career path, or a job. Undocumented individuals share similar challenges, possess similar attributes, and this study sought out to unearth how each has experienced their transition after graduating from college. The research questions of the study were:

1. What are the experiences of undocumented college students (formerly or currently undocumented) in finding a career path or job after earning a bachelor's degree?
2. What barriers do undocumented college students face after graduation, as they enter the workforce?
3. What is the role of an undocumented college student's campus in its ability to support them to enter the workforce after graduation?

These exploratory questions aimed at dissecting the transition process of the participant, the cultural wealth and social capital they possess that was utilized for their transition, and their experience before, during, and after their transition. Other descriptive questions regarding employment were included in the interview protocol.

The time period of this study was 2020-2021, during the COVID-19 global health pandemic. The proposal for this study started in early 2020, and the data collection began in February 2021. The analysis took place in March 2021, and the summary and findings were

outlined in April-May 2021. The pandemic is a confounding factor affecting job prospects, in the context of the study.

Qualitative Approach

A qualitative approach using narrative inquiry was critical to the study to allow flexibility for an in-depth exploration of individuals whose pathways have been defined by their lack of status. The study on the post-graduation lives of undocumented individuals is under-researched, with little literature to reference. Self-designed protocols to better understand the various experiences of the individuals who participated was best suited for the study. Creswell (2008) states that using a qualitative approach will help gather information by not restricting the views of participants. Further, using a qualitative approach with open-ended questions was used to gather rich data from participants, allowing for less restrictions and amplifying the participant's voices. Using a narrative, qualitative approach allowed for further exploration of the participants' stories, where generalizations were avoided, and explorations of the emergent themes were facilitated (Creswell, 2008).

This study relied on self-designed protocols in order to better understand the varied experiences of individuals. In using a qualitative approach, open-ended questions were utilized to gather rich data from participants. The interview protocol was a semi-structured interview approach, to allow the participants the flexibility to share their complete narrative. An interview protocol consisting of seven open-ended questions was used to address the research questions. Twenty qualitative interviews were conducted over a three-week period over Zoom. Additionally, a qualitative approach helped explore participants' responses. In qualitative research, generalization can be avoided, while allowing for in-depth exploration of a central theme or phenomenon (Creswell, 2008).

Recruitment and Research Site

Participants of the study were recruited from all campuses within the UC system, including the graduate campus in San Francisco. The campuses represented in the study are listed below:

- University of California Berkeley
- University of California Davis
- University of California Irvine
- University of California Los Angeles
- University of California Merced
- University of California Riverside
- University of California San Francisco
- University of California San Diego
- University of California Santa Barbara
- University of California Santa Cruz

All ten UC campuses are in the state of California. All are accredited, degree-granting institutions. Program offerings, graduation rates, retention rates, and institutional aid vary from campus to campus. However, all 10 UC campuses share the same policies and procedures for in state tuition residency (University of California, 2019), are all governed by the University of California Board of Regents and have systemwide initiatives to support undocumented college students (University of California, 2019).

Research Design

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative research involves participants who are willing to share their personal experience and stories. Researchers in this type of design establish a close bond with participants, which in turn helps the researcher understand topics in close detail, having the opportunity to ask follow-up and clarifying questions to further understanding (Creswell, 2008). This type of narrative research is called narrative inquiry. To meet the purpose of understanding the experiences of individuals who have graduated, and attended college while undocumented, the researcher asked questions in order to better understand them.

Recruitment

The recruitment site was the 10 UC campuses. Each UC campus has a full-time dedicated professional that leads services and support for undocumented individuals (University of California, 2019). The dedicated staff person is what Creswell (2008) describes as the gatekeeper. The gatekeeper is the individual at the institution organization that served as the primary point of contact. The researcher gathered the contact information, including e-mails and phone numbers, of the primary point of contact at the 10 individual institutions, and asked for help in disseminating the recruitment e-mail message. The recruitment e-mail message, along with the recruitment flyer, was shared with the primary point of contact. After emails were sent to the primary point of contact, a follow-up phone call was made by the researcher, to further explain the purpose of the study, and the need for support for recruitment of UC graduates for the study.

Nine of the 10 UC campuses offer undergraduate and graduate degrees, while one (San Francisco) only offers graduate and professional degrees (University of California, n.d.).

The researcher disseminated the recruitment message (see Appendix B), along with the recruitment flyer (see Appendix D) through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn, through the researcher's personal accounts on these platforms. Social media platforms and LinkedIn were important to use because the researcher is in the field of education, and has networks that include UC staff members, students, and graduates on these platforms.

In email and social media platform recruitment messages, all interested participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire. The questionnaire was uploaded to Qualtrics and was used to assess if the interested individual met the criteria for the study.

As part of the data collection process, a donation in the amount of $30 per participant was offered, as an incentive to those participating in the study (see Appendix D). Participants were asked to choose an organization for the donation. In that process, the researcher compiled a list of the organizations that participants chose for the donation. These organizations are advancing the work of undocumented communities, and became part of the data collection as well, to serve as a resource list for future considerations.

A PDF copy of an informed consent form was delivered electronically to all participants ahead of their individual interviews, and a digital signature was gathered through DocuSign software. Informed consent was reiterated verbally at the beginning of each interview. The study was reviewed by IRB and certified as exempt review under 45 CFR 46.104(d), category 2.

Participants

The participants for this study had to fit a profile that included having graduated from a University of California campus, being undocumented for part or all of their time as a student at that campus, available to commit to a minimum of a one-hour interview conducted via Zoom and interested in participating in the study. Individuals within a 5-year timeframe of conferring their

undergraduate degree(s) were recruited. A timeframe from graduation rather than an age range accounted for non-traditionally aged participants, and transfer students, to be a part of the participant pool. The participant pool included students who conferred undergraduate, master's, and doctorate degrees.

Participants from all ethnicities, races, socioeconomic statuses, countries of origin, religions, gender identities, gender expressions, biological sexes, attractions, abilities, and current legal statuses were welcomed to participate.

Participants had to have successfully conferred the minimum of an undergraduate degree in the UC system. Individuals obtaining multiple degrees were welcomed, if their undergraduate degree was obtained at a UC campus.

Interviews

Because undocumented individuals are faced with many trials and tribulations, dehumanizing, hurtful, and sometimes violent experiences because of their status (Vaquera, Aranda, & Sousa-Rodriguez, 2017), one-on-one personal semi-structured interviews were necessary to establish a sense of trust, rapport, and gain a deep understanding of the participant's experience. Interviews and narrative methods were the primary source of data collection. The researcher had the opportunity to explain their positionality and interest in the post-graduation experience of undocumented individuals, building a comfortable environment for the participant to share deeply personal experiences, that might be difficult to recount, or share. Additionally, interviews provided an opportunity to be referred to additional participants, through snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is a research procedure in which the researcher recruits other participants by asking initial participants to refer them to others, for a 'snowball' effect of the sample (Creswell, 2008).

Document Analysis

The secondary source of data was document analysis of participant's résumé and/or CV. In analyzing these documents that are a universally accepted form of job seeking requirements, the researcher was able to analyze the outward professional representation of participating individuals. Post-analysis, because all participants did not provide documents, the finalized study did not include the analysis of these. The analysis and data gathered from these documents are addressed in chapter 5 as an area for further research.

Researcher Positionality and Reflexivity

The researcher is a formerly undocumented individual that attended college as an undergraduate student while undocumented in the state of California. During the researcher's time as an undergraduate student, California state aid for undocumented individuals was not available, and the in-state tuition residency provision provided by AB540 was in place. Having this lived experience helped the researcher establish rapport and trust with the participants of the study. Additionally, during the study the researcher experienced the emotional toll of reliving experiences of being an undocumented person in the U.S. This manifested in different ways during the interviews and was most prevalent during the last half of the interviews, as more interviews were conducted, and the toll became heavier to manage. A strong support network of family, friends, colleagues, and therapy was used to mitigate the emotional labor of the study.

Ethical Considerations

Knowing that participants might be disclosing deeply personal experiences that might include admission of unlawful activities, the researcher shared all audio and video recording, as well as transcription, to ensure that participants were comfortable with the information being a

part of the research. Pseudonyms were used for all names, and any identifying information that might tie participants to the information they shared. The researcher kept all physical information including notes, printouts, and documents in a file under lock and key, and had all electronic information saved through encryption and two-way authentication.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Introduction

The goal of this study was to explore the career pathways of individuals who went to a University of California campus while undocumented, whether for part of their academic journey, or for the duration of their time as an undergraduate student. The purpose was also to explore the transition of formerly and current undocumented individuals between their academic journey at a University of California campus and entering the workforce.

Being undocumented comes with innumerable challenges. And while attaining a four-year degree comes with many benefits, it does not guarantee the ability to pursue a paid career position or job, because work authorization permits are tied almost exclusively to programs like DACA (Gonzales, Terriquez, and Ruszczy 2014). It is nearly impossible to pursue a career within the borders of the United States without legal work authorization. While entrepreneur and freelancing opportunities provide short-term and one-off solutions for individuals who don't possess work authorization, which in the case of undocumented individuals is almost exclusively the situation of an individual not eligible for DACA, the ability to legally work and be compensated to make a living is decisive to a successful career path (Amuedo-Dorantes and Antman, 2017).

Although survival is an emergent and key theme of an undocumented individual's reality, it is clear that barriers are being challenged every day to bring forward the right to live and work of undocumented communities, with a lot more work to be done. These individuals have forged uncharted paths that will ultimately create new career options and opportunities for those that come after them. As a formerly undocumented student whose career options were limited to

none before gaining status, I am forever indebted to those who forged the steps to allow me to have opportunities I had while undocumented that helped me pursue a career as an educator.

Chapter Structure

In this chapter, I will provide an overview of the lens through which I approached the study and data analysis, demographic information of the 20 interviewed participants, a summary of 11 emergent themes from the interviews, a synopsis of 20 participant stories, an outline of the findings with connections to the research questions, and lastly, a summary of the findings.

This chapter also provides a demographic overview of the participants, the process used for precoding, and the process used for coding and analysis through manual coding and the MAXQDA software tool. For data analysis, I first conducted manual coding and precoding by the content of my questions, not relying solely on computer output. My interview process enabled me to hear firsthand emergent themes that were also later confirmed by MAXQDA. I also used daily reflective journaling to process and reflect on the participants' stories, as well as documenting and reflecting upon the connections made to my own journey as a formerly undocumented college student navigating my own professional career journey.

Community Cultural Wealth, Social Capital Lens

The framework I used for this study was transition theory, and the concept of social capital as introduced in Yosso's community cultural wealth (CCW) model. Given the population and the stories shared from the participants, I focused on CCW exclusively as the lens for the analysis and discussion, as transition theory came up minimally. CCW framed my understanding of an undocumented student's career journey, before, during, and after their transition from student to an individual pursuing career goals tied to their degree(s). Additionally, CCW is a "critical race theory (CRT) challenge to traditional interpretations of cultural capital," (Yosso,

2005, p.69) and was critical in understanding the intersectionality and complexities of each individual's journey and how their experiences and backgrounds shaped the connection to their social capital.

