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The University of San Francisco

**Constructed Borders in Higher Education: A Critical Policy Analysis of Undocumented
College Students' Access to Study Abroad**

A Thesis
Presented to the Faculty of the School of Education of the
University of San Francisco

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
in
Organization and Leadership

By
Louise K. Hon

Spring 2018

This thesis, written by
Louise K. Hon
University of San Francisco
December 7, 2020

under the guidance of the project committee,
and approved by all its members,
has been accepted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

In

Organization and Leadership



(Instructor)



(Faculty Advisor)

12/15/20

(Date)

DEDICATION

To my parents, especially my mom who did not get to accompany me through the end of this project. Their immigration journey and immigrant experiences are my guiding light.

To all the people in this study who have so bravely, candidly, and thoughtfully shared with me their stories. Thank you for allowing me to learn from you. You motivate me in my daily work.

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Abstract

Between 2012 and 2017, undocumented youth in the United States with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival status were able to apply for Advance Parole permissions to travel abroad for educational purposes. During this time, DACA students attending colleges and universities across the nation engaged in study abroad through established education abroad programs. This qualitative study examines undocumented students' decision to pursue educational abroad opportunities during their undergraduate education in the context of national, state and institutional policies and climate and compares and contrasts the experiences of the undocumented college students who successfully studied abroad with those who either attempted but did not go or never accessed the opportunity. The study uses a Critical Policy Analysis methodological approach to uncover how the decision to study abroad impacts students' undergraduate experience and future planning. Critical Policy Analysis examines power and privilege imbalances and goes beyond the linear fashion of a Traditional Policy Analysis approach. This temporary and now halted program shows the three main findings of how 1) the policies that intersect immigration and education can both be empowering and disempowering 2) through the consideration of study abroad, undocumented students question and challenge their place in the hierarchy that exist between them and other documented students and also between them and other undocumented youth, and 3) due to the gap that exists between policy rhetoric and practices, undocumented students exist by living within the limitations of policies while at the same time, finding ways to resist against those limitations.

Keywords: Undocumented Students, Higher Education, Study Abroad, DACA, Advance Parole, Critical Policy Analysis

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Every year, approximately 98,000 undocumented youth graduate from American high schools (Zong & Batalova, 2019). Based on a Pew Hispanic Center study, fewer than 10 percent of undocumented high school graduates pursue post-secondary education (Prinster, 2015). Poor financial access, restrictive policies at the national, state, and local levels, and the under-resourced schools in the K-12 educational pipeline that often serve low-income and immigrant students contribute to the small number of undocumented students pursuing higher education (Bjorkland, 2018; Clark-Ibanez, 2015; Abrego, 2006).

Of the small number of undocumented students who pursued higher education, fewer undocumented students were able to pursue academic enrichment opportunities such as study abroad even during the short period time between 2012-2017. The change in presidential administration and the differing immigration policies and attitudes greatly affected the lives of undocumented students. These differing policies created a perpetual state of insecurity for undocumented students.

Statement of the Problem

In June 2012, President Obama implemented the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program through an executive action. DACA provided undocumented youth who met a set of criteria to gain a work permit, a social security number, and receive temporary exemption from deportation. A benefit of DACA not as widely known or discussed was the ability to travel overseas for educational, career, or humanitarian purposes. This avenue called Advance Parole provided DACA students the ability to participate in study abroad programs. Students with DACA status had the opportunity to apply for Advance Parole which is a United States

Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) approval that allows for re-entry into the United States upon completion of the study abroad program. When President Trump rescinded DACA in September 2017, it halted the consideration of Advance Parole for DACA holders and consequently, stopped any opportunities for undocumented students to study abroad and return to the United States. In the months following Trump's rescission, lawsuits were filed and an injunction was issued to allow those who have previously held DACA to be able to renew their DACA permissions (National Immigration Law Center, 2019). However during this period when DACA was contested, no new DACA applications nor Advance Parole applications were considered. In June 2020, the United States Supreme Court in the case *Department of Homeland Security v. Regents of the University of California* ruled that the way President Trump had rescinded DACA was unlawful because it was, "arbitrary and capricious in violation of the Administrative Procedure Act and infringed the equal protection guarantee of the Fifth Amendment's Due Process Clause" (Department of Homeland Security v. Regents of the University of California, 2020). Even months after the Supreme Court decision, USCIS had not made clear whether Advance Paroles can be issued again for DACA recipients. As a result, key educational opportunities such as study abroad continued to be unattainable for undocumented students even for those with active DACA status.

Within this short period of time between 2012-2017, undocumented students have experienced how expansions and constrictions of immigration policies can have a direct and immediate impact on their personal, educational and career outlooks. Due to the complex set of requirements undocumented Advance Parole applicants must meet and the limited five year period the Advance Parole permissions were considered, there are very limited studies on the experiences of undocumented students with DACA status who have successfully studied abroad.

The intersection of immigration policy and educational opportunities highlight the inequities that exist in the realm of education beyond academic achievement. Understanding undocumented students' experience accessing study abroad within this given period of time helps educators to advocate for a just set of policies across the nation, state, and institution for years to come.

Background & Need for the Study

Study abroad has traditionally been seen as an educational opportunity accessible to and serving only certain privileged groups. Pipitone's (2018) review of the Institute of International Education's 2017 Open Doors report showed that only 28% of the nation's study abroad participants identify as non-white, which is disproportionately lower than the percentage of non-white students in high education. Efforts have been made by American institutions of higher education and the international education industry to diversify and support diverse students in studying abroad (Diversity Abroad, 2020). Global learning and study abroad opportunities have been identified as one of eleven high-impact educational practices (Kuh, 2008) that are beneficial to college students from many backgrounds. Partlo's study (2015) of labor market benefits of study abroad also showed that study abroad can have an impact on the income of participants one year after graduation from college. Because study abroad is a beneficial educational opportunity that can have impacts on students' career paths beyond college, it is important to examine how the exclusion of groups such as undocumented students from international educational opportunities creates inequities that perpetuate beyond students' enrollment in college.

The wealth of studies of undocumented students' experiences in K-12 education and their access to higher education has grown in the last decade and a half. However, very little is known about undocumented students' access to international education opportunities because it was not a possibility prior to the inception of DACA in 2012.

The review of literature examines the historical policies and legislation that intersect education and immigration as it relates to undocumented students, with a particular emphasis on the confluence or conflicting nature of legislation that can happen on the national and state (California) level. It also explores undocumented students' challenges in accessing higher education because many parallels exist between their access to higher education and their access to study abroad, including financial barriers, advising barriers, and psychological and disclosure of status challenges.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the research is to examine how an undocumented student's immigration status and the uncertainties in policy affect the student's decision to participate in study abroad programs. Additionally, the research also looks into how the opportunity to study abroad affected undocumented students' reflection on their undergraduate education, their position as undocumented people and their educational and career prospects. Through using the critical policy analysis method in examining power and privilege through policies, this paper explored the experiences to access of study abroad for eleven undocumented students.

There is an increasing need to explore how immigration and higher education policies create structures that become obstacles in preventing undocumented students from pursuing educational opportunities like study abroad. Through analyzing national policies, institutional structures, the research exposed policy contradictions and injustices that impact the end goal of study abroad.

Research Questions

The study centers around three research questions:

1. How does a student's immigration status and the uncertainties in policy affect the student's decision to participate in study abroad programs?
2. How does access to study abroad affect students' reflection on their sense of self as an undocumented person and undocumented college student?
3. How does access to study abroad affect and shape undocumented students' perception of their educational, professional, and/or personal growth and development?

Methodological Approach

Critical policy analysis can help illuminate undocumented students' experiences in accessing study abroad opportunities, particularly in the way students navigate their identities and educational opportunities under uncertain times with immigration policies. Critical policy analysis explores historical context and is centered on examining power and privilege and how those two components play out in the policy arena. Critical policy analysis is a deliberate set of methods used that challenges the confines of traditional policy analysis. Traditional policy analysis often takes a step-by-step and linear (and at times circular) approach that first defines the problem, evaluates available evidence, weighs the policy options for possible remedy, and then implements specific (Bardach, 2011). Additionally, the success and effectiveness of a policy change in a traditional policy analysis context depend on the confluence of the different streams of problems, politics and policy coming together (Kingdon, 2001).

Critical policy analysis is different from traditional policy analysis as it takes into consideration the history, counter stories and complex settings and contexts in which policies are instituted, implemented, and which players are involved (Diem et al., 2014). Critical policy analysis is characterized by studies that have five general concerns of focus. The first concern of

focus examines the gap that exists between policy rhetoric and what practices are in reality. The second focus explores the historical nature of policy and how a certain piece of policy came about as well as its intended goals towards identified problems. Thirdly, critical policy analysis strives to examine the parties who benefit from the creation or institutionalization of the policy as well as the parties who are disadvantaged in the process. The fourth characteristic examines how policy can create or continue to perpetuate systems of social stratification. Lastly, critical policy analysis explores how those in minoritized groups fight against the parameters set by the policy. Employing the lens of critical policy analysis will guide the understanding of undocumented students' navigation of immigration and education policies in their access to study abroad opportunities. It highlights points and moments of power and disempowerment within this group of undocumented students with DACA status.

Limitations

The limitations of the study are twofold. The first is the small sample population of eleven undocumented students this study includes. The interviews were conducted only a few short months after Trump's announcement to rescind DACA. The sensitivity of the time and confusion around policies may have created greater apprehension for undocumented students to be interviewed.

Secondly, this study also focused on a narrower group of students in the United States. Their experiences, even with so many challenges and barriers along the way, are not representative of the experiences of undocumented college students across the nation. The study was conducted at a public university in California where participants experienced and benefited from some of the policies and legislation that were available only within that state or within an institution that provided financial support for study abroad. The research site was unique in that

it provided more support in student services, financial funding, and mental health resources compared to other institutions in the nation. Future studies of undocumented students enrolled in other institutions and their experiences can provide a wider view and more unique consideration of the role that different institutional supports play.

In some states currently, undocumented students continue to be barred from accessing public colleges and universities altogether. There are states that do not provide financial assistance, making it very difficult or impossible for an undocumented student to pursue higher education, much less an international education opportunity (available nationally through DACA when it was possible). History has also shown that these policies around immigration and education access have always been contested and that the policies change over time as these conversations and debates continue to shape them.

Lastly, this study is a historical look at the period between 2012 and 2017 when Advance Paroles were possible for DACA holders and select undocumented students successfully studied abroad. The long-term fate of DACA and comprehensive immigration reforms are still widely debated today even after the June 2020 US Supreme Court ruling that stated the method in which the Trump presidency rescinded DACA was illegal. The study can be helpful for future changes even if it solely captures a unique period in time and a confluence of circumstances of eleven students in one specific institution of higher education. This study will provide researchers, advocates, international educators, and student affairs practitioners a deeper look at the challenges undocumented students face with study abroad opportunities at this specific time so that advocacy on policy and resources can be substantiated for future options.

Definition of Terms

- DACA- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals is an executive action of President Obama announced on June 12, 2012 (United States Government, 2012). DACA allows “certain people who came to the United States as children and meet several guidelines [to] request consideration of deferred action for a period of two years, subject to renewal. They are also eligible for work authorization. Deferred action is a use of prosecutorial discretion to defer removal action against an individual for a certain period of time. Deferred action does not provide lawful status.” (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2016)
- Advance Parole- An approval issued by USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services) through form I-131 to re-enter the United States upon completion of travel abroad for education, humanitarian, or employment purposes. Advance Paroles can be granted to people of various non-citizen immigration statuses, but this study will focus on the Advance Parole permissions and process for DACA students and especially for educational purposes.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Undocumented students participating in study abroad opportunities at the college level is a recent, but halted phenomenon. When President Obama's executive order in 2012 started the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program, a channel for eligible undocumented students to study abroad was opened through an approval process issued by the USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services) called Advance Parole. Advance Parole provided permission for DACA holders to travel outside of the country on a provisional basis for humanitarian, educational, or professional reasons and be readmitted to and reenter the United States upon completion of travel.

That pathway, and the opportunity for select students with approved Advance Parole to travel for study abroad programs was open from the inception of DACA in June 2012 until the program's rescission in September 2017. The US Supreme Court ruling in June 2020 in *Department of Homeland Security v. the Regents of the University of California* ruled that President Trump's method to terminate DACA was illegal. With DACA still vulnerable to termination from Trump, the long-term fate and sustainability of DACA remains in limbo. With the Obama era Executive Order of DACA in limbo and no clear legislation that provides pathways to citizenship as proposed by the DREAM Act, undocumented youth's access to certain education opportunities are restricted. The doors to Advance Parole have been shut since the date of the rescission and continues to be that way without clear directives from USCIS.

Published research that touches on the convergence of undocumented students in higher education and their pursuit of study abroad opportunities are very limited. There are three articles to date. This literature review highlights those research articles available, but focuses more

heavily on two broader and relevant points. The first is an examination of the historical policies and legislation that intersect education and immigration as it relates to undocumented students. The second is a deeper look at the research that focuses on undocumented students' experiences of higher education. The decision to focus on experiences of undocumented students in higher education in the literature review is a purposive act because many parallels exist in the barriers undocumented youth face with accessing higher education that mirror their specific access and attempt at education abroad opportunities. Those common barriers include financial, advising, psychological and disclosure of status, which are challenges that undocumented students face both in accessing higher education and in study abroad.

The literature is deliberately organized in providing background and information on the historical context of legislation impacting undocumented students in the United States. It then focuses the attention on undocumented students' access to higher education. Lastly, the literature review highlights the published articles found that ties in the specific topic of undocumented students' access to international education opportunities.

Historical Context and Legislation

Historical context and legislation interrogate the roots and development of policies. The following is a chronological overview of national, state (with California as a focus), and local policies that demonstrate the constrictions and expansions of immigration policies that directly affect educational policies and realities for undocumented students.

