THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE OF UNDOCUMENTED LATINO STUDENTS

By

JOSÉ DELA CRUZ, JR.

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma
2005

Master of Education in Adult and Higher Education
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma
2012

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Dissertation Approved:

Dr. Jesse P. Mendez
Dissertation Advisor

Dr. Tami L. Moore

Dr. Diane Montgomery

Dr. Jason F. Kirksey

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Abstract: Undocumented Latino students who enroll in and attend colleges and universities face a multitude of barriers and often must navigate complex situations and structures that make them more vulnerable of not completing their education (Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007). When undocumented students attend colleges and universities, they often encounter social, political, financial, and emotional barriers that threaten their success and challenge their existence (Hurtado & Ponjuan (2005). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to extend the understanding of the holistic and subjective viewpoints of the college experience for undocumented Latino students through the use of Q methodology. The results of 19 participants sorting 47 statements were three distinct factor arrays that were interpreted to describe the college experience from the personal perspective of the students. The *Rejected American* students reveal the overall feeling of being an American, but they also feeling threatened and rejected. The *Conflicted Identity* students have conflicting narratives and the feeling of existing through controlled participation. The *Assimilated as Americans* students remain steadfast in the midst of uncertainty without excuses as a dominant mentality. The conclusions based on the findings are the necessity of family support, the importance of assistance from high school counselors, the mixed messages of the college environment, and how campus community integration can be achieved. Studies on the view points of the general U.S population toward those who are undocumented could provide valuable information on that affect the college experience for those who are undocumented. Moreover, future studies on those who are undocumented, other than Latino students, could provide information on how students from other races and ethnicities perceive their college experience and the extent to which their immigration status affects it.

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INTRODUCTION

The economic stability, fiscal health, and global competitiveness of the United States are intrinsically linked to numerous variables, most important among them is the educational attainment rate of the populace. According to Jamie P. Merisotis (2012), a well-educated public is a critical element for economic progress and social stability of any city or region, but most importantly to the nation as a whole. This argument is consistent with those expressed on a daily basis and is often the central topic of private and public discourse within local, state, and federal government. Put simply, the ticket to the middle-class, a stable economy, and prosperity is largely dependent upon a higher proportion of individuals with a college credential.

The prominent student development theorist, Alexander Astin, used the results of a longitudinal study to explain the effect of student engagement and the college experience on retention and success (1984). According to his research, participation in extracurricular activities, such as student organizations, sports, honors programs, or undergraduate research

projects, had a profound and positive effect on persistence (Astin, 1984). Involvement in these activities, among others, undoubtedly shapes positively the college experience of students. However, there exist internal and external challenges that limit, if not prevent, participation from those students who are in most need of these very opportunities for engagement. If higher education practitioners and policymakers are to change the experience of students, it is imperative for them to view college through the experiences of these most vulnerable students.

Over the past several decades the percentage of undocumented immigrants entering the U.S. has grown to unprecedented numbers. Of the more than 12 million undocumented immigrants, a significant portion of those who are undocumented are youth who have legal access to public education through the K-12 sector, but upon high school graduation, often encounter legal restrictions to entering higher education and the workforce (Abrego & Gonzales, 2010). For those approximately 65,000 undocumented Hispanic students whose immigration status does not stall or derail their education aspirations, how they interact with the college environment shapes their experience in ways that are not fully understood (Abrego & Gonzales, 2010). Those who are unable to access higher education face personal and professional limitations on social mobility that have emotional and psychological consequences that are often overlooked or ignored (Pérez, Espinoza, Ramos, Coronado, & Cortes, 2009). Further complicating an already complex environment, state and federal legislation mandates have been implemented without a full understanding of the adverse consequences and the affect these laws have or would have on students who are undocumented. Although many states have publicly debated the need for strict anti-immigration legislation, these debates and discourse exclude the voices, stories, and experiences of those who have been adversely affected. Hawkins and Gomez (2012) suggest that by excluding these important voices and stories there becomes the potential

risk of fostering and supporting an environment that facilitates the development of negative educational experiences and with social barriers as a product that impose the constant threat of deportation, all which effectively limit their full participation in the larger American culture and community, despite having been in the U.S. from a very young age.

Background of the Study

Research studies clearly demonstrate that having a college degree results in higher levels of employment and earnings and promote economic development (Bahr, Bailey, Booth, Carnevale, Gianneschi, Hanson, & Kelly, 2015). Over a lifetime, college graduates earn, on average, approximately $1 million more than those with only a high school degree (Carnevale, Rose, & Cheah, 2013). According to Merisotis (2012), the labor market is experiencing an increased demand for a college educated populace and that projections indicate more than 60 million American jobs will require some form of postsecondary education by the year 2018 to meet workforce demands. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) (Vilorio, 2016) data indicate that increased levels of postsecondary education yields higher earnings and lowers unemployment rates. Moreover, among Americans between the ages of 25 and over, 2016 data from a BLS Labor Force Statistics Current Population Survey indicate a 5.4 percent unemployment rate for high school graduates with no college compared to 2.8 percent for those with at least a baccalaureate degree. These data suggest a relationship between postsecondary education attainment and employment, but there is a deeper connection between postsecondary attainment and the economy (Matthews, 2016). Over the past few years economists have attempted to explain the U.S.'s slow recovery from the recession and the nation's inability to match jobs with highly skilled workers. Evidence suggests that in each U.S. recession since 1980, jobs losses were linked to increasing job related skill requirements and that education and

training are essential in decreasing unemployment rates (Matthews, 2012, 2016). If the labor market cannot be supplied with enough people who have the necessary knowledge, skills, and education, economic growth, fiscal and social stability, and global competitiveness will be compromised.

Along with meeting workforce demands, educational attainment has a significant impact on economic development. According to Trostel and Gabe (2007), as opposed to cost minimization approaches to economic development that seek to attract business through cheap labor and low taxes, the human capital approach seeks to increase economic development through a high-skilled labor force. Moreover, Trostel and Gabe (2007) suggests that the logic behind human capital theories of economic development is that increased postsecondary attainment enhances innovation, creativity, and productivity, which are all factors that attract and spur employment opportunities and economic development. Yet, because of their immigration status, a significant proportion of undocumented students experience barriers when attempting to access higher education, which indirectly affect economic realities, despite the fact that many of these students are community leaders and demonstrate the scholastic aptitude for higher education (Amaya, Escobar, Gonzalez, Henderson, Mathay, Ramirez, Viola, & Yamini, 2007; Hawkins & Gomez, 2012). Consequently, some of these students encounter a system that limits their ability to increase their human and academic capital and further perpetuates their marginalization. For those undocumented students who are able to access higher education and attend a college or university, they represent a smaller percentage of those undocumented students who graduated from high school and are less likely to be skilled in navigating the admission process and the college or university environment (Contreras, 2009). It is known that undocumented students exist on college and university campuses, but it is particularly difficult to

track this demographic because some of these students may choose to keep their immigration status a secret due to their vulnerability and potential for deportation. The inability to effectively track this demographic prevents scholars and practitioners from truly understanding how these students engage and interact with the college and university environment, which likely places limitations on the extent to which academic and student support services can be provided to these students.

Previous research on undocumented students has been studied with various methods, including both qualitative and quantitative methods (Gildersleeve & Vigil, 2015; Pérez, 2010). Previous studies provide important information regarding the support services necessary for the success of this student population (Nelson, Robinson, & Bergevin, 2014; Nienhusseer, 2015); however, little is known about the holistic perspectives of undocumented students regarding how they experience college. This dissertation seeks to determine how undocumented Latino college students describe their college experience. To understand the subjective experiences and the perspectives of undocumented students' college experience, Q methodology will be used, which allows for the phenomenon to be described subjectively.

Postsecondary attainment creates opportunities for significant contribution to the stability of a nation, which can be attributed to the correlation between educational attainment and earnings and unemployment rates (Vilorio, 2016). The research of Trostel (2010) quantifies the fiscal effects from postsecondary attainment for numerous federal, state, and local tax expenditures created by postsecondary attainment in direct fiscal contribution over an average lifetime to be approximately $481,000 per degree from public postsecondary institutions. This figure shows the fiscal implications postsecondary attainment could have on strengthening the economic and social stability and global competitiveness of the U.S. educational attainment is a

significant factor in determining the stability and competitiveness of a nation and the public has consistently expressed the need for the U.S. to increase its access to postsecondary education to help address these issues the nation is currently experiencing.

There is an evident need for a well-educated populace to address the increasing demands of the US economy. The US cannot continue to compete with the global market if it does not increase its proportion of college-educated people. However, there is the critical issue of access to postsecondary education and an untapped population known as undocumented students. The population is increasingly becoming the majority race; however, they constitute an undereducated population. The current and future consequences of the U.S. are important to consider if limited access to postsecondary education continues to exist for this student population. The economic and fiscal stability of a nation determines its global competitiveness and overall health of its populace. In order for the U.S. to increase its global position and increase social mobility, it will need to accept its reality and take advantage of its opportunities. These opportunities exist with these students who currently possess the ability for, but not the access to postsecondary education. Access to postsecondary education is the problem.

Problem Statement

Each year more and more undocumented students are graduating from high school with the intent of attending a college or university, but they face significant barriers to access due to being ineligible for federal financial aid programs, in-state tuition in some cases, and for most scholarships and grants (Pérez et al., 2009). Moreover, some of these same students are often ineligible to apply for a driver's license and are not legally authorized to work in the U.S. (Pérez et al., 2009). These restrictions on social mobility have emotional and psychological consequences that are often times overlooked or ignored (Pérez et al., 2009). The most common

psychological stressor is the fear of being deported paired with being marginalized. Because of their undocumented status, students are less likely to challenge the system or to seek assistance and are left with fewer higher education options and are forced to navigate alone the obstacles associated with being undocumented. Most importantly, these students are denied the opportunity to significantly contribute to a state's economy and become contributors to their community. For undocumented students, the challenge of access to higher education and inability to receive federal financial aid provides the opportunity to reject the argument that higher education is accessible to all and reject claims that the education system offers objectivity, meritocracy, race neutrality, and promotes racial and social equality (Yosso, 2006). So, what is known is that there are increasing numbers of undocumented students who are high school graduates who have the desire to attend a college or university, which, due to their immigration status encounter barriers that significantly limit their options, experience stressful events; they are part of a larger system that continuously rejects them. However, what is not fully understood is the effect of all these variables on how undocumented students experience college from a holistic and subjective perspective, which is a critical research problem.

Purpose Statement

There exists a large body of research that uses quasi-experimental designs to determine the effect of various financial aid programs on the student outcomes at the postsecondary level and the effect of these programs on in-state retention of students' post-college graduation (Bruce & Carruthers, 2014; Hawley & Rork, 2013; Hickman, 2009; Sjoquist & Winters, 2013). Other studies have researched the extent to which these financial aid programs affect college choice (Bruce & Carruthers, 2014) and college enrollment patterns (Castleman & Long, 2013; Scott-Clayton, 2011; Welch, 2014). However, although ample evidence of postsecondary

performance, attainment, and outcomes exists for students, limited research exists that provides a holistic understanding of the viewpoints of Latino students, specifically those who are undocumented. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to extend, through the use of Q methodology, the understanding of the holistic and subjective viewpoints of the college experience for undocumented Latino students.

Conceptual Framework

Qualitative studies on the undocumented student population have approached research through a critical race or grounded theoretical lens or conceptual framework. However, unlike these studies, Q methodology does not require a theoretical perspective or conceptual framework (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Nevertheless, as Watts and Stenner (2012) explain, constructivist and constructionist paradigms are inherent with Q methodology because of its focus on how people make meaning and significance relative to specific contexts, events, or objects of enquiry and of its interest in and focus on the sociological aspect of shared viewpoints that represent the substantive. This study approached the research through a constructivist and constructionist lens, which served as the foundation for this study. This study applied a constructivist perspective to explore the ways in which undocumented students come to interpret and make sense of their college experience as undocumented students to better understand their personal viewpoints and resultant knowledge structures. Additionally, the social facts that are commonly held or shared among the undocumented students were explored through the lens of a constructionist paradigm.

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the understanding of the viewpoints and perspectives of undocumented students that affect their college experience. An understanding of these perspectives provides college administrators and policymakers with information necessary to

better inform decisions on creating an environment and legislation that will improve the educational experience of this student population. Given the plight and vulnerability of this increasing population, policymakers, school officials, college administrators, and community members must understand the viewpoints of undocumented students because their circumstances may help bring greater attention to the college experience of this student population, which is often excluded from public dialogue.

Q methodology is not widely used in higher education research, and this study will likely contribute to the increasing use of the research methodology. This study revealed the key viewpoints and perspectives extant in undocumented college students to be better understood holistically and to a high level of qualitative detail. In an area that is often strongly debated, for example undocumented students and higher education, such methodology brings clarity in identifying subjective views of the student group that is most effected by the political posturing that often affects their college experience. This study demonstrated that Q methodology has much to offer policymakers and college administrators, because identifying the perspectives and viewpoints in a valid and reliable way will document the college experience of undocumented students and help key stakeholders develop policies and practices that are evidence-based in response to the needs of undocumented students.

Overview of Methodology

This study used Q methodology, a research approach and philosophy developed by William Stephenson in 1935 to gain an understanding of human subjectivity through a sorting technique and a by-person factor analysis (Brown, 1986; McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Stephenson, 1953; Watts & Stenner, 2012). Q methodology uses principal component analysis to extract linear composites of observed variables, unlike traditional factor analysis that

investigates relationships among traits or survey items. Q is able to identify complex concepts that are not easily measured directly by correlating participants' scores on a set of variables to determine relationships (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Moreover, Q factor analysis focuses on the correlation of participants' sorts of the entire set of stimuli, for example the Q set of opinion statements, to identify similar groups of people that share similar perspectives about a particular topic, in this case the college experience of undocumented students (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Q methodology allows the researcher to generalize about the topic related to the perspectives of participants, rather than generalizing about a population.

Limitations

The findings of this study are limited to those undocumented Latino students who participated in the study because the methodology used focused on the perceptions and viewpoints of this particular student population and does not generalize to the population. Yet, what the findings will provide is generalizations about the perspectives held by the participant. Participants in this study were undergraduate students who studied in Oklahoma at a two- or four-year public institution; therefore, the relevance of their perspectives and viewpoints may be limited to the institution or institutions at which the students are studying. This study was conducted at institutions located in an urban metropolitan area, which may further limit the ability to collect viewpoints and perspectives from undocumented students who attend institutions located in more rural parts of the state. Lastly, the findings of the study reflect the participants' viewpoints and perceptions at the time of sorting.

Definition of Terms

The following definition of terms will apply to this study.

Concourse. Is defined as the overall population of statements from which the final Q set is derived (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

Consensus statements. Are defined as a statements that do not distinguish between any pair of factors (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

Distinguishing statements. Are defined as those statements of a particular factor that distinguish it from any other factor.

Factor. Is defined as intercorrelations of Q sorts as a result of common viewpoints and perceptions from participants (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

Factor interpretation. Is defined as the process whereby item rankings and participant comments are used to arrive at an account of the participants clear viewpoint being expressed by a given factor (Watts & Stenner, 2005).

Q methodology. Is defined as a research technique that focuses on the subjective first-person perceptions that requires participants to sort a set of statements related to a phenomenon that uses factor analysis and factor rotation to determine the association of similar viewpoints (McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Watts & Stenner, 2012).

Q sort. Is a modified ranking-order model of opinions or viewpoints that reflects the individual subjectivity of the participant at the time the sort was conducted (McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Watts & Stenner, 2012).

Q sorting. Is defined as an operation by which the participant distributes a series of statements along a continuum defined by the condition of instruction (McKeown & Thomas, 2013).

Q statements. Are defined as a series of subjective statements sampled from the concourse to represent the topic of study and that are used in the sorting process.