The Community Cultural Wealth model is a representative framework that provides an understanding of how underserved students access and experience college from a strengths-based perspective. I used the forms of capital that Yosso in 2005 researched to take a closer look at the experiences of undocumented the 20 individuals I interviewed. The CCW forms of capital came up in all the interviews: aspirational capital (maintaining hopes and dreams), navigational capital (maneuvering through social institutions), social capital (networking and establishing community resources), linguistic capital (using various language skills), familial capital (building upon

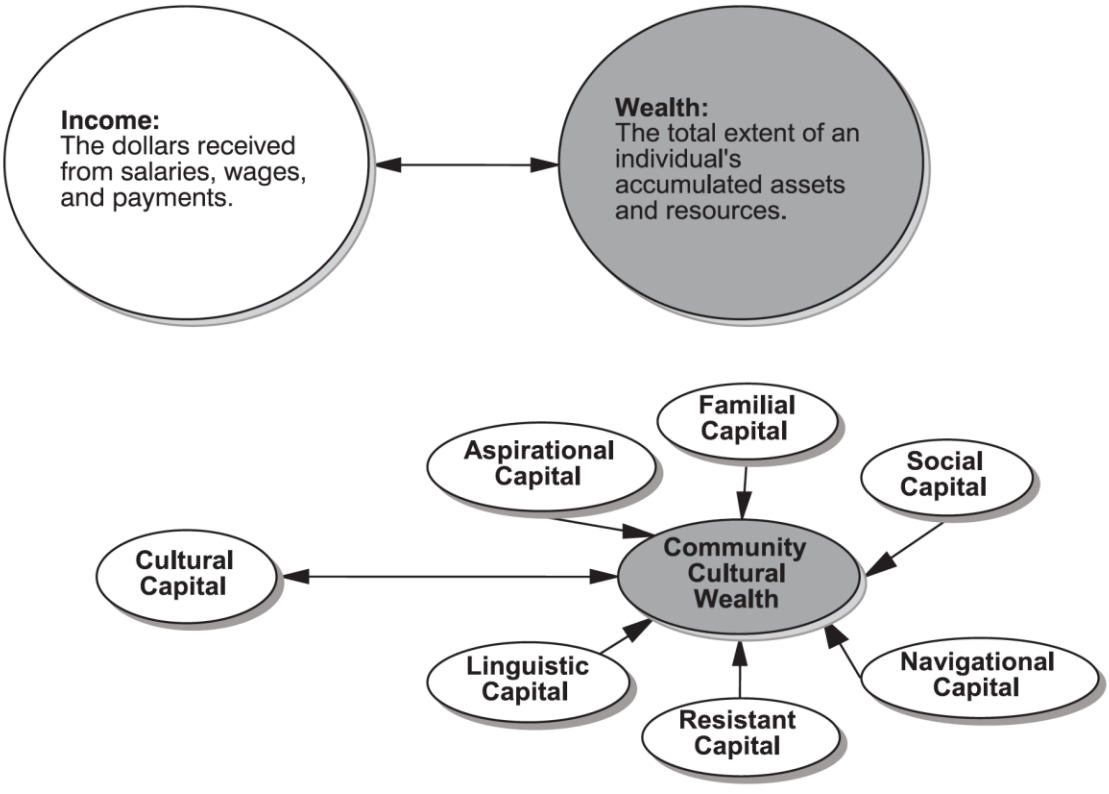

FIGURE 2: Community cultural wealth. (Yosso, 2005, p. 78)

cultural knowledge) and resistance capital (striving for equal rights).

Although the concept of capitals in CCW has traditionally been used to understand identity as it pertains to race and ethnicity, this concept is now widely used to understand other types of identity such as class, and legal status. The pervasive form of capital that came up in the analysis of the qualitative interview data is social capital. Later in this chapter, I have provided the connections to the different forms of capital to the emergent themes.

Participant Demographics & Data Analysis

In the following section I will provide tables of sections of demographic data of the interview participants, as well as an overview table of all the main demographic and characteristics of those interviews. I will then provide a breakdown of any areas of interest and areas to highlight, to get a broad understanding of those who were interviewed.

TABLE 3: Demographic Overview of Interview Participants

Interview	*Pseudonym*	*Gender Identity*	*UG Campus*	*UC Degree(s)*	*Highest Degree Attained*	*Transfer*	*Class Of*	*Yrs Out of UG*
1	French Marigold	Transfemme	Davis	Undergrad	Undergrad	No	1	2020
2	Francisca	Cisgender Female	Irvine	Undergrad	Undergrad	No	1	2020
3	Sandra	Cisgender Female	San Diego	Undergrad	Master's (Pending)	Yes	5	2016
4	Sara	Cisgender Female	Davis	Undergrad	Undergrad	No	6	2015
5	Edelmira	Cisgender Female	Los Angeles	Undergrad	Master's (Pending)	No	4	2017
6	Jaguar	Cisgender Female	Los Angeles	UG (LA) & PhD (SD)	Doctorate	Yes	6	2015
7	Jenn	Cisgender Female	Los Angeles	UG & PhD (Both LA)	Doctorate (Pending)	Yes	5	2016
8	Josefa	Cisgender Female	Santa Barbara	Undergrad	Master's (Pending)	No	2	2019
9	Chuy	Cisgender Male	San Diego	Undergrad	Undergrad	Yes	1	2020
10	Guillermo	Cisgender Male	Santa Barbara	Undergrad	Undergrad	Yes	2	2019
11	Joe	Cisgender Male	Los Angeles	Undergrad	Undergrad	No	1	2020
12	Yeraz	Cisgender Female	Santa Barbara	Undergrad	Undergrad	No	1	2020
13	Crystal	Cisgender Female	Irvine	Undergrad	Master's	No	2	2019
14	Dalia	Cisgender Female	San Diego	Undergrad	Undergrad	Yes	5	2016
15	Tina	Cisgender Female	San Diego	Undergrad	Undergrad	No	4	2017
16	Joon	Cisgender Female	San Diego	Undergrad	Master's (Pending)	No	4	2017
17	Kimberly	Cisgender Female	Los Angeles	UG & MA (Both LA)	Master's	No	6	2015
18	Irma	Cisgender Female	San Diego	UG & MA (Both SD)	Master's	No	6	2015
19	Uriel	Cisgender Male	Los Angeles	Undergrad	Master's (Pending)	No	2	2019
20	Margarita	Cisgender Female	San Diego	Undergrad	Undergrad	No	3	2018

Interview Analysis

There were twenty participants that were interviewed for this study, in the time span of three weeks in the month of January 2021. Interviews ranged from 44 minutes - 76 minutes.

Gender Identity

Of the 20 participants, 15 identified as cisgender females (i.e. womxn, cisgender female, female), 4 identified as cisgender males (i.e. male, cismale, man), and 1 participant identified as transfemme.

UC Campus

The participants completed undergraduate, or additional degrees at the following UC campuses: Davis - 2, Irvine - 2, Los Angeles - 6, San Diego - 7, and Santa Barbara - 3. There were participants from 5 of the 10 UC campuses, the following 5 UC campuses were not represented in the participant pool: Berkeley, Merced, Riverside, San Francisco, and Santa Cruz. UC San Francisco is a graduate-only campus and does not offer undergraduate degrees.

Advanced Degrees and Graduate Studies

Ten participants either already conferred or were in the middle of conferring an advanced degree when they participated in this study. Of those participants 4 had, or were doing so, at a UC campus. One of the 20 participants had successfully completed a Ph.D. in Literature, and one participant was about to begin a Ph.D. program at UCLA, which was also their undergraduate campus. Three participants had successfully completed a master's degree, while five were in the process of completing a master's degree. Four of the participants expressed interest in pursuing graduate school.

Undergraduate Graduation Year

All participants were within a 5-year timeframe from the time they conferred their undergraduate degree (at the time of the dissertation study proposal), and within no more than a 6-year time period of graduation at the beginning of 2021, when interviews were conducted. The time span of undergraduate degrees conferred on those interviewed was 2015 - 2020.

Transfer Students

Of the 20 participants, 6 transferred to a UC from a community college. The six transfers attended the following UC campuses for their undergraduate studies: San Diego, Los Angeles, and Santa Barbara.

Academic Discipline and Majors

I identified academic disciplines based on the undergraduate majors of those interviewed. The academic disciplines that were represented in the interviews were: Arts & Humanities - 1, Social Sciences - 12, and Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) - 7. The Social Sciences were the most represented in the study, followed by STEM. The majors of the participants were (in order by academic discipline): Literature, Criminology Law & Society, Political Science, Labor Studies, Environmental Studies, Spanish, International Studies, International Business, Psychological Sciences, Ethnic Studies, English Literature, American Literature & Culture, Chicana/o Studies, History, Aerospace Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, General Biology, Clinical Nutrition, Mathematics, Biological Anthropology, Psychology, Global Health, and Biochemistry and Cell Biology. Some participants had more than one major.

TABLE 4: Academic Discipline and Majors

Interview	*Pseudonym*	*UC Campus*	*Academic Discipline*	*Major(s)*
6	Jaguar	Los Angeles & San Diego	Arts & Humanities	Literature
2	Francisca	Irvine	Social Sciences	Criminology
5	Edelmira	Los Angeles	Social Sciences	Political Science/Labor Studies
7	Jenn	Los Angeles	Social Sciences	Political Science
8	Josefa	Santa Barbara	Social Sciences	Environmental Studies & Spanish
9	Chuy	San Diego	Social Sciences	International Studies & International Business
12	Yeraz	Santa Barbara	Social Sciences	Political Science
13	Crystal	Irvine	Social Sciences	Psychological Sciences and Criminology
15	Tina	San Diego	Social Sciences	Political Science and Ethnic Studies
17	Kimberly	Los Angeles	Social Sciences	English Literature (UG), Urban Planning (MA)
18	Irma	San Diego	Social Sciences	Political Science (UG), Education Studies (MA)
19	Uriel	Los Angeles	Social Sciences	American Literature & Culture/chicana/o Studies
20	Margarita	San Diego	Social Sciences	History
1	French Marigold	Davis	STEM	Aerospace Engineering, Mechanical Engineering
3	Sandra	San Diego	STEM	General Biology
4	Sara	Davis	STEM	Clinical Nutrition
10	Guillermo	Santa Barbara	STEM	Mathematics
11	Joe	Los Angeles	STEM	Biological Anthropology
14	Dalia	San Diego	STEM	Psychology
16	Joon	San Diego	STEM	Global Health, Biochemistry and Cell Biology

Age Range and Generation Type

The age range of the participants was 22-34 years old, with the average age of the participant being 26.5. Most of the participants were Millennials, and four of the 20 participants were part of Generation Z.

TABLE 5: Age Range and Generation Type

Interview	*Pseudonym*	*DOB*	*Age*	*Generation Type*
12	Yeraz	01/30/1999	22	Generation Z
11	Joe	09/12/1998	23	Generation Z
13	Crystal	01/26/1998	23	Generation Z
2	Francisca	03/10/1997	24	Generation Z
19	Uriel	08/02/1997	24	Millenial
1	French Marigold	09/04/1995	25	Millenial
5	Edelmira	05/07/1995	25	Millenial
8	Josefa	05/10/1996	25	Millenial
20	Margarita	09/18/1996	25	Millenial
15	Tina	02/01/1995	26	Millenial
3	Sandra	05/17/1993	27	Millenial
7	Jenn	09/16/1994	27	Millenial
10	Guillermo	10/10/1993	27	Millenial
16	Joon	01/28/1994	27	Millenial
18	Irma	04/19/1993	27	Millenial
4	Sara	12/14/92	28	Millenial
6	Jaguar	08/21/1992	28	Millenial
14	Dalia	12/22/1992	29	Millenial
9	Chuy	01/24/1987	34	Millenial
17	Kimberly	12/13/1986	34	Millenial

Country of Origin and U.S. Hometown

The country of origin for participants was overwhelmingly from México, only two of the 20 participants were from other countries of origin. The other two countries of origin of participants were Armenia and South Korea. The U.S. hometown of participants were all from the state of California, mostly from Southern California, and only five of the 20 participants from

TABLE 6: Country of Origin

Interview	*Pseudonym*	*Country of Birth*	*U.S. Hometown*	*CA Location*
16	Joon	South Korea	Northern California	Northern CA
1	French Marigol	México	Bakersfield	Northern CA
8	Josefa	México	Santa Barbara County	Northern CA
10	Guillermo	México	Oxnard	Northern CA
4	Sara	México	Santa Rosa	Northern CA
12	Yeraz	Armenia	Los Angeles	Southern CA
2	Francisca	México	Los Angeles	Southern CA
3	Sandra	México	Aliso Viejo	Southern CA
5	Edelmira	México	Baldwin Park	Southern CA
6	Jaguar	México	Bellflower	Southern CA
7	Jenn	México	Santa Monica	Southern CA
9	Chuy	México	San Diego	Southern CA
11	Joe	México	South Central L.A.	Southern CA
15	Tina	México	Hesperia	Southern CA
17	Kimberly	México	Baldwin Park	Southern CA
18	Irma	México	San Diego	Southern CA
19	Uriel	México	El Cajon	Southern CA
20	Margarita	México	San Diego	Southern CA
13	Crystal	México	Pacoima	Southern CA
14	Dalia	México	Coachella	Southern CA

Northern California.

Status

Some immigrants enter the U.S. without documentation, while others stay beyond the term of their permitted presence. This population without legal immigration status is referred to as undocumented, because they do not fall into any U.S. immigration category (Passel, Capps, & Fix, 2004). For the purpose of this study, I grouped participants into two categories for status: DACA, and non-DACA. Individuals covered by DACA receive renewable work permits for work authorization, which is a critical factor in seeking employment and a career pathway as an undocumented individual (Gonzales,Terriquez, & Ruszczyk, 2014). Individuals without DACA do not have work authorization and have limited options for gainful and legal employment, that include entrepreneurship and freelancing/independent contracting (Immigrants Rising, 2020).

