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The University of San Francisco

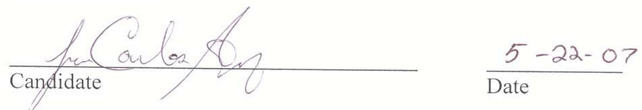
JAULA DE ORO: GROWING UP AS AN UNDOCUMENTED LATIN@
IMMIGRANT IN THE UNITED STATES

A Dissertation Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
Department of International and Multicultural Department

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
JuanCarlos Arauz
San Francisco
May 2007

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.



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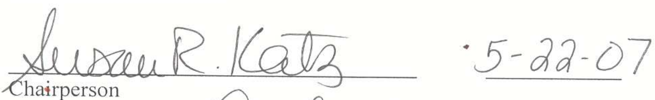

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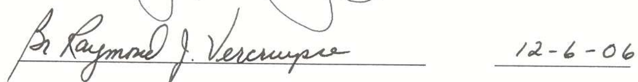

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DEDICATION

In loving memory for the undocumented youth whose stories have yet been told.

This dissertation is dedicated to the most important people in my life. Without their encouragement, support, and love, this dissertation would still be unfinished. Thank you for believing in me. Thank you Great Spirit for your love and strength.

To my amazing spouse, partner and confidant, Kristie Moore-Arauz, whose unwavering patience allowed me the space and love to realize this dream. Your belief in me kept me motivated the many countless days spent away from you. Thank you for your support. Por siempre y para siempre, con todo mi amor, mi alma, y mi cuerpo. Te amo.

To my two blessed amazing children Joaquim CarlosAriel and Isabella Esperanza, whose unconditional love inspired me to focus and finish. I hope to emulate the love and sacrifice of my parents. Because of my love for both of you, I aspire to live in this world in a way that is genuine with love and respect to humanity.

To *mi familia*, Alvaro and Lila, who always have kept our *familia* a priority. To Dr. Juan Ramon & Elizabeth Arauz, whose nurturing love and value of education instilled in me the faith that I can make a difference in this world. Thank you for your eternal love. Your endless sacrifice to immigrate and migrate around the world for your children has been the core purpose of this study. Through my work, I hope you have realized the dream of why we came thirty-five years ago to this country. I am blessed to have you in my life and I love you both.

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I would like to extend my appreciation to the following people. You have all provided support and encouragement throughout this dissertation process. I am indebted to you all.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

> I think that in some things it's good to be or act *Americano*. But, personally I don't want to lose my heritage, my Latinaness. So that's why I fight it [how I define myself] sometimes…I do get angry in the moment. There are times that [being undocumented] it gets me to a point of depression, crying and [asking] why are we here. *Estamos en una jaula de oro* [We are in a gilded cage]. You know, it's [*jaula de oro*] beautiful and its gold, but it's nevertheless a *jaula,* a cage…Yeah, I have everything that I might have dreamed of in my home country, yet I cannot leave. I am caged in and now it's even worse. At least the *jaula* was little bigger then and now it seems like it is shrinking. (Sophia, June 8, 2006)

In this quote, Sophia, a participant in this study, articulates the complex challenges that she faces as an undocumented immigrant living in the United States. Her words draw attention to three key issues. First, Sophia's reaction to being undocumented represents the experience of one of millions of undocumented immigrants living in the United States, which must be placed in a historical context to be thoroughly understood. Second, Sophia's metaphor of a *jaula de oro* symbolizes the enormous challenge of navigating through society undocumented. It is essential to examine the various obstacles that undocumented immigrants encounter in order to comprehend the factors that contribute to the challenge of living in this country. Third, Sophia immigrated as a child to the United States and recognizes the complexity of her own Latin@ identity in that she grew up in this country, yet she is not allowed to reside here.

The word "Latin@" is spelled using the ampersand to replace the letter "a" or "o." Pizarro, Montoya, Nañez, Chavez, & Bermudez (2002) are Latin@ educators who formed Maestr@s, a group which contended that the Spanish language is imbedded with a male-gendered perspective and coined the use of the ampersand in response:

> We deliberately created this term Maestr@s to name our group because it is a visual intervention and a re-coding of information. We seek to augment the visual cues to the reader to illustrate that we are moving between different linguistic, epistemological and ideological systems. (p. 290)

Although gender is not the focus of this study, this term highlights the intricacy of the Latin@ identity. After Sophia and I attended a Maestr@s training known as "Encuentro", we learned the complexity in defining one's Latin@ identity and how gender impacts its formation. Per Sophia's request, the word Latin@ is used throughout this study to make explicit the gendered nature of Latin@ culture and language.

The 2000 Census determined 281.4 million people resided in the United States, but had different estimates for the foreign born population (United States Census Bureau [USCB], 2003). According to two different USCB reports, the foreign-born population ranges from 28.4 million (USCB, 2001) to 31.1 million (USCB, 2003). This is a result of the difficult task in calculating the number of undocumented individuals residing in the United States with figures of undocumented immigrants estimated from 7 million to 9 million (Migration Policy Institute, 2003; Passel, Van Hook, & Bean; 2004; Pew Hispanic Center, 2002b; United States Citizenship and Immigration Services [USCIS], 2003a; Urban Institute, 2004). Although the 2000 Census provided detailed amounts of data, estimating the undocumented population has been historically difficult particularly because there has not been a standard for collecting this information (Passel, et al., 2004).

According to Passel (1999), undocumented immigrants are individuals who entered the country clandestinely or overstayed their visa expiration. Although the method often used in collecting this data is to simply subtract from the known legal population, there is much complication in accounting for the undocumented population that is overlooked (Pew Hispanic, 2006a, 2006b; Migration Policy Institute, 2005). A

closer examination of the undocumented population revealed that 1.5 million people in 2004 were not undocumented, but were unauthorized (Migration Policy Institute, 2005). Unauthorized immigrants are those who held quasi-legal status because they were documented but restricted from full participation in society. An example is an immigrant who had a valid social security number, was not authorized to work, but did so anyway. Because the participants in this study maintained that being unauthorized is as dangerous as being undocumented, the term "undocumented immigrants" will be the umbrella term for both terms and all the participants in this study.

In disaggregating the undocumented population, one in six is a child with nearly 5 million children overall being undocumented or living in households headed by undocumented immigrants (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006a). As evidence of their educational disenfranchisement, 55% of undocumented immigrants that arrived after 1988 do not have a high school diploma (Urban Institute, 2001). The social, health, and educational needs of all undocumented immigrants are largely unmet and their well-being and human dignity repeatedly jeopardized (Bean, Edmonston, & Passel, 1990; Briggs, 1984; Hayes, 2001).

Haines and Rosenblum (1999) suggested that immigrants who over-stayed their visas, or who entered the country without registering, have lived in the United States virtually undetected. As Hayes (2001) pointed out, "Because the undocumented are in the country illegally, they take great pains to remain invisible, with no records of who they are or where they are" (p.34). Because of their status, the voices of these undocumented immigrants are rarely heard and their plight is underrepresented. At the heart of this study

is my intention to illuminate that plight of the undocumented population, specifically in relationship to their dignity and identity.

The United States is considered the land of immigrants; however, historically legislation has exclusively allowed certain people to take advantage of living in this country. Lopez (1996) argued, "The racial composition of the U.S. citizenry reflects in part the accident of world migration patterns. More than this, however it reflects the conscious design of U.S. immigration and naturalization laws" (p. 37). Therefore, it is important to examine who was allowed to enter the United States to understand the racial make-up of society. Furthermore, the United States witnessed an enormous growth of immigrants of color and undocumented immigrants since the 1970's, resulting in the first immigration law (Immigration Reform and Control Act [IRCA], 1986) that targeted the undocumented population (Bean, et al., 1990; Haines & Rosenblum, 1999; Hayes, 2001).

Most immigrants, regardless of their place of origin or whether documented or undocumented, confront numerous challenges as they try to socialize and adjust to living in a new country. This socialization process includes the necessity of learning a new language, the lack of social and familial support or economic stability, exploitation in the labor force, and poor living conditions (Barkan, 1995; Glazer & Moynihan, 1970; Gordon, 1964; Rumbaut, 1997; Sanchez, 1997; Suarez-Orozco, 2000). Overcoming these challenges depends much on the degree of acceptance that the host community demonstrates in assisting immigrants (Alba, 1990; Barkan, 1995; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Several scholars (Barkan, 1995; Glazer & Moynihan, 1970; Gordon, 1964) have proposed that assimilation is often the goal of immigrants where they

can interact with the host community, leading to full participation into the larger society, and becoming indistinguishable from the host society.

While assimilation in the United States may represent the ideal process, according to the mainstream view, immigrants of color have to confront racial discrimination in the United States (Barkan, 1995; Gans, 1997; Glazer & Moynihan, 1970; Gordon, 1964). A central political issue for people of color is the social construction of race. For many scholars, the concept of race is not only socially biased and artificially constructed, but also applied hypocritically resulting in a hierarchical system to benefit people with lighter skin tone (Delgado, 1995; Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Fish, 2002; Hitchcock, 2002; Omi & Winant, 1986; Rosaldo, 1989; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001; Tatum, 1997). Due to the social construction of race, immigrants of color confront a racialized society and structure that make adaptation and acceptance into their new country more difficult or even impossible (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Gordon, 1964; Perea, 1996; Rumbaut, 1997). Consequently, immigrants of color are more likely to acculturate rather than assimilate (Alba & Nee, 1997; Gans, 1997; Glazer & Moynihan, 1970; Gordon, 1964). Acculturation is when immigrants maintain their ethnic ties due to choice or because the host community does not allow full participation (Kallen 1924/1970). In Kallen's investigation of European immigrants, he concluded that those immigrants maintained their ethnic ties while residing in mainstream society.

Although immigration and naturalization laws of the United States are no longer tied to race, religion, or national origin, immigrants of color must still address the effects of racism that linger in this country (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Lopez, 1996). Rosaldo (1989) declared that Latin@s are often excluded from being included in the dominant

cultural citizenship. This is a result of being viewed as foreigners even if Latin@s were born in the United States or as immigrants they became legal citizens. Flores and Benmayor (1997) described cultural citizenship as "a range of social practices which, taken together, claim and establish a distinct social space" (p.1). Cultural citizenship goes beyond the concept of an isolated ghetto reminiscent of the 20th century immigrant neighborhoods. Cultural citizenship for Latin@s represents not only the immigrant population but 3rd and 4th generation citizens. Therefore, Latin@s have developed their own distinct social space that transcends geography as a result of the exclusion from mainstream society.

Both documented and undocumented Latin@ immigrants face a unique situation in that the USCB (2000) categorizes being Latin@ as an ethnicity and not a race. Yet, Sanchez (1997) argued that Latin@ immigrants are continually racialized and discriminated against. Moreover, Ferdman and Gallegos (2001) maintained that since Latin@s can be part of any race, their identity formation is even more complex due to the social construction of race. They noted, "Because Latinos do not fit easily into the prevailing system of racial categories in the United States, understanding Latino racial identity presents special challenges" (p. 32). As a result, the authors have developed a racial identity model to encompass the ethnic and racial diversity of being Latin@.

Central to this study is an examination of the plight of the undocumented Latin@ immigrant, whose personal and social-political challenges include the general issues mentioned above. In addition, because they must appear documented and hide their true identity, the sense of self-esteem is easily compromised. According to Hayes (2001), appearing documented is determined by one's race, foreign accent, socio-economic level,

and paper documentation such as a driver's license or social security card. Hayes found that undocumented Irish immigrants were less suspect of their immigration status than undocumented Mexican immigrants due to the racial stereotype of an undocumented immigrant. Thus, the identity development for Latin@s who are undocumented results in a delicate situation, which may lead to a heightened awareness of discrimination (Gonzalez, & Huerta-Macias, 1997).

In summary, the status of undocumented Latin@s in this country parallels that of the status of the runaway slaves in the United States between the 1600s and 1860s in that public identification of one's race was detrimental to their safety and wellbeing. In both situations, each group risks all for their personal freedom and social justice. Thus, data collection for research on undocumented Latin@ immigrants becomes both problematic and necessary. It is problematic in that personal legal issues could be exposed and lead to possible deportation for the research participant, yet also necessary in order to present the human rights issue involved in being condemned as "illegal aliens."

The term "illegal alien" is ironic since the U.S.-Mexico border is an "artificial border" (Anzaldua, 1987), arbitrarily demarking the boundary between these two countries. In fact, states such as California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Nevada and parts of Colorado, Wyoming and Utah were part of Mexico before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (Chavez, 1984). This sentiment often is manifested in slogans pro-immigrant groups use in stating, "We didn't cross the border, the border crossed us!"