These policies, legislations, and regulations at various levels of government also set the context in which many of the students in this study grew up in. On occasion, national, state and local legislation conflict and brings to question the difference between state residency and

national citizenship. Together, the court rulings and pieces of legislation at various levels affect undocumented students' access and impression of education.

Plyler v. Doe (1982)

A key ruling that continues to shape the discussion around undocumented youth's access to education in the country is the US Supreme Court case of *Plyler v. Doe* in 1982. The case stemmed from a Texas state law that was changed to prevent the enrollment of children who were not "legally admitted" to the country by withholding funding and granted permission to school districts to deny enrollment. The court ruled that denying students the right to free, public K-12 education based on citizenship status is a violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

One of the fundamental arguments in *Plyler* is that the denial of an education to students has a much higher societal cost than the cost of educating them. Justice Blackmun on the concurring side stated that, "when a state provides an education to some and denies it to others, it immediately and inevitably creates class distinctions of a type fundamentally inconsistent with the purposes of the Equal Protection Clause," (*Plyler v. Doe*, 1982) referring to the student's denial from the opportunity to achieve. He continued to say that, "When those children are members of an identifiable class, the state has created a separable and identifiable underclass."

Plyler v. Doe is a landmark case that has had lasting effects on the discussion around undocumented youth's access to education. In the years following the *Plyler* decision, many states and local legislation have tried to circumvent the ruling through other ways of denying educational access to unauthorized immigrants. The discussions and rulings around *Plyler* focuses on K-12 education, but the significance of its decision is used in debates over undocumented students' access to higher education (Gonzales, 2011).

California Proposition 187 (1994)

California's Proposition 187 in 1994, also referred to as Save Our State was an example of the ways states attempt to deny schooling to undocumented immigrants. The proposition was drafted by residents in the state who believed jobs and social services were overwhelmed by undocumented people who used them in a time of the state's recession. The measure proposed a mandatory legal status verification for those who sought out schooling and social services such as health care. The Governor of California at the time Pete Wilson vehemently supported the measure during the gubernatorial re-election year. On November 8, 1994, the proposition passed with 59% of the votes (Ballotpedia, 1994) which demonstrated the power of the anti-immigration rhetoric and the overwhelming support that rhetoric can garner.

Although the proposition passed in the polls, the policies proposed in the measure were never enacted as they were deemed unconstitutional in the courts. Scholars attributed the rise of Latino voter registration and the change of California to a more democratic state as a direct result of Proposition 187.

IIRIRA (1996)

Proposition 187 in California had an influence on the nationwide Illegal Immigrant Reform and Responsibility Act passed under the Clinton Administration in 1996 which created a set of stricter regulation and enforcement over undocumented immigration. In particular, section 505 of IIRIRA created restrictions for the state and institutions of higher education to offer benefits to undocumented students unless a US citizen or resident was also given those same benefits.

DREAM Act (2001-present)

The Development Relief Education for Alien Minors Act was a bill in Congress initially proposed in 2001 by Republican Senator Orin Hatch of Utah and Democratic Senator Richard Durban of Illinois. At its core, the bill proposes to provide pathways to legal status to undocumented youth who came into to the United States as minors. Some of the criteria proposed through the DREAM Act for an applicant to become eligible is through their enrollment into higher education, or even at one point, enlistment into US military services. The DREAM Act deliberately focused on a subset of the undocumented population by centering on its youth and shaped the rhetoric around the blamelessness of a population who had no say in the decisions their parents or guardians made about crossing borders without inspection or overstaying their visa. The DREAM Act created a narrative of the hardworking youth who are every bit as American in culture and upbringing as their documented counterparts (Dingeman-Cerda, Munoz-Burciaga, & Martinez, 2015). Their only difference was their lack of documentation.

Since 2001, there has been more than ten iterations of the DREAM Act (American Immigration Council, 2019) with changes on the details or criteria for qualification. However, no version received enough support to be able to pass both the House and the Senate.

AB 540 (2001)

Without a successful passing of a DREAM Act, undocumented youth who were educated in the K-12 public schools through *Plyler's* ruling often hit a wall upon graduation from high school. Critics have lamented that *Plyler's* decision lacks consideration for higher education access (Abrego, 2006). Additionally, funding and affordability of higher education often becomes the largest roadblock for students' pursuit (Garcia & Tierney, 2011). Because

undocumented students are not eligible to apply for Financial Aid through FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, undocumented youth who decide to pursue higher education had to come up with a way to fund their entire undergraduate education on their own. Public institutions of higher education are generally known for being more affordable for students who are residents of the state. In 2020 in California, the tuition costs for in-state residents for community college, the California State University, and the University of California systems were at \$1380, \$5742, and \$14100 respectively (and based on a 30-semester unit per year calculation for institutions that charge tuition by units). For non-California residents however, tuition rates were close to double and up to four times more than in-state rates at \$6150, \$17622, and \$26670 for the respective three systems (Glendale Community College, 2020; The California State University, 2020; University of California Admissions, 2020). Even if they were able to prove residency in the state, undocumented youth in California who wanted to attend a public college or university had to pay the non-resident tuition until the passing of California Assembly Bill 540 in 2001 as a result of their immigration status.

The passing of AB 540 allowed for undocumented college students who meet a set of criteria to pay in-state tuition. The criteria to become eligible for AB 540 included a student's attendance in a California high school for three years or more. AB 540 was written with the restrictions of what was outlined in *Plyler*. Due to its criteria, the bill also allowed many US citizen students to qualify for an in-state tuition waiver as necessitated by the parameters of IIRIRA of 1996.

CA Dream Act SB 130 and 131 (2011)

Albeit it a significant win, AB 540 only provided one part of the relief for undocumented high school graduates pursuing higher education opportunities. The difference between non-

California resident tuition and in-state tuition residents was substantial, but tuition costs for undocumented youth and their families remained very high and unattainable for many when there was no access to financial aid support through FAFSA.

Ten years after the passing of Assembly Bill 540, California Assembly Bills 130 and 131, together known as the California Dream Act was passed in 2011. The CA Dream Act opened up financial access to both non-state funded scholarships and California-specific state aid. AB 130 allows students to apply for private scholarships for funding higher education and AB 131 allows access to state-funded financial aid such as Cal Grant. Students apply for Financial Aid assistance through the California Dream Act application which is a state-specific process that mirrors the information collected by FAFSA.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (2012)

The most significant policy change at the national level affecting undocumented youth is the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA, announced by President Obama through an Executive Order in June 2012.

As a program that came as a result of an Executive Order, DACA adopted many of the same criteria proposed through the DREAM Act which has not successfully passed through Congress. It had a strict set of prerequisites requiring the applicant to have entered the United States before 16, be under age 31 as of June 15, 2012, have a continuous stay in the United States since 2007, and no felony or “significant misdemeanor” charges. Two crucial benefits were made available as a result of the DACA program. The first benefit was deferred action from possible removal or deportation for a two-year and renewable period. It was clear in its policies to say that, “[d]eferred action does not provide lawful status.” (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2016). The second benefit was the opportunity to obtain a social security

number and gain work authorization. Undocumented youth who previously had no access to formal work opportunities were now able to do so through a temporary safety net of DACA.

With DACA, recipients in select states also benefited from the ability to apply for a driver's license. Beyond that, DACA also provided the opportunity for recipients to go abroad for humanitarian, educational, or career related reasons and return to the United States upon the end of the trip through an approval called Advance Parole.

These benefits which collectively gave undocumented youth a lot more normalcy and equitable access (Crouse, 2017) were put into jeopardy when President Trump announced the rescission of DACA in September 2017. Several injunctions against the decision have been put into place through lawsuits raised by certain states to halt the decision. In June 2020, the US Supreme Court ruled that the method President Trump used to end DACA was illegal. With months after the ruling, still no new DACA applications are being considered by USCIS and renewals from previous DACA recipients may likely have stricter regulations.

Undocumented Students in Higher Education

Research on undocumented students' pursuit of higher education was sparse until the 2000's. Changing immigration policies as well as legislation affecting undocumented students shaped the experiences and educational pursuits of many. Those who grew up in the post-*Plyler* era contributed greatly to the research available and to the discourse of undocumented students in education.

More research on undocumented students' access to higher education has been published in the last two decades. The published research has mainly focused on two broad categories of barriers that have prevented undocumented students in succeeding in higher education and the supports that have been built for them and by them to decrease the barriers. Peter Bjorkland's

(2016) examination of literature available on undocumented students in higher education categorizes the areas of focus on the scholarship produced in the last two decades.

The majority of the research on the topic looks at the barriers that existed for the DREAMers (which many undocumented youth were referred to as a result of the proposed DREAM Act) due to legislation, rhetoric, political climate and consequently the supports that were created as a form of resistance by allies, and colleges and universities, and most importantly, the undocumented community and DREAMers themselves (Person, Gutierrez Keeton, Medina, Gonzalez, & Minero, 2017; Burkhardt, et al., 2012)

Barriers

Financial

The lack of financial resources is one of the biggest impediments to accessing higher education for undocumented students. Through the *Plyler* decision, undocumented youth were able to access a free public K-12 education, but the 98,000 (Zong & Batalova, 2019) of undocumented high school graduates yearly come to a crossroad when accessing college. At the moment of finishing high school, undocumented students are faced with the high cost of attendance for obtaining a college education without the same support that US citizen or legal permanent resident students with financial need can have through accessing Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

At the time of writing, only 19 states offer tuition equity for undocumented students (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2019). Fewer states offer forms of financial aid assistance. Even though California has made more legislative progress with considering select undocumented students for tuition equity in public higher education institutions and made aid available, it has still been a tremendous barrier for many undocumented students to afford higher

education because most youth were not able to secure formal jobs to earn income. The situation improved when DACA was implemented and those who fit the eligibility requirements were able to have meaningful financial advancement through their ability to obtain a job. However, all of these expansions have been recent and are subject to the ebb and flow of changes in immigration policy. Trump's announcement of the rescission on DACA has put the program on hold for any new applicants. This means high school undocumented students coming of age now are yet again in the pre-DACA phase before 2012 where education may be more affordable, but students still have limited ways of financing it through work. A study led by UCLA professor Robert Teranishi found that 61% of undocumented students surveyed self-reported a family income of 30k or less (Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco, & Suarez-Orozco, 2015).

The lack of uniformity across states combined with under-resourced K-12 systems that tend to serve first-generation, low income, immigrant students, as well as changing immigration policies severely limited undocumented students' access to higher education upon completing high school.

Academic Preparation

Scholars and researchers have pointed out the limitations of the 1982 *Plyler v. Doe* Supreme Court decision. Researchers have found that while *Plyler* has provided opportunities for students to pursue K-12 public education, it has fallen short of the promises of an equitable education. Scholars such as Clark-Ibanez (2015) argue that undocumented students are deprioritized in often, large, under-resourced public school systems that do not allow for students to engage civically and become a member of society or ability to view themselves as equal participants.

Belonging

Other scholars have argued that undocumented youth live in a constant state of liminality (Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco, & Suarez-Orozco, 2015). Access to the American K-12 education system has integrated students into American culture, values, and customs, but youth straddle two worlds of belonging and not belonging. It is not uncommon for undocumented youth to talk about a moment of consciousness (Gonzales, 2011) in realization of their identity especially when they encounter social and civil privileges or duties that are tied to coming of age, such as obtaining a driver's license or registering to vote. Studies have raised the extreme psychological impacts that living in the shadows can have for undocumented people (Ellis & Chen, 2013). The threat of deportation is never far and it is often amplified in threatening political climates.

Supports

To confront these financial, academic and belonging barriers, undocumented communities and their allies have coalesced to build shared networks of support. The activism and advocacy that has come from the undocumented immigrant community has led to many successes in legislation, including DACA, tuition equity bills and the continued fight towards pathways to citizenship.

Walter Nicholls (2013) credits the advancements in access and rights of the undocumented community to the efforts advocates, especially youth, have made in the prior decade. Through the community organizing, large nationwide organizations such as United We Dream and Immigrants Rising (formerly Educators for Fair Consideration) have risen up as organizing forces and central hubs in delivering information, trainings and updates on the many changes that reflect the ebb and flow in discussions and policies around undocumented immigration. At the core of these communities and organizations are the undocumented youth

who attended schools as a result of *Plyer*. Though they are more included through legislation and programming, undocumented youth are experiencing what Negron-Gonzalez (2017) describes as constrained inclusion, where contradiction exists when there is expansion of legislation that ostensibly promotes and provides equity, but there is also the restriction of reality where opportunities are limited by immigration status.

These forms of activism as outlined by Nicholls (2013) also include a reframing of the narrative around undocumented immigration and immigration in general. Activists were conscious about making spaces more inclusive of the range of statuses that touch the undocumented experience. Teranishi's (2015) study had 61% of participants come from mixed-status families where some members of the household are undocumented while others may have citizenship status. Many legislations and policy often emphasized the deservingness of a high-achieving young person who should not be blamed for the decisions of their parents, but undocumented activists on many occasions reframed the narrative so that it does not put a dividing line across mixed status families and experiences when immigration policy and deportation threats impact many more than the individual themselves.

Through more advocacy and light shed on the undocumented youth community, colleges and universities were also confronted with serving the needs of a so-called invisible population. For example, the University of California at Berkeley was the first institution in the United States to open an Undocumented Student Program office in 2011 to address the legal, financial, mental counseling that is unique and missing for the undocumented college student population. Many other institutions with a significant undocumented student population have followed the UC Berkeley example as outlined by So & Sanchez (2015). Universities and organizations alike across the nation adopted "undocu-ally" trainings for educators in the K-16 system so that they

could more effectively work with undocumented students who have very unique financial, academic, mental health and immigration concerns and needs. Allen-Handy and Farinde-Wu (2018) noted that networks built by allies, family members, educators can have a significant impact for the growth of undocumented students because educators challenge undocumented students to apply to college and work hard have made lasting impacts on undocumented students' motivation towards academic achievement.