Subjectivity. Is defined as the sum of behavioral activity that constitutes the participant's current point of view (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

Undocumented. Defined as lacking documents required for legal immigration or residence.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presents the background of the study and the context of the phenomenon that was studied. Furthermore, it provides the problem statement that contextualizes the effect on undocumented Latino students and the purpose of the study. Next, the chapter includes an explanation of the conceptual framework and its application to Q methodology, which provides an understanding of the theoretical constructs that serve as the basis of the study that describes the significance and importance of studying the subjective perceptions and viewpoints of the college experience of students who are undocumented. This chapter closes with the limitations of the study and provides definition of terms that provide a foundation for the study.

Chapter II presents a review of the extant literature that has focused on Hispanics in higher education. Additionally, Chapter II will focus on a discussion of the politics of undocumented Latino students and higher education, followed by the divergence of policy and public opinion.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF EXISTING LITERATURE

There are various ethnic groups that make up the undocumented student population and many of these student populations experience similar barriers to employment and education and struggle with being marginalized and disenfranchised. For the purpose of this literature review, the focus will be on the social, political, and educational experience of the undocumented Latino student population in Oklahoma. It is important to note that the voices of other ethnic undocumented students are equally important, but expanding the study to include other non-Latino ethnic groups would be beyond the scope of this research. To better understand the Latino student population, the first part of this literature review will focus on a brief discussion of the status in higher education of these undocumented student populations while the latter part will attempt to provide a conceptual framework to help understand the experiences of undocumented Latino college students attending public higher education institutions in Oklahoma.

More than 200,000 undocumented students are enrolled in colleges or universities, which represents less than 5 percent of all college students, but it is understood that administrators have no idea of the social and academic challenges undocumented students go through (Suárez-Orozco, Katsiaficas, Birchall, Alcantar, Hernandez, Garcia, Michikyan, Cerda, & Teranishi, 2015). The unique situation in which students who are undocumented as United States citizens find themselves has been studied with various methods, including legal analysis, interviews, and surveys (Gildersleeve & Vigil, 2015; Pérez, 2010). Findings point to student services needed for universities and major legislative policies needed to assure academic access and success for these students (Nelson et al., 2014; Nienhusser, 2015). Yet, little is known about the holistic viewpoints of the college experience of those students who are undocumented.

This chapter is a review of extant literature that has focused on Latinos in higher education. The chapter begins with a discussion of the landscape of federal law regarding undocumented students. An examination of Latinos and higher education will follow. Next, the chapter will focus on a discussion of the politics of undocumented Latino students and higher education, followed by the divergence of policy and public opinion. The chapter closes with a discussion of the role of higher education in removing barriers to social mobility.

Federal Law

Undocumented student access to higher education has been one of the most compelling debates in American politics for well over the past decade. This debate has centered on two extremes, one that argues the legality issue, which contends that public education should be reserved only for those who are present with legal authorization. Conversely, the other side of the debate argues the democratic purpose of higher education, which contends that the country was founded on the principles of freedom and equality and that no one should be denied access

to further their education (Herrera, Grabby, Garcia, & Johnston, 2013). Federal law does not explicitly prohibit the admission of undocumented immigrants to United States colleges and schools (Drachman, 2006; Frum, 2007; Gonzalez, 2007, 2009; Pérez, 2010); however, due to their undocumented status, there are financial barriers to higher education that restricts access for and shapes the experience of this population of students (Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007; Gildersleeve & Vigil, 2015; Ibarra & Sherman, 2012; Pérez et al., 2009).

The Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act

In the current social and political context, the most important debate and legislation for undocumented students, and for those whom advocate for these students, is the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act proposed in 2006. Since 2006, the U.S. Congress has attempted to address comprehensive immigration reform through passage of the DREAM Act. According to the Immigration Policy Center (2011), the DREAM Act would create a pathway to legal status for the thousands of undocumented students who graduate from high school each year. This legislation would make undocumented students eligible to transition to conditional lawful permanent resident status, provided that these individuals have been present in the U.S. for at least five years and were younger than 16 years of age upon entering the country and graduated from a U.S. high school or earned their GED (Immigration Policy Center, 2011). Moreover, this status would allow the individual to work, continue into higher education, or join the military (Immigration Policy Center, 2011). Most importantly, DREAM Act students would be eligible for federal financial aid and work study programs and individual states would not be restricted from providing financial aid, such as scholarships, grants, or in-state tuition, to these students.

Proponents argue the DREAM Act will expand access higher education that would address the need for a well-educated populace that would invest in the U.S. economy and help strengthen the nation's global competitiveness. Furthermore, these advocates argue that expanding educational opportunities is not only in the best interest of the student, but in the best interest of the nation. Those who favor the DREAM Act maintain that it is both fair and a matter of U.S. national interest and that it would enable undocumented students who graduate from high school to continue their education or seek immediate employment (Bruno, 2012). Additionally, advocates of the DREAM Act argue undocumented individuals were brought into the U.S. at a very young age and should not be held responsible for entering the U.S. illegally. However, those who are in opposition argue that the DREAM Act legislation rewards lawbreakers and thereby undermines the U.S. immigration system (Bruno, 2012). Moreover, these critics object to using taxpayer money to subsidize the education of undocumented individuals who are present in the U.S. in violation of the law (Bruno, 2012; Drachman, 2006; Kobach, 2006). However, the argument has been made that these families subsidize tuition by paying taxes; therefore, undocumented students should receive the benefit of access to federal financial aid programs and postsecondary education (Frum, 2007). Failure of Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform and the DREAM Act created barriers that effectively created a culture of marginalization that shapes human experiences, which are explored later. The barriers created by the inability of Congress to pass immigration reform legislation include, but not limited to, certain immigration restrictions, the fear of arrest and deportation, and limiting access to higher education and long-term employment opportunities preventing full participation in the larger culture of society (Hawkins & Gomez, 2012).

In response to the failure of Congress to pass the proposed DREAM Act legislation, in June 2012 the U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) that grants temporary administrative relief from deportation and work authorization for undocumented individuals who arrived in the U.S. prior to the age of 16, provided that they satisfy certain conditions (Ellis & Chen, 2013). Although DACA provides deportation relief and temporary work authorization, the results of the 2016 presidential election has placed a renewed focus on DACA. It is unclear whether the current presidential administration will keep or revoke the executive order that created DACA, but what is clear from the current administration is that the governmental rhetoric has reenergized a political base and social movement that is unfavorable, and potentially violent, toward undocumented immigrants. Additionally, there is great fear and concern that the current administration will use the data and information collected through the DACA process as an opportunity to identify those individuals who are present in the US without legal status. Despite reassurances from advocacy groups, the current environment and political posturing has created an uncomfortable and sensitive atmosphere that plausibly influences the experience of undocumented students. There is increasing doubt that the Obama era DACA will end, but Giaritelli (2017) explains that recent rhetoric from the current presidential administration has created a new wave of fear on college campuses, which is partly due to President Trump's inconsistent position on DACA. While campaigning in 2016, Trump made promises to immediately end the Obama era policy that grants temporary reprieve from deportation and work permits to certain individuals who immigrated to the U.S. as minors and consistently lambasted DACA, which Trump often referred to as an "amnesty" program (Giaritelli, 2017). However, shortly after his inauguration Trump shifted his stance on the policy by expressing sympathy for DACA recipients and assuring them

that they have nothing to worry about because of his commitment to focusing only on those who are in the U.S. illegally and have a criminal record (Giaritelli, 2017; Rojas, 2017). Although the current presidential administration has reassured those who are present in the U.S. illegally that the focus of deportation will be on those who have committed violent offenses and have a criminal history, undocumented students still find themselves in a precarious situation and have a significant risk of being deported now more so then ever, which is a process that has been a costly for the U.S. Hinojosa-Ojeda (2010) explains that mass deportation has reduced the U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) by 1.46 percent, amounting to a cumulative $2.6 trillion loss in GDP over the previous 10 years; however, this figure does not include the costs of deportation, which has been approximately $206 billion to $230 billion over five years. According to Bruno (2012), had the DREAM Act legislation passed in 2006, approximately 2.15 million undocumented individuals would have attempted to become lawful permanent residents under its provision, which could have had a positive effect on the position of the U.S. economy by reducing its fiscal constraints. Moreover, the 2.15 million would have included those eligible for higher education and immediate employment.

Latinos and Higher Education

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2013), college enrollment in fall 2012 decreased by half a million from one year earlier despite the substantial growth experienced in higher education in previous years, which is attributed to the decline of adult students 25 years of age or older who are in higher education. Latino students did not follow this trend; rather, the U.S. Census Bureau (2013) reports that the number of Latino students enrolled in college grew by 447,000 from 2011 to 2012 while the enrollment of non-Latino white students declined 1.1 million and African-American student enrollment declined by 108,000. These statistics support

the fact that Latino students are the fastest growing population and will continue to enroll in higher education at increasing rates. Although these statistics provide an understanding of the representation of Latino students in higher education, a large majority of these students are plagued by low rates of high school completion, preparation for higher education, and have low degree attainment (Passel & Cohn, 2008). Furthermore, undocumented Latino students face a multitude of barriers in their efforts to transition from high school to higher education. Of those who do make the transition, they often must navigate complex situations and structures that make them more vulnerable of not completing their education (Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007). Restricted access to financial resources has become the most significant challenge encountered by undocumented Latino students.

Financial Resources

Recognizing that there are inherent regional benefits from higher education, increasing the percentage of people with college-level education has become an important goal for policymakers (McHenry, 2014; Sjoquist & Winters, 2014, 2015). In response, states have created merit-based financial aid programs to help offset the expense of higher education that often restrict or prevent access (Bruce & Carruthers, 2014; Sjoquist & Winters, 2014, 2015; Trant, Crabtree, Ciancio, Hart, Watson, & Williams, 2015; Welch, 2014). Moreover, to encourage individuals to remain in their community after college, some states have financial aid programs that incentivize students to attend a particular college or university within the state to spur regional economic human capital (Bozick, Gonzalez, & Engberg, 2015; Sjoquist & Winters, 2014, 2015). Although state and federal financial aid programs exist to help students offset expenses commonly associated with attending college, an increasing population of students remain ineligible for assistance due to their undocumented status, as explained herein.

Further complicating access to higher education for a growing population of students is the fact the lack of financial resources tends to be a significant barrier for undocumented students and often times restricts access to higher education. To qualify for financial aid, students must be citizens or permanent legal residents, and being undocumented automatically disqualifies these students from receiving federal grants or loans (Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007; Gildersleeve & Vigil, 2015; Pérez et al., 2009). Another harsh reality is that some federally or state-funded college student services programs may require students to be documented U.S. citizens or legal residents to receive support services, which further excludes and marginalize this student population (Pérez, 2010). Moreover, some schools also use the federal financial aid requirements for institutional and privately funded scholarships, which further complicates the financial position of undocumented students and renders them ineligible to receive these funds (Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007). Abrego and Gonzales (2010) contextualize the dire situation by explaining that because of financial situations and restricted access to financial resources, less than half (49 percent) of the nations's undocumented students ages 18-24 who have graduated high school attend a college or university, which is less than the 71 percent attendance rate of their U.S.-born counterparts. While the fact that nearly half of undocumented students attend a college or university is promising, being admitted is just one part of the struggle with which these students deal. An additional component is succeeding in the college or university environment, which often times ends too soon for these undocumented students. Terriquez (2015) poignantly describes that undocumented students indicate that they stop out of college because of their inability to fund their education. For this group, 81 percent of undocumented students stop out because they cannot afford college compared to the 43 percent of their peers who have legal immigration status. This suggests that there is a critical link between financial

resources and the educational pathway through college for students who lack legal immigration status.

Given the evidence of the direct benefits of higher education attainment and its importance to policymakers, little consensus still exists about how to best achieve equitable access to higher education without barriers or limitations (McHenry, 2014; Sjoquist & Winters, 2015). Although most, if not all, college bound undocumented students think of themselves as American, the aspect of being called or categorized as undocumented is demoralizing and has negative effects on the educational aspirations of immigrant children (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). With limited or no access to federal, and sometimes state, grants and loans, undocumented students and their families are forced to cover the cost of their education with no government subsidization despite the fact these families pay taxes (Frum, 2007; Gildersleeve & Vigil, 2015). Gardner, Johnson, and Wiehe (2015) highlight that in 2012 undocumented immigrants contributed an estimated $11.84 billion in state and local taxes. Although individual state estimates are proportional to the number of undocumented immigrants that reside within states, the fact remains that undocumented immigrants significantly contribute to state and local revenue generated through taxation, but are limited to resources they can access due to their immigration status. An updated report indicates a decrease of less than 1 percent ($100k) in the estimated tax contribution of undocumented immigrants, but they still pay, on average, the same effective tax rate (Gardner, Johnson, & Wiehe, 2017). Providing more context, Gardner et al. (2015) explain that, nationwide, undocumented immigrants average an 8 percent state and local effective tax rate, which is the share of income paid through state and local taxes, compared to the 5.4 percent effective tax rate paid by the top 1 percent. To put this into perspective, the top 1 percent have access to local, state, and federal resources despite paying a smaller effective tax

rate while undocumented immigrants experience restricted to no access to these very same resources despite contributing more to these resources through their payment of effective tax.

A large body of research exists that uses quasi-experimental designs to determine the effect of need-based, merit-based, and blended programs on the student outcomes at the postsecondary level and the effect of these programs on in state retention of students post-college graduation (Bruce & Carruthers, 2014; Hawley & Rork, 2013; Hickman, 2009; Sjoquist & Winters, 2013). Other studies have researched the extent to which these financial aid programs affect college choice (Bruce & Carruthers, 2014) and college enrollment patterns and student behavior (Cattleman & Long, 2013; Scott-Clayton, 2011; Welch, 2014). Moreover, many other scholars have focused on telling the stories of undocumented college students who have managed entrance into selective institutions (Abridge, 2008; Frum, 2007; Gonzales, 2009; Madera, Mathay, Najafi, Saldivar, Soils, & Titong, 2008; Pérez et al., 2009; Pérez, Huber, & Malagon, 2007). It is evident that previous research provides ample evidence of postsecondary access, performance and attainment. However, although compelling and important, these previous studies are limited in that they do not provide an understanding of students' college experiences, much less for undocumented students, and do not provide a holistic picture of how students navigate the complex systems of higher education without the necessary financial resources to be successful. What is known is that the constant concern about the lack of financial resources and restricted access to higher education has also created psycho-social stressors for affected students.

The Effects of Micro-aggressions

Given the high cost of higher education, it comes as no surprise that the constant concern of financial resources and affordability causes great stress for Latino students. However, campus

based culture and climate contributes to, if not increase, the level of stress experienced by students from marginalized and underrepresented groups. Although extant literature focuses on access, retention, and attainment, the variables that contribute to the persisting group differences in educational attainment has been a challenge for researchers and, although this achievement gap has decreased over the years, first-generation and ethnic minorities have lower levels of educational attainment, on average, than their multigenerational non-ethnic minority counterparts (Perna, 2007). The persisting difference in educational attainment across underrepresented student populations is a societal and public policy concern because of its contribution to economic and social stratification of American society and because of the limit it places on upward social mobility (Perna, 2007).

Campus environments and ecological structures affect the experience of non-minority White students much differently than their precollege experiences. Research on campus racial climate exposes the fact that although students from non-minority White populations likely graduate from racially desegregated high schools, they possess the ability to keep their cultural resources intact while in college and their ecological fit almost guarantees a different experience than their non-White minority peers (Yosso, Smith, Ceja, & Solorzano, 2009). For non-minority White students, their progression through college follows three distinct processes as described by Tinto (1993) and Yosso et al. (2009), which often contributes to the extent to which they integrate with the campus community and shape the campus climate. First, there is separation, which suggests students separate from their precollege community. Next is a period of transition in which students develop new norms and ideas as they move away from preconceived ideologies and dispositions. Lastly, students become incorporated and engaged with their campus community. However, Yosso et al. (2009) expose very different stages through which

Latino students progress, that, like their non-minority White peers, shapes their college experience. Because of their lack of ecological fit, Latino students often experience rejection because these students often travel to campuses outside of their immediate community and lack the benefit of intact resources. This rejection requires Latino students to build their own campus community of students with similar backgrounds and experiences that gives them the opportunity to access pooled resources that otherwise would not be available to them on campus. Consequently, this micro-community equips Latino students with necessary resources to critically navigate a complex system that is void of the cultural resources and ecological structure that is necessary for their success.