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to explore what it means to be an undocumented Latin@ youth growing up in the United States. First, the researcher

examined how being undocumented impacts the racial identity development of Latin@ immigrants. Secondly, the researcher investigated how undocumented Latin@s negotiate the socialization process as immigrants in the United States. Finally, this study explored how the research process itself was a catalyst for participants to become empowered in creating change individually or institutionally.

Background and Need for the Study

The background and need part of this study is divided into four sections. The first explores the United States immigration policy over the past 200 years in order to understand undocumented immigrants today. Lopez (1996) argued for the need to critique this process of the immigration policy of the United States from the perspective of how racism has shaped the history of immigration policy in the United States. The second section delineates the various theories of the adaptation process for immigrants who enter this country (Barkan, 1995). The third section examines the multiple variables that impact the identity development of immigrant youth (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). The last section explains the importance of the voices of the undocumented immigrants to be heard.

Undocumentedness and Immigration

Accounting for how many undocumented immigrants reside in the United States is an estimate at best, therefore making it challenging to research why they come and what they do (Bean, et al., 1990; Haines and Rosenblum, 1999; Hayes, 2001). The Department of Homeland Security defines undocumented immigrants to be those who overstay their visa or those who enter the United States without inspection (National Immigration Forum, 2000; USCIS, 2003a). However, an estimated 1.5 million people are neither legal nor undocumented but are unauthorized immigrants (Migration Policy

Institute, 2005; Pew Hispanic Center, 2002a, 2006a). Examples include people with Temporary Protective Status, Extended Voluntary Departure, and spouses or children of people who hold lawful permanent resident status (Migration Policy Institute, 2005). Just as with undocumented immigrants, unauthorized immigrants are restricted from either being employed or receiving federal services.

A report by the Pew Hispanic Center (2002b) claimed that the method for accounting undocumented immigrants is somewhat problematic. The way that the government counts the undocumented population is by subtracting the total population of the United States from the documented resident population. This method too often results in excluding people not included in the authorized population, which means that the undocumented population is never actually counted. Still, the numbers of undocumented immigrants are based on these estimates due to the transient nature of the population, the fluidity of immigration status, and the need to preserve their existence (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006a; USCIS, 2003a). As of 2005, the undocumented immigrant population reached 11 million of which nearly 80% came from Latin American countries, 13 % from Asia and 6% from Europe or Canada (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006a). This statistic includes the immigrants who came to the United States 20 years ago and their status changed due to revised immigration legislation (Passel, et al., 2004; USCIS, 2003a).

Most researchers acknowledged that undocumented immigrants come to the United States primarily for economic purposes and amnesty reasons that are rarely recognized (Aguirre & Saenz, 2002; Borjas, 1989; Chiswick, 1997; Migration Policy Institute, 2003; Powers, Seltzer, & Shi, 1998; USCIS, 2003a; Urban Institute, 2003). Studies indicate that 96% of undocumented workers are employed (Passel et al. 2004;

Powers et al. 1998; Urban Institute, 2004). While much debate has taken place as to the economic impact of undocumented immigrants (Huddle, 1994; Vernez & McCarthy, 1996), a recent report found that undocumented immigrants have not hurt employment prospects for native-born workers (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006d). Beyond the economic debate is the new trend of undocumented immigrants migrating into other states such as Arizona, Georgia and North Carolina (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006a, USCIS, 2003a). The trend of domestic migration expanding is a result of economic demand as nearly 60% of undocumented immigrants work in the industries of agriculture, construction, manufacturing, and hospitality (Pew Hispanic Center, 2005b).

Despite the economic realities, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists (2002) claimed that undocumented immigrants are often used as scapegoats and are perceived inaccurately by the government and media in the areas of economic impact, educational and health services (Mandel & Farrell, 1992; Sanchez, 1997). For example, undocumented immigrants are often accused of taking jobs away from U.S. residents (Eviatar, 2006). Yet a recent report by the Pew Hispanic Center (2006d) illustrated that undocumented immigrants have not hurt employment prospects for documented workers.

Another example is the misperception of undocumented immigrants as a drain on public services such as low-income housing and Medicaid. These public benefits should not be accounted for since most immigrants are not eligible. Too often, accounting the real cost of undocumented immigrants is based solely on the taxes they pay and the cost of public services they utilize, but does not take into account the consumer purchasing power of undocumented immigrants (Vernez & McCarthy, 1996).

Race and Racism

To understand how racism has specifically shaped immigration in the United States, three factors were addressed in this study. These three factors included: the historical patterns of immigration into the United States, changes in immigration laws over time, and the impact of globalization. Each of these factors has contributed to the evolution in immigration within the last 30 years. As a result of these three factors, there has been an increase of immigrants of color, both documented and undocumented, which make up the entire immigrant population in the United States (USCB, 2001).

According to Hayes (2001), immigration to the United States can be divided into four periods, all of which have added a unique dimension in creating a pluralistic society. The United States experienced the largest numerical influx of immigration during the fourth period of the 1990s when over 9 million immigrants were accepted into the United States, following the 7 million immigrants who entered the United States in the decade before (Urban Institute, 2001; USCB, 2003). Yet, this fourth period of immigration represented 10% of the total population as compared to 14% during the last big period of immigration in the 1900's (Urban Institute, 2001). In the overall context of the U.S. history, immigrants have represented roughly 10% to 15% of the entire population (Greenwood & McDowell, 1999; USCB, 1993, 1999). However, Hayes (2001) attributed that the fourth period of immigration has received heightened attention not only because of increased numbers, but also because of the racial make-up of immigrants.

A value on race has existed since the inception of this country as exemplified by the 1790 Census asking for race, age, and sex of every resident (USCB, 2002). Coincidently, this is the same year that the first United States naturalization law limited

citizenship to only white males with "good standing" and "moral character" who had lived in the U.S. for at least two years (Naturalization Act of March 26, 1790). Immigration and naturalization policy severely limited the number of immigrants of color until 1965 (Lopez, 1996). As a result, nearly 90% of the foreign born population had been classified as racially white (USCB, 1999). Not until the Hart-Cellar Act of 1965 did race cease being used as a criterion (Hayes, 2001; Immigration & Nationality Act, 1965). Consequently, for the past 30 years the majority of the foreign-born population has been immigrants of color (USCB, 2001, 2003).

Hayes (2001) noted that while an independent movement of people migrating for the purpose of survival has always occurred, globalization has accelerated the process of working class people moving from developing countries to richer nation-states. However, not until recent decades has the issue of undocumented immigrants been so apparent. Several factors have contributed to the growth of undocumented immigrants, such as U.S. involvement in Latin American countries, civil wars, poverty and globalization, as well as the end of the Bracero Program in 1965 (Bejarano, 2005; Briggs, 1984; Hayes, 2001). The Bracero Program was created by the United States in 1942 to provide U.S. employers with temporary legal immigrant workers who were primarily from Mexico (Bickerton, 2001). Although the Bracero Program ended in 1964, the need for seasonal migration employment remained. Furthermore, unjust political conditions in Central American countries during the 1970's and 1980's led to an exodus of people from their homeland (Briggs, 1984; Glazer, 2001; Hayes, 2001). As a result of these and other factors, the undocumented population has been increasing since 1965 with the rise of both refugees

and demands for labor. Within this political context, immigrants must learn how to adapt to life in the United States.

Adaptation and Navigation

All immigrants confront challenges in adapting to their new host country. Scholars of immigration have characterized this adjustment through several different terms: assimilation, acculturation, and cultural pluralism. Barkan (1995) criticized the lack of consistency over the years in defining these terms. This is a result of the socialization process that parallels the 200-year history of immigration to the United States. Early theories in the 20th century focused on the assimilation of European ethnic immigrants into the United States, whereas later theories identified challenges to this assimilation process addressing the new wave of immigrants who were not racially white. Several researchers (Barkan, 1995; Gans, 1992; Glazer & Moynihan, 1970; Gordon, 1964; Murata, 2001; Suarez-Orozco, 2000) identified barriers such as *de facto* (common practice by society) or *de jure* (enforced by laws) segregation, which have historically made it more difficult for immigrants of color to blend into society, both culturally and legally.

Park and Burgess (1921) noted that eventual assimilation would occur when an immigrant had been absorbed into United States culture and was no longer distinguishable in their own culture. On the other hand, Kallen (1924/1970) postulated that immigrants of various ethnicities may be able to acculturate on their own, but they cannot assimilate without the willingness of the dominant society. He coined the term “cultural pluralism” to recognize the inability of immigrants to fully assimilate. Gordon (1964) later argued that immigrants of color could attain “civic assimilation” such as developing social networks, but could not achieve “structural assimilation” such as

obtaining employment and education, due to the legal segregation that existed from racism. Gibson and Ogbu (1991) noted that even after legal segregation, immigrants of color continued to not fully assimilate, but rather acculturate.

Several researchers (Barkan, 1995; Gans, 1992; Glazer & Moynihan, 1970) have proposed theories to address the post-1965 adaptation process for immigrants of color. Glazer and Moynihan (1970) suggested that assimilation could possibly never occur but rather an ethnic cohesion would prevail. Gans (1992) suggested that the assimilation process did not take place according to a "straight-line" theory, but reflected more of a "bumpy-line" theory without a predictable end. According to Barkan (1995), immigrants undergo a multi-step process in adapting to society with the expectation that interaction with the host community will lead to full participation into the larger society.

Back at the beginning of the 20th century, Du Bois (1903/1989) argued that the "color line" was the most pressing dilemma in the United States. Although Du Bois (1903/1989) was referring to the plight of African Americans, his assessment highlighted the inability of assimilation for people of color. Omi and Winant (1986) maintained that racial theory is based on centuries of a hierarchical system of skin phenotype, placing lighter skin at an advantage. They proposed that each generation adopts a new racial ideology that is later reflected in legislation. Thus, over time the United States has redefined the racial construct of people. Critical race theorists (Bell, 1993; Crenshaw, 1988; Delgado, 1995) have expounded upon the concept of race and racism to address how white supremacist ideology has shaped contemporary society. Bell (1993) asserted that people of color build a different frame of reference from their experiences of living in a racialized society. Assimilation theorists have often overlooked the inability of

people of color to assimilate into mainstream society, neglecting the frame of reference identified by critical race theorists.

Rosaldo and Flores (1993) furthered the argument on the role of race as they coined the term “cultural and legal citizenship” to specify how Latin@s were legally citizens but not culturally accepted as citizens. According to Flores and Benmayor (1997), cultural citizenship is particularly problematic for Latin@s since they are viewed often as foreigners regardless of their immigration and citizenship status, as demonstrated by such deportation events as the Zoot Suit Riots of 1942 and Los Angeles riots of 1992 (Quinones-Rosado, 1998; Sanchez, 1997). As Quinones-Rosado (1998) described, the terms "Latino" or "Hispanic,” "undocumented" or "illegal alien" are relatively new within society, even though Latin@s have resided in the United States throughout its entire history. Although the adaptation process is complex, most immigrants of color learn early on about the racial hierarchy that gives highest status to whiteness (Lopez, 1996).

Racial theories can be used as a mechanism for looking at undocumented Latin@ immigrants in the study of Latin@ immigrants' racial identity development. Historically, race and racism in the United States have focused on the bi-polar relationship between Black and White individuals (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001). Latin@ critical race theory (LatCrit) expands upon critical race theory in that race and racism are viewed within the context of Latin@ pan-ethnicity (Johnson, 1998; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Solórzano and Yosso, (2002) describes critical race theory as having an interdisciplinary perspective while recognizing the central role that racism has played in the structuring of society. Furthermore, it challenges the dominant ideology, and commits itself to social justice by focusing on the experiential knowledge of the oppressed.

Identity Development

Although one's identity formation is a life-long process, adolescence is the time period in which many attitudes are instilled that become life long habits (Phelan & Davidson, 1993). Unfortunately, young people are often left on their own to navigate their social setting. Youth identity theory is based on the promotion of social and emotional factors that will prevent self-destructive behavior (Phelan, Davidson, & Yu, 1998). Although factors such as race, class, and gender influence these transitions, much debate still exists as to the level of influence that each factor has on the development of a young person. Suarez Orozco and Suarez-Orozco’s (2001) research expanded upon identity theory for immigrant children as the children encounter the American educational system and the challenge of adapting to mainstream society.

Racial and ethnic identity is one aspect of an individual's identity where for people of color often develop their racial identity consciously (Chavez & Guido-DiBrito, 1999; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). The development of racial identity relies on the influence of one’s family as well as the external influence of society (Chavez & Guido-DiBrito, 1999; Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001; Wijeyesinghe & Jackson III, 2001). Although the racial categories and definitions of "white" have changed over time in the United States, white identity has consistently been viewed positively by the mainstream (Alba, 1990; Johnson, 2001; Omi & Winant, 1986; Tatum, 1997; West, 1994). However, Latin@ identity is more complex since it transcends the Black/White paradigm. While color tends to define racial identity in the United States, Latin@ identity goes beyond the confines of color (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001). Rather, Latin@s include geography, language and class as critical features in their identity.