The financial, academic preparation and belonging are main barriers for undocumented students' access to higher education. However, the youth and supporting ally community has made great strides in the last two decades to raise visibility on a seemingly invisible population and brought their existence and needs to the forefront of American immigration debates that endures today.

Undocumented Students in Study Abroad

Understanding the historical context of undocumented youth's access to education and the barriers and supports built in access to higher education is key to the further examination of undocumented students in the realm of international education. Between the brief five-year period of 2012 and 2017, undocumented students were able to study abroad if they qualified for DACA and received Advance Parole approval from USCIS which allows for non-citizens to travel for educational, humanitarian and career purposes and return to the United States upon the conclusion of travel.

In this period, departments working with international education on American college and university campuses found themselves working with a population of students not previously served because the opportunity and the pathway to travel for those in the population did not exist before. International education organizations and bodies such as NAFSA (the Association of

International Educators) and the Forum on Education Abroad became spaces where international educators came to share ideas of support for this “new” population of underrepresented group in study abroad.

To date, there are three articles published on the topic of undocumented students in study abroad. The research of all three studies were conducted prior to the announcement to rescind DACA in September of 2017, and all three were published after the announcement. Albrecht, Palacios, and Siefken’s (2018) article on Undocumented Students and Access to Education Abroad gives an overview of this new phenomenon of undocumented students engaging in study abroad opportunities as a way to share information to higher education administrators and international education professional alike. It focuses on the value and contributions of undocumented students as well as the challenges they face on college campuses. The article raises an important point that there is no federal-level restriction on undocumented students from attending higher education, but that it is often the financial limitations and under-resourced K-12 educations that many undocumented students receive that create a barrier towards that opportunity.

Albrecht et al., through a review of legal history and review of institutional practices, suggest that support for undocumented students to engage in international education opportunities such as study abroad can be bolstered in five areas of: reduction in institution barriers, deliberate and thoughtful program planning, availability of information regarding federal immigration policies and country-specific information, education and information around costs for an international education experience and the offering of reentry counseling. The researchers touched on institutions of higher education as having an important role in either offering support or creating barriers for undocumented students in study abroad. The

organizational structure of an institution can be a barrier when student services offices such as financial aid, registration and academic advising work in silos and do not have centralized systems and communication. In instances of seeking financial advising, students need to have support in understanding the costs of study abroad and where financial assistance may be possible. Educators serving undocumented students in study abroad must also be up-to-date on fluctuating federal immigration policies and ready to supply country-specific information. This includes advising on academically appropriate programs that could increase the likelihood a student's ability to be granted Advance Parole as an educational reason. Lastly, there is a great need to offer re-entry counseling for students to debrief their academic and international experience.

These examples of crucial barriers and supports are the same ones experienced by students in Butler, Madden, and Smith's (2018) study of undocumented students from a California public research university who studied abroad between the years of 2012 to 2017. Through a phenomenological lens and data collected through semi-structured interviews with eight undocumented students who have gone abroad as well as the examination of legal and advising support these students received, the study illuminated the essential role an institution's commitment to serve this community of students. The commitment comes from providing holistic and integrated services that speaks to the many areas of concerns, such as legal, financial, logistical, academic concerns which many undocumented students carry with them as they consider an international education. While some needs are similar to other underserved populations of students, there are also select unique aspects that create greater concern and anxiety for undocumented students to consider study abroad. The last article from the same researchers (Madden, Butler, & Smith, 2020) dives into the eight undocumented students'

experience as they navigate challenging and contradicting policies at the local, state and national levels.

These three articles shed light on the recent and now suspended phenomenon of institutions of higher education across the country learning and working to support undocumented students who decide or wish to study abroad. These articles represent many of the challenges that are unique to undocumented students that are involved as they face financial, academic, psychological and legal obstacles along the way.

The examination of legal context, policies, and histories that shape undocumented students' access to education and their journeys in higher education and more specifically, unique academic opportunities such as study abroad paves the road for more research that can happen in this area when this halted opportunity changes again with the tides of immigration policy. With DACA in jeopardy and with Advance Paroles permissions to undocumented students for international education purposes remaining uncertain, this study will provide a unique perspective of undocumented students' reflections of a foregone opportunity. By using a Critical Policy Analysis lens, the study also sheds light on the complex connections that exist between education policies and deeply ingrained structural and societal inequities.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Restatement of Purpose

In this study, critical policy analysis is used as a methodological approach to explore how undocumented students' undergraduate education and future planning are affected by the access to international education opportunities in the context of constantly changing and shifting national policies, legislation, and discourse. Critical policy analysis stresses the historical policy context of the identified problem and examines which parties benefit or are disadvantaged through the established policy. Critical policy analysis also looks at the social stratification created through policies and explores how minoritized groups can fight against those parameters.

This research employed a qualitative, semi-structured interview approach to explore personal narratives of eleven students and their varying levels of engagement with study abroad opportunities during their undergraduate years. Within the eleven narratives, three subgroups of undocumented students with varying levels of success through their engagement with study abroad were explored. The first subgroup involved students who applied to and by obtaining Advance Parole, successfully participated on a study abroad program. The second subgroup explored the experiences of students who have applied to a study abroad program, but for varying reasons, were either not able to go or decided not to go abroad. The third subgroup examined those who never accessed the opportunity to study abroad.

Research Design

Setting

The study was conducted at a four-year public research institution in California, hereafter referred to as “the University” or “research site.” According to the National Center for

Education Statistics, approximately 3.3 million students in the United States graduate from high school yearly (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). Of the high school graduating population, 98,000 these students are undocumented. Forty percent of the undocumented graduating high school seniors call California home (Undocumented Student Program, UC Berkeley, 2016). With 39,000 undocumented youths graduating from high schools in California each year, the state has had to be strategic about ways to accommodate large groups of youths into higher education or positions in the workforce. The public higher education systems in the state have all contributed to that effort.

This research site is unique because it was among the early institutions of higher education in the United States to establish an office dedicated to supporting undocumented students. The Undocumented Student Support Services Office at the University is a one-stop location that offers holistic advising as a response to the various facets of challenges that undocumented students face. The program consolidates information from other students support services such as financial aid, legal services, academic support, and mental health counseling and creates a physical space on campus where undocumented students could get information in one centralized and inclusive environment.

Another attribute that makes the University a notable location for exploring undocumented students' educational experience and access to study abroad is the availability and accessibility to financial aid undocumented students have. Through the California DREAM Act of 2011, state funding such as Cal Grants and private University scholarships were expanded to include undocumented students and at the University, students can apply their CA DREAM Act funding towards study abroad. While cost (Vernon, Moos, & Loncarich, 2017) and academic progress are often cited as some of the top barriers in college students' ability to study abroad,

students at the University are able to use their financial aid package towards study abroad programs and can gain academic credit towards graduation requirements.

Efforts made by dedicated staff in the relevant offices at the research site and the great lengths taken by the University to equalize access in various support areas make it a unique institution for the study.

Population and Sample

Participants for this study needed to be undocumented students who meet the unique criteria of having pursued all or a part of their undergraduate degree during the years of 2012 to the time of the study in 2018 at the University. These years mirror the inception of the DACA program which widened opportunities, but it also includes the increasing amount of fear and recalibration of daily life activities after the 2016 presidential election. Lastly, this period of five and a half years also includes September 2017 when President Trump announced the rescission of the DACA, placing the status of many undocumented youth in limbo, and placing larger concerns of survival and deportation at the forefront of many peoples' lives. These years encompassed the large shifts in policies that at one point, opened up many benefits including the opportunity to study abroad for undocumented youth to another pivoting point when the rescission was announced, which overturned the previously short-lived and accessible privileges.

In addition to the years in which they were undergraduates at the University, the students recruited to participate in the study must also have DACA status since having valid DACA status is one of the basic requirements for applying for Advance Parole, a permission needed to return to the United States after studying abroad. Since the inception of the DACA program, DACA statuses were issued on a two-year renewable basis. In 2015, there was a brief period where some

DACA renewals may have been granted for a 3-year period. Interviewing all students who have DACA eligibility made for a more equal comparison since non-DACA eligible students are prevented by their lack of DACA status from applying to Advance Parole and not simply by their lack of desire towards the endeavor to study abroad.

In order for an undocumented person to be eligible for the Deferred Action of Childhood Arrival status, youth must meet a series of criteria outlined by the United States Department of Homeland Security and the subunit of USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services). Those applying for DACA must have come to the US before the age of 16, have continuously resided in the United States since June 15, 2007 up until their application for DACA, must be under the age of 31 (as of June 15, 2012, the announcement of DACA), and must not have had a lawful immigration status prior to June 15, 2012. The applicant must also be enrolled in school, have graduated from high school or obtained a GED or be an honorably discharged veteran from the US Army or Coast Guard. Lastly, the applicant for DACA must not have been convicted of a felony, serious misdemeanor or be considered a threat to national security or public safety (USCIS, 2013). Thus, these attributes were true of all participants in the study.

Recruitment of Participants

The sampling methods for the initial phase of recruitment of participants in this study is a non-random purposive (Lewis-Beck, Bryman, & Liao, 2004) sampling strategy followed by snowball sampling. The undocumented student population is oftentimes described or perceived as an invisible population in the campus setting and the experiences lived are often described as “in the shadows.” Self-disclosure of undocumented status is an intimate and private experience for each person and happens at different stages. An undocumented student’s disclosure about

their immigration status may be due to an administrative need (e.g. filing for the California DREAM Act application) or personal when they need to discuss their experiences of living with an undocumented status with another person. Because of the aforementioned reasons, a purposive sampling method can ensure all participants fulfill all the needed criteria. The purposive outreach to specific students fitting within a population was then followed by a snowball sampling method where the initial interviewees were asked to refer other relevant students in their personal connections to the research. The snowball sampling technique was employed so that existing participants can tap into their networks and connections to refer additional participants for the study (Lewis-Beck, Bryman, & Liao, 2004).

Through the researcher's own connections within the field of international education, seven students were recruited to participate through the initial non-random purposive and snowball sample method. Most of the initial participants belonged to the first and second subgroups of the study- those who successfully studied abroad and/or applied but did not go. To connect to the third subset of students in the study of those who did not consider study abroad, the researcher also solicited the help of the University's Undocumented Student Support Services Office to reach out to participants. The remaining four participants were volunteers recruited through further referrals from that office.

Because living with an undocumented status still poses risks to those involved especially at the time of research when the US presidential administration has threatened to have ICE (Immigration and Citizenship Enforcement) raids on college campuses. Confidentiality was balanced with interviewees' rights and wishes to have their words and stories accurately portrayed in the project. When participants agree to be involved, they were provided with a consent form that outlined the goals of the interview and how the information they provide will

be kept confidential. Interviewees were told that the conversation will be voice recorded and that they have a right to request that the conversation be paused or stopped at any point in the process. The interview information gathered during the session was immediately assigned a pseudonym so that all recordings, transcripts and accompanying information will not contain information that was identifiable and connectable to an individual, unless that was the wish of the individual. The recordings of the interviews were destroyed within a 6-month period. The data collected from the interview recordings were transcribed, coded and analyzed as they related to the research questions posed.

Participants

Eleven DACA-eligible undocumented students were interviewed between March and May of 2018. Each interview ranged between 45 to 100 minutes. The participants consisted of six female and five male undocumented immigrants who were undergraduates at the University at one point during the years between 2012 and 2017 when Advance Parole were considered for DACA students.

The participants' ages ranged from 20-27 at the time of the interview. Their countries of origin represented four different countries of Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, and South Korea. All but one participant entered the United States with other family members. The last student who did not enter the US with family came into the country as an unaccompanied minor to reunite with family members already living in the United States.

Table 1: Participant Profiles

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Country of Origin	Study's Subgroup	Transfer/Four Year	Class Level
Alberto	M	25	Guatemala	A	Transfer	Graduated
Allen	M	21	Mexico	A	Transfer	Junior
Gabriela	F	23	Guatemala	A (twice)	Transfer	Graduated
Diana	F	20	Mexico	A, B*	Four-Year	Junior
Connie	F	22	Mexico	A, B*	Four-Year	Junior
Pedro	M	21	Mexico	A, B*	Four-Year	Junior
Monica	F	23	Peru	B	Transfer	Graduated
Tristan	M	21	Mexico	B	Four-Year	Junior
Tessa	F	21	Mexico	B	Four-Year	Junior
Yvette	F	23	South Korea	B	Four-Year	Senior
Fede	M	27	Mexico	C	Four-Year	Graduated

Note. **Subgroup A:** Participants who successfully studied abroad

Subgroup A, B*: Participants who successfully studied abroad once, planned on study abroad again, but was not successful due to halt on Advance Parole

Subgroup B: Participants who successfully studied abroad

Subgroup C: Participants who did not consider study abroad in undergraduate years

One student, the only one who belonged to the third subgroup of not having considered study abroad at all, finished his undergraduate education right at the initial period of DACA and Advance Parole in 2012. Two students enrolled and completed their undergraduate degree at the University during a period when DACA benefits were considered more reliable during Obama's presidency. The remaining eight students were still enrolled undergraduates when DACA was

put into jeopardy in September 2017 and experienced heightened uncertainties as well as the immediate impact on certain educational opportunities such as study abroad.

While the goal of the study was to examine three different subgroups of undocumented students who successfully studied abroad, attempted to study abroad but were not successful, and those who did not consider study abroad, the realities for the participants were much more fluid and many of their stories and experiences flowed seamlessly between categories, marked as Subgroups A, B, and C in the Participants Profiles table. Of the six participants who successfully studied abroad, three of them had attempted to study abroad again at a later term but was unsuccessful largely due to the changes in policy and political climate during their time as an undergraduate. One student, Fede, who is a graduate student at the University at the time of interview completed his undergraduate degree at the end of 2012, just six short months after the announcement of DACA. Although he is in the category of someone who did not consider study abroad in his undergraduate years, Fede was eventually able to study abroad twice as a graduate student during the years Advance Parole was possible.