Of the participants interviewed, 16 had DACA status, and 4 did not have DACA. Of those who were currently enrolled in DACA, all expressed interest in applying to the DACA program as soon as they were able to. Three participants adjusted their status after graduating, two of them receiving legal permanent residency status, and one becoming eligible for DACA (when previously not eligible while awaiting a case update).

TABLE 7: Status

Interview	*Pseudonym*	*Status*	*Country of Birth*
2	Francisca	Non-DACA	México
8	Josefa	Non-DACA	México
12	Yeraz	Non-DACA	Armenia
16	Joon	Non-DACA	Korea
1	French Marigold	DACA	México
3	Sandra	DACA	México
4	Sara	DACA	México
5	Edelmira	DACA	México
6	Jaguar	DACA	México
7	Jenn	DACA	México
9	Chuy	DACA	México
10	Guillermo	DACA	México
11	Joe	DACA	México
13	Crystal	DACA	México
14	Dalia	DACA	México
15	Tina	DACA	México
17	Kimberly	DACA	México
18	Irma	DACA	México
19	Uriel	DACA	México
20	Margarita	DACA	México

TABLE 8: Career Fields

Interview	*Pseudonym*	*Field of Work*
5	Edelmira	Education, Higher Education
12	Yeraz	Education, Higher Education
14	Dalia	Education, Higher Education
15	Tina	Education, Higher Education
13	Crystal	Education, K-12
18	Irma	Education, K-12
19	Uriel	Education, K-12, Full-Time Student
6	Jaguar	Education, Professoriate
10	Guillermo	Finance
8	Josefa	Full-Time Student
16	Joon	Full-Time Student
20	Margarita	Healthcare
1	French Marigold	Healthcare
4	Sara	Healthcare, Clinical Nutrition
11	Joe	Healthcare, Public Health
17	Kimberly	Housing, Urban Planning
9	Chuy	Start-Up, Mobility
2	Francisca	Non-Profit & Independent Contractor Work
3	Sandra	Policy, Environmental Policy
7	Jenn	Policy, Public Policy

Career Fields

The career fields that participants were working in at the time of their participation in this study were in the following sectors: Education - 8, Finance -1, Full-Time Students -2, Healthcare -4, Housing & Urban Planning -1, Start-Ups -1, Non-Profit & Independent Contract Work -1, and Policy -2.

Participant Profiles

In this section of the chapter, I will introduce the twenty individuals who participated in the study. These individuals highlight the significance that there is no one dominant undocumented individual narrative. Beyond the label of being undocumented, and beyond the tables of demographic information that were presented earlier in this chapter, they have all taken different paths, and their journeys continue. In speaking in-depth, it was evident as they recounted their paths, that their existence as undocumented individuals fueled their passion for going into their respective career fields. This was especially true for educators I had the opportunity to interview, and those who had negative experiences with educators, education administrators, and educational institutions. The individuals in the areas of education shared that they felt it was coming "full circle," to be in positions where they could influence and replace what they experienced as undocumented students.

All names are pseudonyms chosen by the participant or assigned from a list of the researcher's family members, friends, and loved ones. All stories are shared in the order the interviews were conducted. I will share brief profiles of all participants, and in the emergent themes of this chapter, include deeper understandings of their stories through emergent themes.

All individuals are undocumented, lacking status, or recently gained status and formerly undocumented. For the purpose of this study, individuals were categorized in two categories regarding their status: enrolled in DACA, or not enrolled in DACA (non-DACA). Although being undocumented was the major focus of this study, in the context of a career path, being undocumented is much more than a label, it is a specific type of marginalization that comes with severe consequences, experiences, and trauma (Gámez, Lopez, and Overton, 2017).

French Marigold

French Marigold is a 25-year-old transfemme DACA status individual who works in healthcare. Their U.S. hometown is Bakersfield, CA, and they are originally from Morelos, México, making the trek to the U.S. with their mom and stepdad. They attended UC Davis and double majored in Aerospace Engineering and Mechanical Engineering, graduating in 2020.

Francisca

Francisca is a 24-year-old cisgender female who does not have DACA, and currently works in independent/contract work and non-profits, because of her status. Francisca's U.S. hometown is Los Angeles, and she is originally from Puebla, México. Francisca attended UC Irvine and majored in Criminology, Law & Society, graduating in 2020.

Sandra

Sandra is a 27-year-old cisgender female, DACA recipient, who transferred to UC San Diego to study General Biology. She is currently working on her master's at UC Santa Barbara, and holds a professional work role in environmental policy. Sandra conferred her undergraduate degree in 2016, is originally from Mexico City, México, and her U.S. hometown is Aliso Viejo (Orange County).

Sara

Sara is a is a 28-year-old cisgender female who studied Clinical Nutrition at UC Davis, and currently works in clinical nutrition. She had DACA as an undergraduate and adjusted her status after graduating. She graduated from Davis in 2015, her U.S. hometown is Santa Rosa, and her family migrated from Hidalgo, México.

Edelmira

Edelmira is a 25-year-old cisgender female, who studied Political Science/Labor Studies at UCLA, graduating in 2017, and will be pursing her master's at UCLA in Fall 2021. Her mother's family is from Guadalajara, her dad's family is from Veracruz, and economic push factors pulled them to migrate North to Tijuana, México. Edelmira and her family migrated from Tijuana to Baldwin Park after her grandmother became ill and her dad found more economic opportunities to provide for their family in Los Angeles. Edelmira has DACA. Edelmira works in higher education.

Jaguar

Jaguar is a 28-year-old cisgender female DACA recipient who transferred to complete her undergraduate degree at UCLA and successfully obtained her doctorate (Ph.D.) in Literature at UC San Diego in 2015 and 2018, respectively. She is originally from Colima, México, and her U.S. hometown is Bellflower. She currently teaches, and is exploring postdoc opportunities, on her way to enter the professoriate.

Jenn

Jenn is a 27-year-old DACA recipient, cisgender female, part of a mixed-status family, whose U.S. hometown is Santa Monica. She transferred to study Political Science at UCLA, graduating in 2016, and will begin her doctoral studies in the Ph.D. program in Sociology at the same institution in Fall 2021. She currently works in public policy, and is originally from Guadalajara, México.

Josefa

Josefa is a 25-year-old cisgender female who attended UC Santa Barbara (UCSB). She conferred her undergraduate degrees in Environmental Studies and Spanish in 2019. She is

currently working on finishing up her master's at a California State University (CSU) campus and is a full-time student. She is not eligible for DACA. Her hometown is Los Angeles, and she migrated to the U.S. from Puebla, México.

Chuy

Chuy is a 34-year-old cisgender male, who is originally from México City, México, and his U.S. hometown is Southeast San Diego. He has DACA. He studied International Studies and International Business at UCSD, graduated in 2020, and currently works in a mobility start-up. Before transferring to UCSD from community college, he was interested in STEM, and was part of the Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) program at his community college.

Chuy dropped out of high school his senior year of high school, started working at Burger King, and ended up working there for about 7 and a half years. He felt stuck because options to work without a social security number were limited. One day he just decided he had to go back to school, and he was then eligible for DACA. Going to the Burger King at the UCSD campus triggered him to picture himself at school, he shared, "it was like being at Disneyland," when describing what it felt like to be on campus. He quit his job, with the support of his family and the savings he was able to accumulate, and decided to go back to get his GED, go to community college, and eventually transferred to UCSD, on a full scholarship through the Chancellor's Associates Scholarship Program (CASP).

Guillermo

Guillermo is a 27-year-old cisgender male originally from Jalisco, México. He migrated to Oxnard, in Ventura County with his family when he was one year old. He transferred to UC

Santa Barbara and majored in Mathematics, graduating in 2019. He currently works in finance and is a DACA recipient.

Joe

Joe is originally from México City, México, and his U.S. hometown is South Central Los Angeles. He studied Biological Anthropology at UCLA, graduated in 2020, and currently works in public health. Joe is 23, is a DACA recipient, and interested in pursuing graduate studies in the field of health in the future.

Yeraz

Yeraz is a 22-year-old cisgender female originally from Yerevan, Armenia, and migrated to the U.S. at 11 years old as an asylee. Yeraz's asylum process took almost a decade to complete, and during that time Yeraz completed an undergraduate degree in Political Science at UC Santa Barbara, graduating in 2020. During Yeraz's asylum process, she was not eligible for DACA. Yeraz currently works in higher education, and her U.S. hometown is Los Angeles.

Crystal

Crystal is a 23-year-old cisgender female originally from Zacatecas, México, and migrated to the U.S. with her mom when she was six years old. She graduated in 2019 from UC Irvine (UCI) with degrees in Psychological Sciences and Criminology, Law & Society and went on to do a master's in education and teaching credential. Crystal was a DACA recipient while she was at UCI. She is a first-year teacher, and her U.S. hometown is Pacoima. Crystal recently adjusted her status, while she was finishing up her teaching credential, and after graduating from UCI.

Dalia

Dalia is a is a 29-year-old cisgender female originally from Puebla, México. She and her family migrated to Coachella, joining family members that were already in the U.S. She transferred to UC San Diego and majored in Psychology. Dalia currently works in library sciences and is currently a DACA recipient.

Tina

Tina is a 26-year-old cisgender female, DACA recipient, who attended UC San Diego and majored in Ethnic Studies and Political Science, graduating in 2017. She is interested in pursuing additional advanced degrees, and currently works in higher education. Tina shared that she "doesn't have the tragic immigrant story," that everyone assumes because she's so outspoken. She crossed in a car with her family, on a visitor's visa, intending to stay. Tina and her family migrated to Hesperia, in the Inland Empire, joining family that has been there since the 1980s.

Joon

Joon is a 27-year-old cisgender female who transferred to UC San Diego, majoring in the biological sciences, and graduated in 2017. Joon applied to medical school, was waitlisted to one U.S. school, and accepted to a medical school outside of the U.S., ultimately deciding to not attend because she would not be able to practice medicine for the reasons that she initially wanted to, which was to provide care to undocumented people. She declined her acceptance to medical school, deciding to take a gap year, and instead applied to and is attending a master's program in public health at an Ivy League school, where she is currently finishing up her degree. Joon is originally from Seoul, South Korea, and her U.S. hometown is in Northern California. She is currently a full-time graduate student, and not eligible for DACA.

Kimberly

Kimberly is a 34-year-old cisgender female who attended UCLA and majored in English Literature, graduating in 2011 with her undergraduate degree and in 2015 with a master's degree in Urban Planning at the same institution. She is originally from Guadalajara, Jalisco, México, and her U.S. hometown is Baldwin Park. She currently works in urban planning and is a DACA recipient.

When Kimberly first attended UCLA as an undergraduate student, DACA had not yet been implemented, and she was paying for tuition out-of-pocket. She quickly realized she would not be able to keep up with the costs without financial aid. She was referred to a counselor by happenstance, and the counselor suggested she take a leave, complete as much of her graduation requirements at a community college, and then re-enroll at UCLA, without having to reapply. She did just that and shared had she not been referred to the counselor, she might have left UCLA and never come back.

Irma

Irma is a 27-year-old cisgender female who attended UCSD for both her undergraduate degree and master's degree and teaching credential. She completed her undergraduate degree in 2015 and completed her master's degree and teaching credential in 2016. She majored in Political Science and was in the Education Studies department for her master's program and teaching credential. She is a DACA recipient, and San Diego is her U.S. hometown. Her family migrated to the U.S. from San Luis Potosí, México. Irma is a social studies teacher, working in K-12 education.

Uriel

Uriel is a 24-year-old cisgender male who attended UCLA and majored in American Literature & Culture/Chicana/o Studies. Uriel graduated in 2019. He was originally thinking that he was going to pursue medical school, and his career trajectory changed while at UCLA. He is currently finishing a master's degree, is a full-time student, and is currently a teacher's aide, and will enter the workforce in K-12 education after graduation. Uriel's U.S. hometown is El Cajon.

Margarita

Margarita is a 25-year-old cisgender female who attended UCSD and majored in History, graduating in 2018. She is originally from Tijuana, Baja California, México. She and her family migrated to the U.S. when she was two years old, on a visitor's visa to Arizona, and eventually settled in San Diego, which she considers her U.S. hometown. She is a DACA recipient and works in healthcare. She previously worked in K-12 education.

Emergent Themes

Using Yosso's CCW model as a basis to look at the epistemology of marginalized communities as a source to learn from, I critically analyzed the experiences shared with me of the twenty individuals I had the opportunity to meet. I focused on the different forms of capital they utilized to exist and carve out a career space for themselves, despite facing beyond daunting obstacles. Legal obstacles like a lack of a work permit, that no amount of resilience can fix. Staying highly critical of the "good immigrant" narrative that only those who are able to be "good" is a slippery slope, and in my findings I found over and over again that the participants have an abundance of purpose that they exercise in every decision they make in their lives, and through their trajectories, they are paving the path for others that come after them, and always

acknowledging that the opportunities that have been afforded to them are because of other undocumented individuals' work in changing the realities for their communities.