As immigrants, Latin@s must address the adaptation process, but if undocumented, their ability to navigate mainstream society becomes even more challenging. Undocumented Latin@ immigrants are unique in that they confront the same stereotypes facing other Latin@s of being racialized but must also negotiate their identity safely and invisibly enough to not be deported (Gonzalez & Huerta-Macias, 1997; Haines & Rosenblum, 1999). Undocumented Latin@ youth in their early 20s are at a significant time period in creating their sense of identity. Youth in general face numerous types of transitions, defining borders that exist and adapting strategies to bridge different worlds so that they can navigate a variety of situations successfully (Phelan, Davidson, & Yu, 1998). Moreover, historical, social, economical and cultural backgrounds are critical in shaping young people's actions and interactions (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Consequently, undocumented Latin@ immigrants who grow up in the United States are constantly aware of the potential racialization of their own identity because of their need to appear documented.

Need for Study

From the perspective of Sophia's quote on page one, three needs were identified for this study. First is the need to build awareness about the lives of undocumented children to the education field. Due to the dramatic increase of undocumented immigrants in the United States, Sophia's story and the story of millions like her are vital to provide insight for educators and lawmakers who are currently developing policies amidst much controversy. Secondly, there is a need to give voices to undocumented youth. Sophia's description of the *jaula de oro* illuminates the lack of legal voice that she and so many like her have in being undocumented. Because undocumented immigrants are often

unwilling to come forward, researchers on Latin@ issues have struggled to find willing participants (Hayes, 2001). In addition, as immigrants who over-stay their visas, or who enter the country without registering have lived in the United States virtually undetected (Haines & Rosenblum, 1999; Hayes, 2001), and thus identifying undocumented immigrants is difficult at multiple levels. It is critical that any investigation of this area take into careful consideration the safety of research participants.

Finally, as the author of this study, I recognized the need to empower the participants of this study to become agents of change through the act of participation in this research (Freire, 1970/2000, Parks, 1993). By not isolating the experiences of undocumented Latin@s, specifically those who grow up in the United States, the oppression of human beings will continue to be unchecked. Consequently, they need to move beyond being a mere statistic in the Census data to being embraced as full human beings with basic rights.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework employed in this study is based upon the immigrant identity model (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001) and the racial identity model for youth (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001). Each emanated from past models that addressed identity development as youth interact with mainstream society. This section describes these models relevant to this study.

The husband and wife team of Carola Suarez-Orozco and Marcelo Suarez-Orozco (2001) developed the immigrant identity model based on decades of work with immigrants, most recently with the Harvard Immigration Project that was completed in 2002. The Harvard Immigration Project was designed to examine the psycho-cultural

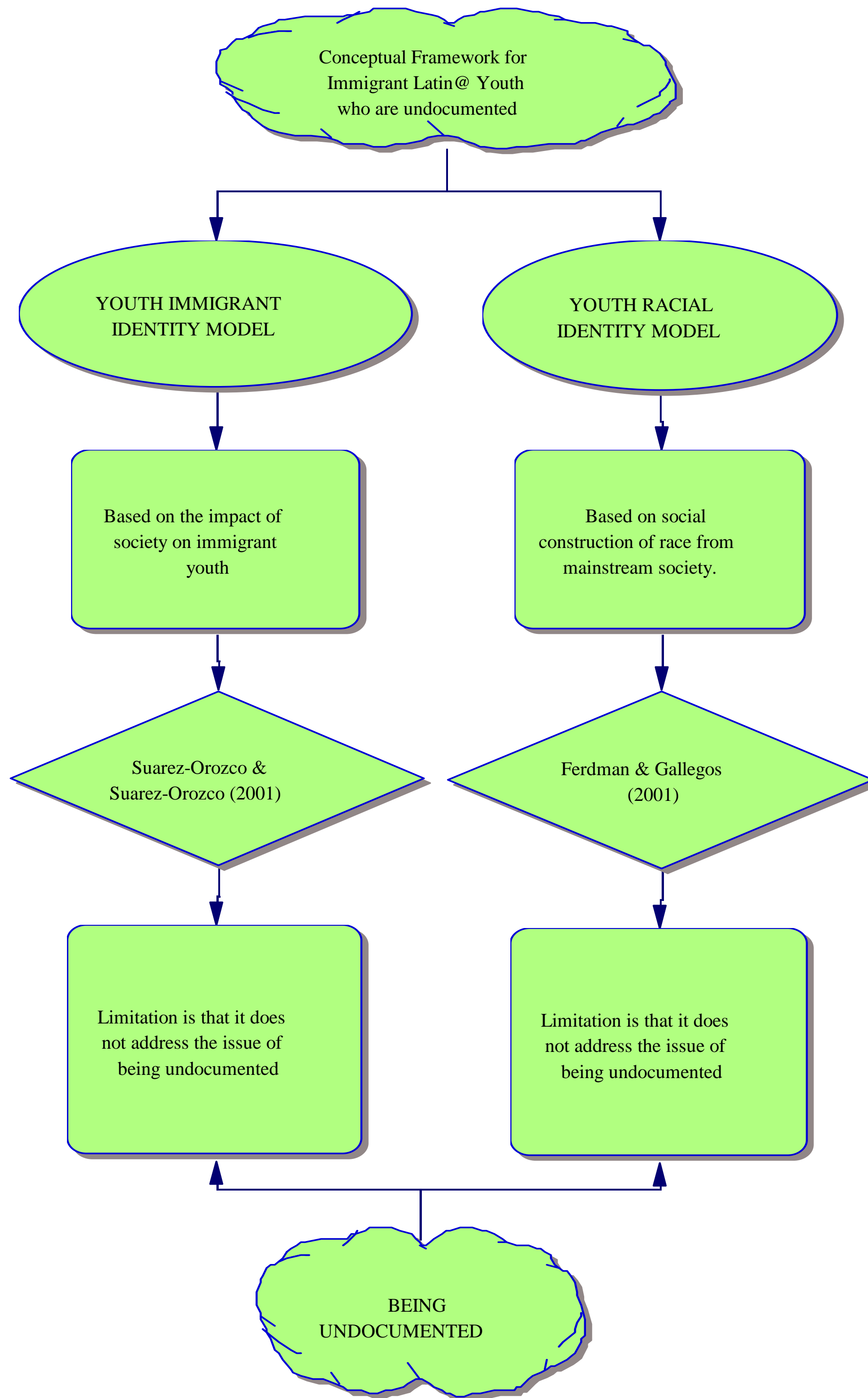
changes that immigrant youth experience in U.S. schools. This project was developed as a comparative interdisciplinary study from 1997 – 2003 to document the continuities and discontinuities in immigrant educational attitudes and adaptations. As a result of their work, the Suarez-Orozco team revealed that immigrants represent the majority group in some public educational settings and that most immigrants confront harsh economic realities, racial discrimination, and negative ethnic stereotypes in the United States.

Essentially, the Suarez-Orozcos' model maintained that society has a profound impact on the self-image of the child. Unfortunately, this impact can be degrading as society mirrors negative stereotypes of immigrant youth. While this model addresses all immigrants who struggle to adapt to a new society, it does not specifically consider undocumented immigrants who represent the focus of this study.

The second model for this conceptual framework is the racial identity model, developed by Ferdman and Gallegos (2001), which emphasized the complexity of race as related to Latin@s. This complexity has a political dimension insofar as Latin@s are not classified as a race in the USCB (2000), and also a personal dimension in that Latin@s focus more on their place of origin, language and nationality relative to their identity. However, when Latin@s come to this country, their identity is very much affected by the Black/White paradigm or what is known as "being racialized" (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001, p. 33). In Ferdman and Gallegos' model, the Latin@ racial identity definition broadly encompasses six categories: Latin@-integrated, Latin@-identified, Subgroup-identified, Latin@-as-Other, Undifferentiated/Denial, and White-identified. Although this model provides a wide range of racial identity categories, it also does not address the unique situation of undocumented Latin@ immigrants.

The rise of undocumented immigrants residing in the United States has led to a recent interest in this area in research (Bean, et al., 1990; Hayes, 2001; Passel, et al. 2004). In addition, with contemporary legislation pending in immigration reform, public officials, educators and society have renewed their interest in the immigration debate (Jonas, 2006; Olsen, 1997, Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). According to a recent analysis by the Pew Hispanic Center (2006a) on the undocumented population, nearly 5 million children under the age of 18 are undocumented or live in homes where the head of the household is undocumented. With this recent phenomenon of undocumented immigrants growing up during their formative years in the United States, interweaving the youth immigrant identity model and youth racial identity model serves as a guide for understanding the complexities of being undocumented. Although both identity models focus on key elements for immigrant Latin@ youth in relation to the immigrant experience and the racialization of Latin@s, neither model centralizes the issue of being undocumented. Figure 1.1 illustrates the conceptual framework for undocumented immigrant Latin@ youth in this study.

Figure 1.1



Research Questions

The following are the research questions developed by the participants and the researcher in order to guide the dialogues.

1. How do undocumented Latin@ youth define the term undocumented?
2. How does being undocumented impact the racial identity development of Latin@ immigrants?
3. How do undocumented Latin@ youth negotiate the socialization process as immigrants?
4. What effect did this research have upon the participants?

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

In order to better understand the Latin@ immigrant population that is undocumented, this literature review consists of four sections. The first section describes how the undocumented population fits within the historical context of immigration and citizenship laws of the United States. According to scholars (Bean, et al. 1990; Hayes, 2001), the undocumented population has always existed due to a demand for cheap labor and has heightened primarily because of changes in immigration laws. The second section addresses how immigrants navigate through society by examining the immigration patterns in the United States. Immigrants of color have had unique experiences that have posed special challenges to becoming fully accepted by mainstream society (Bell, 1993; Gordon, 1964).

The third section reviews the theories on youth identity development with a specific focus of how racism impacts the identity of people of color. As scholars (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001) have expressed, the historical, social, economical and cultural backgrounds of the individual and the United States are critical in shaping young people's actions and interactions. In line with the purpose of this research, the fourth section provides the literature on how social movements have been impacted by individual stories.

The family, social and educational experiences of immigrants shape the identity of this study's participants. In order to delimit the review, the focus will be on how being undocumented impacts young Latin@s who have grown up in the United States for the

majority of their lives. Although various experiences influence one's identity, this study reframes the discussion to examine what it means to be undocumented for Latin@s in the context of a racialized society.

Nation of Immigrants

Immigration Patterns

Migration is part of a human condition that has occurred over the course of human existence (Palme & Tamas, 2006, Wells, 2002). Whether migration has been voluntary or involuntary, basic human survival has been at the root of overall migration (Castles & Miller, 1998; Kyle, 2000; Martin & Larkin, 2000). Rodriguez (1996) described the global migration patterns as an independent movement of working class and peasant communities in developing countries to other nation-states for the purpose of survival. An examination of the historical patterns and legislation in the United States is essential to understand the context that undocumented immigration has in the United States today.

The American hemisphere itself has its own unique and long history of migration, as scholars debate the original migration of the continent that later formed great civilizations like the Mayans, Aztecs, and Incas (Chavez, 1984; Hey, 2005; Wells, 2002, Whitley & Dorn, 1993). The creation of the United States is no different in that Northern European immigrants were encouraged to migrate across the Atlantic Ocean (Handlin, 1951/2002; Takaki, 1993). Since the founding of the United States, the government has opened its borders to over 70 million people (USCIS, 2003b). The United States is considered the land of immigrants (Chavez, 1984; Zinn, 2003), yet the immigration legislation has historically excluded several million people for not meeting the criteria of "white" (Lopez, 1996; Tatum, 1997: Takaki, 1993).

In order to analyze immigration to the United States, four periods demonstrate the significant legislative changes, immigration peaks, and unique attributes for each period. The first period occurred between the establishment of the United States from the 1600's until 1820, while the second period took place between 1820 and 1880. The third period occurred from 1880 through 1965 and the fourth period includes 1965 to the present. Lopez's (1996) investigation of immigration and naturalization laws concluded that legislative acts were created over time to prohibit certain groups from entering the United States of which their impact is still felt today. In addition, once immigrants arrived to the United States, discrimination occurred to ethnic white immigrants such as the harsh treatment towards Southern and Eastern European immigrants (Kallen, 1924/1970).

First Period of Immigration to the United States

Although during the first period from 1600 to 1820 no established nation existed, a radical transformation of racial and ethnic composition still occurred for people living in the original 13 colonies. Often neglected is the fact that the first Americans were the Native American people where an estimated 1.5 million Native Americans lived in the continental United States at the time of Christopher Columbus voyage in 1492 (Szucs & Luebking, 2005). Over the course of the next 200 years in the establishment of the United States 13 colonies, the indigenous population eventually dropped to 100,000 by 1790 (USCB, 1975).