Despite those micro-communities, events that surfaced on college campuses in the wake of President Trump's election serve to threaten and undermine the safety of Latino students. From the "bye-bye Latinos, hasta la vista" message found on an Elon University whiteboard, the three University of Virginia campus police officers shouting from their patrol car intercoms "Make America Great Again," to the White nationalist propaganda that are surfacing on college campuses across the nation (Arriaga, 2017; Jaschik, 2016a, 2016b; Quintana, 2017), all these racial micro-aggressions create stressful environments for Latino students and sends a poignant reminder, intended or not, to students that they are unwanted and unwelcome. Additionally, these hate-themed threats create a negative college experience inside and outside of the classroom that have harmful effects on academic achievement (Boysen, 2012; Franklin, 2016; Harper, 2012; Yosso et al., 2009). Divisive and oppressive Trump-fueled hate speech has surfaced among college students across the nation. During the months leading up to the presidential general election, Latino college students were subjected to aggressive insults and other anti-Latino taunts. Latino students report that they are often recipients of stereotyped assumptions and

characterizations about their academic ability, which further alienate and marginalize them as students (Boysen, 2012; Yosso et al., 2009).

Students feel shame about not being able to share their undocumented status with others, and indicate that at times they have to look and act "White" to remain invisible to ensure survival and not be deported (Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007). Diaz-Strong and Meiners (2007) contend that students often have feelings of anger, shame, and depression in response to institutions or a political state that is oppressive and systematically denies the right to participate. Undocumented students feel they are not able to share their most significant obstacle for fear of being discovered and deported, which contributes to their feeling of isolation (Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007). Moreover, Dozier (1993) found that undocumented students were often reluctant to develop close emotional relationship with others for fear of their undocumented status being discovered and potentially used against them in retaliation. For those students who were not reluctant and chose to be open about their immigration status, the aggression they encountered was overt and intentional. For Prieto (2016), his decision to be open and transparent about his immigration status and an advocate for other students in similar situations resulted in him receiving hostile and aggressive threats of deportation and racially charged insults from some within his own campus community. These students expressed socially driven emotions of discrimination, fear, helplessness, and frustration (Dozier, 1993; Pérez et al., 2009; Pérez, Cortés, Ramos, Coronado, & Price, 2010). These types of campus climates are disturbing to the point students often stop attending class and, even when they do decide to return, must deal with effects of anxiety, fear, and stress that impacts their ability to fully engage with classroom discussion and the educational process (Prieto, 2016). Pérez et al. (2009) contend that to deal with psycho-emotional stressors, undocumented students turned to personal and environmental factors when dealing with the

psychological stressors of living in poverty, having parents with lower levels of education, working long hours while enrolled in school, and rejection due to their legal status. As Zarate and Burciaga (2010) provide, access to postsecondary education and the growing undocumented population is an emerging and urgent issue that must be addressed. Under normal circumstances, these students generally cannot access postsecondary education for financial and, in some cases, for legal reasons. Therefore, because of this, these undocumented students encounter a complex system that likely shapes their experience and engagement with their environment, both inside and outside of the classroom.

Politics of Undocumented Latino Students and Higher Education

The challenge of navigating higher education is relatively small for non-Latino students when compared to their undocumented Latino counterparts, which places undocumented students at a disadvantage from the start (Aguayo-Bryant, 2016; Cuevas & Cheung, 2015; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2015). Further complicating the issue is the fact undocumented Latino students have no access to federal financial aid programs and often times have restricted access to private scholarships. Zarate and Burciaga (2010) state that access to higher education and the growing undocumented population is an emerging and urgent issue that must be address because these students generally cannot access postsecondary education for financial and, in some cases, for legal reasons. Being undocumented creates situations in which the Latino student population is stigmatized and marginalized as they deal with obstacles and creates constant institutional and societal rejection due to their undocumented status (Pérez et al., 2009; Cuevas & Cheung, 2015).

Undocumented students consider the U.S. as their home country and have little to no connection to their parents' country of origin. A large majority of, if not all, undocumented students have assimilated and have adopted U.S. traditions and norms; returning to their home

country is not an option for them (Drachman, 2006). Moreover, many undocumented students are civically engaged and are driven to volunteer, which demonstrates their desire to be considered part of the American society (Pérez, 2010) and refutes arguments that suggest otherwise. Therefore, Drachman (2006) suggests, it is in the public interest to expand postsecondary access to undocumented students. For many students, educational attainment is necessary for success in their careers and in life; denying undocumented students the benefit of access to postsecondary education would create social mobility issues and create significant implications for the global competitiveness of the U.S. According to Baum and Flores (2011), over the past few decades, the U.S. has experienced a sharp rise in demand for skilled labor, which cannot be met without expanding access to postsecondary education. The benefits of expanding access to postsecondary education are obvious; however, they have not been actualized. Undocumented immigrants not only fill jobs, but they also stimulate growth through investments in the U.S. economy (Hinojosa-Ojeda & Fitz, 2011).

The Divergence of Policy and Public Opinion

Public opinion has been somewhat split and polarized on the topic of immigration, but the vast majority of Americans are concerned about the presence of illegal immigrants and wish to stop their entry into the U.S. (Lapinski, Peltola, Shaw, & Yang, 1997). Many individuals understand the need for an increase in a well-educated populace and understand that the need could be met by expanding postsecondary access to undocumented students; however, these suggestions have done little to sway the position of many Americans and policymakers.

Opponents of enacting either federal or state legislation that expands educational or employment opportunities argue that doing so not only condones illegal immigration, but also provides incentives for more people to enter into the U.S. illegally in search of educational and

other benefits (Frum, 2007). However, Frum (2007) refutes this argument by suggesting this interpretation of the migration process fails to appreciate the complexity of immigration issues. There are more significant factors apart from access to education that impact the migratory process. As Frum (2007) indicates, these factors include the role of migrant networks and family connections, the migration industry, structural dependence on immigrant labor, and structural dependence on exporting labor on the part of sending nations. Although undocumented individuals may not come to the U.S. with the strict intention of taking advantage of its educational system, the negative public opinion surrounding immigration reform has polarized discourse centered on the presence of undocumented students in the educational systems.

The history of immigration suggests that reform stands several years out and until policies change, undocumented individuals will continue to be marginalized. The global position of the U.S. and the economic stability hinges on the ability to capitalize and take advantage of these untapped opportunities. As Frum (2007) contends, improving educational opportunities for undocumented students is only one element of the solution. Given the multifaceted benefits yielded from earning a postsecondary credential, a plausible argument is that undocumented students, when given the opportunity, are likely to take advantage of situations that improve their human capital potential and social mobility. As previously discussed, these undocumented individuals intend to permanently remain; therefore, there is an express need for the U.S. federal government to overcome the pressure of the public majority and pass the DREAM Act or another form of comprehensive immigration reform designed to address the global needs of the U.S. and its populace. Furthermore, Frum (2007) states laws are important because they express the importance of equal educational opportunities for all students; however, state laws alone cannot fully address financial barriers to access or employment issues. Thus, without

appropriate immigration reform, neither the students themselves nor society at large can reap the full spectrum of benefits that college-educated undocumented students could bring (Frum, 2007). According to Flores and Chapa (2009), the nation must decide if it will appropriately capitalize on this opportunity or waste it. In the interim, this is ultimately one of a number of multidimensional sets of policies that need to be put in place to truly bring the participation of all undocumented students in postsecondary education to parity with the total population (Flores & Chapa, 2009).

The Role of Higher Education in Removing Barriers to Social Mobility

Trostel (2010) highlights the importance of expanding educational opportunities by quantifying the fiscal effects of postsecondary attainment. The direct fiscal contribution in federal, state, and local tax expenditures averages approximately $481,000 per degree over a lifetime (Trostel, 2010). Debates regarding the contribution of undocumented immigrants are as complex and multifaceted as the debates surrounding their economic and fiscal impact. However, the evidence provided below suggests that appropriate immigration reform would translate into a growing population of people having unrestricted access to employment that provides higher wages, which translates into more local, state, and federal tax revenue and increased purchasing power. Additionally, appropriate immigration reform would also give increased access to postsecondary education, which, by logic, would create better employment opportunities. By extension, greater degree attainment would have fiscal implications on strengthening the economic and social stability and global competitiveness of the U.S. Moreover, a 2010 study conducted by the North American Integration and Development Center estimates that the total earnings of DREAM Act beneficiaries over the course of their lifetime would be between $1.4 and $3.6 trillion. Additionally, Hoffman (2008) found that an individual

with a baccalaureate degree earns approximately $750,000 more over a lifetime than an individual with only a high school diploma. According to Hinojosa-Ojeda (2010) workers without a high school diploma earned approximately $419 per week and had an unemployment rate of 6.8 percent compared to $962 per week and an unemployment rate of 2.3 percent for those with a baccalaureate degree. The benefits of expanding access to postsecondary education are obvious; however, they have not been actualized. Undocumented immigrants not only fill jobs, but they also stimulate growth through investments in the U.S. economy (Hinojosa-Ojeda & Fitz, 2011).

Public debate has shown that a segment of Americans espouse some form of immigration reform which allows undocumented individuals the opportunity to become lawful permanent residents and eventual citizens, as provide in the provisions of the DREAM Act (Segovia & Defever, 2010), but the general understanding that undocumented immigrants generally have low incomes and typically contribute less to public revenue (Frum, 2007) has little impact on changing public opinion despite research suggesting that educational attainment could be a factor to change the course of the economy. The DREAM Act continues to be a highly politicized and controversial issue, especially with the nation's economy at the center of heated public debate (Gildersleeve, Rumann, & Mondragon, 2010). Critically important is that based on their undocumented status, these individuals face distinct disadvantages compared to their native born peers in terms of employment, social service resources, and basic human rights afforded in the U.S. (Gildersleeve, Rumann, & Mondragon, 2010). Therefore, this issue is not only about expanded access to postsecondary education, but an issue that involves the aspect of human dignity and quality of life.

The role of higher education in removing barriers to social mobility is worthy of further discussion; therefore, this section will focus on a broad analysis that will provide a discussion of this critical role. Despite the evidence suggesting there are social and socioeconomic benefits of having more than a postsecondary education, there continues to be income-related gaps both in access to higher education and graduation rates, which is a gap that is widening (Haveman & Smeeding, 2006). Recognizing these benefits, policymakers and social science researchers have questioned the purpose of higher education and its role in social mobility.

Haveman and Smeeding (2006) address this question by explaining higher education, inequality, and social mobility can offset the role of social class in determining economic outcomes of students through a merit-based educational system. The researchers suggest that through a merit-based system, postsecondary education serves, somewhat, as a filter that prevents family social and economic position from passing through their children, thereby promoting equity, economic efficiency, social justice, and social mobility (Haveman & Smeeding, 2006). Unfortunately, however, the current educational system prevents most first-generation and minority student populations from reaching their full potential and provides a false sense of hope that, often times, places these students in a more challenging social position from the one in which they entered higher education. Further complicating the perceived purpose of higher education and its role in social mobility is its effect on creating social stratification and its ability to limit the extent to which social mobility is realized. According to Triventi (2013), parents with higher income have children who are more likely to graduate from top-tier research public and private institutions and less likely to graduate with degrees in humanities and social sciences, which usually lead to lower occupational returns. So, for many, this suggests that higher education retards social mobility. However, Haveman, Heinrich, and

Smeeding (2012) contend that this may be the case only in part because higher education has proven to not promote social equality as effectively as often claimed or as it is popularly perceived to do so. Perna and Finney (2014) contend that higher education has not reduced social inequalities and that, despite efforts from policymakers, researchers, and practitioners, college-related outcomes vary considerably across student populations and the likelihood of earning a college degree is heavily dependent upon family income.

Herrera et al. (2013) introduce an alternative explanation for the social inequalities that exist in higher education today. In their study, Herrera et al. (2013) observed that students who attend institutions with a predominantly White student population indicate satisfaction with the diversity of the student body, which suggests satisfaction with the unequal representation of students from minority groups. This is particularly concerning because it suggests that undocumented students may feel out of place and unwanted on their college campus, which has effects on the success and retention of this student population. Previous studies have found that along with psychological stress caused by financial constraints (Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007), institutional faculty and administrators provide undocumented students with inconsistent and discriminatory messages regarding their student rights, which makes it challenging to navigate and manage the complexity that is higher education. Although faculty and administrators are in significant positions to provide support to undocumented students, little is being done to institutionalize support for this student population (Gildersleeve & Vigil, 2015).

In an attempt to offer possible explanations to this phenomenon, Perna and Finney (2014) suggest that sources of inefficiencies may be factors affecting educational attainment rates among undocumented students. First, Perna and Finney (2014) explain that there are inherent consequences when capable individuals do not participate in higher education. These

consequences come in the form of the private and public good of education, which states individuals benefit socially and socioeconomically from college participation and society also realizes the market benefits that come from greater levels of educational attainment. The researchers offer their second source of inefficiency, which pertains to the higher rate of failure that exists throughout the educational attainment pipeline. According to Perna and Finney (2014), students, families, tax payers, and legislators, among others, invest a considerable amount of financial and non-financial resources into the education of many individuals who, as research suggests, fail to complete college or realize their full academic potential. This is particularly concerning because individuals and society deserve a better return on their investment and students deserve equitable access to and success in higher education. Moreover, these critical issues have sparked contentious debate regarding the value of higher education, which has ignited a call for greater accountability to students, taxpayers, and key stakeholders regarding the performance of colleges and university with respect to student outcomes and success.

The purpose of this section is not to validate arguments against the value of higher education or the public and private benefits that come with higher levels of educational attainment. However, the purpose of higher education and its role in social mobility has gone unrealized for undocumented student populations. Despite the persisting gaps in educational attainment across student populations, there are clear and substantial benefits of higher education for individuals and society, but these benefits are unequally distributed across populations. Higher education attainment has an important role in creating a prosperous economy that is sustainable and advances the well-being of individuals. Extant literature provides that higher education attainment has public and private benefits in the form of less dependence on means-

tested social service programs, lower crime rates, to paying higher taxes and lower occurrences of under- or unemployment (Dickson & Harmon, 2011; Lochner & Moretti, 2004; Milligan, Moretti, & Oreopoulos, 2004; Psacharopoulos & Patrons, 2004; Sjoquist & Winters, 2015; Trestle, 2010). There is another significant benefit from higher education attainment that exists in the body of literature, but is not as widely discussed. This limited conversation focuses on fact that the increased proportion of a college-educated workforce has positive externalities in that it not only provides for higher wages for those who have a college-level education, but increased wages and employment probabilities seem to also effect those who never attended college themselves; thus, creating a human capital spillover effect (Abel, Dey, & Gabe, 2012; Dalmazzo & de Blasio, 2007; Glaeser & Resseger, 2010; Hout, 2012; Iranzo & Peri, 2009; Moretti, 2004a, 2004b; Sjoquist & Winters, 2015; Winters, 2013). By extension, logic suggests that these benefits of increased educational attainment should create a positive movement toward inclusive policies and an immigration system that supports and increases access to higher education for undocumented students, but the converse is our current reality that surely shapes the college experience. Although there are significant benefits to higher education attainment, there remains many barriers that affect the extent to which undocumented students gain access and the success of these students are just as varied.

Complicating the narrative is the fact that there is a general understanding of the inherent value of and the benefits received from higher levels of educational attainment and the belief that higher education is the engine of social and economic mobility regardless of social class, skin color, and financial ability. However, these are the very characteristics that provide variations in higher education access and educational attainment (Perna & Finney, 2014). Through an analysis of data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics published by the Brookings Institute,

Perna and Finney (2014) suggest that, despite its challenges, higher education is the most important factor in social mobility finding that nearly half of adults who are from the poorest families and who did not obtain a college education also ended up poor. Conversely, those from similar backgrounds who obtained a college education were more likely to achieve access to a middle-class lifestyle.