The themes were consistent with the limited literature that exists on undocumented individuals, their lived experiences and the challenges they face in the U.S. educational system, especially the challenge of paying for college. Exploring their lives after graduation builds upon the literature.

Through Yosso's model, I challenged a deficit lens, and in summarizing the emergent themes, I will provide an overview of the highly developed skill each highlighted theme includes, within the context of career and job searching strategies. Understanding that creating a career path begins much before college, and much after graduation as well.

The themes presented here are not mutually exclusive, and in fact in some cases highly dependent on each other. For example, an individual's socioeconomic status might lead to decisions based on survival. Additionally, depending on the point in an individual's life, the saliency of a theme changes over time, especially as an individual has more work experience after graduation.

Following this section, I will align each of the themes to the research questions used for the study, and then connect the different forms of capital that emerged in each one of the themes. Each theme will be connected to the research question to which it helps build knowledge on.

Socioeconomic Status (SES)

An overarching theme that came up in the study is socioeconomic status. Participants shared that a highly influential factor of their families migrating to the U.S. was because of lack of work opportunities in their home countries, and the need to migrate for better economic breaks and a future with possible social mobility, to better provide for their families. In some cases, a

participant's parent would work in the U.S., while the rest of the family stayed in their home countries, and eventually brought their families over to be reunited once an established income source was established.

Dalia, who attended UCSD, shared her family's experience migrating to the U.S., which included both economic factors for her parents deciding to look for work in the U.S. because there were no work opportunities in their hometown in Puebla, and after 5 or so years, bringing the rest of the family over to the U.S. to be reunited again:

> ...I was born in Puebla; I was at the time the youngest of six kids. When I was young, my parents had a lot of debt, so they would migrate a lot, but they wouldn't come to the U.S. They would just go to Sonora and work temp jobs, field work, and they would go down to Puebla. But there was a time where I guess the work conditions weren't that great, there wasn't a lot of jobs that year, the season was bad, and they just decided that to come over [to the U.S.] and I already had a lot of family here. So they came and they stayed, and I think it might have been five years or less than five years that they were gone, and I lived with all my siblings. Well, not all of them. My oldest brother also was here [in the U.S.] already because he's 14 years older than I am.
>
> And so, my parents decided when my oldest sister started thinking about having her own family then my parents decided to bring the young ones here [in the U.S.] with them. So currently, all of my siblings and one that they added here were here except for my one sister at México. So that was when I was nine, turning 10.

Josefa, who attended UCSB shared how her experience in an undergraduate class deepened her understanding of the economic factors that led to her family's uprooting:

> And I really liked one of the assignments where the professor had us write about our personal story through the lens of environmental justice. And in that, I started to write about my family and why we moved to the U.S. And I discovered that we hadn't just moved randomly, but it was more because of government agreements like NAFTA that affected my parents' hometown. So a lot of people in my hometown do farming and they grow corn, specifically. And because of NAFTA, more people were purchasing corn coming from the U.S. because it was cheaper.
>
> So then, families like my dad's and my mom's couldn't really make a living out of that anymore. And at the same time, because of the cheap labor, more American companies are having factories in places like my hometown. So then my dad

> switched from doing farming as a living, to working at a factory where they would, I don't know, do work with jean fabric. And so with that, I also learned that the water in my hometown was being polluted by the same factory. So I just really saw how everything was connected and how we were pulled to move into this country because the way of living that could sustain us wasn't really there anymore.

Josefa and Dalia's quotes regarding their socioeconomic status and the relation SES has to their family's reasons for coming to the U.S. highlight the significance of the SES ties to the challenges of being undocumented. The SES status theme adds to the expectations of college-going individuals, in terms of career options that will presumably come as a result of attaining a degree. This is deeply complicated when an individual is undocumented and has limited options.

Survival.

Making decisions based on surviving, whether that be economic, emotional, or situational, was the second most notable theme in the study. Participants shared making difficult decisions in terms of school choice and career choice, as a means of survival, and feeling limited in options when feeling like survival was at stake in their decision-making process, within the context of being undocumented, especially those not having a work permit. When sharing about their experience approaching their job search and every other aspect of their life, French Marigold shared:

> ...or at least one of the responses to being undocumented or one of the many survival tactics that we implement as undocu folks is that we try to think of plans A through Z. We got to know the laws. We got to know how our status impacts the many aspects of our life.

The theme of survival is complex, and inextricably linked to the other themes that emerged in the study. As stated earlier in this chapter, all the themes found in this study are highly correlated and at times highly dependent on each other. The theme of survival is not a

standalone theme and highlighted that the career pathway of an undocumented individual, while highly salient at the end of their time in college, is deeply fixed with opportunities, experiences, and networks from before, during, and after their college experience. This is a consideration for implications for practice that I will provide in Chapter 5.

Dalia, who now currently works in the field of library sciences and attended UC San Diego shared how although her marital status offered her some options, she still had to make the difficult choice to not petition to change her status during the Trump administration, as a means of survival, because she did not feel it was safe to do so:

> Well, I guess the main goal is always just to survive. I mean, I'm lucky that I have my job, a husband. I'm lucky that being married to him gives me an easier way to petition. I was unlucky as in we got married October 2016 and then Trump came in really quickly after and they told me, 'You haven't been married long enough, you shouldn't file right now,' and then when he came into office the responses I was getting were, "you should wait because it's getting really, really hard out there.' The one thing I regret is not using advanced parole, we were also scared that it was a trap. If I would have used that I would have legal entry and, yeah, my long-term goal, I just want to work, be productive whatever kind of work that is, be content with my life, be healthy and be here.

Dalia and Marigold's experiences in making decisions based on survival, imply that the sense of survival is multi-faceted. Survival in the context of their experience means economic survival, physical survival (safety), emotional survival (mental health), and many areas of life that are further complicated when an individual lacks status.

Validation.

Participants shared a sense of validation through rigorous academic roles they took on, or simply by being a college student. Some shared that they found a sense of purpose, where previously, or had it not been for school, they might not have found, because of their status, and how their lack of status shaped their world view.

Francisca, who is does not have DACA or a work permit shared the sense of safety, security, and purpose she feels comes with being a student in college-

> ...And I feel like for undocu folks education and being in college is a safe place because you know you're going to have housing and you're going to get some type of money and you're going to be doing something, you're going to [more] feel useful than if you were not. I think being in college gives you a sense of security, something like that. I don't know if that makes sense.

When explaining why they chose to double they chose to double major in Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering while at UC Davis, French Marigold shared: "As a point of pride, I wanted to choose the hardest engineering that there is and chose aerospace engineering."

In a follow-up question regarding Joon's drive and purpose, I asked if she thought she would have the same passion and purpose had she not been undocumented, to which she answered:

> Yeah. I don't think I would have the perspectives I have now had I not been undocumented. I like grew up in a pretty like privileged neighborhood. And I feel like when you grow up in that like homogenous community with like a lot of normalized wealth, like you have this really skewed perspective and you don't really care to understand some others who might not be as privileged or are marginalized in other ways. So yeah, it's definitely given me a lot of, I think like, ability to emphasize and see connections between different forms of oppression. And that gives me purpose because I can't stand that, like that makes me angry.

Joon and Francisca's account are a primary example of what Rendón (1994) delineates in validation theory. Their validation can be aligned to their post-graduation aspirations in their career trajectories. As a result of their academic journeys, they feel empowered to seek out job opportunities to help them build their careers.

Layered Life Hardships.

Participants shared making difficult personal decisions in terms of their life trajectories, family considerations, and decisions that documented individuals don't necessarily have to

consider for the same reasons. Most participants shared that aside from funding, a major consideration for which UC to attend was proximity to family, staying close to home, and having the option to commute to save money, and to also help with family obligations. These family obligations increased if the individual was the oldest, or in a mixed-status family where they were covered by DACA, and other family members might not be. In terms of romantic relationships with significant others that were documented, significant relationship milestones like marriage came up earlier, because of status. Sara, a clinical nutritionist that graduated from UC Davis shared that her boyfriend of many years, who also attended UC Davis brought up marriage many times, but she declined because she felt like she wanted to get through college on her own and wanted to get married only after she knew that she could get through college on her own, meaning without petitioning for status as a spouse. After graduating from Davis, she shared what her now husband asked her to consider -

> "Because he's like, 'You did what you said you were going to do. You got through college on your own. Now let's do this. Let's get married, and let's apply for your residency.' And we did. So, yeah. I think it's that sense of pride. Like, 'No, I want to do it on my own.' I'm very stubborn. He did offer a couple times like 'vamos a casarnos,'. I was like, 'No, I need to do this. I don't know how I'm going to do it, but I'm going to do it.'"

And a year after she graduated -

> Then I think a year after I graduated, I got engaged. Just that gave me relief too, because I knew that, okay, I ... My husband was like, 'Okay, let's ...' We got engaged, and then later that year he was like, 'Let's just get married through the court so you can start the process. I want you to be able to have that, to have your residency.' So, we actually got married that same year, later on that year, and just through the court so that I can legally start the process for my residency. And then we had the wedding a year later from when I got engaged. I felt better about it, because I was like, 'Okay, I'm done with school. I did that.' I just didn't want to have to worry about DACA anymore.

Joe, who attended UCLA, shared the family obligations he had while he was an undergraduate student, and still to this day:

> I was, I was like, 'okay, I'm going to go back home and take care of her,' [in reference to his mother] but at the same time, it comes to this point where, what do we choose: our health, or being with our family or studying. It's a really tough one, when compared to our other peers, who are more privileged and given more resources.

Tina, who attended UCSD spoke about the things she considers when making career and life choices, being part of a mixed-status family, and the eldest of her siblings:

> ...my parents are undocumented and now I have to worry about them getting old, I should say, not old, that sounds bad, but they're getting older. And so now I'm thinking like, Oh what about their retirement, their health. A lot of things. And in my head, I'm like, I need a better paying job so I can help support them. But because I don't have a master's I keep getting stuck in entry-level positions. And I keep just barely making it by. So, I have long-term goals. I'm still working on that path to get there. And again, it's very much like a situational thing. And it's also like what happens to a lot of undocumented folks because often when we're documented folks in our family are not. And when you're the oldest, the expectation is always that you are to also provide. Then you're second to yourself in a way.

The individuals that participated in this study hold multiple marginalized identities that include being the first in their families to attend college, transfer students, transgender individuals, women in STEM, and others. These marginalized identities show up in different ways with their lack of status, and present further complications when life hardships, especially those involving family responsibilities arise.

Funding.

All participants shared that the most influential determining factor for choosing which UC they attended was funding. This was unequivocally the most critical factor in their choice, and each individual's experience was different. Those who did not have access to state funding

for different circumstances, shared how it was a community effort to help pay for school, quarter by quarter, without a long-term plan of what was going to happen. While others shared that because they had to pay out-of-pocket costs, they graduated debt free, while understanding the heavy financial burden that their families took on to help them pay for school. Commuting was common amongst participants, to help offset the costs of attending school.

Francisca, who does not have DACA, chose to attend UCI because they offered her the most funding to attend school. Most of her funding comes from institutional funding where status is not a requirement - “And from the UC's I only got accepted to UCI and UC Davis but I picked UCI because it was the one that gave me the most money and also because it was closer to home.”

Kimberly, who attended UCLA for both her undergraduate and master’s degree, paid for her two quarters completely out of pocket, because she was not eligible for financial aid at the time. After being referred to a counselor, by happenstance, and not because she was seeking support, she was advised to take a leave of absence, and complete her general education coursework at a community college, and then return to UCLA, without having to reapply. This interview highlight demonstrates a different angle of overlapping themes unearthed in this study. She shared that if she had not taken that advice, there would have been no way for her to complete her degree paying fees out of pocket without financial aid support -

> ...And somebody told me that what I could do is go back to community college, finish my GEs, and then come back and I wouldn't have to reapply. So I was so grateful for that advice because I was really struggling those first two quarters. And I felt really bad that I wasn't doing well in my classes. And my mom was working overtime to help me pay. So I dropped out of UCLA, went back to Mount SAC to finish my GEs. I did that for a year and a half, and then I returned and changed my major. So I majored in English Literature.

Funding to attend college, to take on internship and research opportunities to make them more competitive candidates, and to cover basic needs, are critical for undocumented individuals to be supported in their post-graduation career paths. All individuals interviewed for the study brought up funding as being a key component to their success.