Another important point about this period is the notion that immigration patterns consisted of only Europeans (Bennett, 1988; Zinn, 2003). In fact, an estimated 1 million immigrant people migrated to the English colonies by 1790, representing approximately 24% of the total population with 72% of those immigrants from Great Britain (USCB,

1975). In addition, even though no immigration laws limited anyone from coming to the English colonies, nearly 60% of the voluntary immigrants were from England, Scotland, and Wales (Szucs & Luebking, 2005). However, as several scholars (Anstey, 1975; Bennett, 1988; Berlin, 1998; Clarke, 1992) highlighted, the forced migration of over half a million Africans to the United States is often overlooked. Not until 1808 did the slave trade abolish the brutal migration of Africans (Abolition of Slave Trade Act, 1807). In fact nearly 40% of the total immigrant population was comprised of Africans at that time (USCB, 1975).

A final point during this first period was legislation on naturalization and immigration. In 1790, the first naturalization law established White males as the only people allowed to naturalize (Naturalization Act, 1790). Furthermore, the Alien and Sedition Acts permitted the President to deport any foreigner deemed to be dangerous (Aliens Act, 1798). In addition, the USCB was created and consequently categorized people as free white males over 16, free white males under 16, free white females, other free persons, and slaves (USCB, 2002). Hence, the 1790 Census accounted for 3.9 million people with African slaves representing nearly one-fifth of the total population (USCB, 1975). Yet, the entire population of Native Americans and indentured servants were completely excluded from the census count. According to Takaki (1993) and Zinn (2003), the impact of these acts developed the notion that the foundation of the United States was white.

In summary, the first period of immigration to the United States included the transformation of the majority population from Native American to a white English-speaking population. Hence, every law created before 1870 was crafted from the

perspective of a European American male, and immigration laws as well as naturalization laws were limited to those deemed racially white by dominant society (Bennett, 1988, Zinn, 2003). Consequently, these original laws created challenges for later immigrants who needed to claim they were white in order to immigrate or naturalize (Lopez, 1996).

Second Period of Immigration to the United States

Two unique features characterized the second period that included an increase of immigrants and continued ambivalence towards non-Europeans by the government. During the decades of 1820 through 1850, the immigrant population tripled as over 1.7 million immigrants entered during the 1840's, compared to 600,000 immigrants the decade before and 144,000 immigrants in the 1820's (USCB, 1975, 2002). Often immigration and naturalization laws came after peaks of immigration as in the case of the first major peak as over 56% of the total immigrant population was either Irish or German. One outcome of this increase was that the USCB added the foreign born and racial categories to their census tracking starting in 1850 (USCB, 2002).

The addition of foreign born and racial categories is a result of not only the migration of Irish and Germans but of Chinese as well. The Chinese immigrant population doubled from the 1860's to the 1870's, when over 124,000 Chinese immigrants came to the United States (USCB, 1975, USCIS, 2003b). The Burlingame Treaty of 1868 encouraged Chinese immigrants to migrate to the United States for employment, which established the precedent to negotiate with other countries for labor (Zinn, 2003). Yet as Takaki (1998) revealed, the Chinese were often mistreated and later were not permitted to naturalize or even immigrate through the various pieces of legislation (Chinese Exclusion Act, 1882, Alien Contract Labor Law Act, 1885).

As Chavez (1984) argued, Latin@s followed similar patterns. After the Mexican American War of 1848, some 80,000 Mexicans living in the annexed part of the United States were automatically given citizenship while being viewed as foreigners in their own land (Acuña, 1981; Weber, 1973). Initially, Mexicans were not accounted for in the Census. The USCB categorized Mexicans as a race only in 1930 and later in 1970 categorized the entire Latin@ population not as a race, but as an ethnicity (USCB, 2002).

In terms of Latin@ immigration, it was not until 1924 that the United States created a border patrol along the Mexican-U.S. border (Immigration Act, 1924). However, in 1830, the Mexican government was the first to close its borders as it attempted to prohibit U.S. citizens from entering northern Mexico, which is now Texas (Chavez, 1984). Unfortunately, for Mexico, this closure among other issues led to more undocumented immigration from the United States and eventually contributed to the Mexican American War of 1846 (Acuña, 1981, Brack, 1975; Weber, 1973).

Acuña (1981) presented that at the time of the conflict between the United States and Mexico, Mexico had several internal conflicts. However, Mexicans feared the hostile take over by the United States government of Mexico and thus put their internal differences aside. Yet with the signing of the Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty, the future of the Mexican-U.S. relations was strongly shaped by the U.S.'s negative attitude toward Mexico as well as the Manifest Destiny vision (Brack, 1975; Chavez, 1984; Takaki, 1993). In the ensuing years, a relatively small number of Mexicans came to the newly annexed United States and went virtually unnoticed. Consequently, Chavez (1984) stressed that with the overwhelming increased presence of Anglo society, "Mexicans in the Southwest were now a conquered people in a conquered land" (p. 42). From this point

the United States government and people viewed Mexicans living in the United States as foreigners (Acuña, 1981; Weber, 1973).

The conclusion of the second period of immigration was impacted greatly by a focus on German and Irish migration and a disregard towards the Chinese and Mexicans. With the focus on European migration to the United States, thousands of immigrants from the western shore and southern border were neglected in two ways. First, Native Americans, Asians, Latin@s as distinct groups were virtually unaccounted for, not appearing in the USCB until 1870, 1870, and 1930 respectively (USCB, 2002). Second, it was not until the 1850 census that the foreign born population was tabulated by asking place of birth (USCB, 1999). However, as scholars affirm (Bennett, 1988; Hayes, 2001; Takaki, 1993) these people have existed here in spite of the fact that the United States government not recognizing them.

Third Period of Immigration to the United States

The third period included the highest wave of immigration when over 27 million immigrants came to the United States between 1880 and 1930 (USCB, 2002; USCIS, 2003b). In addition, the next peak occurred when immigration entries nearly doubled from 2.8 million during the 1870s to 5.2 million during the 1880s. This trend continued as nearly 9 million immigrants arrived to the United States between 1901 and 1910 representing close to 14% of the entire population (Urban Institute, 2001; USCB, 2002; USCIS, 2003b). Eventually the immigrant population declined after the 1930's, but not without having made an impact on overall government policies. Consequently, new immigration and naturalization laws were implemented that not only excluded immigrants but also discriminated against them once they arrived (Lopez, 1996).

The first exclusionary immigration laws in 1875 and 1882 applied to Chinese, criminals and prostitutes as well as modifying the definition of foreign-born children as those whose parents were foreign born (Act of March 3, 1875; Chinese Exclusion Act, 1882). The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act was in response to the guest worker program of the Burlingame Treaty, encouraging immigration from China for its cheap labor (Takaki, 1998; Zinn, 2003). In addition to the Chinese Exclusion Act, the United States further limited a temporary worker program that existed primarily to exclude the Chinese (Alien Contract Labor Law, 1885). These immigration laws, along with others that principally targeted the Asian population, started distinguishing between entire workers who were "legal" and "illegal", foreshadowing future issues of being undocumented.

Racism against minorities was strongly evident during this third period of immigration. While the 14th amendment granted citizenship to African Americans after the U.S. civil war (U.S. Const. Amend. XIV, 1868), simultaneously immigration laws such as the 1870 Naturalization Act were restricting citizenship to other non-white immigrants of color stated only persons who were either white or of African descent were allowed to immigrate to the United States. Other racist legislation included collecting data on Mexicans crossing the border, creating a border patrol, developing a literacy test, reopening a guest worker program, and limiting the number of specific immigrants based on race (Bean et al. 1990; Hayes, 2001; USCIS, 2006). In addition, female citizens could lose their own citizenship in marrying an immigrant, but immigrant women who married a U.S. citizen male soldier could naturalize (USCIS, 2006). In conclusion, these laws were enacted to restrict immigrants of color from entering into the United States.

Once immigrants arrived and attempted to naturalize, the United States courts decided inconsistently who was white or not (Lopez, 1996). The case of *United States v. Wong KimArk* (1898) first tackled the complex dilemma of granting citizenship to people of color who were not African American. Wong KimArk was classified as Chinese and born in the United States, which created the conflict between the Naturalization Act of 1870 and the 14th amendment. The Supreme Court decided in Wong Kim Ark's favor and was given naturalization based on the 14th amendment that grants citizenship to any person born in the United States.

Yet, court rulings were decidedly inconsistent. Such is the case of *Ozawa v. United States* (1922) where a Japanese man attempted to naturalize by passing as white (Lopez, 1996). The Supreme Court denied Mr. Ozawa naturalization based on scientific claims that Asians were a separate race. Yet, one year later, in the case of *United States v. Thind* (1923), Mr. Thind was denied naturalization even though racially he belonged to the Caucasian race since he was from India. The Supreme Court denied Mr. Thind citizenship because they determined that although scientifically he might be white, socially he did not look white and was not white as deemed by society (Lopez, 1996).

Over the years, the Supreme Court decisions of *Ozawa v. United States* (1922) and *United States v. Thind* (1923) delivered contradictory rulings regarding race. According to Lopez (1996), the message to immigrants of color as well as people of color was that they were not welcomed in the United States. For those individuals who were born in the United States but were not considered white, there was a need to justify their citizenship status. For those individuals who immigrated and were not considered white,

their citizenship status depended on the Court's response to common knowledge determined by mainstream society. As Lopez (1996) articulated:

> The reversal between *Ozawa* and *Thind* is dramatic: while in the earlier case the Court seemed eager to rely on science, in *Thind* it repudiated the "speculations of the ethnologist," instead resting the test of race solely on "familiar observations and knowledge. (p. 92)

It is important to note that both of these two cases were unanimous and written by the same justice, Oliver Wendell Holmes. In addition, Lopez argued that these cases challenged the notion that "race is not a measured fact, but a preserved fiction" (p.102). The complexity and discrimination of these Supreme Court decisions would become problematic for immigrants who arrived in the United States.

The third period of immigration was important to Latin@s. Due to the economic demand for cheap immigrant labor, the United States struggled with how to incorporate Latin@s while also holding racist attitudes towards them (Chavez, 1984). These conflicting tendencies manifested themselves in legislation such as the Immigration Acts of 1891 and 1924, the Bracero Program, and Operation Wetback (Acuña, 1981; Alba, 1990; Garcia, 1980). Although the first law to impact Latin@s was the Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty of 1848, it was not until after the Mexican revolution of 1911 that nearly a quarter of a million Mexicans immigrated to the United States during that decade (Cardoso, 1980; USCIS, 2003b). Although Mexican immigrants have made up the largest percentage of Latin@ immigrants, there has been insufficient data available for Mexican immigrants until 1908, which left a void in determining how many Mexican nationals already lived or immigrated to the southwest (Greenwood & McDowell, 1999).

Not until the Immigration Acts of 1891 and 1924 did the United States establish a legal entry to the United States that required the federal government to inspect, reject,

admit and process immigrants as well as create a border patrol along the Mexican-U.S. border (Immigration Act, 1891, 1924). Later in 1940, all immigrants were required to register as aliens with the government in an attempt to verify each person residing in the United States (Alien Registration Act, 1940).

Similar to the economic need for cheap labor for Chinese immigrants to come to the United States (Takaki, 1998), the need for cheap labor in agriculture was in high demand, such that another guest worker program developed known as the Bracero Program that brought in Mexican immigrants (Perea, 1999). Two Bracero programs, one from 1917 to 1921, and the other from 1942 to 1964, strengthened the perception of Mexicans as foreigners and good for cheap labor as well as vulnerable to acts of discrimination (Acuña, 1981; Gonzales, 2005). Sanchez (1997) further elaborated on the abuses of Mexicans in forms of substandard housing, insufficient food, inadequate wages and unsafe working conditions during this twenty plus year stretch. According to Passel (1999), the creation of the Bracero Program was the first legislation to address the farm labor movement from Mexico. Over 5 million Mexicans worked in the United States on a temporary basis, which Gonzalez (2005) argued served to place Latin@s in a subordinate position as well as United States and Mexicans into a neo-colonial status.

The Operation Wetback of 1954 proved to be one of the largest assaults against Latin@s, as more than 1 million Mexicans were deported back to United States (Acuña, 1981; Chavez, 1980; Garcia, 1980). Operation Wetback was a repatriation project of the Immigration Service to remove undocumented Mexican immigrants from the Southwest while the Bracero Program ensued (Garcia, 1980; Perea, 1999). According to Garcia, the Mexican government began withholding their workers while filing grievances against the

United States for maltreatment of Mexican workers. In response, various agricultural groups pressured the Immigration & Naturalization Services (INS) (now the USCIS) to allow undocumented immigrants to enter, resulting in the increased flow of undocumented immigrants by 6,000 percent.