Instrumentation

The interviews for the eleven participants consisted of eight to ten questions that mapped out the students' (and their families') immigration experiences and its connection to the students' journey towards higher education at the University. The interview then delved into the students' undergraduate education experiences in general and then narrowed down to explore their decision on if, how and why they decided to pursue a study abroad program. Lastly, students are asked at the end what changes in access to study abroad they would like to see for undocumented students and what those changes would look like.

An interview protocol was developed by the researcher to identify the commonalities and the patterns of the experiences undocumented students had with access to study abroad. The interview questions included:

- 1.) Could you tell me about you and your family's journey to the United States?
- 2.) How would you describe your undergraduate education? What have been the highlights or lowlights?
- 3.) Do you feel that being an undocumented student impacted your undergraduate education?
Are there things you feel like you did not have access to or missed out on in your undergraduate education because of your undocumented status?
- 4.) Did you study abroad?
 - If yes: Could you describe that experience? What were some challenges throughout the process? What were supports available along the way?
- 5.) What were the biggest factors that led to the decision? If not already mentioned: How did your status impact your decision, if at all?
- 6.) What impact has that decision had on the rest of your undergraduate education or opportunities beyond graduation?
- 7.) If you think about another undocumented person you know who has/hasn't studied abroad (opposite of interviewee experience), how do you think your paths differ?
- 8.) Are there changes you would want to see in access to international education opportunities for undocumented students? If so, what would those changes look like?
- 9.) What do you feel needs to happen in order for those changes to be realized?

Researcher's Background

The researcher's positionality as a naturalized US citizen working in the field of international education holds various levels of privileges. The most essential in the context of this study is the privilege of not living in the constant fear or concern of deportation which creates an everyday reality that is different from the lives of the participants. Even though being viewed as a foreigner or immigrant can lead to similar othering treatment from society at large, the researcher cannot claim to have the same understanding, consciousness, and awareness of the stress and marginality undocumented people face on a daily basis. Additionally, as a study abroad professional aware of regulations, deadlines, and funding available, this knowledge in the

field provides for a different perspective around the study abroad timing and often lengthy process. International educators work with groups of students in a cyclical way over the years. However, for many students especially for those with DACA undocumented status, there may only be a very slim window of opportunity in which study abroad could be successful. This position allows for the researcher to have a broader perspective on the processes and policies within study abroad that can be challenging for undocumented students which can lead to advocacy for change for the group, but it can also create blind spots when considering individuals and their experiences.

Human Subjects Approval

The rights and privacy of the participants of the study is of great importance. This study was approved by the University of San Francisco Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS). The protocol can be found in the Appendix.

Participants were offered a copy of the consent form for review and signature at the beginning of the in-person interviews and via email prior to the phone interviews. The consent form provided to participants detailed the purpose, goals, and location of the study. Additionally, potential risks and discomforts of involvement were also shared with participants. Participants were notified that they have the option to bypass any questions or withdraw from participation at any point in time.

Data Collection Procedures

Upon receiving the University of San Francisco's Institutional Review Board approval, participants were contacted through personal contacts the researcher has built as a professional staff member in the field of international education. Individual interview appointments were then set up at a small, private conference room at the University or over the telephone. Nine of the

eleven interviews were conducted in person. Two interviews were conducted over the phone because the participant had since graduated from the University or had an off-campus obligation. Given the sensitive nature of the topics discussed, it was essential that the location or method agreed upon was considered a safe space for the interviewee. Each interview took between 45 to 100 minutes. At the end of the interview, participants were asked to refer others who fit the criteria to the study through the snowball sampling method. They were also reminded of the referral through a thank you email sent within 24 to 48 hours of the interview.

Data Analysis

Data collected from the interviews were coded and analyzed. After each interview concluded, the researcher replayed and transcribed each of the eleven recordings. The transcribed recordings were analyzed through open and axial coding (Allen, 2017). Each of the interview transcripts were read through four times line-by-line to identify commonly used words and themes to describe their experiences on or access to study abroad. These themes and codes included participants' sentiment of feeling trapped, living in hierarchy, living under limitations of immigration policy, traveling abroad as a sole opportunity, having a sense of agency and having personal, academic and professional growth impacted. The commonly mentioned words, sentiments, or ideas were recorded in a spreadsheet to identify larger categories. The results identified in the next chapter represents the synthesis of these categories when interpreted through the use of Critical Policy Analysis as a methodological approach.

CHAPTER IV

Results

This chapter represents the findings of the qualitative research conducted through semi-structured interviews with eleven undocumented undergraduates at the University. Using a critical policy analysis methodological approach, the goal of this study was to understand the challenges undocumented college students face upon pursuing study abroad within the political context of anti-immigration policies and rhetoric of the time. The study examines the decision-making process for study abroad under a specific time period and how that access (or lack thereof) affects undocumented college students' undergraduate career and subsequently, their personal, educational and professional growth. Consistent with the methodology of critical policy analysis, the results were analyzed in the historical context of policy development, differences between policy rhetoric and realities, how select groups are disadvantaged through the policy and how policy can create social stratification.

The following sections address three main findings from the study. The first is that policies and political context can be both tools of empowerment and disempowerment for undocumented college students in their educational pursuits, particularly with study abroad. Policies and political context of the time either give students agency or contribute to their sense of entrapment in relation to what opportunities in college would be open or closed to students. Undocumented students fall within a spectrum of liminality (Turner, 1969) as immigration policies ebb and flow to dramatically impact their educational opportunities and everyday realities.

The second finding is that the access to study abroad leads undocumented students to an interrogation of power and privileges that exists at the juncture of higher education and immigration policies. At the moment of deciding whether to study abroad, participants are left to question the inequalities of education and educational opportunities as they simultaneously belong to both a privileged group and a disadvantaged group. Undocumented college students are disadvantaged when compared to their fellow documented students because there are many opportunities such as scholarships or internships they are shut out from because of citizenship requirements in the eligibility criteria. At the same time, because of their DACA eligibility and the benefits that the status provides, participants are conscious of and actively question the privileges they hold over other undocumented, non-DACA eligible, youth. The inequities created through immigration policies, governmental programs, and educational opportunities further stratify the undocumented community where it sorts people in various categories around deservingness. For these reasons, participants challenge the hierarchy and question the power and privileges that come with having DACA status, including the accompanying and fleeting opportunity to study abroad through Advance Parole.

The third finding centers on how, DACA students in accessing study abroad, create their own form of existence and resistance due to the contradiction between the policy rhetoric and practiced realities at the individual, community, state, and federal levels. The variety of information, practices, and systems of support offered through familial, peer-to-peer, educational, and legal advice lead students to make decisions on their own terms about their educational opportunities, career prospects, and futures amidst the differences of opinion, information and policy changes. At times, undocumented students make decisions related to their academic career in line with the expanding or restrictive nature of immigration and educational

policies. Other times, they make those decisions despite the limitations of policy. These decisions are made within the challenging bureaucracies they face in the process and the need for many bureaucracy and timing to work in perfect alignment before study abroad can be possible. With these actions and decisions, undocumented students create their own form of resistance towards the many contradictions that they are exposed to between policy rhetoric and practiced realities.

Policies and Political Context as Empowerment and Disempowerment

The political context in which an undocumented student lives under during their undergraduate education highly impacts their daily life and dictates educational decisions and opportunities available. The laws, policies, programs and the consequent context they create have the potential to empower or disempower for undocumented college students. Policies can mean the expansion of opportunities and access, such as access to financial support through financial aid or financial independence when one can obtain official work through work permits. They can mean the opportunity to study abroad with an approval to reenter the United States upon the completion of the program. Certain legislations, programs, and events such as the CA Dream Act (Assembly Bills 130 and 131) in 2011 and DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) in 2012 were important lifelines in empowering students to be able to afford college and survive financially. The opportunity to apply for Advance Parole under the DACA status also opened up an avenue for undocumented youth with DACA status to travel abroad for educational, career and humanitarian purposes.

On the contrary, policies and the political climate can also mean a constriction of opportunities and create a hostile environment for undocumented students on campus. There are moments throughout the US presidential campaign leading up to the election in 2016 that

dramatically shaped participants' daily experiences at the University. Tied to undocumented college students' educational access and opportunities, DACA students were no longer able to study abroad when USCIS (United State Citizenship and Immigration Services) stopped considering Advance Paroles applications after Trump's announcement to rescind DACA in September 2017.

In the last decades, key policies, programs and legislation related to undocumented peoples' access to education were passed. Participants in this study recount how these policies have changed their educational trajectory, how it has impacted their decisions around study abroad, and their futures beyond their undergraduate career. All eleven participants in the study referenced a specific policy, program or political context that impacted their road to the University and their life within the University as they pursued their undergraduate education.

Policy as Empowerment in Undergraduate Education and Study Abroad

The positive references participants made about policy or programs were largely focused on two aspects of access to financial support and educational opportunities. The ability to have financial freedom or participate in study abroad gave students a sense of agency and freedom.

Financial aid policies that empower

All eleven participants referenced the importance of receiving financial support. The California Dream Act, which provides financial aid access to undocumented students was influential on whether an undocumented youth would pursue higher education altogether. Fede, the oldest of the participants, entered the university before the passing of CA Dream Act and other key legislation. Fede recounted how difficult it was to survive as a college student on a day-to-day basis as he struggled with balancing academics, a different culture, finances, and

basic needs. He had to work several informal jobs to get paid. He relied on the graces of fellow students who allowed him to sleep in their living rooms. Fede said,

Because I had to commute, I had to make a decision every day if I was either going to have a meal or take a train ride home. And if I ate that day and didn't take a train ride home, then I would have to crash on a friend's couch or find somewhere else to sleep.

Fede recalled that after the CA Dream Act passed, he was able to receive financial aid for the last two terms of his undergraduate education. He referred to CA Dream Act as "an amazing lifeline which helped a ton."

Other larger scale programs such as DACA have an even more significant impact because it allows for undocumented youth to obtain a work permit, which helps lessen the gap of unmet need of financial aid. For someone like Fede who was already attending the University, he saw the impacts of DACA and CA Dream Act immediately. Through DACA,

I got my work authorization card and I just felt like a whole new world of opportunities opened up for me. Because with that, that meant getting a social security number, starting to develop my credit, starting to save for retirement, getting a driver's license. It really felt like the world was my oyster.

Monica recalled her older cousin's pressure to finance her entire education without the help of financial aid nor the ability to work legally because she had attended school before the passing of the California DREAM Act. Alberto's older brother also applied for college prior to the passing of the California Dream Act. For Monica and Alberto who started college after the passing of the CA Dream Act in 2011, they saw a big difference in the attainability of higher education. The differences were so drastic that Alberto recounted his own journey while comparing it with his older brother's with a significant amount of guilt. Speaking about his recent graduation from the University, Alberto said,

I had a lot of survivor's guilt...[M]y brother, he got into this University...his dream school. And then right before coming here, he realized that he wasn't going to be able to afford it.

And so that was tough because that was his dream. And um, I still get emotional because to me, it's not fair that I got to graduate and he didn't.

The access to financial support is closely tied to student's consideration of other educational opportunities such as study abroad. Those six participants with DACA status who went abroad said they would not have been able to do so if there was no financial aid support.

Immigration policies that empower

When DACA was introduced in 2012, it opened up a never before seen opportunity for undocumented students to study abroad. Through their DACA status, students were able to apply for Advance Parole for study abroad which gave them the opportunity to go abroad and return to the United States at the end of the program.

For the six participants who were able to go abroad due to the new avenue, they spoke of empowerment, freedom and, agency gained through the personal growth they were able to experience during and after their time abroad. Participants described their experiences to be personally and culturally empowering in that it gave them agency, new perspective and a space and time to heal from traumas of being undocumented and trapped in the United States.

After returning home from study abroad, Alberto described his experience as something that has given him freedom. The freedom came from the idea that he now has tools and resources to navigate any other setting.

[T]he whole experience abroad was life-changing. I felt like I was gaining freedom. I was, in a way, leaving the golden cage that I'm in. It felt like I gained agency and studying abroad showed me that there's another world- that there's more out there than just my undocumented identity here in the United States.

The realization that he could survive and be resilient in other contexts was a relief from feeling constantly trapped as an undocumented person with limited opportunities in the United States.

The three students, Allen, Alberto and Pedro said that by going abroad, their worlds became

larger and their perspectives clearer on what was important. Upon returning from a summer studying in Mexico, Pedro had gained a better perspective about what matters most to him. His life was no longer simply about achieving a high GPA or doing all the same things his peers were doing. Pedro said that after returning from study abroad, he focused more time on family and the causes he cares about.

Five of the six students who went abroad chose destinations that had cultural or academic significance to them. With the many limitations he experienced as an undocumented person in the US, Pedro expected to have a smoother transitioning to Mexico, his country of origin and study abroad destination than it turned out to be. He noted surprisingly that going to Mexico was a culture shock for him and said he felt more like an outcast.

As an immigrant who grew up in the US, I had completely different values, completely different perceptions of everything. So, it was shocking and hard to accept that realization and feel like, oh, what I thought would have been closer to home is further than your previous home.

Nevertheless, going abroad to a place that had significant cultural and academic connections were empowering for the five students.

The clearer perspectives on undocumented students' sense of selves contributed to their personal growth. Allen recounted the stories of acquaintances he made while studying abroad in France and he was surprised by how genuinely curious people were about Mexico, his country of origin. He thought, "Wow, there's another perception about my culture. It made me feel proud and happy to be what I am." It was empowering for him to see and hear positive perceptions of him that were different from the harmful rhetoric and images painted about Mexicans in the United States.