The responsibility for achieving meaningful improvements in higher education attainment lies with state governments and policymakers. Unfortunately, as prior research suggests, higher educational attainment has remained stagnant over that last couple of decades and is more significant for students who are undocumented. During the Obama administration a set of ambitious initiatives were implemented designed to address the educational attainment gap by increasing access to higher education and making college more affordable (McClendon & Perna, 2014); however, undocumented students remain ineligible for financial aid, as previously discussed, which is a situation that almost certainly shapes their college experience, but not fully understood (Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007; Gildersleeve & Vigil, 2015; Pérez, et al., 2009).

The Role of State Government

States and governments play a critical role in the development of public higher education policy and determine the types and extent of financial resources appropriated to postsecondary education. Therefore, to stabilize and position themselves for the future, colleges and universities have to position themselves into greater levels of influence in shaping public policy regarding undocumented student benefits and their rights as students and, most important, their human rights. Institutions find themselves in a new era of accountability and one in which new public management policies are transforming institutional operations. Moreover, this era is marked by increasing distrust in government; therefore, citizens and policymakers are calling for

an accountability structure that measures the performance of postsecondary institutions (Rutherford & Rabovsky, 2014).

McLendon, Hearn, and Deaton (2006) suggest that in previous decades, accountability referred to reporting structures detailing which activities and functions of colleges and universities should be dictated by the state and which should be left to the discretion of institutional campuses. In contrast, accountability frameworks have now evolved into a structure that factors performance into funding models. This new normal links institutional performance to budget allocations, which presumably will encourage colleges and universities to perform better by increasing college completion rates and student success. To think college and university administrators and personnel are not focusing efforts on reducing the educational attainment gap, income disparities, and educational inequity would be naive; however, colleges and universities are facing significant challenges with limited resources and fiscal constraints that essentially require them to do more with less.

Chapter Summary

Chapter II presented a review of the extant literature that has focused on Hispanics in higher education. The chapter opens with a brief discussion of the search process that describes the primary resource in the search of relevant research for this study. Next, the chapter focuses on a discussion of the federal landscape that has contributed to shaping the complex and sensitive environment in which Latino students find themselves, specifically the section focuses on the DREAM Act and DACA. The chapter then seaways into a section on Latinos in higher education that provides a discussion on the representation of these students in higher education with a narrow focus on the financial resources, or lack thereof, and the effects of macroaggressions encountered by Latino students. The next three sections of the chapter dealt

with the politics surrounding undocumented students in higher education, the extreme divergence of policy and public opinion regarding undocumented students, and the critical connection between higher education attainment and social mobility. Lastly the chapter closes with a brief discussion of the role of state governments in the development of public higher education policy that promotes and increases access for undocumented students.

The following chapter provides an overview of the methodology with a discussion of Q methodology, which includes a brief discussion of the pilot project that served to evaluate the feasibility of using this particular methodology for this research study. Next, Chapter III describes the research context and explains the selection of participants. The remaining sections will discuss the particular instrument that was used for data collection and how these data were analyzed.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the research methodology that was used to examine the phenomenon of how undocumented students explain their opinions and viewpoints regarding their college experience. The chapter begins with a statement of the purpose of the study followed by a description of the search process and of the research context. Next, is a discussion of how the participants were selected and continues with sections describing the data collection instruments, study procedures and analyses. The chapter concludes with a summary of methodological stages.

The General Perspective

Previous research on undocumented students has used various study strategies, including both qualitative and quantitative methods (Gildersleeve & Vigil, 2015; Pérez, 2010). Although findings provide important information regarding the student services needed to assure academic access and success for this student population (Nelson et al., 2014; Nienhusseer, 2015), little is known about the holistic and subjective viewpoints of those students

who are undocumented regarding their college plans, goals, and lived experiences. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine how undocumented college students describe their college experience. To understand the subjective experiences and the perspectives of undocumented Latino students' college experience, Q methodology (Brown, 1980, 1986; McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Stephenson, 1953; Watts & Stenner, 2012) was used, which allows for the phenomenon to be described subjectively.

The Search Process

Oklahoma State University's Edmon Low Library served as the primary resource in the search of relevant research for this study. The electronic databases accessed through the university's library such as ProQuest and EBSCOhost, relevant books, and current scholarly journals also served as valuable resources. Boolean descriptors were used to search terms such as "undocumented students," "college experience," undocumented students + college experience," "faculty + student interaction," "undocumented college student + engagement," and "undocumented college student + microaggression" to find relevant journal articles and research studies. I searched for relevant literature by reviewing the reference list of identified research articles relevant to the study.

Q Methodology

Q methodology is a research methodology that focuses on the subjective first-person perceptions of participants (Brown, 1980; McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Stephenson, 1953; Watts & Stenner, 2012). There are three research applications within the methodology, which are technique, method, and methodology. The technique for Q involves the sorting process of Q items or statements. The method includes the use of intercorrelation, factor analysis and any necessary rotation, and standard score calculations for statements within factors to provide the

statistical results. The methodology encompasses the philosophy and interpretation of all data sources to present holistic and subjective findings (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Founded by William Stephenson (1953), Q methodology is designed to measure human subjectivity using statistical applications of correlation and factor analysis to subjective sorts that have self-referent meaning to the participant (Bang & Montgomery, 2013). Q methodology is different from R method (traditional factor analysis) in that it seeks to determine the subjective meaning of a particular phenomenon, in this case the college experience of undocumented Latino students, through opinions and viewpoints (Bang & Montgomery, 2013).

Random sampling of a population of persons is rarely the best strategy for Q methodology participant selection because of the need to acquire research subjects familiar with the topic. The sampling is technically the item representation of the phenomenon of study as Q methodology analysis of by-person sorts of all statements at once (Watts & Stenner, 2012). There are two main repercussions for using R over Q methodology. The first is that the items, or the Q set, and not the participants, constitute the study sample; therefore, the second repercussion is that the participant in the Q study becomes the variable as the entire sort by each participant (Watts & Stenner, 2012). The purposive sampling technique for the sorters (P set in Q terminology) was very strategic, which was intended to select participants who had a particular viewpoint of interest to the researcher. The following section will focus on a discussion that situates the research.

Pilot Study

As a fundamental phase to this research process, a pilot study was conducted in Spring 2016 to evaluate the feasibility of using Q methodology to conduct a study of university students who were undocumented as US citizens. The pilot study acquired appropriate IRB

approval (Appendix A) and provided valuable insight on the difficulties encountered in the recruitment process and the information needed for inclusion in the set of Q statements for the larger research study. To define the concourse, the extant literature was examined to collect all possible statements that the population of concern could have made regarding the topic of interest. The concourse development included four steps: (1) collection of all possible statements; (2) Q sample selection; (3) formulating the Q statements; and (4) piloting the statements. The Q sample was selected by first putting statements regarding a similar content together (homogeneity principle, Brown, 1980) and then selecting the statements that represented the content area with greatest breadth and depth (heterogeneity principle, Brown, 1980).

The recruitment process presented challenges with identifying and encouraging undocumented students to participate. A recruitment flyer and communication distributed to students provided the necessary information regarding the study and had the researcher's contact information; however, only four students - the researcher served as the fifth sorter - reached out and expressed interest in participating, which was less than expected. To minimize the extent to which student schedules were a factor in participation, the researcher was intentional in remaining flexible by meeting students at a time and location that best accommodated their availability. Additionally, the data collection period occurred at a slow time of the semester to avoid interfering with mid-term and final examinations. Therefore, although it is not factually known, the assumption is that the student's undocumented status may have contributed to their reluctance to participate in the study. The political climate on illegal immigration and the sentiment toward undocumented students at the time of this study and the fear and vulnerability these students experienced made this assumption plausible and

is a situation that may not have had an immediate remedy. Therefore, as a result, the researcher worked through this challenge by identifying spaces for these students to feel more comfortable and safe enough to participate. Moreover, the researcher worked to establish stronger relationships with undocumented students who were part of larger advocacy groups, which allowed a greater opportunity to establish rapport with potential research participants. Understanding research ethics, the relationship with these advocacy groups was genuine and the researcher was fully transparent from the onset as to avoid any potential animosity from the undocumented students at the time of participant recruitment.

The five sorters achieved different factors leading to the conclusion that Q methodology would work for the larger study; however, there were a few Q statements with wording that caused the participants confusion and, thus, the participants asked for clarification. Because Q methodology allows for research participants to make meaning of the Q statement based on their interaction with the Q set, the researcher gave no specific meaning and responded that the specific interpretation of the Q statement is based on however they engaged with the particular statement at the time of the sort. The initial results highlighted some statements to be revised for purposes of clarity. Q statement #4 *Counselors have too many students to worry about to help me with my situation* is one about which the sorters had questions. Because of its wording, these participants were unsure as to whether the statement referred to high school or college counselors. Q statement #10 *I live in a state where people don't understand my legal right as undocumented* created confusion for some of the sorters because they were unsure if the statement pertained to their legal rights as an undocumented student without DACA or undocumented student with DACA, which do have different benefits afforded to them under the presidential executive order. Additionally, Q statement #49,

What's the matter with Trump building a fence across Mexico, is another statement about which the sorters had questions. It became evident that, from the wording, the particular statement did not provide a clear stance of the topic, which prevented the sorter from fully engaging with the statement. In addition to revising these three Q statements, a modified Q set added statements on faculty-student relationships, acts of micro-aggression, feelings of possible deportation, and the costs associated with maintaining or securing DACA and its effect on the college experience.

The pilot study provided the opportunity to test the demographic survey that was provided to the participants following their Q sort. From the pilot study, it was evident that the survey needed to be modified to remove the binary gender options to an open response field to be openly inclusive of all gender identities. Next, the demographic survey had two questions added, one asking the age at which they learned of their undocumented status, and the second question asking at which age they immigrated to the U.S. Additionally, because of the target population, described further herein, the survey was modified to include only freshman and sophomore classification with first or second semester preceding the classification to identify the specific term. Collecting this information was important for gaining a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of a student's college experience.

The Research Context

This research had as its focus the college experience of undocumented Latino students. All research participants were Latino students who were high school graduates and who were currently attending a higher education two- or four-year institution. Because this study sought to better understand the opinions and viewpoints of the college experience of these undocumented students, the research included participants who are new first-time entering to college and those

who had attended one semester or more. The natural academic progression suggests that participants who were at least in their second year have a better understanding and are more aware of their college experience, because of their undocumented status; however, due to their immigration status, undocumented students have a different on-boarding experience than their documented peers. Therefore, these undocumented participants could interact with the Q statements in a more robust and meaningful manner. Data collection began mid-fall 2017 semester and continued until complete.

Students participated in the study on a mutually convenient day and at a time that accommodated their schedule; this included morning, afternoon, evening, and late at night on weekdays and weekends. The location was a public place such as, but not limited to, a public community library or a library located on a college or university campus. Because of the sensitivity of this research, participants were met at a neutral location to reduce potential feelings of threat or discomfort due to their undocumented status. The following is the research question to guides the analyses:

1. How do undocumented Latino students describe their college experience?

The following sections discuss how the research participants were selected and recruited, followed by a discussion of the data collection instrument, study procedures, and data analysis.

The Research Participants

Oklahoma law allows undocumented students to attend community colleges or four-year universities; however, identifying these students can be a sensitive matter and often difficult. For this study, the researcher used a criterion purposive sampling strategy to select the participants. According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2012), criterion purposive sampling is a strategy in which participants must meet one or more criteria established by the researcher. Additionally, this

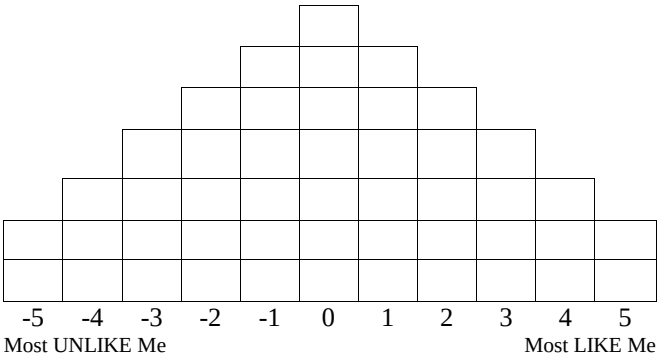
approach produced the most information about the phenomenon studied because it allowed for the subjective viewpoints of participants to be introduced into the research design.

For this study, participants were undocumented and were enrolled in and attending a higher education two- or four-year public institution. In addition to these criteria, participants must have immigrated as a minor, and identify as Latino. The researcher followed IRB approved procedures (Appendix A) and employed a two-step process to recruit participants. The first step involved working with the office of admissions or registrar at the selected higher education institutions to collect contact information on the particular student population. Following this step, participants who meet the criteria were recruited through their college or university e-mail and, in response to the recruitment notice, 19 students responded with interest in the research and agreed to participate.

Data Collection Instrument

Participants sorted a series of statements in a normally distributed grid (see Figure 1). The Q set, or the series of statements, were sampled from the concourse, which is the population of all possible statements from which the Q set is sampled (Brown, 1980; Watts & Stenner, 2012). Viewpoints are what Q methodology studies and captures, not the individual statements of the concourse (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

Figure 1. Record sheet with value scale



Thus, a Q sort is a ranking of a series of statements under a specific condition of instruction. The results of the Q sort allowed the researcher to understand the subjective nature of a particular phenomenon, in this case the college experience of undocumented students. The research instrument is the set of opinion statements, called the Q-sample. The Q-sample, a representative sample of statements, was developed from the concourse, which is all possible statements. The concourse of statements was developed through the pilot study and a review of printed resources such as journal articles, editorials, and any other source germane to the phenomenon.

Study Procedures

Data were collected at two urban two-year public institutions and one urban four-year public institution during the latter part of the fall 2017 semester and early part of the spring 2018 semester. All data for this study were collected in person, either on campus or at a public library, from 19 participants (Table 1).

For this study, the participant sat across from the researcher at a table with a form board (see Figure 1) and an envelope containing 47 cards, each with printed opinion statements to elicit the subjective opinions and viewpoints of each participant. Each participant completed a Q sort under the same condition of instruction. The participant used a writing utensil at the conclusion of the Q sort to complete the record sheet and demographic survey. The participant read through the statements and sorted them into three piles according to the condition of instruction: "Describe Your College Experience." The participants made three piles with the pile on their right as those statements that were most like what they thought about their college experience and the pile on their left were those statements that were most unlike what the participant thought about their college experience. The third pile were those cards placed in the middle in which the

participant did not have strong feelings about. After the participant created three piles of cards with statements, the research participant started with the pile to their right, the "most like" pile and selected the two cards from that pile that were most like their opinion of their college experience and placed them in the two spaces at the far right of the form board in column +5 (see Figure 1). The order of the cards within the column, that is the vertical positioning of the cards, did not matter.

Next, from the pile on their left, the "most unlike" pile, the participant selected the two cards that were most unlike their college experience and placed them in the two spaces at the far left of the form board in column -5. Following these first three steps, the participant then went back to the "most like" pile on their right and selected the three cards from those remaining in the most like pile and placed them into the three open spaces in column +4. The participant then went back to the "most unlike" pile on their left and selected the three cards from those remaining in the most unlike pile and placed them into the four open spaces in column -4. Following this alternating pattern, the participant worked back-and-forth by continuing to place cards onto the form board until all cards had been placed into all spaces.

After all the cards had been placed on the form board the participant was encouraged to rearrange the cards until the arrangement best represented his or her opinions and viewpoints. After the participant were satisfied with their Q sort, the Q statements were recorded on the record sheet (Figure 1) using the numbers corresponding with each statement. Lastly, the research participant completed a post-sort demographic survey that was printed on the back of the record sheet (Appendix B). The survey was used to collect information regarding gender, age, race, college classification, age at which they immigrated to the U.S., age at which they

learned of their undocumented status, and any additional comments from the participant. Following the data collection was analyses, which is described in the section that follows.