With the increase of undocumented Mexican immigrants, the United States government began a semi-military operation of search and seizure of immigrants with the assistance of local, state, and federal border patrol agents. Garcia (1980) adds that the heavy-handed methods of abusive police-state tactics as well as the deportation of legal U.S. citizens of Mexican descent led to the end of the operation. Nonetheless, the combination of Operation Wetback and the Bracero Program was a clear example of the invited and exclusionary attitude that the United States had towards Mexicans (Acuña, 1981; Garcia, 1980). This policy affected ultimately other Latin@ immigrants as well.

Even though race based immigration and naturalization laws were overturned during the fourth period of immigration through the Hart-Cellar Act (Immigration and Nationality Act, 1965), treatment towards immigrants of color was still impacted by historic and contemporary nativism (Alba & Nee, 1997). From the inception of the first naturalization law, only whites were able to naturalize until the 1870 Naturalization Act when only immigrants of white and African descent were able to become citizens in the United States (Naturalization Act, 1870). As several scholars (Bell, 1993; Crenshaw, 1988; Delgado, 1995; Lopez, 1996) concluded, the first three periods of immigration had legally and socially shaped the racial make-up of people as well as attitudes of citizens to believe in the myth that the United States came to be populated by Europeans as accidental rather than a construction of laws based on a racist ideology.

Fourth Period of Immigration to the United States

The fourth period, which includes from 1965 to present day, is similar to past immigration periods with the exception of an increase in numbers of undocumented and immigrants of color. First, similar to the first period of immigration, there has been a transformation of the racial and ethnic make up of the United States. With the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act (1965), immigration patterns shifted in which the majority of immigrants came from Latin America or Asia (USCB, 2001). According to Passel, et al. (2004), over 65% of all immigrants were from Latin America or Asia since the 1960's, increasing to 86% during the 1980's and 1990's. Overall, immigrants have represented no more than 12% of the total population in the United States during the past 30 years (USCB, 2001).

Second, the large numbers of immigrants during the 1980's and 1990's have surpassed the numbers of immigrants during the 20th century of the third period of immigration (USCIS, 2003b). In terms of Latin@s, the number of immigrants from Latin American countries has grown exponentially in recent decades, from less than 10% of the foreign born population prior to 1960 to more than 50% of the immigrant population currently (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006a; USCB, 2001; Urban Institute, 2001). Even though current percentages are not as high as in the past, an awareness of a greater number of immigrants prevails among native-born citizens. Unfortunately, this awareness has produced a heightened level of anxiety (Perea, 1999; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). As of 2000, the USCB (2001) determined that half of the foreign born population was from a Latin American country. With this increase, Latin@s are now becoming a major factor in

shaping the United States in every aspect of the population, society, and politics (Alba, 1990; Quinones-Rosado, 1998; Rumbaut, 1997).

Third, similar to the guest worker program of the Chinese and Mexicans of the second and third period of immigration, most current immigration legislation has focused on developing a guest worker program while eliminating undocumented immigration (Perea, 1999). Legislation has included the Refugee Act (1980), Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) (1986) and Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) (1996). Given an average of 70% of undocumented immigrants and 40% of documented immigrants are from Latin America, Latin@s are at the forefront of defining immigrant issues (Passel, et al. 2004; National Immigration Forum, 2000).

In the 1970's, speculation by government officials indicated that somewhere between 2 and 12 million undocumented people lived in the United States (Castillo, 1978; Warren & Passel, 1987). The creation of IRCA (1986) was an attempt to curb undocumented immigration after Immigration Naturalization Services officially reported erroneously high estimates of undocumented immigrants in 1980 (Haines & Rosenblum, 1999). This law included penalties for employers hiring undocumented workers and allowed 2.5 million estimated undocumented immigrants to apply for residency (Passel & Fix 1994). In addition, it allowed residency for undocumented immigrants who had resided in the United States for no fewer than five years (IRCA, 1986). Unfortunately, as Hayes (2001) concluded, "the beneficiaries of undocumented workers in terms of the profit margin have always been employers and American citizens who benefit from cheap labor by paying less at the cash register" (p.10).

Undocumented immigration continued to grow and the passage of IIRIRA in 1996 was supposed to be a reformed IRCA (Hayes, 2001). The IIRIRA (1996) legislated increased penalties for employers who hired undocumented workers, augmented border patrol agents and provided more independence for immigration officials to deport individuals (Sierra, Carillo, Desipio, & Jones-Correa, 2000). In addition, documented residents were denied welfare benefits, leaving immigrants to their own social capital to find support. However, as Hayes (2001) pointed out, the creation of North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and contradictory United States immigration policy have led to an increasing growth of undocumented immigrants. As Rodriguez (1996) suggested, it is nearly impossible to detain the autonomous movement of people in their search for basic economic survival.

The impact of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 changed immigration policy drastically when the 107th Congress passed the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA PATRIOT) Act (2001). This law has come under heavy criticism as it exempted immigrants and non-citizens from being granted basic human rights and due process (Jonas & Tactaquin, 2004). Such examples include the fact that undocumented immigrants are subjected to preventative detentions and deportations without a judicial hearing or right to appeal all of which can be held in secret

The events of September 11, 2001, became dangerous for all immigrants, especially those who are undocumented. For example, according to Polakow-Suransky (2001), many family members of undocumented workers who perished on that day feared to come forward and acknowledge their beloved family members, even though

immigration officials stated that they would not seek immigration status information for rescue and recovery efforts. Many immigrants were reluctant to risk what little security they already had as undocumented immigrants. Regardless of the change in contemporary immigration law, the impact the laws have in general on the daily lives of undocumented immigrants is such that most continue with their struggle to survive.

The 109th Congress attempted to reform immigration legislation with two versions H.R. 4437 (Border Protection, Antiterrorism and Illegal Immigration Control Act, 2005) and Senate Bill 2611 (Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act, 2006). Although neither bill passed Congress, the actions of Congress galvanized anti and pro immigrant supporters (Thornburgh, 2006). The H.R. 4437 bill intended to consider persons crossing the border without proper documentation a felony, plus any person or organization who assisted undocumented immigrants to reside in the United States to be liable for criminal penalties. On the other hand, the Senate Bill 2611 attempted to tighten border security, establish an immigrant guest worker program, and offer a path to citizenship for millions of undocumented immigrants already in the United States. Though neither bill was able to pass, the mobilization of more than one million Latin@s on May 1, 2006 placed the immigration debate at the forefront of people's minds (Saad & Cottin, 2006).

In light of the growth of the undocumented population and "war on terror" declared after the September 11th attacks, Latin@s are often positioned in a complex situation. A negative example includes a United States citizen born in Nicaragua who had her passport stolen as she entered the United States. Instead of officials doing a thorough investigation, she was deported immediately back to Nicaragua and her case was not resolved until weeks later (National Immigration Forum, 1997). In another case, a young

gentleman from the United States was deported to Mexico after he had participated in an interview with a local journalist in North Carolina (Wizda, 1998). When the Immigration and Naturalization officials investigated the story, they found him and deported him back to Mexico. The consequences of these new immigration laws have impacted not only the undocumented community but also Latin@s in general. Latin@s have been both invited and excluded from entering the United States by being labeled as refugees, asylees, guest workers, or undocumented immigrants.

Illegal Aliens or Human Beings

The term “illegal alien” is derived from the 1798 Alien and Sedition Act where foreigners where regarded as “aliens” because of their anti-U.S. government opinion Aliens Act, 1798). This term “alien” was further used in the 1885 where foreigners were deemed “alien” and excluded from working in the United States (Alien Contract Labor Law, 1885). According to several scholars (Alba, 1990; Perea, 1999; Quinones-Rosado, 1998), “illegal alien” is a term and concept that is aligned with racist terminology and attitudes of the past and present. As noted earlier, this study will use the term “undocumented” to describe non-documented and non-authorized population. While most immigrants come to the United States to improve their lives, their immigration status is often determined by which country they came from. For example, Nicaraguans and Cubans, from countries whose leaders have been at odds with the United States administration, have had a much easier time receiving residency in comparison to Salvadorans or Guatemalans, whose leaders have not opposed United States policies (National Immigration Forum, 2000). Although immigrants from these four countries

may immigrate for the same reasons, the relationship of these countries to the United States have had a significant role in the preferential treatment that the immigrants receive.

Facts and Numbers of the Undocumented Population

In 2005, over 191 million migrants existed worldwide, up from 176 million in 2000 (Omelaniuk, 2005). In addition, an estimated 30 to 40 million undocumented migrants worldwide comprise 15% to 20% of the overall immigrant population (Omelaniuk, 2005; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2005). Globally and historically, as long as there has been a need for survival, individuals have taken it upon themselves to migrate from one nation-state to another (Rodriguez, 1996). This fact correlates with research that indicates the majority of immigrants migrating to the United States come for basic economic survival (Bean, et al., 1990; USCIS, 2003b)

The USCB uses five methods to determine how undocumented immigrants are identified as the unauthorized resident population; they die, change status, emigrate, leave and come back with a visa, or they are removed by the government officials (National Immigration Forum, 2000). In essence, the common method to define undocumented immigrants is a person who enters the country without inspection or have their visas expired, but there is no direct count of undocumented residents (Office of Immigration Statistics, 2006; Passel, et al. 2004; Pew Hispanic Center, 2002b).

As noted earlier in chapter I, there are discrepancies in the undocumented population. The lack of a common definition is a result of slight varying assumptions used by the Census and U.S. surveys (Pew Hispanic Center, 2002b). Numerous immigrants have the legal authority to reside in the United States, but are still prohibited

from finding employment and obtaining a driver's license and therefore are considered undocumented (Migration Policy Institute, 2005; Pew Hispanic Center, 2006a). At the same time, there are individuals who crossed the border without inspection and purposefully try to live going unnoticed (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006b). As Raymondo (1988) articulated, determining the number of undocumented immigrants "is like trying to shovel water" (p.1). Hence the challenge is not only finding undocumented immigrants, but also having a common definition. As a result, there have been multiple population counts for undocumented individuals.

Regardless of how many undocumented immigrants reside in the United States, an essential piece to understanding the undocumented population is grasping the fluidity of immigration status. Once immigrants have entered and stay in the United States, their immigration status can fluctuate due to changes and interpretations of the law. With immigration laws, such as the Bracero Program, Refugee Act, IRCA, IIRIRA, Temporary Protective Status, immigrants have become legal or not, without even having left or re-entered the country (Haines & Rosenblum, 1999). Even organizations that focus their services on Latin@s, such as the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), have debated as to how to take a stand on undocumented immigrants (Murata, 2001).

Every year millions of undocumented immigrants change their status or leave the United States. According to Passel et, al. (2004), nearly 1 million immigrants entered the country without documentation as 500,000 undocumented immigrants left in 1999. An estimation of 1.5 million undocumented immigrants were already here in 1990 and 5.5 million came within the next ten years. Furthermore, once undocumented immigrants

have entered the United States, many move beyond the border-states as immigrants find economic opportunities such as 8% living in New York, 7% in Illinois and 7% in Florida (Passel, et al. 2004; USCIS, 2003b). Uniquely, undocumented immigrants in California represent nearly one-third of the total immigrant population that is undocumented.

Why Undocumented Immigrants Come to the United States

Most researchers acknowledge that undocumented immigrants come to the United States for their own personal survival as well as for fulfilling U.S. labor needs (Aguirre & Saenz, 2002; Borjas, 1989; Urban Institute, 2003, et al. 2003; Chiswick, 1997; Passel & Fix, 1994; 2003; Powers, et al. 1998; USCIS, 2003b). Historically, U.S. immigration policies ignored the fact that immigrants occupied some of the lowest wage positions in this country (Hayes, 2001). Approximately 60% of undocumented immigrants are employed in farming, cleaning or construction, which often have the lowest wage (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006a; Urban Institute, 2003). As a result, labor unions and employers, in their own self-interests, have lobbied successfully to ensure a steady flow of immigrants (Sierra, et al. 2000).

Although the focus on undocumented immigration has been on limiting the number of immigrants from crossing the U.S. and Mexican border, researchers have declared that nearly 50% of undocumented immigrants have this status because of expired visas or work-permits (Passel, et al. 2004; Pew Hispanic Center, 2006c). Therefore, researchers point out that focusing on closing the border will do little to prevent undocumented immigrants residing in the United States (Perea, 1999; Sierra, et al., 2000). Scholars criticize that policies increasing border patrols may not necessarily detract potential immigrants from crossing without detection. Rather these policies make

crossing more costly and life threatening (Sierra, et al. 2000; Eschbach, Hagan, Rodriguez, Hernandez-Leon, & Bailey, 1999).