The study abroad experience was perhaps the most personally significant for Gabriela, the student who went abroad for the second time and had to come back when news surfaced that

an announcement of the rescission of DACA would happen in September of 2017. Gabriela was part of the first wave of unaccompanied minors who came to the United States towards the late 2000s. Originally from Guatemala, she traveled through Mexico as an undocumented person before she reached the United States. She chose to return to Mexico to improve on her academic Spanish and do research specifically on the topic of Central American migrants in Mexico. It was a very personal journey that she described as healing from the trauma because going back to Mexico and exploring those topics dug back into her own painful experiences. “Me being one of them [Central American migrant] that did it [migrate] and knowing all the things that go on there [in Mexico], so I wanted to just expose stuff. So, for me it was also healing to be able to be there.” The students who were able to go abroad reflected on their own experiences in awe that they were able to study abroad during such a unique and small time frame which expanded educational opportunities temporarily. Alberto sums it up succinctly in saying, “my presence there [abroad] may not have been possible a couple years ago.” These various ways made study abroad an even more meaningful experience for undocumented students and added to their personal growth, empowerment, and agency.

Having financial aid and the ability to study abroad are core examples of how policy and program can be empowering for undocumented students in their choices for educational opportunities. These decisions have direct impacts on their future plans.

Policy as Disempowerment in Undergraduate Education and Study Abroad

The expansion of inclusive policies can have a positive effect on students’ educational decisions. However, constrictions of policies through administration changes and legislation limitations can create an unwelcoming political and campus climate for undocumented students across the nation. Participants point out how policy has limited them significantly both as people

and as college students. Without a choice, their immigration status is forced on center stage which overtakes their identity as college students or young adults and works to disempower them.

When referencing specific moments in time that reflect the policies, political climate in a negative context, participants mainly focused on the US presidential elections of 2016 and the now closed opportunity to study abroad. Both of these incidents quickly closed many opportunities for them not only as undergraduates, but also with career planning upon completing their degrees. One unifying factor for all participants was how policies can disempower them and how they can feel trapped, regardless of whether they were able to study abroad.

Political Climate

All eleven participants made a reference to the US presidential campaign and elections in 2016. Many participants of the study recalled their feelings of the time leading up to and during November 2016 US presidential elections and the direct impact that it had on them.

The US presidential campaign and election results in 2016 also shaped the political context of what was possible for students as the fate of DACA and other immigration policies became the focus in political discourse around the country. The political context also sets the stage for the campus climate that can be conducive or abrasive towards students' personal growth. These policy decisions at the state and national levels have a direct impact on the day-to-day experiences and educational decisions of an undocumented student, which is seen through students' decisions to pursue or not pursue study abroad. The political context trickles down to dictate what education opportunities are generally possible in their undergraduate years and also what is specifically unique to access to study abroad.

Two students, Allen and Pedro, talked about the makeshift wall that conservative student groups on campus built in the prominent student quad area. Connie talked about the rumors of ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) officers on campus. These incidents collectively create a hostile environment for students and impact their daily lives as well as their ability to focus on their roles as students when their immigration status takes center stage. These warnings and disruptions alter their everyday lives. Perhaps the most significant and direct impact of the US presidential election results is the closing of opportunities. The rescission of DACA was announced in September 2017. Along with that came the halting of considerations for Advance Parole applications for students who wish to study abroad.

Immigration Policies and misaligned timing

Even if undocumented students had the will to study abroad, things did not always work in their favor. A large part of their decision was dictated by the climate and the resulting policies on immigration. All students recalled the results of the 2016 US Presidential elections as the defining moment they knew a change was happening to their identity as undocumented people. The diminishing opportunity about their ability to study abroad however, was realized later as more fear and policies set in gradually over time.

Yvette had been planning to study abroad since entering the University as a freshman. As a Japanese and Economics double major, she applied during her third year to study abroad in Japan in spring 2017. She had been diligently working towards all pre-departure requirements for the program throughout spring, summer and fall of 2016, researching Advance Parole, and had been proactively contacting the Japanese consulate, asking questions about what extra documents she may need to obtain a student visa. November 2016 marked a sea change for her.

The moment I realized maybe I can't do it was when I watched the elections...I saw the results and that's when I started emailing [Undocumented Student Support Office] to see

what would they recommend. I think it was two to three weeks' time from the election decision for me to continue searching if it was possible and if it was recommended. The immigration attorney recommended that maybe it isn't the right time right now.

Monica came into the University as a transfer student while Obama was still president. As a transfer student, she only had two years at the University and focused on getting her major and graduation requirements done although she seriously planned to study abroad towards the end of her undergraduate career. Monica was getting ready to go apply for a 2017 program abroad and when the election results unfolded, she knew that her already slim opportunity to participate would close completely.

Here's the thing. I would have--if someone would have told me if Trump would have gotten elected, I would have traveled abroad my first semester at this University. I wouldn't even care to miss out on that first experience at this University. I would have traveled abroad then. But I didn't know. No one knew!

Monica spoke of the decision to withdraw her study abroad application with a deep sense of regret because that opportunity would never come again for her. Gabriela, a fellow undocumented student who came into the University as a transfer student viewed the situation slightly differently. She also just had two years to finish her degree requirements and was going to seize the opportunity to study abroad when there was the chance regardless of the administration. Although Trump made threats on the campaign trail to rescind DACA if he were to become president, the first eight months of his presidency left an incredible amount of uncertainty for undocumented people. The undocumented population waited in limbo, fearing and anticipating what was about to be decided on with DACA.

Despite Trump entering office in January 2017, Gabriela applied in early 2017 to study abroad in fall 2017. This would be her second time going abroad. She described the process matter-of-factly, "it was normal to worry. But the second time, I was way more worried. At the same time, I was very empowered by the first time." Having gained the knowledge through her

first study abroad experience, Gabriela was even more determined to go and not let anything stand in the way as long as Advance Paroles were still being issued. “[I’m] not letting this person who is in power right now constrain my life. Because of all the laws, all the everything that is like, you know the things about undocumented students, it’s about constraining, constraining, constraining.” Gabriela, in the midst of the uncertainties moved forward with her second study abroad experience. Unfortunately, she was only able to stay on her program a few short weeks before she was advised by the campus Undocumented Student Support Office and her study abroad program to return to the United States immediately before the announcement of the rescission of DACA in September 2017, which could further jeopardize her safe return to the United States.

Of the eleven students interviewed for this study, six had successfully studied abroad. Of those six, the majority like Diana, Connie and Pedro also fit into the category of those who applied again but could not go when they attempted or planned for it for the second time. Although they remain hopeful for what can come for undocumented student in the future, for all these seven students, including Diana, Connie, Pedro, Monica, Tristan, Tessa and Yvette, the announcement of the rescission of DACA sent the informal message that study abroad (whether for the first time or for the second time for those who planned to go abroad again like Diana, Connie and Pedro) was not going to be in the cards for them as undergraduate students.

The timing of when participants were undergraduates played a significant role in understanding their views on the possibility of study abroad. The timing of Trump’s presidency and the rescission of DACA represented a closing of opportunities seen through the experiences of those who were ultimately unable to take advantage of study abroad. The climate and timing of policies shows an ebb and flow that impacted students’ educational opportunities greatly.

The quick changes around policy and the closing of educational opportunities inevitably left the participants feeling disempowered as students and undocumented people. They expressed this disempowerment through the sentiment of being trapped. The feeling of being trapped permeated through all subgroups in the study, not just for those who could not successfully study abroad. Being trapped was a shared feeling for the DACA students who were able to go abroad as well.

Entrapment through study abroad

There is an inextricable feeling all participants have of being trapped or limited which persisted among the group regardless of their ability to study abroad and it played a powerful part in their experiences as undocumented students. The feeling of being trapped or limited manifested in various ways among the participants when reflecting on the access. For students who did not access study abroad, it was the continuation of being challenged by the obstacles of being an undocumented person in the United States. For those who applied, but could not go, they felt constrained, but also remorseful that there was a period with the opportunity that did not work out for them. For those who studied abroad, they still faced many limitations by the parameters of Advance Parole. Being constrained shaped the way they saw themselves and their position as undocumented students and undocumented people.

Trapped for those who could not study abroad. For Fede who was not able to even consider the opportunity because of the timing of his undergraduate education in relation to the immigration policies, he expressed a feeling of exasperation with the amount of challenges and barriers undocumented students face on a daily basis.

Unfortunately, I think when you're in this status, when you have DACA, when you're undocumented and you're growing up in this country, you kind of get numb to it. You kind of get used to it. I mean, [it's one] challenge after another.

For those who applied, but ultimately were not able to study abroad, their feeling of constraint is mixed with an even larger amount of regret and remorse for not having taken the opportunity when the chance existed. The missed opportunity made them feel even more trapped than if the opportunity had not been there in the first place. Tessa rehashed the steps she had taken to apply and wished that she had just gone through the very bureaucratic processes of applying for the program and for Advance Parole. Monica wished she had the foresight to know that a different president would so dramatically change her own education access.

There were also students like Pedro, Diana and Connie who had the opportunity to study abroad once but saw the opportunity close on their plans to go abroad the second time. Connie was extremely proactive and studied abroad in Mexico, her country of origin, the summer immediately after her first year at the University. That program and experience held personal and cultural significance for her. Even though that was the case, she regrets not having chosen something different that would help her advance in her graduation requirements or other skills. Connie mentioned how other students around her are now pursuing study abroad and that she has had to readjust.

For the first few months immediately following the announcement to rescind DACA, Pedro was not aware that issuance of Advance Paroles was put on hold for undocumented students. It was not until he sought advising at the University's study abroad office that he realized the situation. When looking back at his first experience abroad and his missed opportunity for a second chance to study abroad again, he states with a sobering tone, "it kinda reminds you that, oh well, you had your fun." Pedro goes on to say that for his first experience, he did not feel undocumented at the time because he had the same access to study abroad as

another student at the University did. However, the situation is very different for his second attempt.

Now it's like, I'm reminded that I have limited power, I have to abide by these rules when other people can just hop over, you know? It's upsetting. Again, learning that you can't do things or things keep getting taken away from you. Like it wasn't enough before, now you have to lose this experience. I don't know what more they can take. It's very upsetting.

This feeling of being trapped and limited for those who applied but could not go was mixed with a sense of regret.

Trapped for those who went abroad. The most unexpected finding was that feelings of being trapped, limited, and constrained were also sentiments felt by the group of students who successfully studied abroad. This group of six students talked about the freedom they experienced during their study abroad experiences, but at the same time, were quickly reminded of their limitations as undocumented people even while being hundreds or thousands of miles away from the United States. For the students who successfully studied abroad, they were trapped by the limitations in Advance Parole which dictated where they could travel and how long they could stay abroad.

Three of the six students who successfully studied abroad, Gabriela, Diana and Alberto, all noted that at points of their time abroad, mainly at the beginning of the program, they felt like a "normal" student. To the locals abroad and to the teachers and fellow students on the program, everyone in the group were all students from California and no one questioned, knew of, or asked about their immigration or undocumented status in the United States. However, that normalcy was short-lived shortly into the program when classmates decided to travel, sometimes to neighboring countries of the study abroad location. On the I-131 form where students apply for Advance Parole, applicants must indicate the exact countries of visit, the date of departure and duration of travel. For the undocumented students, they had to submit a letter of acceptance

for the program along with the application for Advance Parole. Identifying the locations of travel and specific, limited dates meant that the DACA students were hyper aware and concerned about any violations of their Advance Parole that could jeopardize their safe return to the US. Alberto, who studied in Buenos Aires, Argentina said,

I saw the limitations of DACA and Advance Parole very quickly. I had friends during that time and they just hopped on a boat and went to Uruguay. But because my Advance Parole was for Argentina, I was like okay, I can't go. How is it going to affect me when I go back? So yes, it still followed me, the limitation. I realized, oh wait, never mind I'm still undocumented. I still have limits to what I can do.

The limitations of borders and their undocumented identity followed students even though they were far away from the United States. Allen talked about his time studying in Paris when he felt paranoid and paralyzed. There was an excursion to a nearby town within France and Allen was afraid to go because he put on his Advance Parole application that his study abroad program was situated in Paris. He also recounted the story of how he purchased tickets to see a EuroCup soccer match between Germany and France that was held in Marseille in the south of France and in the end, he could not go because he was afraid it would be caught on surveillance cameras that he had left Paris and went to the south of France. Allen said of that experience, "I was scared, really scared, about doing something I wasn't supposed to" even though the action was something as ordinary as going to a soccer match. Other students who went abroad had similar experiences of being fearful of the countries they were simply in transit through or had a stopover at. They could not shake the feeling that whatever they did abroad, however normal or mundane those things are for others, could potentially harm them upon re-entry to the United States.

In addition to locations they could travel to, the participants who were able to study abroad were also limited by time through the parameters of Advance Parole. Because students

put the date of departure and the duration of the program on their I-131 application, their Advance Paroles are usually issued only for the period of the program. Pedro, the student whose parents really wanted him to go to Mexico as a way of fulfilling their own dreams to visit a homeland they cannot reach, talked about how he did not have the time he wanted to visit with his parents' relatives in Mexico upon the conclusion of the program. "There was a time limit. You couldn't enjoy things to the full extent." The constraints of time and location for undocumented students who were able to go abroad contributed to their sense of self as being continually trapped even though they have this opportunity to go abroad.

Consciousness of Status and Power with DACA

Immigration policies that have been expanded or constricted have a direct correlation to empower or disempower undocumented college students. Through the examination of educational opportunities like study abroad, participants come to realize the hierarchy that exists in the intersection of immigration and education policies. The second finding shows that study abroad leads undocumented students to interrogate of power and privileges that exists at the juncture of higher education and immigration policies.

With the access of educational opportunities so intricately tied to their immigration status, the participants brought up the injustices they see in their situation which greatly shaped their sense of selves both as undocumented people and as undocumented college students. Many of them acknowledge that they are living in a hierarchy created by education and immigration that sorts and stratifies them firstly from other undocumented people and secondly from their classmates and peers with citizenship or legal status in the United States. The access to study abroad highlights those differences that exists between DACAmented, or DACA-receiving

college students and others in the undocumented community whereby being an undocumented student with DACA status is considered the most privileged kind of undocumented. At the same time, access to study abroad also shows how students attending the same university do not have the same educational opportunities when their immigration statuses differ.