Data Analysis

Q methodology was used to respond to the research question. In addition to a qualitative understanding and interpretation of results, Q uses quantitative data reduction to make connections that otherwise would be overlooked by non-statistical data analysis. In Q methodology, the quantitative data analyses uses correlation and by-person factor analysis with any necessary factor rotation followed by calculating standard scores for each statement within each factor to be used as the results to the interpretation of the data to yield the findings of the study.

The researcher selected PQMethod software, which is a statistical program used in Q studies. With PQMethod, data are entered in the manner they are sorted by the research participant and the software computes correlations between all of the Q sorts (Watts & Stenner, 2012; McKeown & Thomas, 2013). This software was used to perform principal component factor analysis of the correlation matrix of all 19 sorts to determine distribution of the data. A correlation matrix was examined to discern the extent of the relationships between all the Q sorts in the group or, in other words, the relationship of each Q sort with every other sort in the study (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Q methodology correlation provides a measure of the extent of the relationship between any two Q sorts; thus, a measure of their similarity or non-similarity (Watts & Stenner, 2012). By using the correlation matrix, factor analysis determined the groups of data arrays that were highly correlated, which indicated a strong relationship between particular sorters. The groups of data arrays that were highly correlated determined the factors that represent clusters of participants with similar opinions or viewpoints regarding the particular

phenomenon studied, that is, the college experience of undocumented students. This correlation matrix forms the basis for the factor analysis and rotation. The correlation matrix is what was factored, rotated, and used to determine the factor solutions. The data were analyzed first using centroid analysis and then principal component analysis was used to determine groups of like-minded sorters. This method of analysis is not performed by variable of a statement, but rather by person or the variable of the entire sort. A threshold of 0.45 significance was used to manually flag the defining sorts for all views, which resulted in three stable factors. In the practice of Q methodology, participants who are associated with one factor have attributes that differentiates them from those participants who are associated with other factors (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Findings were interpreted using the calculated *z*-score of each statement for each resultant factor and other supportive data, such as field notes, and demographic descriptors. A z-score is a measure of standard deviation by which the value of a particular observation is above or below what is being observed, or the extent to which a participant agrees or disagrees with a particular statement, within a particular factor.

Data analysis began by transforming each participant's rank-ordered sort of statements into an array of numerical data. For example, the two statements that were placed in the "most like me" end of the distribution received a score of +5, the next three statements received a score of +4, the next four statements received a score of +3, and so forth, all the way down the distribution to the two statements that were "most unlike me," which received a score of -5. Statements placed in the middle of the bell-shaped distribution by the participants were assigned scores of zero. Next, each participant's array of numerical data were then intercorrelated with the arrays of all the others that produced a correlation matrix. The purpose of the correlation matrix is to determine those participants who sorted statements into similar orders.

A factor represents subjective operants and a participant's association with subjective states expressed in his or her sort indicated by the magnitude of the factor loading (McKeown & Thomas, 2013). Factor interpretation proceeded primarily in two ways: (1) by noting the participants who have significant factor loadings and (2) by attending to the factor scores of Q items characterizing the factor (McKeown & Thomas, 2013). A Q sort value is the particular value of a statement resulting from the position in a given column within the reconfigured Q sort of a factor (e.g., -5 to +5) and the statement rank is the numerical rank resultant from the weighted z-score values ordered from highest positive to highest negative.

Lastly, to interpret factors, factor loadings, factor arrays, Q sort values, statement rankings (Appendix C), and weighted *z*-scores were used to make sense of the results. Additionally, the researcher focused on the distinguishing statements, those with higher pure loadings, and consensus statements, those that do not distinguish between any pair of factors. By analyzing the distinguishing and consensus statements, the researcher was able to determine if there were any commonalities and relationships.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the methodology with a discussion of Q methodology, which included a brief discussion of the pilot project that served to evaluate the feasibility of using this particular methodology for this research study. Next, Chapter III described the research context and explained the selection of participants. The chapter ends with a discussion of the particular instrument that was used for data collection, a description of the data analysis, and provides a brief introduction to the findings.

In sum, Q methodology was used to make connections between the opinions and viewpoints of undocumented students. Through factor analysis, the study developed groups of

data arrays that are highly correlated, which indicate a strong relationship between particular sorters and help better describe the college experience of undocumented students.

Chapter IV presents the findings of the interpretation of the factor analyses of this research study.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to determine how undocumented college students describe their college experience. This chapter provides an analysis of the resultant data that responds to the research question that guided this study. After a description of the participants, the statistical method results are presented, followed by a detailed interpretation of the findings.

The report of the demographic data of participants is provided in Table 1. Fifteen participants were female (approximately 79 percent) and four were male (21 percent) with an average age of 22 years. The average age of when the participants found out they were undocumented is10 years of age, and the average of when they immigrated to the U.S. is approximately 5 years of age (rounded to nearest whole number). Table 1 includes a column that provides the code, which represents the institutions at which the participants attend. The two community colleges are represented by URB2_1 and URB2_2 and the four-year represented by the URB4 code.

Table 1. ***Demographic Information for Sorters***

Participant Code	Gender	Age	Age Found Out They Were Undocumented	Institution Code	Age Immigrated to U.S.
1	F	18	7	URB2_1	2.5
2	F	19	12	URB2_1	1
3	F	20	7	URB2_1	7
4	F	35	6	URB2_1	6
5	F	20	10	URB2_1	2
6	M	20	5	URB2_1	3
7	F	20	11	URB2_1	8 months
8	F	20	13	URB2_1	6 months
9	M	18	10	URB2_1	10
10	F	20	13	URB2_2	5
11	F	19	15	URB2_2	13
12	F	21	6	URB2_2	6
13	M	20	8	URB4	2
14	F	23	13	URB2_2	2
15	M	26	13	URB2_1	13
16	F	31	13	URB2_2	8
17	F	22	15	URB4	3
18	F	25	10	URB4	3
19	F	23	3	URB4	3

URB2_1 = Urban 2 year 1st institution
URB2_2 = Urban 2 year 2nd institution
URB4 = Urban 4 year institution

A total of 19 participants (15 female and 4 male) each sorted 47 statements.

Statistical Analysis

To analyze the results, PQMethod (Schmolk, 2011) software was used. There are three statistical procedures to conduct in order to obtain the data for the narrative of findings by interpretation of the factor arrays. First, all sorts are correlated to all other sorts. This correlations matrix is factor analyzed with any necessary rotation, and the final statistical procedure is the calculation of standard scores for each statement within each factor. The statements are then ordered from highest positive to highest negative values for interpretation.

After trials with centroid analysis and judgmental rotations, I used principal component, and varimax rotation of three factors (see Table 2). The purpose of the varimax rotation was to maximize the saturation of as many sorters on the factors to increase their reliability and reduce the correlation between factors scores. Following the sorting process, each participant completed a demographic survey. Due to the political climate toward those who are undocumented and their vulnerable situation, post-sort interviews were not conducted as it would require contact from them. However, as part of the demographic survey, participants were given the option of responding to an open-ended question that asked if they had any additional information they would like to share that was explanatory of the sort or not part of the statements they sorted. For the interpretation of the views and opinions of participants, the calculated *z*-scores for each statement for the resultant arrays along with their position from -5 to +5 were used. Furthermore, analysis consisted of using distinguishing statements, those statements that were significantly different from the same statement position on the other arrays, and consensus statements, those statements with similar values across arrays.

Table 2. ***Factor Matrix***

Participant	Gender	Age	Institution Type	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
02	F	19	2-year	**0.7401X**	0.3280	0.2109
04	F	35	2-year	**0.4930X**	0.3259	0.2207
13	M	20	4-year	**0.7699X**	0.1043	0.0679
05	F	20	2-year	0.4066	**0.5370X**	0.3882
12	F	21	2-year	0.4067	**0.4704X**	0.2119
14	F	23	2-year	0.3454	**0.6792X**	0.1652
15	M	26	2-year	0.0873	**0.6296X**	-0.0128
16	F	31	2-year	0.1198	**0.6438X**	0.1479
17	F	22	4-year	0.2672	**0.6460X**	0.1460
03	F	20	2-year	0.3879	0.1482	**0.7612X**
06	M	20	2-year	0.1090	0.3353	**0.7307X**
09	M	18	2-year	0.2257	0.0132	**0.6803X**

11	F	19	2-year	0.1159	0.2223	**0.8146X**
01	F	18	2-year	-0.2498	0.5285	0.6176
07	F	20	2-year	0.4845	0.2325	0.6609
08	F	20	2-year	0.4806	0.2325	0.6369
10	F	20	2-year	0.5585	0.3079	0.5507
18	F	25	4-year	0.6434	0.2725	0.4730
19	F	23	4-year	0.6424	0.4892	0.3272
# of Defining sorts				3	6	4
% expl. var.				23	20	18

Note: An X and bold print indicates a defining sort

Of the 19 participants, three sorts defined the first factor with 20% of the explained variance, six sorts defined the second, factor with 18% of the explained variance and four sorts defined the third factor with 23% of the explained variance (Table 2). Factor one and two had a correlation value of factors scores of 0.5816; the factors of one and three had a correlation value of 0.4585; and the factors scores of two and three had a correlation of 0.5062. Although the correlations between factor scores may suggest the three factors may be closely related, the analysis in the sections that follow name the factors and provide the description of nuances and context necessary to substantiate the differences that exist between all three factors making each factor unique from one another and, thus, expressing the differing viewpoints and opinions of the college experience of undocumented Latino students.

Interpretation of Factor Arrays

The research question that guided this study is: How do undocumented Latino students explain their college experience? The interpretation of the factor scores and other data sources represent the three differing viewpoints of how these students describe their college experience. The sections that follow describe the characteristics of each factor.

A *z*-score calculation of each statement within each factor allowed the descending array to determine the three viewpoints of the college experience of participants. The interpretation

includes using the factor scores, the demographic data, the open-ended questions on the survey, and any field data collected. The three factor arrays were named Rejected American, Conflicted Identity, and Assimilated as American. In this chapter, each is described with supporting data as evidence for the themes to support the names of the arrays.

Rejected American

Three sorters defined this factor array, two were female ages 19 and 35 attending an urban two-year institution and the third was a male 20 years of age attending an urban four-year institution. The exemplar (i.e., the highest loadings in their views and opinions) was sorter 13, which is the sorter that most clearly defined the characteristics of this array. The sorter is a male 20 years of age attending an urban four-year institution. For the interpretation of this array, themes emerged that best describe the viewpoints and opinions of the college experience of undocumented Latino students. These themes are threatened, but not deterred; dueling realities; and, unguided, yet resourceful.

To summarize the entire array, interpretations reveal the overall feeling of being an American, but also feeling threatened and rejected. Highest and lowest positive and negative statements describing the array are provided in Table 3. This view and opinion emphasizes the fact that these students found that their DACA status gave them a sense of security, but, due to their undocumented status, also understand that having DACA made them different from other Americans.

Table 3. ***High Positive and Negative Statements for Rejected American***

Rejected American			
S#	**Most Like Statements**	**Q-SV**	***z*-Score**
22	I think that DACA is more than just a work permit...it provides the ability to not be scared.*	5	2.116
16	I feel like I am an American just like those who were born in the U.S.*	5	1.672
45	I feel more threatened and afraid now that Donald Trump is president.*	4	1.201
42	My family pays taxes like any other U.S. citizen, so I feel like I should have access to the same benefits as do U.S. taxpaying citizens.	4	1.178
35	I feel that undocumented students with DACA do not take jobs away from Americans. These undocumented students are qualified for the jobs.	4	1.150
40	Because I am undocumented, I feel like some see me as a criminal.*	3	0.987
44	I hate that because I am undocumented some see me as not American.*	3	0.980
36	I feel like my college campus is inclusive and accepting of students from different backgrounds.	3	0.959
14	Despite the challenges associated with my undocumented status, I will succeed regardless of the obstacles I encounter.*	3	0.886
S#	**Most Unlike Statements**	**Q-SV**	***z*-Score**
7	My family wants to help me, but how can they without knowing the U.S. educational system?*	-3	-0.987
1	I feel like my high school counselor didn't help me with college paperwork because they thought I couldn't attend college due to my undocumented status	-3	-1.012
11	There were adequate resources in place for me to help with my college enrollment.	-3	-1.113
24	I feel like my undocumented status makes me an at risk college student.	-3	-1.230
43	It is hard to focus on my school and studies because I often worry more about being deported.	-4	-1.345

Rejected American			
12	I feel like no one really understands what I need emotionally for academic success.*	-4	-1.380
15	I feel like I do not belong at the college.	-4	-1.578
25	When school officials find out I am undocumented, they often treat me like a special student and I wish they would treat me like any other student.	-5	-1.898
38	I have encountered students who treated me negatively due to my undocumented status.*	-5	-2.116
Asterisks indicate distinguishing statements for this view; (*) significance at P < .05. Both the Factor Q-Sort Value (Q-SV) and the *z*-Score are shown.			

The following themes emerged during the analysis of this view.

Threatened, but not deterred is a theme that supports the Rejected American viewpoint, supported by these data:

45. *I feel more threatened and afraid now that Donald Trump is president* (+4 is the array position; z-*score* is 1.201);

14. *Despite the challenges associated with my undocumented status, I will succeed regardless of the obstacles I encounter* (+3 is the array position; *z*-score is 0.886);

29. *I am afraid of what might happen to my family in the future due to all the hostility toward those who are undocumented* (+2 is the array position; *z*-score is 0.865); and

43. *It is hard to focus on my school and studies because I often worry more about being deported (*-4 is the array position; *z*-score is -1.345).

These statements received the highest positive and negative values by sorters in this view, which suggests that although they experience levels of anxiety and fear due to their immigration status, it is not necessarily fear of deportation. Illegal immigration has been a topic of

conversation and has often created political tension; however, as the 2016 presidential elections ramped up, undocumented students began to experience an aggressive and violent environment created by the rhetoric of then candidate and now President Trump. These students feel more threatened and are afraid of what might happen to their family because they exist in world of false narratives constructed by the words of then candidate Trump when he announced his presidential bid. These false narratives that Mexico does not send their best, but rather sends their problems, drugs, and rapists served as the catalysts that ignited an aggressive and racist activity that sparked a wave of White-nationalists rallies in support of then candidate Trump's vision for a renewed America.

For these sorters, statement 43 received an array position of -4 suggesting that it is most unlike those that identify with this viewpoint. A possibility is that those sorters that have this as most unlike their viewpoint may experience a fear connected to another phenomenon that is unrelated to deportation. For example, since June 2012, those undocumented individuals who met specific criteria received renewable deferred action from deportation and became eligible for a work permit in the U.S., some of those DACA recipients exist on college and university campuses across the U.S. The ability to exist in an inclusive and accepting environment and the safety of having a job all ended when President Trump announced in September 2017 the plan to phase out DACA. These sorters indicated fear of deportation was most unlike them and the fact that they assigned a high array position to statement 45, *I feel more threatened and afraid now that Donald Trump is president*, suggest that the root of their fear is more complex. Despite the challenges these undocumented students will encounter, those sorters that identify with this view suggest that they will succeed regardless of the obstacles. According to Krogstad (2016), Latino high school dropout rates have decreased while enrollment of Latino students into colleges and

universities has increased since 2000. Additionally, despite their fear of deportation and obstacles encountered, some DACA recipients have demonstrated in solidarity to demand Congress to act on and pass comprehensive immigration reform that addresses and deals with a pathway to legal citizenship for undocumented residents who meet certain conditions.

Another theme to support the Rejected American viewpoint is the opinion of *dueling realities*, supported by these data:

25. *When school officials find out I am undocumented, they often treat me like a special student and I wish they would treat me like any other student* (-5 is the array position; *z*-score is -1.898);

38. *I have encountered students who treated me negatively due to my undocumented status* (-5; -2.116);

15. *I feel like I do not belong at the college* (-4; -1.578);

36. *I feel like my college campus is inclusive and accepting of students from different backgrounds* (+3; 0.959); and

35. *I feel like undocumented students with DACA do not take jobs away from Americans. These undocumented students are qualified for the jobs* (+4; 1.150).