Limited Opportunities.

In terms of being able to tap into robust networks for job and career prospects, the findings point to limited opportunities for undocumented individuals, and narrow options for paid internship opportunities, to gain experience in their respective fields. In sharing his experience at UCLA, and the frustration that came with not knowing what questions to ask, and no network to turn to, to get more guidance, Joe shared -

> ...at the moment, I do not know how to apply for grad schools, I do not know how to apply for post-bacs. I do not know how to even start to think about research. I do have my ideas, and so on, and everything, but I still don't know who to ask for help. And I know there comes this part of me, people don't ask for help because they want to be independent. But to the point where I am at right now, I want to ask for help, I don't know who to go to, to ask for help for those matters. When I see my friends, they be, I accepted to a PhD program, or I got accepted to a master's program. How did you do that?

Josefa is finishing up her master's program at a CSU and attended UCSB for her undergraduate degree. When talking to me about what opportunities she's considering for what's next for her, and she shared:

> ...I still don't have a work permit. I know that being in school is like a safety net where, I guess, I am in the system and as a student, I just have different opportunities than if I were to not be in school anymore. So, in December, I finished my applications for PhD programs... And I have heard back from two.

Before transferring to UCSD from his local community college, Chuy spent almost a decade working at a fast-food restaurant and felt stuck. He shared he felt he had no other options

because he had been able to work there for so long without a work permit before DACA was an option:

> I started working at a Burger King nearby and I worked there for a very long time. I got promoted right away to an assistant manager at barely 18 years old. So, it was an interesting experience where I lasted a very long time. So, one of the downsides of not being documented is that either, I mean the opportunities to be able to find that job that pays okay, it's pretty hard. So, most of the places that hire people without a real Social Security number are mostly in the service industry. So, I ended up working in the fast-food industry for about seven, seven and a half years. So, it was a long journey.
>
> If DACA would not have been in place, I would never [have] gone back to school. Even though it felt good, seeing it, from outside, and romanticizing going back to school, I think what made it real was the opportunity to be able to leave that dead end job. So, it was definitely the most definitive factor that changed everything, [it] was DACA. Without DACA, I probably would still be working at Burger King. I'm not joking. I had co-workers that were with me those seven years that were there 10 years before I even showed up. So, it's unfortunately the fact that it's a very very...there are so many limitations in the job market for someone who does not have a social security number.

Joon initially intended to attend medical school after completing her undergraduate degree at UCSD. Joon is not covered by DACA, and while she was accepted to a non-U.S. medical school, and after considering different factors that included U.S. medical schools not having pathways for undocumented students to be successful, she decided to pursue a master's degree in the meantime:

> ...I think if I'm being honest, there are not that many resources at my graduate school that are applicable to me, mainly because I can't work in this country. And I think, like I said, not a lot of people can answer my questions about medical schools, like for people without DACA. So, I would say the resources I tend to use are like people, like just mentorship and individual support… I did really appreciate while I was at UCSD, just emotional support and just like companionship and feeling like I belonged, like while I was interacting with folks at the [redacted campus unit]. So, I wouldn't say I like received concrete advice or like materials or anything like that from the [redacted campus unit], but just knowing that there were many people who were supportive of me and people like me, I think that gave me some confidence and some hope and just some comfort while I was dragging myself through the process of applying [to graduate school].

> That was like a really confusing path. Like, I wasn't clear if I was doing the right thing.

Networks & Resources.

Participants shared that if/when they established small, focused individuals as part of their networks they found an incredible amount of support, advocacy, and resources to tap into. Individuals shared that these networks and resources sometimes happened as a result of a supportive individual, whether that was a counselor or professor, and sometimes as a result of an office dedicated to undocumented student support services. For those individuals graduating recently, they shared more direct resources connected to undocumented student centers/programs on campus, while those who graduated later, shared that since the services were not yet established, they did not connect to networks or resources through undocumented-specific programs on campus. It was clear from those who shared about their experience with undocumented student-specific offices and programs on their campuses, that it made a positive impact on their experience in identifying networks and resources in their job and career exploration efforts.

When sharing about her experience at her community college with a professor that helped her apply to transfer to UCLA, and also continued helping and supporting her as she entered a Ph.D. program at UCSD, Jaguar shared -

> And my professors ended up knowing that I was undocumented because I remember I did share that information with one of them. And luckily, he was very supportive. He was a white man, and he had a lot of power. And he always believed in my potential. And he helped me with the fellowship.

Additionally, she shared she had a similar experience moving from UCLA (undergrad) to UCSD (Ph.D. in Literature program), in terms of disclosing her status and receiving support from faculty -

> It's not like something, I would just randomly go to a professor and talk to them. And thankfully, because I told him, he was also kind of very supportive. And whenever he would go up online about a scholarship on campus, he would inform me about it. And then I really appreciated that type of information, right? The thing that I find really important and that's lacking in many campuses is that this information, for instance, for scholarships or fellowships or whatever, are not being put out in a certain page, right? Practically, the professor was giving me the information because he knew about it, right? So it's not like I would find kind of this stuff somewhere. It was almost as if like, somehow the professors know the information and they kind of decide who they give the information to which is kind of a sad system because it seems like, well, what about everybody else? Nobody else gets to see these opportunities in it.

Yeraz, who attended UC Santa Barbara, shared that had their undocumented student center not reached out to her first, she would not have known to reach out to them -

> I'm glad Undocumented Student Services reached out to me at first. But if someone does not reach out to you, you should definitely go to Undocumented Student Services. I cannot imagine an undocumented student going through undergrad without having a specific office for them to kind of tell them what is going on.

Josefa, who also attended UC Santa Barbara, shared how one of her high school teachers was instrumental in her getting more information and becoming comfortable with attending the campus that she had never visited before -

> And my Spanish teacher went to UCSB. And because myself and another girl had been accepted to that school, he drove us there so that we could see the school. So, we got a tour of the campus…

Studies have shown that teachers play a key role in transmitting college knowledge or directly expositing students to college (Corwin, & Tierney, 2007). In this case, Josefa is

describing how a campus tour by her very own Spanish teacher served as her personal introduction to the campus.

When sharing with me the sense of community that helped her during her time at UCLA and during her time in community college before transferring, Jenn shared -

> During my time at SMC [community college], was when I met other undocumented students who I could relate to. I felt like I never had that growing up in Santa Monica. And so, I became more comfortable with talking about my status, to like healing and then to be undocumented. Because I felt like, I grew up knowing I was undocumented, but we always talked about it in a jokeful manner. I was like the outlet to early trauma. We joke around about it, right? With our family members and whatnot, but never really understanding what the repercussions of what that is going to mean when we were older.
>
> One of my best friends to this day, I remember we were sitting at the table and she's like, 'I'm from Guadalajara. And I was like, 'Oh my God, me too.' And then I was like, 'Do you have DACA'...But we both kind of knew, right? [in reference to being undocumented] We didn't really have to ask one another. And so, I was able to build a solid little key group of people who were undocumented. And so, we were able to support one another through that and through that journey.

Kimberly, who paid for two quarters out of pocket and had no plan for how to continue at UCLA while completing her undergraduate degree, shared how a staff person in a major department gave her the information she needed to be able to afford to pay and finish her degree:

> And I think I must have talked to three, four, maybe five different counselors that were available to us because every time you make an appointment, it was with a different person. And one of them finally said, 'Hey, you should go talk to this person. Her name's Ellie in the Chicana/o Studies department. And just go talk to her. She likes talking to students.' So, I talked to her. At the time, right before graduating, I was looking for a professor to sponsor my research so that I could have some research experience before graduating to make my graduate applications more competitive. She connected me to a professor in the urban planning department. And she's actually the person that gave me the idea to go and finish my GEs at a community college. But if it weren't for her, I don't know what I would've done.

Marginalization and Discrimination. Discrimination and marginalization because of their status was something that came up in different ways in the study. While some individuals highlighted hurtful interactions with persons in positions of power, particularly in high school, others shared feeling marginalized from what is considered 'traditional' college experiences like getting involved in campus activities, student organizations, studying abroad opportunities, and traveling for leisure later on in life as full-time working professionals. While the interactions were prior the context of a career path, they made enough of an impact to still be very present in the individual's mind and influenced their sense of purpose and part of the reasons why they have chosen the career fields they are. Individuals also noted work-specific obstacles like not being able to work for federal agencies, because of federal work regulations, or not being able to clear certain certifications or clearances because of their lack of status, and these being required for certain positions in their respective career fields.

As a transfemme individual, French Marigold has faced discrimination and biases based on many aspects of their being, including status. When sharing about considerations about disclosing their status at their workplace, they shared -

> Don't be too honest with your status. Employees are shitty people. Employers really don't need to know. Keep everybody on a need-to-know basis, because it's none of their business and it could lead to some biases that are really hard to work against. Just do your best. You'll be okay.

Undocumented individuals have to be cautious and question individuals' intents, including their employer, when sharing information regarding their status (Muñoz, 2016). This becomes especially important if an individual feels that their livelihood or safety will be in jeopardy as a result of disclosing their status.

As an Armenian undocumented individual, Yeraz shared her perspective on how being undocumented is perceived and handled in the Armenian community:

> One thing I'll say specifically for Armenian immigrants is that almost none of them kind of owned up to being undocumented. It's very common in the Armenian immigrant community to be undocumented, to be here with the expired visa. It's very common. It's not talked about at all. I believe there's very few folks who try to push out of that and maybe embrace being undocumented and follow whatever they want it to do, regardless of their status. I know a lot of Armenian folks who are in similar situations as me, where they were undocumented, but they just stuck at home. They didn't feel comfortable leaving. It was kind of shameful to share their status. So, a lot of them did community college or went straight to work. I think if I was giving advice, it would definitely be like owning up to your status.

Crystal, who attended UC Irvine, shared the negative experience she had when she was considering different graduate schools, and while attending an information session:

> And then again, towards the end of it [a grad info session], I was like, do you offer any support for undocumented students? And I also said DACA, or I don't know what I said, but I didn't say, 'Undocumented,' just because I didn't feel comfortable. I was in a room full of white people, I was the only brown person. And so yeah, I said that, and they were like, 'Oh, we don't.' They actually knew what it was, but they're like, 'We don't. You can apply to outside scholarships. You can get a loan, or you can pay out of pocket.' And the program was $30,000. And so, I was like, Wow. Marriage and family therapy here is not for me. And so, from there, I just was like, I'm not going to be able to afford school.

Although not tied to a specific incident or individual, Kimberly, who attended UCLA, shared how a class helped her face some of the feelings she had about being undocumented:

> And the best resource that I found on campus was the Chicana/o studies department. I took a Chicana/o Studies class at UCLA and that changed my life really, because before I took that class... I'm getting a little emotional, but before I took that class, I kind of felt invisible on campus. I walked around just kind of hiding out of fear that people would find out my status, because I didn't know how to explain it. I didn't know what to say, there was a lot of shame attached to it. I struggled a lot with my classes. I didn't want people to feel sorry for me, so I avoided other students. I avoided talking about things like that even though I was really struggling, until one of the counselors.

Similarly, Margarita, who attended UCSD, explained how feelings tied to her status show up in every aspect of her life, including her place of worship:

> Well, I think when you're undocumented, it impacts everything. It impacts every aspect of your life because even now, my husband and I just moved to a new church that's primarily white and I was having a really hard time with it and I didn't really understand why. It was actually something I talked to my therapist a lot about, and I came to the realization that I'm constantly on the defense with people who don't understand or who I think might not understand. So, it almost makes me, not afraid, but almost weary of having to educate of explain. I'm so tired of that. We constantly have to be explaining and educating people. I don't mind that in the sense, for somebody who... Well, it's going to benefit everybody, but how do I say this?

Political Climate. The political climate, specifically during the Trump administration came up in different ways during the interviews. It was either alluded to, or addressed directly. What was common throughout, was individuals feeling a heightened sense of fear and uncertainty during the time the Trump administration was in the White House.

Sandra, who has DACA, attended UCSD for her undergraduate degree and is now finishing up a master's program at UCSB spoke about what she started thinking about when DACA was challenged by the Trump administration:

> And then things started to get scary when DACA was placed on hold or, and I remember when it was shut down, I was in the lucky bracket of people that could renew again. And so I think at that point I started to think about, 'Well, maybe my career does really depend on this,' and I was working on international environmental policy. And so, again, it was really tough because the career that I envisioned required so much flexibility to travel, which obviously I couldn't do. And then by the time I found out about advanced parole, I was like, I should have taken the opportunity.