In spite of the risks, immigrants continue to cross the border as more border patrol agents and vigilante groups scan the border. Even though an estimated 1,600 deaths took place from 1993 to 1997, many more have gone unrecorded because the bodies of the decedents often do not come to the attention of government officials (Eschbach et al., 1999). Nevertheless, immigrants continue to make the dangerous journey. For example, the pregnant wife of an undocumented worker came across the border without detection from Mexico in search of her husband who had died in an accident (Polakow-Suransky, 2001).

By not having documentation, undocumented Latin@s have often become the classic scapegoat for economic hardships in a community (Mandel & Farrell, 1992). However, research reveal conflicting evidence. In one research study, Huddle (1994) determined that undocumented immigrants are a drain to the U.S. economy. On the other hand, Vernez and McCarthy (1996) estimated in a Research and Development (R.A.N.D.) study that the local, state, and federal governments receive 25 billion dollars more from undocumented immigrants than the costs of services provided. Vernez and McCarthy (1996) criticized the study by Huddle (1994) in that it did not take into account the social security taxes, unemployment insurance, vehicle registration fees, and gasoline taxes. This contradiction is important to note in that policies have been created on the basis of inaccurate data.

What Undocumented Immigrants Do Once They Arrive

With one out of every 2 undocumented immigrants coming from Mexico, Hinojosa and Schey (1995) argued that the United States is indebted to Mexico for producing such a low-wage labor force. Therefore, the United States government should understand how these immigrants contribute to the economy through immigrant-owned businesses or consumer spending by immigrants. According to several reports (National Immigration Forum, 2000; Pew Hispanic Center, 2002, 2005), undocumented immigrants were employed in either manufacturing, retail such as restaurants and personal services as in landscaping, or homecare. Furthermore, among the male working age of 18-64 years old, 94% of the undocumented males were employed, compared to 86% of male legal immigrants and 83% of native-born males (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006d). Because undocumented individuals often have had minimal education, they were underrepresented in white-collar occupations and seem to be concentrated in private household industries. Consequently, they earn less than what they could potentially and are easily exposed to exploitation by the employer.

Even though undocumented immigrants have represented nearly 5% of the total the United States workforce (Urban Institute, 2003), several studies have indicated that undocumented immigrants have earned less than documented immigrants (Chiswick, 1997; Powers, et al., 1998). In addition, day laborers, those who are not employed long-term but must look for work on a regular basis, make up less than half of the undocumented population (Migration Policy Institute, 2005). On the contrary, the majority of undocumented immigrants have permanent employment working with business and still do not qualify for many social services (Passel & Fix, 1994). Yet,

undocumented immigrants are paid an average of 15% - 20% less than documented immigrants for comparable work, thus generating significant profits for business (Hinojosa & Schey, 1995).

Beyond employment, many undocumented immigrants are negatively impacted by the inequities and restrictions in education. While the Supreme Court decision in *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) concluded that undocumented children had a right to be educated by the state, anti-immigrant sentiment and legislation persist. In 1994, a majority of voters in California passed Proposition 187, which attempted to deny the right to public education to undocumented children. This law, which was eventually declared unconstitutional and never implemented, revealed the deep nature of anti-immigrant public sentiment. The fact that this law gained so much support left fear in the minds and hearts of undocumented immigrants in California (Gonzalez & Huerta-Macias 1997).

In studying the educational attainment of undocumented youth, researchers (Dozier, 1995; Gonzalez & Huerta-Macias, 1997) found that these youth were often motivated to succeed in school as they see this as their only option to achieve success in the United States. Unfortunately, most students are not able to overcome the insurmountable obstacles that they face (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Immigrant students overall have higher dropout rates than U.S. born high school students. According to a study by the Pew Hispanic Center (2005a), immigrant students represented only 8% of the total youth population, but 25% of all high school dropouts.

Society's negative perception of undocumented immigrants contributes to the personal violence enacted upon these immigrants, creating a cycle of abuse (Solis, 2003). This cycle of abuse begins with the lack of services and restrictive legislation placed on

children. Solis (2003) argued that these children are set up to become violent youths themselves, because they are given the message that they are unwanted. Even if these children do not become violent, Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001) concluded that many of these immigrant children mirror the negative perspectives held by this society.

From economic and educational perspectives, undocumented immigrants have been perceived inaccurately and unjustly with conflicting research evidence (Alba, 1990; National Association of Hispanic Journalists, 2002; Sanchez, 1997). Their contributions to the United States are often undervalued, and their typical employment in the agricultural, caretaker, landscaper, and restaurant business creates the sense of subservient class. Public perception of the term “illegal alien” status tends to undermine their humanity by creating a permanent underclass caste system (Solis, 2003).

Navigation of Undocumented Immigrants

Race and Racism

Omi and Winant (1993) argued that most multiracial countries have one racial group that rises to power, which in turn leads to legislation based on the views of that one dominant racial group. The United States is no exception in that the foundation of the Constitution was legally constructed to include only white males who owned property, excluding people of color, white males without property, and women (Lopez, 1996). Several scholars (Bell, 1993; Bennett, 1988, Lopez, 1996) have illustrated how laws were created on the basis of racism to maintain power over those people deemed as non-white. Over the past century, racial categories have changed overtime in the United States as demonstrated by the racial classification for individuals according to the U.S. Census Bureau (Lopez, 1996). Early Census racial classifications since 1820 included terms such

as Mulatto, Quadroon, Octoroon, Chinese, Japanese, Mexican and Indian to refer to people of color (USCB, 1975).

Wiebe (1976) articulated this point when he stated "Although every citizen could claim a basic set of legal rights, some of those citizens would almost certainly remain outsiders….Each generation passed to the next an open question of who belonged to American society" (p.95). Although first generation immigrants often were restricted from fully participating in society, people of color who were second, third, even fourth generation immigrants were also seen as foreigners (Oboler, 1995). In particular Latin@s continue to be seen as foreigners, making it difficult for many to assimilate into U.S. society (Chavez, 1984; Perea, 1999; Quinones-Rosado, 1998).

The notion of race first came into existence in the 16th century, when Europeans began to come into more contact with Africans and Native Americans, while viewing them as sub-humans (Bennett, 1988). Race later became a prominent factor in justifying the enslavement of millions of Africans and Native Americans creating a mythical white superiority (Zinn, 2003). Through the 17th and 19th century, scientists attempted to distinguish these categories as biological constructs based on color, shape of body and disposition (Eze, 1997). The notion of white superiority arose as a result of the explanation of physical features as manifestations of factors such as intelligence and social behaviors that later provided fuel for the advancement of the Eugenics movement of the 20th century (Eze, 1997; Fish, 2002; Omi & Winant, 1986).

By the end of the 18th century and building on these premises, a worldview on race was formulated. Over time, the United States created its own eugenics movement by accepting the hierarchy of human inequality based on race (Pandian, 1985). The

extension of this racist ideology associated negative attitudes, beliefs, myths and assumptions with the world's non-European peoples. Consequently, myths about white superiority over Africans and Native Americans as savages, Asians as Orientals and Latin@s as lazy drunks permeated its way into mainstream society (Bennett, 1988, Takaki, 1993; Majfud, 2005).

Omi and Winant (1986) added that the concept of race is dynamic in that the categorization of race has changed overtime and has been applied differently in different environments. Along with others, they critiqued the concept of race as socially biased, artificially constructed and applied hypocritically, based on a hierarchal system to benefit people with lighter skin tone (Bell, 1993; Delgado, 1995; Hitchcock, 2002; Omi & Winant, 1986; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001; Tatum, 1997). In a racialized society like the United States, people of color are grouped and generalized whereas whites are individualized. This phenomenon has resulted in minorities having greater susceptibility to being stereotyped (Omi & Winant, 1986; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Hence, understanding racial identity development is significant for the Latin@ immigrant.

Critical Race Theory

Du Bois (1903/1989) was one of the first pioneers to position race within a social and historical construct (Omi & Winant, 1993) with his argument that race is the central construct for understanding inequity (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Critical race theorists also contend that "racism is a permanent component of American life" (Bell, 1993, p. 13). Critical race theory challenges the biological notion of race as well as the oversimplification of racism (Bell, 1993; Crenshaw 1988; Delgado, 1995). It builds upon

the theoretical understandings of race, which Du Bois began to develop over a century ago but which few have taken on until the emergence of critical race theorists. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) stipulated that race has been relatively untheorized unlike gender and class. Instead, race has often blended with the notions of ethnicity and class, remaining excluded in a systematic analysis of inequity.

Solórzano and Yosso (2002) offered five themes to summarize the foundations of critical race theory. First, critical race theory has a commitment towards social justice by offering transformative solutions to racial, gender, and class oppression. For example, this framework challenges multicultural educators to recognize and address the growing tensions that exist among various groups rather than gloss over these differences in a false sense of tolerance (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Second, a critical race framework utilizes the interdisciplinary knowledge of law, education, ethnic and women's studies, history and sociology to better comprehend the experiences of people of color. One example is educators examining their own curriculum by countering ethnic studies and history against each other to challenge cultural deficit theories (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001).

The third theme of critical race theory is separating race and racism from the analysis of gender and class. Critical race theorists postulate that racism has a micro and macro component; it emerges institutionally and individually on both an unconscious and conscious level, and impacts both the individual and the group (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Although class and gender do intersect with race, these factors alone do not explain the inequities between whites and people of color (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). By recognizing the central role that racism has had in the structure of education,

law, and policies, critical race theory acknowledges the essential significance of race in the United States (Delgado, 1995).

One example of critical race theory's application is the analysis of race in the interaction with democracy and capitalism. Bell (1993) underscored the tension between human rights and property rights throughout the history of the United States. In the development of the constitution, rights were given to property owners that went in direct contrast with the human rights of African slaves. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) have identified the limits of a traditional civil rights approach to address inequality in that the focus has been on achieving a more democratic state while ignoring the structural inequality of capitalism linked with democracy to build the United States. In addition, Bell (1993) argued that civil rights legislation could only go so far because these policies threatened white social status. As a result, the progress towards individual rights while overlooking property rights has still kept a majority of people of color to be disenfranchised.

Challenging assumptions of dominant ideology is the fourth theme. Critical race theory problematizes mainstream beliefs regarding culture, intelligence, and capability. Solórzano and Yosso (2001) postulated, "Critical race theory challenges the dominant discourse on race and racism as it relates to education by examining how education theory and practice are used to subordinate certain racial and ethnic groups" (p. 2). Too often, the inability of minorities to improve their economic status or complete their education has been viewed from a deficit model perspective (Bell, 1993; Crenshaw, 1988). Omi and Winant (1993) highlighted that the social issues of welfare, crime, immigrants and educational problems have been racialized. As a result, people of color

are placed into three negative categories; intelligence stereotype, character stereotype, or physical appearance stereotype (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Such examples include descriptions of people of color as dumb or slow, violent or lazy, dirty or scary.

In response, critical race theorists question and challenge when subtle statements of racism surface such as, "You're not like the rest of them. You're different. When I was talking about those Blacks, I really wasn't talking about you" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001, p. 6). By confronting mainstream assumptions, critical race theory rejects "a paradigm that attempts to be everything to everyone and consequently becomes nothing for anyone, allowing the status quo to prevail" (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 62).

The fifth theme has been a significant contribution to critical race theory in acknowledging the experiences of students and communities of color as legitimate in exposing oppression (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Delgado (1995) proposed the concept of "counter-storytelling" as a tool for deconstructing the stories of those in power, reflecting dominant discourse. Critical race theorists recognize that disenfranchised people have different experiences and methods of storytelling than enfranchised people. Listening to people with multiple lenses of experiencing the world gives voice to those lived experiences rarely recognized in the humanities or social sciences. Counter-storytelling furthers the understanding that race is a socially constructed reality. Not only can counter-storytelling challenge the perceived wisdom of those in power, but also can provide a context to understand the established belief systems. Furthermore, it can build community among the oppressed as they begin to share and learn of their similar experiences.

Since theories of race have tended to evolve within the limited context of the United States, the challenge for the 21st century is how to critique race from a global perspective (McCarthy & Crichlow, 1993). Omi and Winant (1993) proposed three requirements for examining race into the 21st century society. First, race must be placed in the context of contemporary political relationships since conceptions of race often change with time. Second, race must be broadened to reach a global perspective, as the pan-ethnic communities of blackness no longer fit appropriately with the pan-ethnic communities of Latin@s and Asians. Third, race must not lose its historical framework since race has been transformed from an objective biological fact to an illusionary social construct.

As Omi and Winant (1993) concluded, the danger of not critically assessing race can lead society into a regressive concept of race. “As previous assumptions erode, white identity loses its transparency and the easy illusion with ‘racelessness’ that accompanies racial domination” (p.8). In other words, the transition towards re-defining race has the risk of causing those in power to deny the existence of racism. This tendency is currently exemplified in political proposals to remove race as a factor in data collection such as Proposition 209 (1996).