The first three statements received high negative values; however, statements 35 and 36 were assigned a high positive value, which suggests that sorters with this view experience a different reality on their college campus than the one off campus. Colleges and universities seek to provide inclusive and accepting environments necessary to facilitate the success of the students and are intentional with the support services provided to students, which is a reality and an environment that is different external to the college and university campus ecology. These sorters assigned statement 38 the lowest possible array position indicating that the viewpoint is

most unlike them. Off-campus, however, some undocumented students are the recipients of hate-speech and hate-crimes that affect their sense of belonging within their community. Additionally, these sorters state that feeling like they do not belong on the college is most unlike them by giving the statement a low array position, which suggests that they, at some level, feel as if they belong, are accepted on campus and are seen as a college student. So, for these sorters, the interpretation suggest that they experience a sense of acceptance on the college campus, but the narrative and rhetoric they experience while off campus provides a different reality, one that is a constant reminder that they are unwanted, that they are unqualified for the jobs they are perceived to take away from Americans, that is those born in the U.S., and that undocumented equals unAmerican.

Analyzing statements ranked towards the middle or zero point of the factor array, especially those assigned a value of 0, have the tendency to be interpreted as indifference or indicative of neutrality, which is an assumption that is often correct (Watts & Stenner, 2012). However, for this array, the statements positioned in the middle column, those with an assigned value of 0, provide a point of departure of the on-campus experience from the off campus experience. The following statements serve as the fulcrum for this particular theme and viewpoint:

46. *The news articles I read call undocumented students 'aliens.' They make us seem foreign and unintelligible, so nobody will see us as human* (0 is the array position; *z*-score is 0.211);

18. *I feel like you are a nobody without a social security number* (0; 0.393); and

39. *I feel that if people truly understood the negative sentiment I experience on a daily basis, it could change the conversation regarding immigration reform* (0; -0.012).

These data represent a particularly challenging position for these sorters because the results suggest that they exists in a society whereby its members determine the *Americanism* of an individual, that is, the extent to which one is an American based on their circumstances and background rather than how the person self-identifies, and whether they belong in the U.S.

Another theme to support Rejected American is the notion that they are *unguided, yet resourceful*, supported by these data:

11. *There were adequate resources in place of me to help with my college enrollment* (-3 is the array position; *z*-score is -1.113); and

31. *I feel like colleges do a good job of informing undocumented students of their options and available resources* (-1; -0.582).

The college and university environment and its systems and process can often lead to lost and confused students. It is not uncommon for students to go without the necessary resources to be successful and may look to other sources outside the college environment for a sense of direction. For these sorters, although they indicated there were inadequate resources in place to facilitate the enrollment process and that colleges do a poor job of informing undocumented students of their options, the fact that they were enrolled as college students suggest that they figured out the enrollment process on their own or enrolled with limited guidance.

Interestingly, statement 12, *I feel like no one really understands what I need emotionally for academic success*, had a low array position and *z*-score (see Table 4.3), but statement 21 that speaks to the environment necessary for undocumented students to support their mental and physical health was assigned higher array position (+1) with a *z*-score of +0.538, which suggests that there is a difference in type of support and resources needed for academic success from those needed for overall health and wellness. Moreover, statement 14 was assigned a higher

array position and *z*-score (see Table 4.3). These contrasting viewpoints suggest that these sorters navigate the complex higher education structure without the necessary guidance or resources in place to ensure their academic and personal success.

Conflicted Identity

Six sorters defined this factor array, five were female ages 20, 21, 22, 23, and 31 with four of the five attending an urban two-year institution and the fifth female attending an urban four-year institution. The sixth sorter that defined the array was a male 26 years of age attending an urban four-year institution. The exemplar (i.e., the highest loadings in their views and opinions) was sorter 14, which is the sorter that most clearly defined the characteristics of this array. The sorter is a female 23 years of age attending an urban two-year institution. For the interpretation of this array, themes emerged that best describe the viewpoints and opinions of the college experience of undocumented Latino students for this factor array. These themes are conflicting narratives and existing through controlled participation.

To summarize the entire array, interpretations reveal the overall feeling of being on a campus that communicates conflicting narratives and existing in a world that controls participation. Highest and lowest positive and negative statements describing the array are provided in Table 4. This view and opinion emphasizes the fact that these students understand that their ability to fully assimilate and integrate into society is largely dependent upon factors beyond their control. Additionally, these students experience conflicting messages and cues on college campuses that create a sense of confusion.

Table 4. ***High Positive and Negative Statements for Conflicted Identity***

Conflicted Identity			
S#	**Most Like Statements**	**Q-SV**	***z*-Score**
28	I have a sense of purpose and goals for my life and completing a college degree will help me achieve those goals.	5	2.351
14	Despite the challenges associated with my undocumented status, I will succeed regardless of the obstacles I encounter.	5	2.126
26	I can make an amazing contribution to society if given the chance.	4	1.895
18	I feel like you are a nobody without a social security number.*	4	1.343
34	I feel like without DACA I will be unable to have a well paying job and help the U.S. economy thrive.*	4	1.339
35	I feel that undocumented students with DACA do not take jobs away from Americans. These undocumented students are qualified for the jobs.	3	1.127
13	Now that President Trump has announced his decision to rescind DACA, I constantly think about the possibility of being deported.	3	0.973
27	I know I need more education to meet the future demands of society.	3	0.916
22	I think that DACA is more than just a work permit, it provides the ability to not be scared.*	3	0.820
S#	**Most Unlike Statements**	**Q-SV**	***z*-Score**
43	It is hard to focus on my school and studies because I often worry more about being deported.	-3	-1.025
11	There were adequate resources in place for me to help with my college enrollment.	-3	-1.295
5	College counselors have too many students to worry about than to help me with my situation.	-3	-1.297
6	College counselors who understand the state and federal policies help me get into college.	-3	-1.321
25	When school officials find out I am undocumented, they often treat me like a special student and I wish they would treat me like any other student.	-4	-1.342
21	I feel like my college has an environment for undocumented students that is supportive of my mental and physical health.*	-4	-1.442

Conflicted Identity			
15	I feel like I do not belong at the college.	-4	-1.568
47	Due to my undocumented status, I have felt alienated on campus.	-5	-1.677
31	I feel like colleges do a good job of informing undocumented students of their options and available resources.*	-5	-1.851
Asterisks indicate distinguishing statements for this view; (*) significance at P < .05. Both the Factor Q-Sort Value (Q-SV) and the *z*-Score are shown.			

The following themes emerged during the analysis of this view.

Conflicting narratives is a theme that supports the Conflicted Identity viewpoint, supported by these data:

31. *I feel like colleges do a good job of informing undocumented students of their options and available resources* (-5 is the array position; *z*-score is -1.851);

47. *Due to my undocumented status, I have felt alienated on campus* (-5; -1.677);

15. *I feel like I do not belong at the college* (-4; -1.568);

21. *I feel like my college has an environment for undocumented students that is supportive of my mental and physical health* (-4 ; -1.442); and

11. *There were adequate resources in place for me to help with my college enrollment* (-3; -1.295).

Historically, colleges and universities have been places of personal and intellectual growth and development for its students. Respective campuses have provided spaces for their students to challenge societal norms and to push boundaries toward the innovative development of knowledge. With this, colleges and universities have communicated to prospective students their commitment to providing a nurturing environment and academic enterprise that seek to develop the holistic student. Most recently, some colleges and universities have communicated their support for undocumented students and some reiterated their protection for these students

by announcing their decision to become sanctuary campuses, which is any college or university that adopt policies to protect undocumented students.

Although colleges and universities attempt to provide an inclusive and accepting environment for all its students, systematic practices are in place that communicate a conflicting narrative for some students. For the undocumented students who identify with this viewpoint, for them, the college campus was the opportunity to feel as if they were part of something larger that viewed them as an equal person. However, despite colleges' efforts, these students were unaware or did not receive resources that clearly communicated to them their academic options as students. The message, although likely unintentional, received by these students is that they are not seen as part of the larger campus community, but perhaps a mere afterthought in an environment that is forced to evolve to become more inclusive of its students. Supporting this interpretation is the fact that the students who identify with this viewpoint also feel that their college does not have an environment that supports their mental and physical health. It is likely that these students, due to their immigration status, experience varying levels of psycho-social stress, but feel like their college environment is structured in a manner that does not offer the support they need. This support may come in different forms, but may include access to mental health counselors who understand and can speak to the variables that may have led to the dysphoria that some students may experience. Additionally, the support needed may include diverse faculty representative of the students they teach who use the classroom as an opportunity to encourage students to challenge an oppressive state and society to one that is more open and inclusive. Despite these limitations, the students who identify with this opinion also communicated a sense of belonging. For these students, although the academic structure provides a different reality, their interactions with other students may be what provides them

with the acceptance that makes them feel unalienated and part of the campus community. This dichotomy may occur because undocumented students are not required to self-identify as undocumented in order to develop peer networks or engage in student organizations. However, these students must self-identify as undocumented on their admissions application, may not be eligible for internships or work-study positions, and their employment status post-graduation hinges largely on the fate of comprehensive immigration reform, which all serve as a constant reminder that they are different than others and access to resources is not based on merit or financial need as is the case for their peers. Therefore, although these students felt a sense of belonging on the college campus this may have been attributed to the difference in how their peers and interactions with others made them feel compared to the college structure and its processes.

Another theme to support Conflicted Identity is the notion that they are *existing through controlled participation*, supported by these data:

26. *I can make an amazing contribution to society if given the chance* (+4 is the array position; *z*-score is 1.895);

18. *I feel like you are a nobody without a social security number* (+4; 1.343):

13. *I feel that undocumented students with DACA do not take jobs away from Americans. These undocumented students are qualified for the jobs* (+3; 1.127); and

22. *I think that DACA is more than just a work permit, it provides the ability to not be scared* (+3; 0.820).

For those who are born in the U.S., participation in life is usually unobstructed and opportunities to advance ones social position through education is often an option for many. Although challenges may exist for a majority of U.S. born citizens when it comes to pursuit of

advanced education, none of these challenges include the reality experienced by undocumented Latinos. For these students, the bureaucratic structure is oppressive and serves as a constant reminder that they are different and not American despite the number of years spent in the U.S. What serves to alienate undocumented students is the fact some do not have social security numbers, while others may have a temporary number provided under the benefit of DACA. Those students who identify with this theme assigned statement 18 a high array position, which suggests that a social security number is more than just a nine-digit number, for them it is a number that makes you a person. That is, it is a nine-digit number that creates your existence and validates you as human. For those without DACA, the constant reminder that they do not have a social security number serves to denigrate their existence and, for those who have DACA, understand that the fate of their existence, vis-a-vis the social security number, is temporary and controlled.

The strongest advocates for comprehensive immigration reform, that includes a path to citizenship, are often those that will benefit the most. Those sorters that identify with this opinion assigned a high array position to statements 26 and 22 (see table 4.4), suggesting that although they may be scared at times, they feel as if their full potential and contributions have not been fully realized by society and the communities in which they exist and that the economy stands to benefit from their full participation. These are students that are succeeding in and graduating from college, have jobs, are taxpayers, are community volunteers, and play a critical role in the fabric of society, but the extent to which they can fully participate hinges on their immigration status. Opponents of DACA argue that the program allows for jobs to be taken away from capable U.S. citizens, but this argument implies that jobs are tangible and owned by a segment of the U.S. population. The argument fails to realize that low- to high-skilled jobs

should be for those who express interest in and are qualified for the job. All the sorters that identified with this viewpoint had DACA, but understood that the benefits afforded under the program were temporary, unlike that for U.S. citizens who have permanent access to these same benefits, which served as the basis for their conflicted identity.

Assimilated as American

Four sorters defined this factor, two were female ages 19 and 20 with both attending an urban two-year institution and the other two sorters were male ages 18 and 20 attending an urban two-year institution. The exemplar (i.e., the highest loadings in their views and opinions) was sorter 11, which is the sorter that most clearly defined the characteristics of this array. The sorter is a female 19 years of age attending an urban two-year institution. For the interpretation of this array, themes emerged that best describe the viewpoints and opinions of the college experience of undocumented Latino students for this factor array. These themes are remaining steadfast in the midst of uncertainty and no excuses mentality.

To summarize the entire array, interpretations reveal the overall feeling of having a deep commitment to American norms and culture. Highest and lowest positive and negative statements describing the array are provided in Table 5.

Table 5. ***High Positive and Negative Statements for Assimilated as American***

Assimilated as American			
S#	**Most Like Statements**	**Q-SV**	***z*-Score**
14	Despite the challenges associated with my undocumented status, I will succeed regardless of the obstacles I encounter.	5	2.174
26	I can make an amazing contribution to society if given the change.	5	2.003

Assimilated as American			
28	I have a sense of purpose and goals for my life and completing a college degree will help me achieve those goals.	4	1.891
27	I know I need more education to meet the future demands of society.	4	1.432
29	I am afraid of what might happen to my family in the future due to all the hostility towards those who are undocumented.	4	1.159
19	I have a deep sense of commitment to American society and culture.	3	1.089
20	I feel like I have advocates supporting me and fighting for my personal rights.	3	0.930
10	It may take more time, but I can succeed in college at my own rate without the help I need.	3	0.876
42	My family pays taxes like any other U.S. citizen, so I feel like I should have access to the same benefits as do U.S. taxpaying citizens.	3	0.832
S#	**Most Unlike Statements**	**Q-SV**	***z*-Score**
38	I have encountered students who treated me negatively due to my undocumented status.	-3	-1.101
43	It is hard to focus on my school and studies because I often worry more about being deported.	-3	-1.202
25	When school officials find out I am undocumented they often treat me like a special student and I wish they would treat me like any other student.	-3	-1.318
4	It would take a creative college counselor to figure out how to get financial aid for me.	-3	-1.411
15	I feel like I do not belong at the college.	-4	-1.463
47	Due to my undocumented status, I have felt alienated on campus.	-4	-1.475
18	I feel like you are nobody without a social security number.*	-4	-1.615
40	Because I am undocumented, I feel like some see me as a criminal.*	-5	-1.475
17	Because of my undocumented status, I feel hopeless about my situation.*	-5	-1.767
Asterisks indicate distinguishing statements for this view; (*) significance at P < .05. Both the Factor Q-Sort Value (Q-SV) and the *z*-Score are shown.			

The following themes emerged during the analysis of this view.

Remaining steadfast in the midst of uncertainty is a theme that supports the Assimilated as American viewpoint, supported by these data:

14. *Despite the challenges associated with my undocumented status, I will succeed regardless of the obstacles I encounter* (+5 is the Q-sort value; *z*-score is 2.174);

28. *I have a sense of purpose and goals for my life and completing a college degree will help me achieve those goals* (+4; 1.891);

10. *It may take more time, but I can succeed in college at my own rate without the help I need* (+3 ; 0.876);

17. *Because of my undocumented status, I feel hopeless about my situation* (-5; -1.767); and

43. *It is hard to focus on my school and studies because I often worry more about being deported* (-3; -1.202).

For those sorters who identify with this theme, remaining steadfast and goal oriented in the midst of complex uncertainty was the commonality. Historically, those families or individuals who immigrated to the U.S. did so in pursuit of the opportunity for a better life, to escape the daily torment of living in a country in the midst of a civil war, or to escape death. Those sorters who identify with this theme assigned statement 14 and 17 the highest possible positive and negative value, respectively, suggesting that these sorters do not let their immigration status dictate how they should feel about their situation. Interestingly, however, is the fact these sorters assigned a fairly high negative array position to statement 18 *I feel like you are a nobody without a social security number* (-4 Q-sort value; *z*-score is -1.615), which suggests that they do not see the social security number as validating a person as human.