Higher education creates a divide and hierarchy within the undocumented community because an undocumented college student with DACA status is afforded more privileges than other undocumented youth. The DACA status allows for temporary protection from deportation, the ability to work and in some cases, obtain a driver's license, combined with additional educational opportunities for college students, such as study abroad during the brief period Advance Paroles were granted. That gave DACA college students more freedom and leeway than other youth in the undocumented community. The status creates a divide in the community since not all undocumented youth can qualify for DACA under the arbitrary nature of DACA eligibility requirements (such as the maximum age one could apply for DACA). The constructed hierarchy of opportunity is supported and reinforced by higher education opportunities and education opportunities. This set up creates subgroups of undocumented people where one would have more opportunities and pathways compared to the next, which further bolsters the good immigrant-bad immigrant rhetoric of and division around deservingness.

On the contrary, DACA students who were able to study abroad when Advance Paroles were issued at the same time saw the hierarchy their documented counterparts had over them as students. They were at a disadvantage for studying abroad and other educational opportunities compared to other students who were US citizens, permanent residents, or international students with visas.

DACA college students as privileged in undocumented community

Participants were quick to acknowledge that, in accessing study abroad, they had more privilege than other undocumented peers. Fede believed that the difference of opportunities creates divides among the immigrant and undocumented community and that it “breeds resentment between well, this person got this opportunity- they have DACA and I don’t have DACA. Well, that person had a chance to travel, but I never had that opportunity.”

When participants were asked what changes they would want to see for undocumented students in international education opportunities, two students Connie and Tessa, said that all undocumented students should have a pathway to study abroad solely for being a university student. However, shortly after making such a comment, they quickly followed up to realized that by saying access should be given to students just for sake of being college students, they were leaving their undocumented counterparts who do not have DACA status or who could not pursue higher education behind. Connie catches herself and regretfully said,

[If suggesting] having like a protection as a student, it’s kinda- it makes me feel like a little bit selfish because I know a lot of people are not in the place that they’re able to have these opportunities...Although I would want to say to maybe have a type of protection on students; it kind of feels unfair.

The access to study abroad when Advance Paroles were issued meant that undocumented students with DACA had the most amount of privileges afforded to them compared to other undocumented counterparts, including college students without DACA status, or those who could not attend or afford college at all. Tessa says,

I wish everyone would be able to travel. So, I even hate myself for saying ‘students’, right? [E]ven just the perception of an undocumented student, a Dreamer-- just completely changes...[D]efinitely, being a student is the best way of you could be undocumented, to be honest, cause then you get more perks. And that sucks. I wish it wasn’t that way because it’s not fair.

By thinking and talking about study abroad, Connie and Tessa were reminded how much better off with the opportunities they had compared to other undocumented counterparts without DACA or college student status and other undocumented college students who came before them.

When participants compared themselves to other students at the University who are US citizens or who have a lawful presence in the United States, they quickly see the hierarchy from the other side and know that education is not created equally even if they were all students attending the same school. This also made some participants reflective of the layers of injustices created by immigration policies, but supported through the systems in higher education.

DACA students as disadvantaged students

The period prior to DACA in 2012 and the period after the rescission of DACA in 2017 marked the times when study abroad is not open to students. Fede said of the limitation, “It was just a source of bitterness. As a student, those kinds of things, they get to you. You’re a college student, you see your peers who get to live their lives in a more happy [sic] way, to get these opportunities, to live life more freely.”

Twenty seven percent of participants mentioned feeling exacerbated by the number of times well-meaning peers asking them why they chose not to pursue to study abroad since study abroad was often seen as almost a rite of passage for many college students. Participants said they often bypassed those questions because they either did not want to disclose their undocumented status, did not always want to explain the limitations of their immigration status, or they did not want others to feel sorry for them. Tessa said that she used to get so excited over the emails the study abroad office at the University sends about new programs, scholarships and

deadlines, but “now, I just get pissed off and delete it,” she half-jokingly said. After the closing of Advance Parole opportunities, she unsubscribed herself from the newsletter.

Study abroad not only played a part in affecting students’ personal development, but it also impacted their academic and professional development. In examining the effects of study abroad on academic and professional developments, they knew their options would be a lot more limited compared to their documented counterparts.

Students had to readjust to the new reality of policies, political rhetoric, and climate. The act of shifting gears and adjusting to the new realities brought the inequalities they experienced to the forefront.

For me, I think I had the hardest time to accept it was spring of 2017 because that was the year I was planning to study abroad. Because part of learning Japanese is experiencing the culture as well as living in it, I felt that not having that part wasn’t going to complete- give me a complete satisfaction in the Japanese major.”

Yvette later decided to give up on her Japanese major after she saw the closing of opportunity to go study abroad in Japan.

Other students like Alberto and Tessa also talked about the adjustments they have made to wanting a career in international relations. They remarked how they continually came across obstacles when internships and similar career development opportunities, especially in government office positions as they often required citizenship and in-depth and bureaucratic background checks that they could not obtain or were not eligible to go through due to the immigration status. A constant state of adjustment was what all participants had to do with their academic and professional plans as immigration policies continue to shape and affect their ability to achieve and grow.

Contradiction between Policy Rhetoric and Realities

Policies and programs either widen or narrow the gap between access for undocumented students' international education opportunities. DACA college students' access to study abroad demonstrates how undocumented students create a unique form of existence and resistance when a schism exists between policy rhetoric and what is put into practice. Through institutional advice and support structures such as the university, legal advice, community, peer groups, undocumented students make decisions and build their own form of existence molded by policy changes, restrictions, expansions, and at times, conflicting guidance filled with bureaucratic complexities. In turn, when deciding whether to study abroad, some undocumented students choose to wade through complex bureaucracies and move forward with their plans despite the risks and others choose to pivot their academic, personal and professional plans to fall within the confines of policy. The confrontation of policies or redirection of plans is done as a form of resistance. DACA students, through study abroad, create a form of resistance to the restrictive and limiting convergence of immigration and educational policies of the times.

Reality of Complex Bureaucracies

Participants found that there was not always a clear correlation between their intentions and the actual ability to study abroad. National and statewide policies such as DACA students' ability to apply for Advance Parole did not equate to a smooth bureaucratic process for students as different players such as universities, financial regulations, immigration lawyers, families and communities all interpret the risks and benefits of the academic opportunity.

One hundred percent of the participants who attempted study abroad or had successfully studied abroad mentioned the bureaucratic complexities of the process unique to them as DACA students pursuing international education. Allen noted that while there was good will and

encouragement from academic advisers and program directors, a contradiction existed between the finer details of how it could be possible. Administrators knew of the policies that allowed for undocumented students to study abroad, but they were not able to provide the guidance.

So, when I learned about that program, I approached the professor and asked her do you know if there has been any undocumented students that have gone before. And she's like, 'Yeah, yeah, yeah!'

So I talked to the person who is in charge of the study abroad programs and he said, 'We've had a few [undocumented students], but I'm not really sure how the process is. I think there is the one form, the I-131 form which is...I think you have to fill in, but I wouldn't be able to help you with this because I'm not familiar with this.' And so, after he gave me that information, I had to do the research on my own. And I had no resources for, at that time, we knew right after DACA was implemented, there's not a lot of undocumented student services in my community college. So, yeah, the lack of support-- not, not lack of support, but the lack of information, knowledge wasn't there in high school, college. So, I had to do research on my own and I went online and I found other organizations that deal with this.

Monica had the same experience when she attempted to study abroad her last term as a transfer student at the University and found the process extremely frustrating. She recounted how she was repeatedly referred between offices that had one part of the answer but was not able to help her address all the aspects and concerns of her identity as an undocumented student in her senior year with financial need trying to study abroad.

I remember this moment in my life- it was rough! I skipped probably three classes to try to get appointments to try to figure things out. It was sooo difficult because I would go [to the study abroad office] and they would tell me I would have to talk to my academic adviser and my academic adviser would tell me you have to go to the study abroad office. I wasn't getting my questions answered and it was all a mess.

These sentiments of uncertainty between what was possible through policies and the actual implementation of those policies and accompanying complicated bureaucracies followed participants throughout the process. Contemplating withdrawal from the process and the program were realities the participants encountered throughout the process. Diana said,

Everything was so surreal when I was going to go. A couple of days before, I was like, I'm going to withdraw. In my head, I needed to withdraw. It's scary. But I had already paid all this money. I wasn't going to lose that money.

There was a clear contradiction between the policy rhetoric and policy implementation for the participants who pursued study abroad. In addition to the lack of centralized information, participants also noted the restrictive nature of DACA itself which had to be renewed every two years. Three participants remarked that they had to postpone their study abroad plan if their DACA renewal period fell into any part of the study abroad timeline which was a lengthy process. Their DACA renewal could cause complications in their pre-departure process for study abroad with visa requirements for their host country and study abroad destination. It also would be problematic if they did not have a valid DACA for the duration of their study abroad program because renewals for DACA required biometric appointments that had to be completed in the United States. All these factors lead to the challenges between policy rhetoric

In their research process about study abroad, students were at times largely influenced by their family, peers, and the legal and study abroad advising received. The guidance through institutions and social and personal support structures can also be fluid and changing as policies change. The advice given to DACA students about studying abroad in an uncertain time can lead each unit, actor, or player in the process to enact and interpret policy in a unique way. That interpretation and enactment oftentimes result in contradiction or misalignment between policy and action of the practiced realities of the student.

Summary of Results

The semi-structured interviews with 11 undocumented students done in this study helps explore how the uncertainties in policies can affect the student's decision to participate in study abroad. The study also examines how the access to international education opportunities can affect their sense of self as undocumented students and people. The study resulted in three findings that 1) policies can be empowering to provide agency or disempowering or contribute to

the feeling of entrapment, 2) the limited and temporal ability for undocumented students to study abroad leads students to a heightened consciousness of the hierarchical structure created in higher education between them and other undocumented youth without DACA status and also between them and other college students with citizenship or other legal statuses, and 3) that there is a contradiction between the policy rhetoric and lived realities of a decision around whether to study abroad.

CHAPTER V

Discussion & Conclusion

This chapter presents a summary of the study and important conclusions drawn from the data presented in Chapter IV analyzed through a critical policy analysis methodological approach. It provides a discussion of the implications for action and recommendations for further research.

Summary of the Study

For the brief period between 2012 and 2017, undocumented students had the opportunity to pursue educational opportunities abroad as a direct result and benefit of the implementation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program under President Obama's administration in 2012. This opportunity was halted by the announcement made by President Trump to rescind DACA in September 2017. This time period represents a temporary moment of expansion in opportunities in the larger struggles that undocumented students face when accessing higher education. It illustrates how immigration status can largely affect the inequities that students face in higher education and how immigration can further stratify those pursuing higher education.

This study explores the impacts of policy changes on undocumented students' decision to study abroad and how that access or lack thereof affects their sense of self as undocumented people and students well as personal, educational and professional growth. The study centers around three research questions of: How does a student's immigration status and the uncertainties in policy affect the student's decision to participate in study abroad programs? How does access to study abroad affect students' reflection on their sense of self as an undocumented person and undocumented college student? How does access to study abroad

affect and shape undocumented students' educational, professional, and/or personal growth and development?

This qualitative study using a critical policy analysis as a methodological lens was completed through semi-structured interviews that captured the stories and experiences of eleven undocumented students with DACA status in three subgroups. The subgroups include (a) those who have successfully studied abroad, (b) those who applied for, but did not or were not able to study abroad, and (c) those who did not consider study abroad during their undergraduate years during the time period between 2012 to 2017 when study abroad was possible for undocumented DACA students. One-on-one interviews were conducted with each of the eleven participants. Each interview was voice-recorded, transcribed, and coded. The transcripts were analyzed through manual and repetitive coding to find common themes that existed in participants' accounts of their access and exposure to study abroad.

Findings & Discussions

Three main findings resulted from the study. The first finding is that policies, at the juncture of higher education and immigration in this case, can be empowering or disempowering. Undocumented students who access or consider study abroad fall along a spectrum of liminality where the idea and/or the practice of study abroad can provide either a sense of freedom or contribute to the feeling of entrapment. Secondly, the limited and temporal ability for undocumented students to study abroad leads students to question the hierarchical structure created in higher education between them and other undocumented youth without DACA status and also between them and other college students with citizenship or other legal statuses. Finally, there is a contradiction between what the rhetoric of what the policy allows and what the realities of the policy implementation and interpretations are. Participants found themselves

mired in decentralized information and processes and were frustrated that the policy of permitting travel abroad did not reflect an easy process or system that made it possible. The bureaucracy created through the interpretation of the policy is where access stopped. The acknowledgement of this is what led participants to create their own form of existence in the process.

Policy as Empowerment or Disempowerment

The first finding of policy being empowering and disempowering shows how the ebb and flow of immigration policies has an enormous impact on cohorts of students' access to educational opportunities such as study abroad. The expansion and constrictions of policy shows how it can greatly alter a students' access to certain opportunities during the short years of an undergraduate experience and that experience can be both empowering and disempowering depending on the timing of a student's pursuit of their undergraduate education.

With immigration policy impacts, many students talked about the benefits of the national program DACA that allowed them to have a certain level of regularity and normality in their lives. The announcement of the rescission of DACA jolted that regularity and even though DACA is still in contested, some opportunities such as study abroad closed up and came to a halt. Participants recounted the challenges they faced and all named specific programs or pieces of legislation that changed the course of their education career. Important to all were key pieces of state legislation related to financial aid policies such as AB 540 allowing for in-state tuition, and the California Dream Act which gave them access to financial aid, something that one of the participants, Fede, had called a lifeline. More than half of eleven participants referenced the experiences of older siblings or family members who did not have the same access as them. Although these higher education legislative changes were made in to provide regularity in face of

restrictive immigration policies, the participants were very quick to recognize these recent changes made their education a smoother path compared to undocumented family members who came before them and compared to youth who did not have the same equal access because they were not university students.