Edelmira, who attended UCLA for her undergraduate degree was ready to leave for D.C. in late 2016 as part of the UCDC program and reconsidered after the election results:

> So I applied to UCDC. I got in in October of 2016. November 2016 [elections] happens and then in December of 2016, my advisor, the advisor to the program, calls me into her office and tells me, 'I don't think you should go to DC.'

Transience.

Whether they were covered by DACA or not, all participants shared living in a state of transience, because of the uncertainty that comes with being undocumented, and having a difficult time with long-term goals and planning. For those covered by DACA, they shared planning, goal setting, and living in 2-year increments, which is when the DACA needs to be renewed.

Jenn, originally from Guadalajara, México, currently covered by DACA, and part of a mixed-status family shared the different aspects where living in two-year increments is impacted, even before the Trump administration's challenge of the program:

> But I think in the back of my head, because DACA was temporary, even prior to Trump being in office, I always wondered shit, if they take this away... I know how to navigate working because I was working in high school without a social. I know I can do it. Right? But then I thought about, when I was in high school and I thought, I don't want to go to college because I'm going to graduate and then what? That was kind of the attitude I had back then.

She went on to share how as a person that thrived in structure, this is just not possible as an undocumented individual:

> Even since I was young, I always remember wanting to have structure to my life or a plan. Knowing that, that wasn't really there was a hardship [inaudible 00:07:39]. Sad and just angry about having to continue in a quote, unquote, different trajectory than my best friends who all went off to college and to this day, didn't come back. Right? They stayed wherever they went to school. I just decided to enroll in community college because I was following my brother's footsteps. I'm like, I guess that's what I do next. I always loved school. I think I was intrigued by being there, but also very aware of the reality of what it meant to not also know what was going to happen after I graduated from college, if I did ever graduate from college.

While at UCI, Francisca experienced an identity crisis tied to her status, and shared what she started to think about being undocumented in the U.S., and that identity outside of the U.S.:

> And I feel like I was forcing myself to do that and I forced myself to think that stay with that narrative, 'I'm here to stay.' And I think I started really reflecting on what I wanted to do, and I didn't really see myself staying in this country for 20 years and live as undocumented person. Because also I was catching myself really applying to foreign schools like Canada as a grad student and I would type how to apply for a Canadian school as undocumented person. But then I thought to myself, wait I'm not undocumented in another country. And that's when it hit me, why am I like this?

Jaguar completed an associate's degree in community college, an undergraduate degree at UCLA, and a doctorate degree at UCSD, and shared her sense of transience and living in the moment throughout her process:

> ...I think as an undocumented student, we don't really think about the future, at least in my situation, I don't because I don't really know. All I have is the right now, the right now moment, right? And so, unless somehow, miraculously, we get citizenship, we get kind of more settled. That's when you feel like, 'Okay, my life is not kind of floating in the air.' In five years, I mean, if DACA stays and I'm able to apply and everything goes well and they continue to give me DACA, I imagine myself, hopefully working as a teacher because that's what I really love.

Kimberly, who has a work permit through DACA thinks about backup plans in the case she did not have a work permit at any moment, continuously living in a state of transience:

> It's more about the uncertainty of being able to continue to have a work permit. I feel like every once in a while, I just go back to the drawing board like what would I do in this situation? And luckily, thank goodness the career that I have, there are a lot of people that are consultants. So, I feel like that would be my backup plan.

Uriel shared his strategy on focusing on the short-term, because of the uncertainty of anything beyond the two years at a time he is covered by DACA:

> I feel right now, and I just got my two-year renewal again this past month. So, I feel my thinking ahead is only restricted to those two years. Yeah. I can think

> ahead and have goals, and have plans, have aspirations, right? But I feel like this restriction doesn't let me think ahead that long because that's not guaranteed, so I tend to focus more on the short-term like, these two years, what am I going to do in these two years while I have this work authorization? And that's it right now. I'm applying for two full-time positions right now. Also, I'm just thinking ahead in terms of those two years. I think further along that I'd like to be optimistic. I think that eventually there'd be a reform or something that grants us legal status, right? But for now, it's just allowing me to focus on the short-term.

Delayed Trajectories.

Life milestones like graduation and family planning, and even privileges like traveling, are delayed because of considerations tied to being undocumented. Participants shared delaying some of these milestones, or having significant concerns when reaching these milestones, because of the sense of transience they encounter, and difficult decisions they have to make because of their status.

Traveling. When talking about things he would like to be able to do, Guillermo shared he would very much like to be able to travel out of the country for leisure, and also to visit family members he's never gotten the opportunity to meet:

> It would be nice to travel. I guess for a lot of people, especially young people, that's the goal to go to this and that country and just experience different cultures, but here I am, I can't. I'm still grateful that I could even work. Maybe I'm getting old and better now, but I've always known that this is a messed-up game that we're all in, but I'm now getting more negative feelings towards that because I do want to go out and do things with myself and not worry about how I can come back and things like that. Like wanting to go visit family in Mexico that I've never seen.

Kimberly shared how not only would she like to travel, but she wants the ability to be completely disconnected from work responsibilities, that she doesn't feel like she has the ability to do in her work environment:

> But on the other hand, I feel like the biggest downside is not being able to travel, to either just get away from work or go visit family because my work is very demanding and sometimes people will take off for two weeks. And I noticed it

> doesn't sound like a big deal, but they're able to take two weeks off and completely disconnect and not check emails, not answering anybody because they'll go to Ireland, or they'll go to Spain or they'll just leave the country and completely disconnect. I don't think I've never been able to do that, so in the long run that affects me because unless you're out of the country, people still expect you to answer emails and answer phone calls, if you're still here, so I'm never able to really disconnect.

Marriage & Family Planning. Participants shared that while they had to delay some life milestones, they had to accelerate others, as a part of the considerations made tied to their status.

Irma, who is currently covered by DACA and just celebrated a wedding anniversary shared:

> I finished my master's program at 21, 22. I'm so young, most people take time and I feel I've had to kind of run really quickly through things because if I have the opportunity, I'm going to take it and I don't have time to wait and that's the luxury I wish I had sometimes is to be able to just, know that my future and my time, that things will be there for me when I want them to be but I feel because of my status, I'm just like nope, I'm just going to do it. If it's offered to me, let's go, I have to do it now and I know I can't just sit and wait for it to happen later.

When speaking about long-term planning, and how being undocumented impacts long-term future planning, Irma shared,

> Oh, in so many ways I had, I didn't have to, but I got married very young and I didn't imagine that for myself, I really wanted to get married under different circumstances, sorry [crying]. Yeah, I really wanted, I don't know, it's not that I wanted a big wedding, but I just needed time, I wanted time and I realized that I didn't [have that] with Trump becoming president, so I just didn't have the time anymore, the fear was too real. So I think for me that impacted my long term [planning] because I got married young and with marriage comes, in my head, marriage equals I'm an adult, equals children, equals what's going on? So I've had to make a lot of peace with that and accept that was something that ultimately, that it's okay and I am okay, but I think it's impacted my way of planning for our future family for myself. I think I lived for so many years really scared to even want to have kids because I'm well, if I'm undocumented or if I'm, I finally have DACA, what's going to happen to my kids. What am I going to do? So that's impacted that, but now I feel I've also just kind of decided I'm going to do it. That's what I want. I'm going to do it...

Options after Graduation. Participants had varying considerations to make for their path after graduation. Some delayed graduation to maintain the sense of safety that being a college student provides (housing, financial aid, etc.), and some shared having a plan to transition before graduation. This experience was drastically different for those individuals without a work permit. Francisca, a recent graduate from UCI who majored in Criminology, Law & Society shared the uncertainty that comes with considering this difficult decision -

> Yeah, well actually I was supposed to graduate in 2019 but I would say my initial go was to go to law school. I thought I was going to go straight to college in 2019 but I didn't really feel prepared and so I postponed my graduation until next year. But last year it was weird because in a way I feel I was postponing my graduation because I was scared of what would come next because I didn't have a backup and I didn't really know many people. I knew doc folks without DACA after graduation, I didn't know what they were doing. So that scared me because I was like, 'Okay I'm going to graduate, what am I going to do?'

> And in a way I feel like going to law school was my safe option to just continue, something safe. But then when I was looking into law school I found that a lot of law school students really find undocumented students without DACA, I will ask and they're like, "Yeah you might have to take out loans because we don't really have any funding for people like you." Pretty much. And so I didn't want to pay anything out of my pocket, that's too expensive and I didn't think it was worth it. So I decided to drop that goal and just got to go with the flow and so I graduated this year.

Additionally, because Francisca shared that her options are so limited, not having a work permit, that she is seriously considering leaving the country, understanding that decision means separating from her family and being unable to come back, and that there are difficult considerations to make. She shared -

> And that's why I went through an identity crisis because I was like okay so what am I going to do after graduating and I started thinking do I have other options? If I go back to my own country, I have more options outside than here. So, I think that's why I started to go with the flow. I thought that I'm going to graduate, maybe take some community classes, I don't know, take some coding or graphic design, stay here two years and then go back or apply to a PhD or master's

> program abroad. And I mean really that's my plan, I'm actually planning to leave, maybe in two or three years.
>
> I'm still deciding because it's a big decision because leaving means that I'm not going to be able to come back because my parents and my siblings are still here. My siblings are in high school and I have a brother who has autism and he's six and my parents, their lives are already here settled. So, it's a hard decision. If I were to leave, I'm not going to be able to see my family for 10 or 20 years, who knows how long. So, I'm still trying to adapt and see what happens.

Sandra, a current graduate student at UC Santa Barbara, who completed her undergraduate degree at UC San Diego shared a similar experience -

> So, I knew I wanted to pursue my master's. I've been wanting to do it for a couple of years, but the decision to go when I did was definitely because I thought I would be safer as a student then than not, because at that point, I didn't know if this most recent round of renewing my work permit was going to be it. And so, I have it until next year. And so, it was right around the time where I needed to apply, and I was calling all the schools and figuring out, what happens if, in the middle of school, I lose this, and it was by that point, I told my employer and I was like, 'What happens if I lose this?'

Hope.

Aside from survival, the second most salient theme in this study was hope. The hope that individuals shared was not a sense of hope that is not grounded in unrealistic realities, rather the sense of hope they shared with me is grounded in family, community, and strong values and beliefs. Additionally, a sense of hope with an incredibly deep understanding of the significance of them attending college, and a sense of purpose and indebtedness to create more opportunities and paths for those who come after them. Unprompted, individuals shared with me why they chose to be a part of the study, and why they felt it was important to share their story if it could help any individual at all. This was the most powerful theme of this study.

French Marigold shared their approach to hope: "I'm still in the process of crossing my fingers and lighting all the candles to hoping that I'm able to adjust status one way or another."

In describing her approach to planning for the future and her ability to stay as a full-time student from community college through her doctorate program, and eventually her post doctorate work, working toward her goal of teaching, Jaguar shared -

> So, I was just in love with my learning. So, I think that was just, I wasn't really thinking about too much about the future. I was having hopes that things would change or like, somehow, I ended up having a 4.0 GPA at my community college. And I imagine, I think that if I worked really hard, maybe I would be able to end up with some type of scholarship or fellowship. And so, practically, so since I would get kind of anxious. What's going to happen because that came out in 2012, I believe. And I started my community college in the fall of 2010. So those kind of first, two years were emotionally very kind of... Stressful, but at the same time, they really pushed me because I knew that I had to work really hard, if I really expect to perhaps, get some type of fellowship. My goal was actually never in UC. It was more like, maybe a [inaudible 00:18:49], [inaudible 00:18:50], for instance, was really close. And it was obviously cheaper. So that's kind of where I imagined I would end up going.

Sara shared how her mom shared how her attending and graduating college was an act of resistance, and hope:

> “Te pueden quitar todo, pero no te pueden quitar la educación.”
> (Translation: “They can take everything from you, but they can’t take away your education.”)

Guillermo shared not being fearful of the future, and knowing he can and is persevering:

> I was one year old when my family came to the U.S. I started studying like always, parents telling you to go to school. I have an older sister, but she didn't really want to go the academic route, and then my younger sister is also in the same boat... they don't like school. I felt a sense, like a responsibility to my parents for doing what they intended us to do here. I guess you could say I'm more responsible than my sisters in that way, but it was mostly for them. I didn't really have any plans of what I wanted to do or where I wanted to go, what kind of career I wanted... I just wanted to complete this for them because I'm not really afraid of the future. Whatever happens, happens. I know I'm going to persevere in anything I do, so it wasn't really a concern for me.