Moreover, this high negative array position for statement 18 paired with the high positive array position of statement 14 *Despite the challenges with my undocumented status, I will succeed regardless of the obstacles I encounter* (+5 Q-sort value; z-score is 2.174) may also suggest that these sorters feel the lack of a social security number does not limit their opportunities or control the extent of their success.

Statements 28, 10, and 43, that speak to determination and ambition, were assigned high positive and negative array positions, which speaks to the extent that these sorters are encouraged and motivated to achieve their goals. For them, having a college degree is the way to a better life and understand that it is necessary to help meet the future demands of society as evidenced by the high array position of statement 27 *I know I need more education to meet the future demands of society* (+4 is the Q-sort value; *z*-score is 1.432). Although these sorters may not worry about being deported, as suggested by the array position of statement 43 (-3 is the Q-sort value; *z*-score is -1.202), they are afraid of what might happen to their family. This fear may be largely driven by the fact that some of their family members may not benefit from comprehensive immigration reform, if ever passed by Congress, due to the fact they may have immigrated as adults and may not meet certain qualifications. Despite being afraid for their family members, these sorters do not feel intimidated, feel as if they belong in the U.S., and are American.

Another theme to support Assimilated as American is the *no excuses mentality* supported by these data:

14. *Despite the challenges associated with my undocumented status, I will succeed regardless of the obstacles I encounter* (+5 is the array position; *z*-score is 2.174);

27. *I know I need more education to meet the future demands of society* (+4; 1.432);

28. *I have a sense of purpose and goals for my life and completing a college degree will help me achieve those goals* (+4; 1.891);

19. *I have a deep sense of commitment to American society and culture* (+3; 1.089);

34. *I feel like without DACA I will be unable to have a well paying job and help the U.S. economy thrive* (-1; -0.163);

45. *I feel more threatened and afraid now that Donald Trump is president* (-2; -1.043); and

17. *Because of my undocumented status, I feel hopeless about my situation* (-5; -1.767).

Those sorters who identify with this theme suggest a *no excuses mentality* by the array positions of the statements listed above, when considered in aggregate. It is important to consider this particular theme and the statements that support it from a holistic perspective because it gives a whole understanding of a phenomenon, which reflects the complexity of the sorters that defined this factor array. For these sorters, living in fear of deportation and feeling hopeless about their particular situation is not their reality like some people may suspect, as evidenced by the negative array positions assigned to statements 45 and 17. Rather, their reality is the fact that their undocumented status influences how they prioritize important aspects of their lives to benefit the most from their situation. The high positive array positions assigned for the statements listed above suggest that these aspects may relate to education, family, future financial stability, and career prospects. Statement 14 was assigned the highest possible array position suggesting that the sorters who identify with this theme place a high importance on succeeding regardless of the obstacles they encounter. Interestingly, statement 34 received a relatively low negative array position, which may suggest that these sorters do not think the path to a well-paying job is through their DACA status, but through advanced education and a college

degree as evidenced by the relatively high array positions assigned to statements 27 and 28. For them, they do not see their immigration status as limiting their opportunities for or the barrier to a well-paying job, but a lack of education and a college degree would be the contributing factors. As evidenced by the relatively high array position assigned for statement 19, those sorters who identify with this theme subscribe to the American Dream. That is, they believe they are capable of succeeding and possess the set of ideals ingrained in the American culture, which are the disposition to strive toward achieving prosperity, success, and upward social mobility for their family and future children through determination and hard work, absent of barriers.

Consensus Values of the College Experience

In reviewing the consensus statements, which are those that do not statistically distinguish between any pair of factors, there were some commonalities in statement rankings and array positions. The consensus statements among factors are included in the table below.

Table 6. ***Consensus Statements of Interest***

		Rejected American		Conflicted Identity		Assimilated as American	
S#	**Statement**	Q-SV	*z*-Score	Q-SV	*z*-Score	Q-SV	*z*-Score
1*	I feel like my high school counselor didn't help me with college paperwork because they thought I couldn't attend college due to my undocumented status.	-3	-1.01	-1	-0.048	-1	-0.46
2*	It's a lot of work to help me, because I am undocumented.	-1	-0.36	-2	-0.64	-1	-0.17
8*	I need help in getting financial support for my education.	-1	-0.47	0	0.15	-1	-0.24
10*	It may take more time, but I can succeed in college at my own rate without the help I need.	2	0.84	1	0.29	3	0.88
15*	I feel like I do not belong at the college.	-4	-1.58	-4	-1.57	-4	-1.46
24*	I feel like my undocumented status makes me an at risk college student.	-3	-1.23	-2	-0.83	-2	-0.63

		Rejected American		Conflicted Identity		Assimilated as American	
25*	When school officials find out I am undocumented, they often treat me like a special student and I wish they would treat me like any other student.	-5	-1.90	-4	-1.43	-3	-1.32
29*	I am afraid of what might happen to my family in the future due to all the hostility toward those who are undocumented.	2	0.87	2	0.76	4	1.16
30	Despite having immigrated to the U.S. at a young age, I have fully assimilated to American culture.	2	0.86	0	0.02	2	0.73
35*	I feel that undocumented students with DACA do not take jobs away from Americans. These undocumented students are qualified for the jobs.	4	1.15	3	1.13	1	0.58
36*	I feel like my college campus is inclusive and accepting of students from different backgrounds.	3	0.96	2	0.56	2	0.82
42*	My family pays taxes like any other U.S. citizen, so I feel like I should have access to the same benefits as do U.S. taxpaying citizens.	4	1.18	2	0.59	3	0.83
43*	It is hard to focus on my school and studies because I often worry more about being deported.	-4	-1.34	-3	-1.03	-3	-1.20
47	Due to my undocumented status, I have felt alienated on campus.	-2	-0.84	-5	-1.68	-4	-1.47
All statements are non-significant at the P < .01; Asterisk (*) indicates non-significance at P < .05 Both the Factor Q-Sort Value (Q-SV) and the *z*-Score are shown							

Array positions ranging from -1 to +1 usually suggest a relatively neutral position regarding a particular statement or viewpoint. Statement number 8 was the only statement to be assigned an array position between -1 and +1 on the three factor arrays; however, statement 15 had identical negative values suggesting a commonality with regard to the viewpoint among sorters. More than half of the statements listed in Table 6 were either rejected or strongly rejected by the sorters. Interestingly, statements 15, 25, 43, and 47 were assigned high negative values, suggesting that these sorters felt as if they are not treated differently on campus due to their

immigration status, do not need to justify their existence on the campus, and that they belong on the campus just like any other student regardless of immigration status. Statement 8 was a surprising consensus statement because, due to their immigration status, they are ineligible for federal financial aid and in most cases state aid. The -1, 0, and -1 array positions are particularly interesting because the common assumption is that undocumented students are challenged with identifying financial resources to support their education. However, for the sorters, their situation was different enough that a need for financial support was not viewed highly. This suggests that either they have the financial support necessary to fund their education or they do not view financial support has highly or important as other aspects of their college experience.

The consensus statements of interest provide a compelling story for these undocumented Latino students. Despite the restrictions and limitations they encountered, they remained steadfast, committed, and set ambitious, but realistic goals (statement 10 *It may take more time, but I can succeed in college at my own rate without the help I need*, statement 24 *I feel like my undocumented status makes me an at risk college student*, and statement 43 *It is hard to focus on my school and studies because I often worry more about being deported*). These students existed in a world of daily uncertainty. That is, they could have been detained and deported at anytime; however, this extreme possibility did not deter them from living their fullest life. For them, a life of constant challenge, uncertainty, and unwanted marginalization was their realty; however, their feeling of being an American gave them purpose and drive. The consensus statements provide a glimpse of the resiliency and grit these student possessed that gave them the strength and energy necessary to thrive in a world that constantly sought to invalidate their existence.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the interpretation of the resultant data that responded to the research question that guided this study. This chapter also provided a description of the participants, presented the statistical method results, followed by a detailed interpretation of the findings using statement array positions and their corresponding *z*-scores, distinguishing statements, consensus statements, field notes, and open-ended survey questions and the chapter closes with a description of the consensus statements.

Chapter V presents a summary of the findings in response to the research question that guided this study, conclusions based on the finds, the implications of the conclusions, and concluding comments.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Contained in this chapter are the summary of the findings, conclusions based on the findings, and the implications for research and practice that emerged from this study. The summary of findings provides a response to the research question that guided this study and conclusions provide a holistic understanding of the college experience of undocumented Latino students. The discussion of the implications for research and practice is intended to provide direction for future research and an understanding on how to approach the student experience through the lens of undocumented Latino students. The chapter closes with concluding comments.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to extend the understanding, through the use of Q methodology, of the holistic and subjective experience of undocumented Latino college students.

The research question that guided this study was:

1. How do undocumented Latino students describe their college experience?

The results of the statistical analyses, thematic interpretations, qualitative notes, and demographic information obtained from the research participants played an important role in

answering the research question. The results of the factor analyses indicated that, although there were some similarities between each group of participants, there were nuances that distinguish each group from one another. The purposeful selection of participants suggests that the conclusion of this study is limited to those who participated in this study. Nevertheless, the findings of the study provide a holistic understanding of how undocumented Latino students experience college and may be true for students in other similar situations.

The difference in correlations between factors scores between the three factor arrays suggests that although the participants have differing values and opinions regarding their college experience, for the most part these undocumented Latino students experienced college similarly. The slight variations unique to each group represent distinct values held by the participants regarding their college experience as undocumented students, which were interpreted and thus named accordingly. The first view emphasized that the participants do not feel as if they are American under all situations and was named *Rejected American*. For these participants, the extent to which they are accepted or feel as if they are valued as an American is situational and complex. The second view, named *Conflicted Identity*, suggests that the students exist in an environment that lacks a clear distinction of elements and norms that coincide with their own identity. For these participants, their experience is shaped largely by the fact that their subjective feelings toward distinctive traditions, culture, language, and politics are often questioned or unconsciously challenged due to their immigration status. This conflict creates the inability to feel part of a collective national identity. Lastly, the third view emphasized the conventional American way of life, which is largely thought to be hard work and determination. *Committed American* participants espouse the customs and norms and feel assimilated to the cultural norms of the ways they were raised in America.

Rejected American students do not feel as if their undocumented status makes them at risk, rather their sense of rejection comes from the constant negative rhetoric that exists in conservative media outlets, which is fueled by the political posturing of President Trump's administration. Although these participants feel as if they are American just as those who are born in the U.S., they exist in a world that constantly questions and threatens their existence, but they remain steadfast and determined to co-exist in a world that challenges their identity and existence. The viewpoint of the *Rejected American* students emphasizes not how they perceive their college experience, but more so how they experience life in off-campus communities. This viewpoint suggest that there is a perceptual boundary that divides their college experience from their off-campus experience, but the fact remains the latter affects their college experience in intangible ways that are not easily noticed or recognized.

Conflicted Identity students exits in a world where their identity formation is dually controlled. That is, the extent to which they control their identity formation largely depends on their immigration status and environmental factors. Because these participants are undocumented, the extent to which they can fully participate in society is dependent upon whether one must be a U.S. citizen or not. Imagine the mixed messages one receives when they find out they are eligible to enroll in and attend a college or university, but learn that they are not eligible to receive federal financial aid or scholarships due to their immigration status or their conference presentation proposal has been accepted, but they will be unable to attend the conference because the travel requires a passport or they fear being detained at the airport due to their undocumented status. These messages communicate to the participants that they are as much an American as the system will allow and that their immigration status dictates how they should be treated and accepted under specific circumstances.

Committed as American students feel as if they are part of the fabric of society much like those native born Americans. For these participants, their situational perspective and experiences are not affected by their immigration status. They place value on how they make meaning from their respective situations and less on how others perceive their experiences. These participants express an understanding that they are in control of their situation and control the extent to which they contribute to society. For these participants, hard work, determination, and grit is all they have known, but place positive value on their feelings toward how members of their family may be treated, due to their immigration status, in the midst of uncertainty.

These three views served to explain that although all participants were undocumented, their college experience and interpretations of their own complex situations are dependent upon how they each internalize their immigration status. Thus, it is not surprising that, for the most part, none of the participants had similar views with respect to their college experiences and how external variables affect their daily interactions on- and off-campus. However, considering the negative rhetoric and posturing toward undocumented immigrants, specifically those who are Latino, it was surprising that, in general, most participants placed a neutral or lower value on how they felt toward Donald Trump being president, how they felt with his decision on rescinding DACA, the possibility of being deported, and his apparent unwillingness to redirect or speak against the dangerous and negative narrative that his administration has constructed regarding those who are undocumented Latinos.

Although post-sort interviews were not conducted, the demographic survey captured key information that contextualizes the college experience of undocumented Latinos. For some, the qualitative response suggest that the political posturing and rhetoric of the Trump administration encouraged and motivated many undocumented immigrants to complete a college degree, which

is evidence that they are not easily deterred or intimidated into fear. Additionally, although being undocumented is a label that creates barriers and restricts students from many things, most participants insisted that their immigration status will never stop them from achieving their aspirations. Interestingly, however, not all undocumented students share the same view regarding the effects of their immigration status, but rather share a different opinion on the immigration debate. There is a subset of undocumented students that think the U.S. Congress has the right to implement whichever federal legislation it wants with respect to undocumented immigrants and that those who are undocumented have no voice in the legislative process. Although these students may ultimately be affected by whichever legislation is implemented, their success will not be dependent on or limited by whichever legislation is implemented. These viewpoints suggest that undocumented Latino students are completely aware of their immigration status and its effect on every aspect of their life, but they demonstrate a strong will, desire, and dedication to succeed despite whichever challenges they may encounter, much like native born Americans. For them, they saw their immigration status as part of an already complex system, but not something that created for them a hopeless situation.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to develop a holistic and subjective understanding on the college experience of undocumented Latino students, but an additional desired outcome was to gain knowledge on participants' views that may inform policy and practices that affect their experiences on campus. Although limited in the extent to which these findings can be generalized, the findings fulfilled the purpose and desired outcomes of the Q methodology research design. The conclusions based on the findings are (1) the necessity of family support,

(2) the importance of assistance from high school counselors, (3) the mixed messages of the college environment, and (4) campus community integration.

Ovink (2014) contends that Latino students often peruse higher education because of their parents lack a formal education, but this was not necessarily the case for these participants who indicated their desire of a college degree was largely driven by the fact it is necessary for economic and personal prosperity. Although undocumented Latino students receive emotional support and encouragement from family members, their familial network often lacks the understanding and knowledge of how to navigate the complex environment of higher education and cannot relate to the academic challenges and demands of college. Therefore, family members cannot provide the full support that is necessary for students to be successful. Sáenz, García-Louis, Drake, and Guida (2018) suggest that familial support is evident through their direct involvement with information gathering, consistent messaging of their expectation for their children to obtain a college education, and an active attempt to understand the academic demands of college. However, this level of support was not evident for the *Rejected American* students.

Rejected American students also expressed that they felt as though they did not receive the necessary support from high school counselors, which created an unpleasant and stressful experience. The lack of assistance with information gathering and a full understanding of admission options and processes for undocumented students likely affected the experience they had with the high school to college transition. This creates a situation where students developed their own strategies to collect information and make sense of the college admission process, due to the lack of systematic guidance, which prevents them from feeling connected to and a part of the institution and affects campus culture integration (Lauby, 2017). Considering that the

Rejected American students were enrolled in college, despite feeling that they did not have adequate assistance from high school counselors or college officials, suggests that they likely gathered information by what Enriquez (2011) calls haphazardly piecing together information and resources to accomplish their goals. Although the *Rejected American* students indicated that they received limited assistance from their high school counselors, it is not entirely known if it was because they were undocumented students or possibly due to other factors that were not captured in this research study. Interestingly, despite these limitations for a majority of the *Rejected American* students, a subset of the participants indicated that people understand what they needed emotionally to be academically successful, which indicates that these particular *Rejected American* students see emotional support as a resource different than that necessary to enroll in college. This suggests that this subset of *Rejected American* students may have developed relationships with some institutional agents that likely provided the social capital necessary for emotional support that may not have been available at home or in their community (Yasuike, 2017), but not the social capital necessary to access institutional information. For Yasuike (2017), the existence of both types of social capital are critical for undocumented students to overcome the feeling of isolation and exclusion, which are factors that contribute to success. For the *Rejected American* students, feeling welcome on campus, having knowledge of others who could relate to and discuss specific issues surrounding their current immigration status were important.