In the same way that policy can disempower or empower, the participants reported being somewhere between a continuum that represented being trapped or gaining freedom. All participants talked about the feeling of being trapped regardless of whether they were able to study abroad successfully and the feeling of being trapped manifested in different ways for students who chose not to study abroad, could not study abroad, or successfully studied abroad, but the feeling of being constrained remained. Being trapped continue to shape their sense of identity as undocumented people. Not surprisingly, those who were able to study abroad felt liberated, albeit temporarily, and felt relief from the restrictions of borders which made them see other opportunities beyond. Those who were unable to pursue study abroad were reminded of the limitations that continue to constrict their ability to live equally like their peers. The idea or the act of study abroad gave students a glimpse into life beyond the constraints of an undocumented person living in the United States. The expansion and restrictions of policy and opportunities in study abroad also continued to impact students' personal, academic and professional goals and plans beyond the consideration of study abroad opportunities. Students have to constantly adjust their personal, educational and professional plans as a result of expansion and limitations of opportunities as highlighted through access to study abroad.

When undocumented students' access or encounter education abroad opportunities, they relive and go through the meaning making process of *legal consciousness* (Munoz 2016, Gonzales 2011, Abrego 2011) once again. Munoz uses the term to describe the point when

students consciously have to make a decision of who to disclose their status to and noted that it usually happens at moments of transitions, future planning and embarkations on new experiences that students arrive at crossroads of facing how their undocumented status is limiting those plans. When undocumented students encounter study abroad, they are reminded of the fleeting nature or temporary widening of expanding opportunities that cannot be counted on or taken for granted. This constant adjustment of significant academic and life plans pose a challenge for students.

Study Abroad Highlights Education's Inequalities

The second finding is that the access to study abroad highlights a hierarchy that is created by higher education whereby an undocumented college student with DACA status is granted more access and opportunities compared to other undocumented people, but those same students are still disadvantaged compared to other college students with legal statuses. The most important benefit of the DACA status is that it grants temporary protection from deportation. Additionally, the ability to obtain a work permit and in some instances, the opportunity to obtain a driver's license, combined with additional educational opportunities for college students, such as study abroad during the brief period Advance Paroles were granted, permitted access and privileges to DACA students not experienced by others in the undocumented community. When study abroad was possible and accessible to some undocumented youth but not others, it becomes the factor that highlights how arbitrary some of the policies are.

As chronicled in Nicholls' (2013) book on the undocumented youth movement, there was a divide caused by the rhetoric of programs and policies such as DACA that was meant to assist undocumented youth. Mirroring rhetoric and policies outlined in the DREAM Act, programs like

DACA with its rhetoric lifted the blame and fault from undocumented young who were brought to the US as children. By removing the blame on the youth, the fault was redirected and placed on the parents who brought the children to the US. A same divide with undocumented students' access to study abroad is created between youth who qualify under the arbitrary nature of DACA's age requirements and others who do not. The rhetoric of DACA and the benefits around DACA sends a message that there are only a select subset of undocumented youth that is deserving.

The same way that undocumented youth had resisted against the language and fault placed on parents for bringing them to the US, the participants of this study are also actively resisting and acknowledge that these opportunities of international education should be accessible to all regardless of immigration status.

Study abroad also challenges undocumented activist youth and participants in this study when they compare themselves with other schoolmates that have legal status in the United States. It is made clear that not every student at the same university has the same access and privileges to all educational opportunities. Therefore, their ability to achieve equally at the same rate is also not equitable.

It suggests a need for educators and administrators in higher education to question the structures in place that put limitations to a certain educational opportunity based on students' immigration status rather than academic abilities. These inequities challenge the idea of meritocracy so prevalent in the American system of higher education and points out the structural causes that prevent certain groups of students from having equal access.

Contradiction Between Policy Rhetoric and Realities

The third and final finding is that through the process of accessing study abroad, DACA students experience a gap between DACA and Advance Parole's policy rhetoric and their own lived realities, especially when it comes to the complicated bureaucracy they faced in the process.

The majority of the participants remarked how bureaucratically complex the process was for them to pursue study abroad. Firstly, there was a lengthy process for planning towards study abroad that did not always fit in neatly with their education plans and other educational demands, like major and graduation requirements and obligations related to work, family, and career-building. Secondly the two-year DACA validity which required a complicated and lengthy renewal process does not appear to consider and account for students who wish to pursue study abroad. These restrictive set of circumstances added more complications beyond ones that study abroad students typically face in considering international education.

This helps many of the participants to be more resilient, reflective and appreciative of fleeting moments of educational opportunities, especially when they compare themselves to other siblings or other undocumented counterparts that did not have as much access as they did. Some have grown even more proactive and diligent in seeking out more opportunities because they were unsure whether an opportunity will slip from their grasp again solely due to their immigration status. However, the attention cannot simply be focused on those who find successful paths through temporary expansion of opportunities because there are many whose growth is limited or blocked due to restrictive policies.

In the findings, 83% of participants who belonged in the first subgroup had attempted to study abroad again. These were students who had successfully studied abroad for one time and was prepared to go again even with the complex bureaucracy they needed to surmount. However willing they were, the rescission of DACA and the cessation of Advance Parole permissions stopped them all from being able to do so. All those who have been able to participate in study abroad among this study were only able to study abroad for the summer instead of spending a semester or year abroad. Gabriella's attempt at a semester program was cut dramatically short when rumors of the rescission of DACA drew near.

Three important findings came out of this study. The convergence of immigration and education policy can be both empowering and disempowering for undocumented students. Policy changes can expand to create lifelines or build towards a more equitable future for those impacted. On the contrary, the restriction of policy can constrict and limit opportunities. As DACA students engage in and access international education opportunities, they realize the inequalities that stratify them into a category where they have more privileges than other undocumented youth, but they are disadvantaged when compared to other counterparts with legal status in the United States. Lastly, large gaps exist between policy rhetoric and implementation, making study abroad a difficult endeavor even if policy allows for it. The many bureaucratic processes involved become obstacles for students and prevent them from successfully studying abroad.

Significance of Findings

These three findings through a critical policy analysis approach about undocumented students' access to higher education have implications for educational practice and future research.

Educational Significance

The literature review in Chapter II demonstrated that research on undocumented students' access to international education opportunities is very limited. There are three articles that touch on the convergence of undocumented students' pursuit of international education. The existing literature reflects information found on undocumented students' access to higher education as one point of focus. The ability for undocumented students to study abroad has been an act frozen in time between the period of 2012-2017. This study contributes to the understanding that access affects students' personal, professional and academic development. It is also a piece that could be helpful in affecting change at the local, state and university levels because advocacy is needed at all these stages for the opportunity to happen again and for it to be achievable as debate around immigration reform continues.

The examination of DACA students' access to international education further emphasizes how policy is not set in stone. It ebbs and flows. It shows that policies are also value-laden and a reflection of the times and political climate. The states, institution, university advising offices, and family and community members each are a player at every level of policy making and are muddling through based on their own or the institution's values and priorities and these decisions shape the lived realities of undocumented students and their educational opportunities.

Significant to Future Research

This study examines the lives of eleven undocumented students who have attended a large public university in California and their access to study abroad within the period that DACA and Advance Paroles were issued under the originally intended circumstances between the years of 2012 and 2017. Support structures such as the Undocumented Student Support Office, legal advice tied to the University and financial aid support offered in combination is unique at this at this institution due to California's large population of undocumented immigrants. Future research can continue to examine at the effects of study abroad on undocumented students in other states or regions of the country.

The period of time between 2012 and 2017 is unique as it marks a specific duration that gave undocumented students their ability to study abroad. Further advocacy and future policy changes can impact undocumented students' ability to study abroad in the future. This research can contribute to the knowledge when that opportunity opens up again and future research on the same topic can contribute to the broader knowledge of the topic.

Recommendations

The study of the brief period of time when undocumented students were able to study abroad gives educators steps for further action. The first is that colleges and universities' higher education administrators are key players in influencing policy and policy creation. Therefore, educators have an obligation to continue advocating for equal educational access for all students. Equal education access must include being able to access higher education in general. The Supreme Court case of *Plyler v. Doe* in 1982 held that states cannot constitutionally deny students free public education based on immigration status and that should also be upheld for institutions of higher education alike. Financial support must also be in place to support students'

ability to successfully complete their education. Upon the completion of education, undocumented students must also have access to professional pathways to allow students to transition into the working world. Policy makers should consider how preventing access of educational opportunities like study abroad and professional pathways to undocumented students is a contradiction to the investments state and local governments have made to undocumented students' K-12 education.

Secondly, even if Advance Paroles are halted, international educators should continue the conversation about and be advocates for undocumented students' access to international education opportunities in addition to being advocates for equal access to higher education, financial support, and pathways towards professional opportunities. International educators and policy makers need to consider the international learning benefits and outcomes to create programs with that focus and possibility.

Lastly, educators must constantly question and challenge the areas where immigration status is the only thing that separates a student's access to certain educational opportunities. What structural systems are in place to continue to sort students when American systems of higher education touts the belief that students should be judged on their ability and merits rather than race, class, gender, immigration status, and etc.?

Conclusion

The examination of undocumented students' access to higher education shed light on the impacts immigration policy and rhetoric can largely shape a student's ability to pursue certain educational opportunities and its subsequent outcomes. Instead of the system of meritocracy touted in the rhetoric of American higher education, the participants' stories reveal that they have to be "lucky" in the time they are undergraduates and be in the right place (in college) at the right

time (when Advance Paroles are issued) rather than simply being proactive and qualified. The timing of their undergraduate education has to meet the perfect confluence of immigration policies, political climate and rhetoric, which are all beyond their control.

Because of the numerous obstacles and challenges to their education and lives, the undocumented student participants are very aware of their identities and the privileges that they hold in relation to others within the community. They have a heightened awareness and sense of self and they are resourceful because of the need to adjust personally, professionally and academically due to the limitations placed on them by their immigration status. This resiliency towards limited access on opportunities such as study abroad has made undocumented students strong activists and voices for the need to build more equitable access for those who follow in their footsteps and to break out of this mold of liminality of being stuck between trapped and gaining temporary freedom.

At the time of writing, the long term future of the DACA program is still being contested and the possibilities for DACA holders to be able to apply for Advance Parole again is unknown even after the US Supreme Court June 2020 ruling. It is important not to forget that there a time existed when undocumented students were able to study abroad. In the near future, we will learn from the period of success and expansion and use that as a jumping off point without having to start from the beginning. Advocacy of and activism from undocumented persons and their allies will continue to challenge the status quo of a stratified education and to break out of the constructed borders that exist in American higher education.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A
Institutional Review Board Application



APPLICATION FOR IRB REVIEW OF NEW RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Complete the following form and upload this document to the online IRB system in Mentor. **In addition to this application, you will also need to upload any survey/interview questions and informed consent documents for your protocol.**

1. RESEARCH PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Provide, in lay terms, a detailed summary of your proposed study by addressing each of the following items:

Clearly state the purpose of the study (Usually this will include the research hypothesis)

The purpose of this study is to explore what impact study abroad has had on undocumented students in their undergraduate education and career prospect. The goals of the project are twofold. It aims to capture undocumented students' opportunities or views of their educational/professional careers and how it has been affected by participation in study abroad (or lack thereof) in the larger context of changing policies surrounding DACA. The second is to gain undocumented students' perspectives and insights on the changes they would like to see for a in more equitable undergraduate education experience.

The study will be a comparative analysis of three different subgroups of undocumented students and their access to study abroad. The first group examines DACA students who pursued study abroad. The second group explores the experiences of those who have applied to study abroad, but for various reasons, did not participate. Lastly, the third group looks at DACA students who have not considered study abroad as an opportunity altogether.

This study works to address the research questions of:

How does a student's immigration status and the uncertainties in policy affect the student's decision to participate in study abroad programs?

How does the opportunity to study abroad affect undocumented students' reflection on their undergraduate education?

How does study abroad affect undocumented students career choices and educational prospects?

Background (Describe past studies and any relevant experimental or clinical findings that led to the plan for this project)

When the executive order of DACA was announced in 2012, the most immediate benefits focused on were the deferred action of deportation, rights of undocumented youth's ability to obtain a working permit and a driver's license.

Lesser known, but equally important are the educational benefits that DACA led to. One of those benefits was the ability to apply for Advance Parole, which gave permission for DACA-eligible youth to leave the

United States to travel abroad for educational, employment or humanitarian reasons. Undocumented youth started to travel, in many cases through their college and universities' study abroad programs. Advance Parole applications were commonly considered at USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services) and approved between 2012 until Trump's announcement of the rescission of DACA in September 2017.

Because the ability for undocumented students to study abroad has been a recent and limited endeavor, the study will expand the knowledge in the field of international education to help professionals and advocates understand the experiences and the impacts of an international experience for all students, particularly those who are undocumented. Additionally, it will be important for the university administrators and advocates to get a broad scope understanding of the repercussions current policy debates regarding undocumented students have brought. This is especially important as the changes in policies continue to complicate the experience for undocumented students and the work for international educational professionals. The study will serve both as a historical record and a springboard for future advocacy.

Previous studies in international education have highlighted benefits of study abroad for college students. Additionally, studies have focused on undocumented students' experience on college and university campuses across the country. This study aims attempts to tie in undocumented students' experiences with access to higher educational opportunities beyond the college campus and beyond national borders.