Latin@ Critical Race Theory

Latin@ critical race theory (LatCrit) is aligned with critical race theory in that the focus is to confront the dominant discourse on race and racism (Valdes, 2000). LatCrit expands on the work of critical race theorists in addressing issues such as language, immigration, ethnicity, culture, phenotype, identity, and sexuality as viewed within the context of Latin@ pan-ethnicity (Johnson, 1998; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).

LatCrit acknowledges that racial oppression alone cannot account for oppression based on language and immigration; rather it argues that the intersection of all of these components assist in understanding the subordination of Latin@s (Yosso, 2005). Ultimately, LatCrit theorists must conduct a critical analysis that reflects anti-subordination while maintaining solidarity within the diverse Latin@ community (Valdes, 2000).

Delgado Bernal (2002) maintains that the experiential knowledge of Latin@s legitimates and is critical to understanding their oppression. While one Latin@ comprehends Latin@ness to be racialized, another Latin@ may view it differently. This difference is a result that the concept of race for Latin@s has been applied inconsistently (Burns, 1990; Flores & Benmayor, 1997; Oboler, 1995; Portes, 1996). Even families have been divided along racial lines where siblings with similar superficial characteristics or phenotypes have been classified as different races (Grillo, 2000). Grillo mentioned instances where Latin@ siblings who went to school in the segregated south were separated by race simply because of the social norms of the day known as Jim Crow laws. This example demonstrated how different criteria are used to categorize people in the United States, and its sociopolitical characteristics are reflected in its racial categories. Similarly, the USCB has changed its racial categories throughout the history of the United States (USCB, 2002).

LatCrit theorists recognize that while race is the central lens from which to critically analyze, the concept of race varies due to the different immigration backgrounds (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Another issue for Latin@s has been the particular understanding of race within the United States as opposed to their country

of origin. Yosso (2005) articulates “the traditional paradigm for understanding U.S. relations is often a Black/White binary, which limits discussions about race and racism” (p.72). The racial categories here are not the same as those in Latin America. Some Latin American countries use several shades of color to categorize people, such as: *blanco* for those with European ancestry, *indio* for those with indigenous ancestry, *mestizo* for those from both European and indigenous ancestry, *mulato* for those from African ancestry and *moreno* for those from both European and African ancestry (Burns, 1990).

Oboler (1995) emphasized the notion that Latin@s construct their social and racial distinctions in gradations, as compared to the black/white paradigm in the United States. Furthermore, *mestizo* immigrants of mixed heritage without strong indigenous features not only cross from one border to another, but also cross the color line (Rosaldo, 1989). Some of these immigrants have had the privilege of escaping racism because they were not indigenous. Thus, to continue this privilege and to avoid moving from being a majority to a minority, Latin@ immigrants sometimes avoid being classified in any way that will equate them with African Americans (Grillo, 2000).

Another focus of LatCrit theory is the role that language plays in the experience of Latin@ in the United States. Delgado (1995) expresses the importance of valuing the life experiences of marginalized people. Their life stories provide a sense of self-preservation, and the exchange of real stories can assist in overcoming the false notion that there is only one way to view the world. For example, Latin@ parents are often accused of not having high expectations for their children’s academic success in schools. Yet, according to research by Bejarano (2005) and Olsen (1997), Latin@ parents revealed the true reason for their lack of involvement, once they were in a safe and

trusting environment to talk. These parents explained that they did not participate due to apathy, but rather due to their fears of being questioned about their immigration status and discriminated against at school for not speaking English. Their “counter-stories” provided evidence which went against the myth of Latin@ parents not caring.

Because critical race and LatCrit theories focus on how power and privilege subordinate those oppressed, they can serve as lenses for looking at undocumented Latin@ immigrants. Not all issues mentioned above may correspond to each and every undocumented Latin@ immigrant. At some point in their lives Latin@ immigrants may clash with the dominant ideology where they may encounter various forms of oppression not encountered in their home country (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). For example, an immigrant may have held a high-end position in their home country, but then placed on the lower end of the scale in the United States because of skin complexion, foreign accent or lack of a credential recognized by the United States. While critical race theorists focus on the overall subordination of people of color, LatCrit theorists are concerned with a sense of Latin@ pan-ethnicity that addresses other forms of subordination such as immigration status, sexuality, culture, language, accent, and phenotype which uniquely encompass the diverse experiences of Latin@s (Yosso, 2005).

Assimilation and Acculturation Theory

Adapting to a new country has been not only challenging, but also impossible for some immigrants (Barkan, 1995; Gans, 1973; Gordon, 1964; Kallen, 1924/1970). During the massive immigration waves of the early 20th century, nearly one-third of those who arrived ended up returning to their homeland (Rothstein, 1998). All immigrants are confronted with the challenge of how to best adapt to their new environment.

Assimilation models reflect the immigration patterns over the past 200-year history as scholars only took into account those issues present at the time (Barkan, 1995). For example, scholars incorporated the obstacles of language and religion into the assimilation models that mirrored the first two immigration periods. During the third and fourth immigration periods, scholars had to address how barriers of race and racism impacted their assimilation models.

One of the first models suggested by Park and Burgess (1921) proposed that assimilation occurred in four stages: contact, competition, accommodation and finally assimilation. During the first period of immigration from the 1600's to 1820, the majority of immigrants were from English speaking countries (USCB, 1975). Not until the second period of immigration from 1820 to 1880 did immigrants appear different from the native born of the United States (Kallen, 1924/1970). The diverse features brought by the Irish and Germans were their religion and language, for which they were discriminated against. But because earlier immigrants predominantly were white coming from European countries, the children of these immigrants could pass as white once overcoming language barriers.

Initially, debates arose as to how best to assimilate immigrants. In contrast with the theory of Park and Burgess (1921), Kallen (1924/1970) proposed a model of cultural pluralism in the 1920's after the large influx of immigrants the decade before. Kallen argued that although people could volunteer to belong to a country or social club, they couldn't choose and easily move in and out of their ethnic community. It was at this crossroad that Kallen promoted the notion of a pluralistic society.

During the third period of immigration from 1880 to 1930, the issue of race becomes paramount for two reasons. First, 27 million immigrants came to the United States (USCIS, 2003b), which at that time was the highest influx of immigrants that the country had witnessed. These non-white immigrants brought with them new customs and languages (Gans, 1997; Glazer& Moynihan, 1970; Gordon, 1964). Second, the internal migration of African Americans that began in the 1880s (Greenwood & McDowell, 1999) initiated the contact with northern whites and African Americans. According to the USCB (2002) from 1920 to 1960, over 6 million African Americans living in the United States migrated from rural areas of the South to cities in the North and West. Consequently, the majority of whites began to come in contact with African Americans, whereas earlier the majority of African Americans had been largely segregated geographically in the south. These two migration patterns heightened the issue of racism and the role that race played in the full integration of individuals.

Gordon (1964) developed a model of a cultural and structural assimilation process that addressed barriers that kept immigrants of color from socializing successfully. Although Du Bois (1903/1989) had defined the color line over 50 years earlier, Gordon (1964) challenged conventional wisdom of assimilation theory to include the perspectives of immigrants of color. Gordon was one of the first theorists to recognize that immigrants of color encounter impenetrable barriers in assimilating due to not being white. He acknowledged that racism prevailed in keeping people of color from assimilating. Scholars (Barkan, 1995; Gans, 1973; Glazer & Moynihan, 1970) have noted structural constraints such as legislative policies that prohibited people of color from fully participating in society.

With the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act (1965), legal discrimination based on race ended and the fourth period of immigration began. With the end of racial quotas, over 75% of the immigrants came from Latin American and Asian countries since 1965, whereas before the 1960s, nearly 90% of the immigrants came from European countries (Suarez-Orozco 2000). During this fourth period of immigration from 1965 to present, new models such as one created by Barkan (1995), elaborated upon the previous models of Gordon (1964), allowing more flexibility for the complex process of multiple outcomes of immigrant assimilation.

As mainstream society has been forced to grapple with incorporating new waves of immigration, immigrants have often stayed within the neighborhoods of people who shared their same customs and language (Gibson & Ogbu, 1991; Handlin, 1951/2002). With the rise of Spanish speaking populations, cities like New York, Miami, San Francisco and Los Angeles commonly have pockets where Spanish is the dominant language spoken (Olsen, 1997). Thus Gibson and Ogbu (1991) stated that immigrants of color acculturated, rather than assimilated, to the United States society due to the inherent barriers that society placed upon immigrants of color from full participation. The ability of Latin@ immigrants to either acculturate or assimilate is often determined by complex issues, such as language, racial composition, as well as their own will and the will of the dominant society (Alba & Nee, 1997; Flores & Benmayor, 1997; Rumbaut, 1997).

Latin@ Immigrants

In analyzing how nations evolved to create a sense of national community, Anderson (1983) argued that nationalities were cultural constructs where people would imagine a collective identity reinforced by the centralization of government and services.

Thus, the strength in building unity in people who would never meet each other was based on the ability of the nation-state to unify people under common ideals such as language, religion and race. Anderson further maintained that language played an important role in maintaining a national sense of identity. This analysis is useful in understanding how minority groups such as Latin@s in the United States have developed a sense of community that Anderson coined “imagined communities”(p. 7).

Oboler (1995) asserted that Latin@s in general have been seen as foreigners, therefore creating the space for Latin@s to define their own community. Therefore, most Latin@s have kept a strong language base not only in the home, but also in their communities. Consequently, people have collectively created “imagined communities” with other people based on a larger bond (Anderson, 1983). Although Latin@s have not always been fully accepted into society, they have found a way to create their own sense of community. Rosaldo and Flores (1993) coined the term “cultural citizenship” to define the combination of a range of social practices so that Latin@s can establish their own community (p. 2).

The need for Latin@s to create “cultural citizenship” is a direct result of the United States not valuing the cultural capital that Latin@s bring with them as well as perceiving Latin@s as not invested in obtaining permanent residence in the United States (Bejarano, 2005). As Flores and Benmayor (1997) asserted, immigrants unfortunately must sacrifice their own culture in order to be perceived as even eligible for full citizenship. As Rosaldo (1989) clarified, “Full citizenship and cultural visibility appear to be inversely related. When one increases, the other decreases. Full citizens lack culture, and those most culturally endowed lack full citizenship” (p.198). Furthermore, identifying oneself as

Latin@ can also be a political decision aimed to strengthen the Latin@ community (Oboler, 1995).

Even though Latin@s make up such a diverse group politically, racially and geographically, they do unite around certain issues. For example, Latin@s have come together during the passage of H.R. 4437 (Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act, 2005) where nearly one million of people protested around the country in defiance of restrictive immigrant legislation (Saad & Cottin, 2006). Without any defined single leader, Latin@s around the country, including numerous Puerto Ricans who are naturalized citizens and Cubans with automatic residency, organized to fight the proposed restrictive immigrant legislation. Thus, the majority of Latin@s clearly have created their own sense of cultural citizenship around being Latin@ residents in the United States.

Historically, Latin@s have been given mixed messages of being welcomed and undesired by the United States (Rosaldo, 1997). The impact on Latin@ children's identity in learning the negative stereotypes to be Latin@ can be traumatic (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Several Supreme Court decisions have impacted the fate of Latin@s in their racial classification and education, which will be discussed below. As Flores and Benmayor (1997) illustrated, Supreme Court decisions are similar to immigration laws that both opened and closed the borders for Latin@s.

For example, in *Mendez v. Westminster* (1947), the Ninth Circuit Court denounced the legal segregation of Latin@s and whites, concluding that Mexicans were racially white and therefore should not be segregated. At the time of this case, schools in California did not allow Mexicans to attend the same schools as whites following the Jim

Crow laws of the day. Jim Crow laws were designed to segregate whites from blacks in society but also included segregation for Asians, Native Americans and Latin@s (Bennett, 1988). Eight years later, the *Hernandez v. Texas* (1954) Supreme Court case determined that Mexicans were in fact distinct from whites due to the amount of discrimination they encountered. The courts concluded that Mexicans had faced discrimination actions comparable with African Americans and that Latin@s were being treated as second-class citizens (Lopez, 1996).

Language has been a very important legal issue for Latin@s in the United States as more immigrants from Spanish speaking countries have entered this country. Public opinion and legislation have often promoted English as the national language of the United States and as the primary tool for instruction (Alba & Nee, 1997). Yet, the courts have tended to support linguistic equity and diversity. One of the first notable court cases that addressed the issue of language in schools was *Meyer v. State of Nebraska* (1923) where the courts struck down as unconstitutional the prohibition of foreign language instruction. Thus, The Supreme Court rejected the English only instruction mandate that Nebraska held for all public schools. Decades later, *U.S. v. State of Texas* (1971) challenged the discrimination that took place specific to language in Texas where one school district had two segregated schools, one for Latin@s and one for whites. In this case, the courts ordered that the school district eliminate segregation by consolidating the school district and that all students receive bilingual instruction.