Interestingly, the *Confused Identify* students felt that they were not treated differently or as if they were a special student population and that they never encountered students who treated them negatively, due to their immigration status, but these same students shared experiences of existing on a college campus that communicated mixed messages. Although colleges and

universities may express that they provide diverse and inclusive campus communities for students, their systems, process, and employees may have directly or indirectly communicated a different reality to students who are undocumented. Although college officials may have not intentionally sought to treat undocumented students differently than other students, their knowledge of a student's immigration status may have shaped their response to interactions with undocumented students. Torino, Rivera, Capodilupo, Nadal, and Sue (2018) contend that biases are ingrained in American history and often reinforced by current societal ideologies. Unfortunately, the implicit racial biases are unconscious and likely unintentional; however, have a profound impact on interpersonal relationships and reinforce the hierarchical social order that exists in American society (Torino et al., 2018). Therefore, this type of treatment may have communicated to the *Confused Identity* students that they are not fully accepted on campus despite it being the place where they spend a significant amount of time (Benuto, Casas, Cummings, & Newlands, 2018).

According to Astin (1984), a college's environment has a significant effect on the outcomes of the student that includes how these environments affect the development of their knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about their set of experiences. Considering Astin's (1984) input-environment-output model, the experience of undocumented students may have largely been shaped by the feeling that they belong on the college or university campus, but purely on the merits of their academic ability and credentials and not from a social engagement perspective. The *Confused Identity* students experienced an absence of campus social and academic communities, which undermined their sense of belonging and morale as a member of their respective college or university campus (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005). The absence, or perceived absences, of these resources undermines the ability for the

Confused Identity students to develop a sense of belonging and the support network that develops through active engagement and participation within the campus community.

Despite the mixed messages experienced by the *Confused Identity* students, the *Assimilated American and Culturally Committed* students viewed themselves as part of the campus community just as any other student, regardless of their immigration status. Benuto et al. (2018) explained that undocumented students often feel a sense of not belonging due to their limitations; however, the results of this study found a different student narrative for the *Assimilated American and Culturally Committed* students. The *Assimilated American and Culturally Committed* students did not allow a social security number to construct their existence and their immigration status did not control or determine their level of hope or level of inclusion. The *Assimilated American and Culturally Committed* students expressed a deep sense of commitment to American society and culture and that they had advocates or institutional agents. Because of these institutional agents and integration of American norms, *Assimilated American and Culturally Committed* students were more likely to demonstrate greater affinity toward their campus culture, which may have influenced their college experience (Pérez et al., 2010). For the *Assimilated American and Culturally Committed* students, it was much less external factors that affected their college experience, rather it was their respective challenges and barriers that motivated them to succeed and the strong desire to earn a college degree. Just as one of the *Assimilated American and Culturally Committed* students stated, being undocumented is only a label that comes with its restrictions; however, immigration status should never stop someone from achieving their goals.

The design of this study was effective in capturing the subjectivity of participants who may not have been captured through a qualitative or quantitative design. Although the Q-set of

statements selected by the researcher proved successful in capturing the operant subjectivity of the participants, there were some statements that will need to be revised or replaced in future replications of the study.

Implications

This study provided a holistic understanding of the college experience of undocumented Latino students. The design and results of this study contributed to the research and practice that may serve an important role for college and university practitioners and policymakers. The following sections describe some of the implications of this research.

Implications for Research

An innovation in researching the subjective views of undocumented Latino students on their college experience, this study provided an understanding of Q methodology and how it can be applied to develop a holistic picture of student perceptions.

This study focused on exploring the viewpoints of undocumented Latinos and how they explained their college experience. Although the three factors where closely correlated, the differences between factors suggest that the three groups varied enough to provide three distinct viewpoints on the college experience. Future research designs may study comparisons between groups based on demographics and include participants from private institutions and additional 4-year institutions to include research institutions.

Participants in this study were enrolled at two 2-year colleges and one 4-year regional university located in the central mid-west part of the U.S. Future studies using P sets that focus on collecting data on the view points of the general U.S population toward those who are undocumented could provide valuable information on different subjectivity that affects the college experience for those who are undocumented. Additionally, future studies that use P sets

for those who are undocumented, other than Latino students, could provide information on how students from other races and ethnicities perceive their college experience and the extent to which their immigration status affects it. Data collection sites were situated in an urban setting, but future studies that include institutions in a rural setting may also provide interesting findings. The two 2-year colleges were similar in size of approximately 6,100 students and the 4-year regional university with approximately 16,000 students. Future research may include P sets in different states with colleges and universities of similar and different size, type, and control to explore if subjectivity of the college experience differs between these types of institutions.

This research design established a first of its kind with respect to studying the subjectivity of Latino students and their college experience. The topic of research contributed to the existing body of research; however, paired with the use of Q methodology, it is likely the study advanced the field of knowledge and expanded the use of Q methodology within a higher education setting.

Implications for Practice

The views that emerged from this study may inform the practice of higher education practitioners and those who develop policy affecting students. The views of those undocumented Latinos who feel as if they are *Rejected Americans* may inform policy and practice by understanding that these participants navigated the complex system of higher education without the necessary resources in place to help them feel as if they were part of the campus culture. For policymakers, advocating for and implementing policies that ensure inclusive access and participation in the academic enterprise, regardless of immigration status, may affect the ways in which these students integrate with and perceive their college experience. The views of those who identified with a *Conflicted Identity* may inform practitioners and policymakers on issues

that they negatively valued that related to how the colleges and university communicated their acceptance of undocumented students. For these participants, the institutions communicated the message of acceptance towards those who are undocumented; however, the realities of the campus culture and services provided were inconsistent with the messaging. Practitioners and policymakers may better serve undocumented Latino students if they were to adopt practices of service and policies that were congruent with their campus culture and consistent with their respective branding and communications.

The particular views for those who expressed being an *Assimilated as American* may also inform practice and policy. Unlike the participants from the other factor arrays, the participants who identified with this factor array may be better served and motivated if they were provided challenging opportunities that did not force them to prioritize between family or furthering their education. These participants were familiar with the constant struggle of balancing a life undocumented in a world of boundless opportunities. Practitioners may better serve these students by assisting them to identifying or work through solutions to the limitations created by their immigration status. For policymakers, developing and implementing policies that allow full participation of all college students may provide a more inclusive and positive college experience for these students.

Previous research has pointed to the importance of collaborative relationships between high schools and community colleges and universities. Practitioners may better serve undocumented students by offering programs, such as college achievement summits, that provide students the opportunity to envision themselves as college students and programs that ensure successful college admission and information on financial aid opportunities (Yasuike, 2017). Moreover, these summits may provide undocumented students the opportunity to develop a

social network to facilitate their integration into the college community. Further research on how marginalized students develop and use social and human capital to access information and resources may be beneficial in understanding how undocumented Latino students succeed in college without the necessary support structure (Enriquez, 2011).

Lastly, for undocumented students, financing college can be costly and unmanageable for many, thus restricting access to higher education (Suárez-Orozco, Yoshikawa, Teranishi, & Suárez-Orozco, 2011). Policymakers and practitioners should advocate to create pathways for these students to receive affordable tuition and financial assistance regardless of immigration status, which may allow them to more easily attend and complete a college education that will benefit not only the student, but as well as their community and economy.

Concluding Comments

Although Q methodology is an emerging research design in higher education, it provided the ability to advance research and our understanding of the college experience for undocumented Latino students. The findings support the assumption that these students are often uninformed of the resources and support services available to them on college campuses. The findings also suggest that there may be some college and university campuses that do not have the necessary resources or services to meet the unique needs of this student population. Unlike college and university administrators, interestingly, this student population did not see themselves as a vulnerable population. This disconnect may have created the perception that these students where more at risk than their peers who are documented U.S. citizens. These particular findings suggest additional key elements to their college experience that merit further study and exploration.

The increasing negative rhetoric and vitriol toward those who identify with an ethnic racial minority group, especially those who are undocumented Latino students, may continue to shape how they experience life and may play an important role in how they integrate into their community and society. This study provides a glimpse into understanding these effects through the lens of undocumented students. As higher education practitioners and policymakers create campus environments and spaces that are inclusive, further research is warranted to better understand experiences and perceptions that effect the academic enterprise and its ability to create inclusive environments that are sustainable.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date	Tuesday, January 16, 2018	**Protocol Expires:**	**1/15/2019**
IRB Application No:	ED1630		
Proposal Title:	Undocumented students' experience of college		
Reviewed and Processed as:	Expedited **Continuation**		
Status Recommended by Reviewer(s)	**Approved**		

Principal Investigator(s)

Jose Dela Cruz

,

Diane Montgomery
424 Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078

Approvals are valid until the expiration date, after which time a request for continuation must be submitted. Any modifications to the research project approved by the IRB must be submitted for approval with the advisor's signature. The IRB office MUST be notified in writing when a project is complete. Approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. Expedited and exempt projects may be reviewed by the full Institutional Review Board.

☐ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

The reviewer(s) had these comments:

New participant enrollment still in progress. No new changes. No change in risks/benefits. No reportable events, withdrawals, complaints or new/additional funding.

Signature :

Hugh Crethar, Chair, Institutional Review Board

Tuesday, January 16, 2018
Date

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

1. What is your gender? _____

2. How old are you? _____ years of age

3. Please check the item that best describes your ethnicity. Check all that apply.
   _____African American _____Asian American
   _____Hispanic/Latino(a) _____American Indian
   _____White _____Other, please specify: _____

4. Which college do you attend? _____

5. What is your current college classification? (check one)?
   _____First Semester Freshman _____Second Semester Freshman
   _____First Semester Sophomore _____Second Semester Sophomore

   Other, please specify: _____

6. At what age did you find out you were undocumented? _____

7. At what age did you immigrate to the U.S.? _____

8. Is there anything else you would like to share about the ideas on the statements you sorted? If so, please provide the response in the space below.

APPENDIX C

FACTORS WITH CORRESPONDING STATEMENT RANKS

No.	Statement	Rejected American	Conflicted Identity	Assimilated as American
1	I feel like my high school counselor didn't help me with college paperwork because they thought I couldn't attend college due to my undocumented status.	-1.01	-0.048	-0.46
2	It's a lot of work to help me, because I am undocumented.	-0.36	-0.64	-0.17
3	I feel like college officials should ask me what resources I need rather than assuming.	-0.15	-0.33	-0.26
4	It would take a creative college counselor to figure out how to get financial aid for me.	-0.86	0.72	-1.41
5	College counselors have too many students to worry about than to help me with my situation.	-0.47	-1.30	-0.97
6	College counselors who understand the state and federal policies help me get into college.	-0.97	-1.32	-0.03
7	My family wants to help me, but how can they without knowing the US educational system.	-0.99	-0.20	0.14
8	I need help in getting financial support for my education.	-0.47	0.15	-0.24
9	I'm not the only one who needs help in college as an undocumented student.	0.38	-0.43	0.81
10	It may take more time, but I can succeed in college at my own rate without the help I need.	0.84	0.29	0.88
11	There were adequate recourses in place for me to help with my college enrollment.	-1.11	-1.29	0.09
12	I feel like no one really understands what I need emotionally for academic success.	-1.38	-0.11	0.44

13	Now that President Trump has announced his decision to rescind DACA, I constantly think about the possibility of being deported.	0.63	0.97	-0.14
14	Despite the challenges associated with my undocumented status, I will succeed regardless of the obstacles I encounter.	0.89	2.13	2.17
15	I feel like I do not belong at the college.	-1.58	-1.57	-1.46
16	I feel like I am an American just like those who were born in the U.S.	1.67	-0.17	0.37
17	Because of my undocumented status, I feel helpless about my situation.	-0.82	-0.04	-1.77
18	I feel like you are nobody without a social security number.	0.39	1.34	-1.61
19	I have a deep sense of commitment to American society and culture.	0.79	-0.20	1.09
20	I feel like I have advocates supporting me and fighting for my personal rights.	-0.16	0.62	0.93
21	I feel like my college has an environment for undocumented students that is supportive of my mental and physical health.	0.54	-1.44	0.59
22	I think that DACA is more than just a work permit...it provides the ability to not be scared.	2.12	0.82	-0.03
23	I am comfortable reaching-out to my professors if I need help with my classes.	0.46	0.18	0.65
24	I feel like my undocumented status makes me an at risk college student.	-1.23	-0.83	-0.63
25	When school officials find out I am undocumented, they often treat me like a special student and I wish they would treat me like any other student.	-1.90	-1.34	-1.32
26	I can make an amazing contribution to society if given the chance.	0.65	1.89	2.00

27	I know I need more education to meet the future demands of society.	-0.50	0.92	1.43
28	I have a sense of purpose and goals for my life and completing a college degree will help me achieve those goals.	0.73	2.35	1.89
29	I am afraid of what might happen to my family in the future due to all the hostility toward those who are undocumented.	0.87	0.76	1.16
30	Despite having immigrated to the U.S. at a young age, I have fully assimilated to American culture.	0.86	0.02	0.73
31	I feel like colleges do a good job of informing undocumented students of their options and available resources.	-0.58	-1.85	-0.01
32	I have DACA, but, due to the cost of maintaining my DACA status, I have had to choose those expenses over school related expenses.	-0.85	-0.62	-0.89
33	Although I am undocumented, I know I am able to complete and file the FAFSA.	-0.75	-0.27	0.17
34	I feel like without DACA I will be unable to have a well paying job and help the U.S. economy thrive.	0.47	1.34	-0.16
35	I feel that undocumented students with DACA do not take jobs away from Americans. These undocumented students are qualified for the jobs.	1.15	1.13	0.58
36	I feel like my college campus is inclusive and accepting of students from different backgrounds.	0.96	0.56	0.82
37	I feel like the misperceptions of what benefits DACA recipients receive are what has fueled the negative rhetoric surrounding undocumented students.	0.61	0.03	0.30
38	I have encountered students who treated me negatively due to my undocumented status.	-2.12	-0.84	-1.10

39	I feel that if people truly understood the negative sentiment I experience on a daily basis, it could change the conversation regarding immigration reform.	-0.01	-0.22	0.56
40	Because I am undocumented, I feel like some see me as a criminal.	0.99	0.29	-1.62
41	I hate how undocumented students are portrayed in the media.	0.87	0.26	-0.23
42	My family pays taxes like any other U.S. citizen, so I feel like I should have access to the same benefits as do U.S. taxpaying citizens.	1.18	0.59	0.83
43	It is hard to focus on my school and studies because I often worry more about being deported.	-1.34	-1.03	-1.20
44	I hate that because I am undocumented, some see me as not American.	0.98	-0.64	-0.53
45	I feel more threatened and afraid now that Donald Trump is president.	1.20	0.53	-1.04
46	The news articles I read call undocumented students “aliens.” They make us seem foreign and unintelligible, so nobody will see us as being human.	0.21	0.49	0.11
47	Due to my undocumented status, I have felt alienated on campus.	-0.84	-1.68	-1.47

VITA

José Dela Cruz, Jr.

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation: THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE OF UNDOCUMENTED LATINO STUDENTS

Major Field: Educational Leadership & Policy Studies

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership & Policy Studies at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2019.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Education in Adult & Higher Education at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma in 2012.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in Psychology at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma in 2005.

Experience:

Dean of Student Affairs, Tulsa Community College, 2016 – Present

Senior Coordinator of Academic Affairs Projects, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, 2010 – 2016

Academic Counselor, University of Oklahoma, 2006 – 2009

Professional Memberships:

Association for Institutional Researchers
National Association of Student Personnel Administrators
National Community College Hispanic Council
Oklahoma Association for Institutional Researchers