Research plan (Provide an orderly scientific description of the intended methodology and procedures as they directly affect the subjects)

Qualitative methods give researchers a way of understanding how a system work and provide opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of people's internal experiences (Weiss, 1994). By exploring the narratives of undocumented students, it allows those in higher education to gain a deeper insight into a unique population of students at the university. In-depth interviewing methods will be used to understand the perspectives and observations of students in access to study abroad because in-depth interviewing aims to understand the lived experience of others and their interpretation of that experience (Seidman, 2006).

Students who have worked and interacted with the researcher will be initially recruited to provide for the perspectives of DACA students who have studied abroad or applied to study abroad but eventually withdrew. Through those interactions, the rest of participant connections will be made by a snowball sampling of referrals from the initial interviewees. If the need arises, the researcher will also solicit the help of the research site's Undocumented Students Program office to help recruit students who fit the criteria for the study.

The interviews, lasting 60-90 minutes, will be recorded using a digital recorder and uploaded for the transcription process. To protect the identity of participants, all participants will be immediately assigned a pseudonym upon agreement to participate. All files and transcripts will be assigned the pseudonym so that the participants' information is not identifiable. The transcripts and data will be analyzed and coded. Participants will be contacted where necessary for clarifications. Transcriptions will be shared with participants upon request, but all notes and recordings will be deleted after 6 months of the completion of study. Transcripts without identifiable voices of information will be kept up to 10 years in a password-secured file.

Give the location(s) the study will take place (institution, city, state, and specific location)

The participants will be undergraduate students who are currently studying at or have studied at the University [REDACTED]. These will include students who were undergraduates between 2010-the present to account for the changes leading up to DACA in 2012 and its current state.

Duration of study project

The interviews are expected to be collected over a five-month period upon the approval of IRB. The data analysis will be ongoing for the next year, through December 2019.

2. PARTICIPANTS

2(a) Participant Population and Recruitment

Describe who will be included in the study as participants and any inclusion and exclusion criteria.

The participants in the study will include those who:

- *are undocumented*
- *possess or possessed DACA between 2012-present*
- *enrolled as an undergraduate at [REDACTED] between 2010-present (2018)*

Within those who fit into the abovementioned criteria, there will also be three different subgroups studied.

- 1.) *Undocumented students who studied abroad*
- 2.) *Undocumented students who have applied to, but did not study abroad*
- 3.) *Undocumented students who have not considered studying abroad*

The goal is to perform 9 to 12 interviews total, with each interviewing lasting between sixty to ninety minutes. This is meant to include 3 to 4 interviews for each of the subgroups identified.

What is the intended age range of participants in the study?

The participants' age range will likely fall between 20-25 years of age.

Describe how participant recruitment will be performed.

The initial set of participants (DACA students who have studied abroad or have applied to a program) would be students the interviewer has worked with directly. The researcher will recruit participants via email. Students will be reminded that their participation is completely voluntary and that any refusal to participate does not have any negative impact on their current application or preparation for study abroad. The researcher will continue to remind participants that they may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or losses to their current application or academic plans.

Through the initial participants, the additional participants (who did not consider study abroad) would be recruited through a snowball sampling method. If needed, the researcher will also solicit the help of the [REDACTED] office for help to reach out to more participants.

Do the forms of advertisement for recruitment contain only the title, purpose of the study, protocol summary, basic eligibility criteria, study site location(s), and how to contact the study site for further information?

- Yes**
 No

*If you answered "no," the forms of advertisement must be submitted to and approved by the IRB prior to their use.

2(b) Participant Risks and Benefits

What are the benefits to participants in this study?

There will not be tangible immediate benefits to the participants. However, participants' testimonials will be a significant contribution to the currently limited body of knowledge on undocumented students' experience after the implementation of DACA.

Additionally, the narratives from participants will be a significant source of knowledge as colleges and universities across the nation continue to build resources to support undocumented students. The data can be used for advocacy of expanded and truly inclusive educational opportunities for all within the student population.

What are the risks (physical, social, psychological, legal, economic) to participants in this study?

If deception is involved, please explain.

n/a

Indicate the degree of risk (physical, social, psychological, legal, economic) you believe the research poses to human subjects (*check **the one** that applies*).

- MINIMAL RISK:** A risk is minimal where the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the proposed research are not greater, in and of themselves, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.
- GREATER THAN MINIMAL RISK:** Greater than minimal risk is greater than minimal where the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the proposed research are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. **If you checked "Greater than Minimal Risk",** provide a statement about the statistical power of the study based on intended sample size, design, etc. to test the major hypotheses)

Due to the national attention and discussion on DREAMers and undocumented people and the hostile social environment that many undocumented students may face, a study involving undocumented persons can involve some minimal risks and discomfort or trigger strong emotions. The researcher will take extreme care in protecting the confidentiality and identity of participants. Participants will also be reminded that all conversations within the study will be used for research purposes only and that their identities and personal information will be kept confidential.

Because the topic discussed can contain confidential, sensitive and triggering topics, the researcher will share knowledge of and refer counseling resources specifically for undocumented student where needed.

2(c) Participant Compensation and Costs

Are participants to be financially compensated for the study? If "yes," indicate amount, type, and source of funds.

- Yes
- No**

Amount:

Source:

Type (e.g. gift card, cash, etc.):

Will participants who are students be offered class credit?

- Yes
- No**
- N/A

If you plan to offer course credit for participation, please describe what alternative assignment(s) students may complete to get an equal amount of credit should they choose not to participate in the study.

Are other inducements planned to recruit participants?

- Yes
- No**

If yes, please describe.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA SECURITY

Will personal identifiers be collected (e.g., name, social security number, license number, phone number, email address, photograph)?

- Yes
- No**

Will identifiers be translated to a code?

- Yes**
- No

Describe how you will protect participant confidentiality and secure research documents, recordings (audio, video, photos), specimens, and other records.

Once a participant agrees to be part of the study, they will be immediately assigned a pseudonym so that identifiable information cannot be traced to that an individual. All references made from that point forward will only use the pseudonym. The only document that connects the pseudonyms with the participants will be in a locked cabinet only accessible to the researcher. Notes gathered from the interview sessions will be kept in a secure file until transcribed and uploaded in password-protected files. All paper notes will be shredded after transcribed onto electronic files.

Audio recordings using a digital recorder will also be uploaded for the transcription process and secured with a password. Voice recordings in the researcher’s possession will be deleted within 6 months of the completion of the study. Transcripts without information identifiable to a particular individual will be kept up to 10 years after the study.

4. CONSENT

4a. Informed consent

Do you plan to use a written consent form that the participant reads and signs?

- Yes
- No

***If “no,” you must complete Section 4b or 4c below.**

If “yes,” describe how consent will be obtained and by whom.

Upon agreeing to participate in the study, interviewees are informed that a consent form will be shared at the meeting. Before the in-person session begins, the researcher will provide a copy of the written consent form, go over the information and ask the participant for their consent and initials.

If the participants are minors under the age of 18 years, will assent forms be used?

- Yes
- No
- N/A**

If “no,” please explain.

Upload to the online IRB system the consent form(s) that the participants and/or parent/guardian will be required to sign, and the assent forms for children under the age of 18, if applicable.

Note: All consent forms must contain the following elements (quoted directly from Office for Human Research Protections regulations, available at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.htm#46.116>). The Fairfield IRB has consent templates containing all required elements, **and we strongly recommend you use these templates.**

If you believe it is important to create your own consent form, you are free to do so but please ensure that your consent form has each of the following elements and indicate you have done so by checking this box:

I have chosen to create my own consent form and have ensured that it contains the 8 essential elements listed below:

(1a) A statement that the study involves research, (1b) an explanation of the purposes of the research, (1c) the expected duration of the subject's participation, (1d) a description of the procedures to be followed, and (1e) identification of any procedures which are experimental;

(2) A description of any reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts to the subject;

(3) A description of any benefits to the subject or to others which may reasonably be expected from the research;

(4) A disclosure of appropriate alternative procedures or courses of treatment, if any, that might be advantageous to the subject;

(5) A statement describing the extent, if any, to which confidentiality of records identifying the subject will be maintained;

(6) For research involving more than minimal risk, an explanation as to whether any compensation and an explanation as to whether any medical treatments are available if injury occurs and, if so, what they consist of, or where further information may be obtained;

(7) An explanation of whom to contact for answers to pertinent questions about the research and research subjects' rights, and whom to contact in the event of a research-related injury to the subject; and

(8) A statement that participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled, and the subject may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled."

4b. Waiver of documentation of written informed consent (Complete only if answered "no" to 4a)

The regulations allow instances in which the IRB may waive the requirement for documentation of informed consent, that is, the collection of a signed consent form. If you are requesting a waiver of written documentation (signed) of informed consent, please answer the following questions:

Will the only record linking the participant and the research be the consent document and the principal risk to the participant would be from breach of confidentiality? Yes No

Do you consider this a minimal risk study that involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of research (see 2B above for definition);? Yes No

Explain why you are requesting waiver or modification of documentation of written (signed) informed consent and how you plan to obtain consent.

4c. Waiver or modification of informed consent (Complete only if answered "no" to 4a)

The regulations also provide an opportunity for the IRB to waive the requirement for informed consent or to modify the informed consent process, provided the protocol meets the following criteria:

- (1) The research involves no more than minimal risk to subjects (see 2b above for definition);
- (2) The waiver of alteration will not adversely affect the rights and welfare of the subjects;
- (3) The research could not practicably be carried out without the waiver or alteration; and
- (4) Whenever appropriate, the subjects will be provided with additional pertinent information after participation.

If you are requesting a waiver or modification of informed consent (e.g., incomplete disclosure, deception), explain how your project meets the requirements for waiver or modification of informed consent, as outlined above.

Appendix B Consent Form



Consent Form for Adults

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Below is a description of the research procedures and an explanation of your rights as a research participant. You should read this information carefully. If you agree to participate, you will sign in the space provided to indicate that you have read and understand the information on this consent form. You are entitled to and will receive a copy of this form.

You have been asked to participate in a research study entitled Undocumented Students' Access to Study Abroad and its Impacts conducted by [Louise Hon](#), a Masters student in the Department of Department of Leadership Studies at the University of San Francisco. The faculty supervisor for this study is Professor Danfeng Koon, a professor at the University of San Francisco.

WHAT THE STUDY IS ABOUT:

The purpose of this research study is to explore how access to international education opportunities has impacted undocumented students' undergraduate education and career outlook. The goal is to examine how students' opportunities or views of their educational/professional careers have changed due to participation (or lack thereof) in study abroad in the larger context of ever-shifting national policies on immigration, especially as it pertains to undocumented people.

WHAT WE WILL ASK YOU TO DO:

During this study, you will be asked a series of questions related to your experience with or exposure to study abroad. The questions will explore if and how those experiences have impacted your overall undergraduate education. The entire interview will last approximately 60-90 minutes. The session will be voice recorded using a digital recorder so that your thoughts are captured as accurately as possible. If at any point, you wish to have the recording stopped, please let me know.

DURATION AND LOCATION OF THE STUDY:

Your participation in this study will involve one session that lasts between 60 to 90 minutes. The study will take place at a location mutually agreed upon between the interviewee and the researcher. Further follow-up for clarification by phone or transcript reviews and consultations may be possible. The study will take place in the San Francisco Bay Area.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS:

The risks and benefits associated with this study are a loss of your time and the risks associated with regular activities. The benefit of the study is that it may add to the research on the field of education and international/multicultural issues. This information, once collected, might be read by policymakers, educational experts, educators and scholars and could affect the educational practice. If you do not

want to participate in the study, you will not be mentioned in any documents of the study, and your decision to not participate will not be told to anyone. You may choose to withdraw your consent and discontinue your participation at any time during the study without penalty. If you are upset by any of the questions asked, the researcher will refer you to counseling services available publicly or at the university if you are a member of the academic community (student, staff or professor).

PRIVACY/CONFIDENTIALITY:

Any data you provide in this study will be kept confidential unless disclosure is required by law. Because all participants have been assigned a pseudonym, there will not be any information in the recordings, transcripts and notes that will be personally linked to you. In any report published, no information will be included that will make it possible to identify you or any individual participant. Specifically, all information will be stored on a password-protected computer and any printouts in a locked file cabinet. Consent forms and any other identifiable data will be destroyed in 2 years from the date of data collection.

COMPENSATION/PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION:

There is no payment or other form of compensation for your participation in this study.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF THE STUDY:

Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits. Furthermore, you may skip any questions or tasks that make you uncomfortable and may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. In addition, the researcher has the right to withdraw you from participation in the study at any time.

OFFER TO ANSWER QUESTIONS:

Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you should contact the principal investigator: Louise Hon at [REDACTED] or lkhon@dons.usfca.edu, or the faculty supervisor, Danfeng Soto-Vigil Koon at (415) 422-4346 or dkoon@usfca.edu. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact the University of San Francisco Institutional Review Board at IRBPHS@usfca.edu.

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE INFORMATION. ANY QUESTIONS I HAVE ASKED HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT AND I WILL RECEIVE A COPY OF THIS CONSENT FORM.

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

Appendix C**Interview questions**

- 1.) Could you describe your (and your family's) immigration journey to the United States?
- 2.) What was your educational path like leading up to your arrival at this university?
- 3.) How would you describe your undergraduate education?
- 4.) How has being an undocumented student impacted your undergraduate education?
 - Follow up: Are there things you feel like you did not have access to or missed out on in your undergraduate education because of your undocumented status?
- 5.) Did you study abroad?
 - If yes: Could you describe that experience? What were the challenges in the process? What supports were available?
- 6.) What were the biggest factors that led to the decision?
 - Follow up (if not already mentioned): How did your status impact your decision, if at all?
- 7.) What impact has that decision had on the rest of your undergraduate education or opportunities beyond graduation?
- 8.) If you think about another undocumented person you know who has/hasn't studied abroad (opposite of interviewee experience), how do you think your paths differ?
- 9.) Are there changes you would want to see in access to international education opportunities for undocumented students? If so, what would those changes look like?
- 10.) What do you feel needs to happen in order for those changes to be realized?