Margarita shared the sense of purpose she has pulled from her hope:

> Yeah. That I had to do something meaningful because I just feel like I've been given this gift and I was one of the lucky ones. I have to honor these people who came before me and who did everything possible for me to have what I have. I feel the burden, in a good way, to do the same for the next people and so hopefully, eventually we won't have an undocumented community anymore because we'll be able to bridge all that and to change that so that everyone feels like they belong. They can if they want to and if that means changing the law... I don't know how to get there, exactly. But I just feel that I can't waste my life because it's too important.

Joon shared how her hope is not an option:

> I think it's almost like in a ritualistic way, we train ourselves to forget that we have certain barriers and just go through the motions of striving for your dreams as if things were possible, like as if the status thing was not an issue. Because otherwise, I think the option is to really just like not do anything and that's ... I think, for most people that's not an option.

Connecting Themes to CCW Forms of Capital

The primary framework used as a lens for this study was Yosso's (2005) CCW model, in which different forms of cultural capital are delineated. In the table below, the different forms of capital that were described by individuals, are aligned with the emergent themes that came up in the study.

TABLE 9: Emergent Themes and Yosso's CCW Model Forms of Capital

Emergent Theme	Yosso's CCW Model Forms of Capital
Socioeconomic and Class Issues	Social Capital, Navigational Capital
Validation	Resistant Capital
Layered Life Hardships	Familial Capital, Social Capital, Linguistic Capital
Funding	Navigational Capital, Familial Capital
Limited Opportunities	Familial Capital, Navigational Capital, Social Capital
Networks and Resources	Familial capital, Social Capital, Navigational Capital
Marginalization and Discrimination	Resistant Capital
Transience	Aspirational Capital
Delayed Trajectories	Aspirational Capital, Familial Capital
Hope	Aspirational Capital, Familial Capital

The theme of hope and resilience confirms the aspirational capital that Yosso (2015) describes in her CCW model. Not only did individuals describe maintaining hope throughout what at times were insurmountable challenges but going to and graduating from college was something that them and their families saw as one of the highest forms of resistance in challenging the limited opportunities due to their status, particularly in terms of having a job that broke away from the options available to their family members. Patricia Gandára's (2012) work researching the aspirational capital of Chicanx families, and their hopes and dreams for their children to create a new history to break the links "between parents' current occupational status and their children's future academic attainment' (Gandára, 2012, p. 55), were present in the stories of the individuals interviewed for this study.

Linguistic capital in the CCW model refers to the skills and assets that come with being able to communicate in more than one language. In this study, linguistic capital came up when participants shared the critical role they played for their families, including translating. This sometimes included translating complex legal documents, or documents or processes necessary to utilize community resources.

Familial capital is the knowledge that comes through community and culture, broadly, and also includes cultural intuition. Familial capital goes beyond the traditional family unit and has a broader definition of kinship. Throughout the stories, familial capital came up in addressing family-related issues and circumstances, rather than an individual having to take it on, on their own. Additionally, in terms of funding and limited opportunities, familial capital became key in helping to create and find opportunities to gather income, and to connect to connect the individuals to resources, especially those that helped them apply to college.

Social capital, networks of opportunities, people, and community resources came up the most in this study. Throughout, the individual stories highlighted social capital being critical in the successes they found getting to college, during college, and after graduation to find opportunities to begin career building or continuing on their career paths.

Navigational capital was the second most salient form of capital in this study. Mostly being the first in their families to attend college, the participants had to not only navigate highly complex institutions, but also had to journey through these while undocumented, adding additional layers of complexity and strife.

Challenging inequality is at the center of resistant capital and came up most in the themes of validation and marginalization in this study.

Connecting Themes to Research Questions

This study focused on the following research questions:

1. What are the experiences of undocumented college students (formerly or currently undocumented) in finding a career path or job after earning a bachelor's degree?
2. What barriers do undocumented college students face after graduation, as they enter the workforce?
3. What is the role of an undocumented college student's campus in their ability to support them to enter the workforce after graduation?

The themes that emerged in this study were:

1. Socioeconomic Status
2. Survival
3. Validation
4. Layered Life Hardships

5. Limited Opportunities
6. Funding
7. Networks and Resources
8. Marginalization and Discrimination
9. Transience
10. Delayed Trajectories
11. Hope

In the table below, the emergent themes are connected to the research questions they help inform. In the first research question, the twenty individual experience of being an undocumented college student finding a career path after earning a bachelor's degree was: their socioeconomic status being a critical factor, making decisions based on survival, having layered life hardships that contributed to the decisions they made during and after graduating, making decisions based on funding available to them, having limited opportunities during and after graduation, feeling marginalized and discriminated because of their status, living in a state of transience, delaying life trajectories and milestones, and having a hope grounded in strong values and community.

The most significant barriers that undocumented individuals shared they faced as they entered the work force, for this study, were layered life hardships, mostly family responsibilities that added to their decision-making process, marginalization and discrimination, and living in a state of transience, especially during the Trump administration.

The role of the study participants' undergraduate college campus was key in validating them, providing funding that created opportunities they otherwise would not have had, helped them connect and build networks and resources, and added to their sense of hope.

TABLE 10: Connecting Themes to Research Questions

Research Question	Themes
1. What are the experiences of undocumented college students (formerly or currently undocumented) of finding a career path or job after earning a bachelor's degree?	Socioeconomic Status Survival Layered Life Hardships Funding Limited Opportunities Marginalization and Discrimination Transience Delayed Trajectories Hope
2. What barriers do undocumented college students face after graduation, as they enter the workforce?	Layered Life Hardships Marginalization and Discrimination Transience
3. What is the role of an undocumented college student's campus, and their ability to enter the workforce after graduation?	Validation Funding Networks and Resources Hope

Summary of Findings

The findings from this study indicate that when there is a lack of avenues for legal and compensated job opportunities, funded higher education opportunities and advanced degrees are attractive options for undocumented youth. The ability to access college and being a full-time student comes with health insurance, a source of some funding, student job opportunities,

housing, food, and other resources that offer a sense of security and protection. Being a college student for undocumented individuals is an attractive option because of the benefits that come with it, although short-lived for the duration of their time in college.

Twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted for this study, to explore three research questions on the experiences of undocumented individuals' post-graduation, and in their career paths. Analysis on the qualitative data obtained was conducted, guided through the lens of CCW. Combined, each participant's narrative unearthed 11 emergent themes, where the different forms of capital from the CCW framework were visible. The emergent themes were consistent with the existing literature on undocumented college students. This study concluded the following: 1) the need for policies at all levels to add to and create new work opportunities for undocumented individuals, 2) an undocumented college student's interaction heavily influences their career profession, 3) attending and graduating from college is validating, and 4) the sense of hope for undocumented college student's after graduation is grounded in community.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

In this chapter I will provide an overview of the problem, provide a summary of the findings from the study, address the limitations of the study, and provide the researcher's positionality. Additionally, I will offer some implications for practice, policy, and theory, as well as provide the significance of the study and areas for future research.

Overview of the Problem

There is sparse research into the experiences of undocumented students' post-graduation--what these students expect to find, and do find, after graduation from college. In a post-pandemic, post-Trump administration reality where the limited programs like DACA were challenged daily, we do not yet know what the impacts of a tumultuous time period are on undocumented individuals (Rogers, 2020). For those who are not covered by DACA, or those who do not hold a work authorization, the struggle to obtain gainful employment is unresolved. While attending college provides a temporary safety net in the form of funding, community, knowledge, and resources, it is short-lived, and there is no set plan for undocumented college students after they graduate. For undocumented students who are part of mixed-status families, and even those who are able to adjust their status and are part of mixed-status families, the uncertainty of opportunities and the future become exacerbated (Gonzales & Ruszczyk, 2021).

When an undocumented individual attends college, the expectation of opportunities post-graduation changes. The opportunities that they actually come to find varies and cannot be generalized. Because of their limited options, attending college becomes an incentivized path to take, because it provides temporary relief in the form of resources, community, and funding. It continues to be necessary to further explore their actual post-college experiences (Peña, 2021).

The shortage of work and career opportunities for undocumented individuals became a compounded challenge due to the COVID-19 global health pandemic, and what we are still experiencing in a post Trump administration United States reality. The xenophobia and racism that were conjured before, during, and after the election of Donald Trump can still be seen in the violence committed against Black, Asian American and Pacific Islander, Indigenous, and Brown communities (Fahmida & Samin, 2020).

Finding a job after graduation can be especially difficult for undocumented individuals, who cannot legally work in the U.S. without specific authorization such as DACA (Gonzales, Terriquez, & Ruszczyk, 2014). Most policies and advocacy efforts in support of access to higher education for undocumented individuals fail to address life after graduation. In states where undocumented individuals can obtain professional and vocational licenses through state legislation, individuals still face the challenge of work authorization, especially in the case of individuals who are not covered by DACA (Connell, 2016). Understanding the pathways that undocumented college students take upon graduation will help inform policy, will guide educators and advocates to better understand how to support undocumented students, and will aid students in identifying resources and practices that will assist them in navigating their post-graduation realities.

Summary of the Findings

This study was concerned with the educational experiences and career pathways of individuals who went to college while they were undocumented. This study is a qualitative study, and the results cannot be generalized. Rather, the twenty individual stories provide examples of different paths taken after college, in the context of the University of California system. From the stories shared, it was evident that career paths, not dissimilar to those who are documented, are

not linear. Building networks and resources happens before, during, and after a college student's time in college. The sum of experiences helps an individual not only identify their career and field of study of choice, but also heavily affects an individual's opportunities throughout. This is important to consider for implications for practice.

Alignment with Literature on Undocumented College Students

It is worth reiterating that there is limited research to reference because the post-graduation pathways of undocumented college students are under-researched. The findings from this study are consistent with the literature synthesized in Chapter Two. Specifically, they are consistent with the study by Abel, Deitz, and Su from 2014, indicating that college students face significant obstacles in seeking employment after graduation. Smith's 2017 study highlighting the expectations that come with graduating from college that include performing meaningful work, achieving job satisfaction, and earning a salary that pays a living wage, is also aligned with experiences of those who were interviewed for this study.

Legislation

Additionally, the different policies and legislation reviewed in the literature review, point to significant advances for undocumented communities, through educational attainment. These include: Plyler v. Doe, AB540, AB 2000, SB 68, AB 30 & 131, the California DREAM Act, and ISTR. While the individuals that were part of this study directly utilized policies that worked in their favor of educational and career attainment, campus personnel at institutions of all educational levels did not uniformly have the knowledge or experience to facilitate navigating these policies. This limitation will be covered in the limitations section of the chapter. Now that we see advances in the matriculation and graduation of undocumented college students, additional legislation is needed to provide opportunities post-graduation.

The themes of survival and hope were the strongest themes found throughout the journeys of the twenty individuals who participated in this study. Saliency and strength was determined by the number of times mentioned throughout the interview, as well as the length of time spent on any particular point during the interview, that is tied to the theme. The themes are not standalone themes, and highly connected to the 9 emergent themes provided in the findings section.

It is not possible to generalize every aspect of the experience of being an undocumented student, since no two journeys are alike. There is also substantial diversity and variation to the challenges and opportunities that are presented after graduation from college. Because this was a qualitative study, no generalizations can be made from the findings, but rather the 20 individual voices add to the limited literature that currently exists.

Undocumented College Student Population

In the 2018 Immigrants Rising report provided in Table 1 of the literature review of this study, it was estimated that of the 11 million estimated undocumented individuals in the U.S. (please note that this is the figure used for this study, and the most current updated figure by Passel & Cohn is 10.5 million), approximately 65,000, that is 5-10% go on to college. From those interviewed for this study, the stories shared indicate that the undocumented student population they were able to connect to on their respective UC campuses were small.

Overview of Study Findings

There were three research questions in this study, geared at exploring the experiences of undocumented individuals' post-graduation. The analysis of the findings was guided through the lens of Yosso's CCW. Eleven emergent themes provided qualitative data to add to the literature

of these lived experiences. The analysis concluded that: 1) there is a need for policies at all levels to add to and create new work opportunities for undocumented individuals, 2) an undocumented college student's interaction heavily influences their career profession, 3) attending and graduating from college is validating, and 4) the sense of hope for undocumented college students after graduation is grounded in community. In addition, the experiences of the qualitative data gathered from the study participants indicate that a career pathway does not and cannot start after graduation, it happens throughout and is not a linear process, it is in fact an iterative process.

Highlighted Resources

During the recruitment process, and the interview process, participants shared the following resources that they found helpful in their career search process, and in building a network that has helped them secure work opportunities: DACA Subreddit, Undocu-specific centers, resources and staff on campus, Dream Summer Fellowship Program. Additionally, these are the organizations that the participants identified as advancing opportunities for undocumented communities: Oasis Legal Services, Undocumented Professionals Network, Haitian Bridge Alliance, UC Davis AB540 & Undocumented Center, Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE), Detention Resistance, Latinas Talk Dinero, Dreams to be Heard, CARECEN, Asian Prisoner Support Committee, Border Angels, CHIRLA, Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Coalition, United We Dream, and O.U.R. Rescue. This list of resources was compiled from those who were selected to be interviewed, as advancing opportunities for undocumented individuals.

Limitations

The design for this study is a qualitative design, to allow for an in-depth look at each participant's story. While generalizations can't be made with this approach, the study findings

add to the voices of the undocumented community, particularly undocumented college students. Additional analysis with a different lens looking specifically at intersectionality would deepen the diversity of voices of individuals seeking job and career opportunities post-graduation. A broader interview pool that includes undocumented individuals from other parts of the world are needed to provide more perspectives. This is particularly important for Black and Asian American and Pacific Islander undocumented communities that are under-represented in the literature. Broadening legal status for non-DACA individuals, including asylum seekers, is also needed to provide additional perspectives.

Positionality

I was undocumented when I went to college at a large, public institution, off the heels of the passing of AB540 in the state of California, which allowed me to pay in-state tuition, without access to state or federal aid. Having this lived experience, at a time when critical legislation was passed to provide access for undocumented individuals to attend college, provided a historical memory for the last two decades, within the context of policies and its implications in the educational landscape in Southern California. Additionally, having lived the majority of my adult life in a border town, the effects of the physical border and the ebbs and flows of migration are ever-present in my everyday life. This has affected my research in having a fixed frame of reference for the implications of immigration status, and the physical border.

Implications for Practice

One of the implications from the findings, is that the career pathway for an undocumented individual, while highly salient and relevant at the time they are getting to graduate from college, is shaped before, during, and after their time in college. A consideration is

for institutions to work together to form links for students to have a better transition through high school, higher education, and subsequent fields of industry and work areas.

Immigration legislation and policies are ever-changing and highly complex. While the individuals that were part of this study directly utilized policies that worked in their favor of educational and career attainment, campus personnel at institutions of all educational levels did not uniformly have the knowledge or experience to facilitate navigating these policies.

Because this study was focused on individuals in the UC system, UC-specific implications emerged in the study that include: the McNair program, the DREAM Fellowship Program, and undocumented student centers at the UC campuses.

The McNair program came up in 16 of the 20 interviews, as opportunities that participants sought out, and were not able to participate in because undocumented individuals are not eligible for the program. Undocumented individuals are not eligible for the program because it's federally funded. Alternative funded undergraduate research opportunities were brought up by participants, like the DREAM Fellowship Program, and it was shared that these sorts of alternative opportunities would be easier to find if they were promoted in conjunction with McNair.

Undocumented student centers at the UC campuses were brought up in different ways: either as being instrumental in an individual's efforts to plan for post-graduation life, or as arriving too late in their undergraduate journey. Individuals who fell in the latter category shared that these undocu-specific centers and/or resources came toward the end of their time at their campus, and they were not able to utilize the services offered.

Participants shared the need for paid internship opportunities, particularly for those without DACA. Programs like UCLA's Dream Summer program are a model to be looked at to

be institutionalized or offered systemwide, to provide more equitable experiences at all undergraduate UC campuses.

Implications for Policy

As I stated in earlier chapters of this study, no significant federal immigration legislation exists regarding the opportunities available for undocumented individuals residing in the U.S. who wish to pursue postsecondary education. Until these policies exist, there is no evidence to suggest that there will be more opportunities for undocumented college student's post-graduation.

Significance

The emergent themes were consistent with the existing literature on undocumented college students, and further corroborated: 1) the need for policies at all levels to add to and create new work opportunities for undocumented individuals, 2) undocumented college students' interactions heavily influence their career profession, 3) attending and graduating from college is validating, and 4) the sense of hope for undocumented college students after graduation is grounded in community.

Of the twenty individuals interviewed for this study, 10 are in the field of education (8 as workers and 2 as full-time students), and 4 work in the field of health. These two fields of work are public service-oriented, and highlights, as in one of the emergent themes), the passion and drive that undocumented individuals have to pursue careers that help change the narrative or experiences that they have experienced themselves, whether that be a negative experience with a high school counselor, administrator, etc. This is also true for the field of health, where

participants shared the complexity of navigation large institutional bureaucracies to connect family members to health resources, while undocumented and/or not speaking English.

Future Research

In order to add more voices to the under-researched area of undocumented college students' post-graduation career pathways, further studies that focus on this area of study are needed. A larger study in the state of California that includes California State Universities and private colleges, and campuses would provide a broader landscape in this area. Further, studies in other states would provide a national landscape of what is available to undocumented college students after graduation.

During interviews, participants were asked to share their résumé or CV, as well as their LinkedIn profiles, for document analysis. These documents should be analyzed in future research to add additional elements for analysis.

Conclusion

Undocumented college students use a hodgepodge of jobs to fund their education, sometimes and often with jobs that pay under the table because they do not have a work permit. When an undocumented college student finds themselves in the position of working multiple jobs, or too many hours, they often must cut back on their school workload, delaying their time to degree. Students shared working waitressing jobs, and other positions outside of their academic fields or fields of interest, because limited opportunities exist for them (Gámez, Lopez, & Overton, 2017). If the career and job development opportunities are already limited for undocumented college students while they are in college, it is not likely that more opportunities will be available once they attain their degree. The stories of the twenty individuals shared in this

study point to not many additional opportunities being available to them as a result of having a college degree, unless they have a work permit through programs like DACA.

Pathways are limited, and undocumented students continue to face some of the same challenges if they remain undocumented after earning a college degree (Abrego & Gonzales, 2010). Limited job opportunities based on legal status, structural racism, poverty, and the threat of deportation continue being barriers even after receiving a college education. As Abrego and Gonzales (2010) outline, federal policies like DACA, and state policies like AB540 and the CA Dream Act have been challenged and make for an uncertain path for undocumented college students. The paths that have been opened for students through these policies will no longer be options for undocumented college students if they are threatened or overturned. More importantly, if further legislation and policies are not created, this problem will go unresolved.

APPENDIX A

Electronic Recruitment Message

My name is Belinda Zamacona, and I'm a current student in the UC San Diego/CSU San Marcos Please help me spread the word to recruit participants for a study on undocumented college students for my doctoral dissertation. Interested folks who fit the criteria can visit http://bit.ly/undocstudy21 to submit a screening survey. As a formerly undocumented college student, I am deeply appreciative of your support and help!

TL;DR – if you attended a UC while undocumented and are interested in helping me with a study that examines the career experiences of undocumented individuals after graduation, please answer the questions on this survey. A $30 incentive will be offered, as a donation to an organization of your choice that works with undocumented communities. More detailed information below.

My name is Belinda Zamacona, and I'm a doctoral candidate in the UC San Diego/CSU San Marcos joint doctorate program in Educational Leadership. I am recruiting participants for qualitative research I am conducting for my doctoral dissertation. My research explores the experiences of individuals who went to college while they were undocumented, and who have successfully graduated from the University of California system.

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the pathways of those who went to college while undocumented, since graduation. There is limited research on what happens after undocumented students graduate.

I plan on conducting one face-to-face interview, approximately 60-90 minutes, that will be conducted through Zoom. I will ask participants to share their résumé or CV with me. In the interviews, I'll ask participants to share with me their career search experiences, after they have graduated.

In this study, undocumented is defined as having been, or currently being, undocumented while attending college. Undocumented refers to being without legal status.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please answer the following profile questions. If you meet the desired profile for the study, I will be in contact with you to set up a virtual interview, I will e-mail you a consent form, and I will include more detailed information about the study.

A $30 incentive will be offered, as a donation to an organization of your choice that works with undocumented communities.

Please feel free to contact me directly at the contact information listed below with any questions you may have. Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX B

Email Text for UC Coordinators & Staff

Dear UC colleagues,

If appropriate, I ask that you consider please helping me spread the word to recruit participants for a study on undocumented college students for my doctoral dissertation. Interested folks who fit the criteria can visit http://bit.ly/undocstudy21 to submit a screening survey. Below my signature line is additional information on the study.

As a formerly undocumented college student, I am deeply appreciative of your support and help!

Please see the information listed below, and feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

All my best,

Belinda Zamacona

My name is Belinda Zamacona, and I'm a doctoral candidate in the UC San Diego/CSU San Marcos joint doctorate program in Educational Leadership. I am recruiting participants for qualitative research I am conducting for my doctoral dissertation. My research explores the experiences of individuals who went to college while they were undocumented, and who have successfully graduated from the University of California system.

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the pathways of those who went to college while undocumented, since graduation. There is limited research on what happens after undocumented students graduate.

I plan on conducting one face-to-face interview, approximately 60-90 minutes, that will be conducted through Zoom. I will ask participants to share their résumé or CV with me. In the interviews, I'll ask participants to share with me their career search experiences, after they have graduated.

In this study, undocumented is defined as having been, or currently being, undocumented while attending college. Undocumented refers to being without legal status.

If you or anyone you know might be interested in participating in this study, please visit http://bit.ly/undocstudy21 to answer some screening questions. If you meet the desired profile for the study, I will be in contact with you to set up a virtual interview, I will e-mail you a consent form, and I will include more detailed information about the study.

A $30 incentive will be offered, as a donation to an organization of your choice that works with undocumented communities.

Please feel free to contact me directly at b2zamaco@ucsd.edu with any questions you may have. Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX C

Consent Form to Participate in Research

Greetings,

My name is Belinda Zamacona, and I'm completing the final year in the Educational Leadership Program at UC San Diego and CSU San Marcos. I'm currently conducting a study on the experiences of individuals who attended the University of California while they were undocumented. My research in this area aims to capture information on the overall experience of undocumented individuals after they graduated. This is important because there needs to be more information on the expectations of what undocumented individuals can expect after they graduate. You are invited to participate in this study because you indicated you went to college in the University of California system while you were undocumented. Length of your status being undocumented for the purpose of this study is at some point being undocumented while you were in college. Graduating for the purpose of this study is having successfully conferred a minimum of an undergraduate degree.

In preparation for the study, each participant should be aware of the procedure they will follow:

- Once the profile questions in the Qualtrics survey are completed, the participant receives a follow-up email confirming their submission.
- The participant will receive this consent form to review and sign in and will return to me.
- Once the consent form is received, I will follow up within no later than 5 days to schedule an interview. The interview can be conducted in person, or via Zoom.
- The interview will be a minimum of one hour of answering questions.
- The primary investigator reviews the signed consent form at the time of the interview.

- The primary investigator records the interview using an audio-recorder and a video camera.
- Each recording is transcribed and provided to the participant for review.

In any research there may be potential physical or emotional risk and breach of confidentiality. In this study, the participant:

Risks

1. May recall uncomfortable, sad memories or current struggles that are deemed difficult to articulate or share.
2. May experience deeply rooted unexpected and unresolved feelings.
3. Personal information may be subject to being breached.

Safeguards

1. May ask the primary investigator to turn off the audio-recorder and take a moment to recuperate.
2. Will be directed to talk with people they trust (i.e., family, friend, and mentor), make an appointment with a counselor, or if necessary, request to stop or withdraw from the study.
3. A list of referrals to local health clinics will be offered if a strong emotional reaction is evoked during the interview process.
4. Documents will be kept in a locked cabinet with the primary investigator only having access to the documents. The primary investigator is working alone, thus limiting others to have access to data. Pseudonyms will be used.

Your participation in the study will add an in-depth understanding of your unique experience. Your story will bring insight into the attributes that have encouraged and enabled you to graduate from college and find a path after graduation.

Selected participants will receive a $25 Amazon gift card. Participation in this study is voluntary and withdrawal from it is understandable. If withdrawal from the study occurs, receipt of the incentive will not be jeopardized, thus the participant should not be concerned with any consequences.

This study has been approved by the University of California Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have questions about the study, you may direct them to the primary investigator, Belinda Zamacona at b2zamaco@ucsd.edu or (760) 420-2437, or the primary investigator's Chair, Dr. Frances Contreras at f3contreras@ucsd.edu. Questions about your rights as a participant should be directed to the UC San Diego IRB at (858) 246-4777. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

- I agree to participate in the study.
- I agree to be audio taped.
- I agree to be video recorded.
- I decline participation from the study.

Participant name: _____

Participant signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX D

Recruitment Flyer for Electronic Posts on Social Media, LinkedIn

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