The Bilingual Education Act, also known as the Title VII of the Elementary and School Education Act (1968), was the first federal law that recognized the need for specialized instruction for children from non-English language homes. However, this law

was not explicit in guiding whether the goal was simply to learn English or also to maintain the native language as well (Katz, Kyuchukov, Graziano, 2005). The vagueness of the Bilingual Education Act became evident in later years. The Supreme Court case *Lau v. Nichols* (1973), challenged the concept of equal access to school curriculum if provided only in English. The Supreme Court declared that bilingual instruction is necessary for equal access to education, but once again did not provide any specific guidelines to remediate the situation. This court case was significant in its connection of the issue of language with equity (Katz, et al., 2005).

Several attempts have been made to interpret court decisions such as the Improving America's School Act (1994) that promoted bilingual competence for all children. However, much of this support for bilingualism has been repealed with the No Child Left Behind Act (2001). While recognizing the needs of limited English proficient students, No Child Left Behind Act does not promote becoming competent bilingually (Katz, et al., 2005). Rather, it supports English-only instruction as embodied in California's Proposition 227, despite research findings that show bilingual programs to be most effective (California State Senate, 1998; Krashen, 1999).

These examples illustrate the negative perceptions that the government has had historically towards immigrants and its tendency to Americanize Latin@s. This pattern is similar to how the United States forced Native American children off the reservation to strip them of their own heritage (Anzaldúa, 1987). Sanchez (1997) contended that efforts to derail bilingualism is hypocritical when elite institutions are promoting mainstream students to learn two languages in preparation for a global economy, and yet are simultaneously targeting Latin@ immigrant students to become monolingual.

Unfortunately, immigrants are bombarded with negative messages, which do not serve to value their home language and ultimately have a negative impact on their identity (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001).

Undocumented Immigrants

The negative connotation of being undocumented also affects those who are documented. Latin@ families that live in border communities share the common belief that if one looks Latin@, then the border patrol or immigration officers may inquire about legal residency (Gonzalez & Huerta-Macias, 1997). Legal residents who are Latin@ are often harassed by officials asking for their proof of residency (Wizda, 1998). Border theory examines the complex socialization for native-born minorities and immigrants along the cultural and physical border U.S. cities across the country (Bejarano, 2005). It recognizes the Black/White dichotomy that U.S. born and immigrant Latin@s encounter within the racial discourse in the United States.

The concept of border theory can be traced back to the work of Anzaldúa (1987) who concluded that Latin@s are a prohibited and forbidden people. She further declared that those in power have rationalized the legitimacy of geographic borders of Latin@s as well as the legitimacy within these borders. The sense of otherness is compounded by the fact that the inability to speak English without an accent typically leads to the assumption of being inadequate (Silvestrini, 1997). Bejarano (2005) expanded on the border theory concept by exploring the struggles experienced by all Latin@s, regardless of proximity to the U.S./Mexico border. The experiences of undocumented Latin@ immigrants fall under this border theory concept since they must carefully balance adapting between two worlds no matter how close to the border they live.

Border theory arose as a result of World War I and World War II when in fulfilling agricultural labor demands, Latin@s would migrate to the north from Mexico for employment and then return home after work had been completed. Latin@s living along the border and migrant workers began to cultivate a sense of belonging neither here nor there. Although Latin@s had populated much of southwest and the border, the implementation of the Bracero Programs brought Latin@s, and specifically Mexicans, to the United States where they were often reduced to second-class citizenship and viewed as foreigners (Flores & Benmayor, 1997; Oboler, 1995). With the Bracero Program, employers had come to rely on cheap labor, and many of the temporary Braceros became permanent residents who were able to find better paying jobs or move on geographically (Hoffman, 1974). At the end of the Bracero Program, employers then substituted former legal laborers for the same or new undocumented laborers, beginning the undocumented migration pattern, which has not changed since (Bickerton, 2001).

Modest research efforts have been attempted for understanding how undocumented Latin@ immigrants adapt to the United States (Bejarano, 2005; Flores & Benmayor, 1997; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Based on the concept of cultural citizenship, undocumented Latin@ immigrants are most likely to acculturate rather than assimilate. What is for certain is that once these immigrants arrive, they experience limited participation in society (Bejarano, 2005; Flores & Benmayor, 1997). For example, day laborers have not been involved in unionizing efforts to improve working conditions for fear of deportation (Sierra, et al., 2000). In addition to the labor market where immigrants are fearful to confront their employers, immigrant parents are

often hesitant to come forth with any criticism of school officials for fear that they may be asked about their citizenship status (Gonzalez & Huerta-Macias, 1997).

Negotiation of Identity

Identity Development

Identity development is not restricted to adolescence, but is a lifelong process of construction and transformation (Phelan & Davidson, 1993). Youth face numerous types of transitions, defining borders that exist, adapting strategies to bridge different worlds so that they can navigate successfully in a variety of situations (Gibson & Ogbu, 1991; Phelan, et al., 1998; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Unfortunately, many young people are left to traverse these transitions on their own without assistance (Phelan & Davidson, 1993). In focusing on the population of undocumented Latin@ immigrants who have no legal voice in the United States, the negotiation process within the context of racial identity formation adds a new perspective as to how these immigrants negotiate their identity while being undocumented.

Youth identity development theorists acknowledge that the formation of human beings have several stages in which several factors influence one's identity formation, such as biology, family, peers, and institutions (Adams, Gullotta, & Montemayor, 1992; Alba, 1990; Cross, 1991; Erickson, 1963; Phinney, 1996). Yet several debates continue as to the extent of influence that each factor has on the individual. According to Phelan and Davidson (1993), young people must cross real and imagined borders as they define their own identity. However, as the Suarez-Orozco team (2001) noted, immigrant children are heavily affected by what society mirrors back to them regardless of their own

established identity. In addition, individuals of color are often impacted by the social domination of race, class and gender (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

The Students' Multiple Worlds Model developed by Phelan, Davidson, and Yu (1998) is a useful tool in understanding the context in which young people come to define themselves. The focus is on students' perceptions of borders between worlds and adaptation strategies as they move from one context to another. Such borders in which youth must make transitions include socioeconomic, linguistic, gender, heterosexist, structural and psychosocial borders. One example is young immigrant children who speak Spanish at home to their families and speak English in a typical school in order to relate to classmates. Although the model highlights the fact that individuals react differently, it acknowledges that institutions can help or hinder students as they approach borders and determine whether or not to transform these borders into boundaries. This model provides a framework for understanding youth identity and exposes how the social and cultural forces are reproduced in school organizations.

However, the Students' Multiple Worlds Model is limited in that it measures autonomy from parents and adolescence in general (Adams et al., 1992). At the same time, people of the same ethnic or racial classification should not be assumed to be alike (Phinney, 1996). Therefore, an examination of young people of color is needed, whose unique experience is shaped by the history of racism in the United States (Cross, 1991; Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Horse, 2001; Kim; 2001).

Specifically, the case of undocumented immigrants challenges the model by Phelan, Davidson, and Yu (1998) in that they do not simply cross a border but instead live on both sides of the border. Although the Students' Multiple Worlds Model defines

the borders existing for youth to transcend, it does not reveal the impact of real life borders that immigrants must experience.

Racial Identity Development

Racial and ethnic identity is central to the overall identity formation for individuals (Alba, 1990; Cross, 1991, Chavez & Guido-DiBrito, 1999; Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001). Not until the last forty years have scholars acknowledged that the melting pot metaphor no longer applies due to race and racism (Alba, 1990). One's racial identity is multidimensional, shaped by experiences of oppression and racism in society (Cross, 1991; Phinney, 1996; Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Quinones-Rosado, 1998). In addition, the media's negative depictions of people of color, along with the increased power of this media on young people, contribute to influence racial identity (Arnett, 1995; Bejarano, 2005, Olsen, 1997; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001).

An essential point of critical race theory is that people of color speak from a perspective shaped predominantly by racism (Bell, 1993; Delgado, 1995). In spite of positive socio-environmental experiences, individuals may still develop negative racial identities (White & Parham, 1990). Nonetheless, one's perception is more powerful than one's reality, as explained by Thomas and Thomas (1928) that if people "define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (p. 572). Noguera (2004) described his own personal experience in raising his son who struggled with the racial identity process. Despite the nurturing environment that Noguera's family provided, his son behaved in self-destructive behaviors of an angry black male. This contradictory identity exemplifies the numerous challenges that young people of color must endure.

As racial identity development relates to education, race has historically been linked to one's level of intelligence (Fish, 2002; Cross, 1991; Omi & Winant, 1986; Tatum, 1997; Steele, 1997). Consequently, children become aware of these stereotypes early on, and often fall prey to them as they navigate the school environment (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Steele, 1997; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2000; Tatum, 1997). In the well documented research by Fordham and Ogbu (1986), African American students were less likely to perform well at school due not only to negative stereotypes but also to peer-pressure among African American students who considered doing well in school as "acting white."

Several examples illustrate this point. Government officials such as Senator Obama (2004) have acknowledged the negative connotation of doing well in school as equating with race:

> Go into any inner city neighborhood, and folks will tell you that government alone can't teach kids to learn. They know that parents have to parents, that children can't achieve unless we raise their expectations and turn off the television sets and eradicate the slander that says a black youth with a book is acting white.

Noguera (2004) furthered this concept in stating, "Simply put, there are often strong assumptions made that if you're White you'll do better in school, than if you're Black, or if you're Asian you'll do better in school than if you're Latino" (p.3). Hence, one's racial identity is heavily dependent on the type of school experiences that children have whether the school is racially diverse and the school's attitudes towards race is inclusive (Nieto, 2004; Noguera, 2004; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001; Tatum, 1997).

Many people of color, including immigrants of color have school experiences that expose them to negative racial stereotypes (Suarez-Orozco, 2000). According to Rosaldo

and Flores (1993), this negative perception of Latin@s specifically is due in part to the fact that young teens are not exposed to the historical contributions made by Latin@s in the United States. Instead, they are often taught about the settlement of the 13 colonies from Europe, but not about the southwest of the United States, and about the myth that the Mexican-American War and Spanish-American War were necessary to fight off the ruthless Mexicans and Spaniards. Consequently, Nieto (2004) has strongly recommended curriculum with an inclusive multicultural perspective. When students of color are exposed to education that promotes educational equity, they become more engaged in the learning process. The 500 plus years of Latin@ history and influence on the United States offers students a diverse understanding of historic events as well as instilling a positive racial and ethnic identity (Novas, 2003).

Tatum (1997) elaborates that children who are exposed to racially diverse settings are much more likely to become aware of race than children in a homogeneous setting and thus skin color may be no more significant than other physical attributes. Unfortunately, Latin@s are more likely to be segregated (Renshon, 2005; Suarez-Orozco, 2000) and they often see a bi-polar image. One image is of few selected highly successful Latin@ immigrants, such as individual prominent elected officials or business people (Novas, 2003). The other is of less successful Latin@ immigrants as a group often identified as English language learners, day laborers, and high school dropouts. In addition, regardless of the racially diverse setting, or the students' own academic success, many Latin@ immigrant students report hostility from native-born children who believe they are taking privileged positions that would otherwise go to the native-born children

(Bejarano, 2005; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). This fact supports the contention that Latin@s have received mixed messages of both reception and hostility.

The Suarez-Orozco team (2001) found through the Harvard Immigration Project that most immigrant children encounter a negative social mirror that they identify as a toxic mirror. They concluded that when asked what was the hardest thing about immigration, the recurring theme response by students was discrimination and racism. As Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco (2001) determined, “Over time, immigrant children develop a keen eye for discerning the place of race and color in the U.S. status hierarchy” (p.98). One illustration lies in a study by Phelan, et al. (1998), in which a young Latin@ person commented, “Being Mexican means being popular, cutting classes, acting crazy” (p. 7). Consequently, these negative perceptions of Latin@s are passed down from one generation to the next (Bejarano, 2005; Noguera, 2004; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001).

At the heart of the many issues for immigrant students of color is that immigrants are comparing their lives to their old home and their new home as well as navigating through the complexities of the new society (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Immigrants enter the social hierarchy of the new society under various circumstances, but it is often at the cultural margins where they do not belong neither here nor there (Bejarano, 2005; Oboler, 1995). Over time, the Suarez-Orozco team (2001) found that immigrant children learn early on about the role that race and color plays in the United States and how they shape one’s place in the social hierarchy. Their research affirmed the notion that Du Bois (1903/1989) introduced “double-consciousness” and the influence that negative perceptions and stereotypes can have on one’s identity.

Regardless of whether Latin@s are immigrant or native born, how they are received in schools is significant (Bejarano, 2005; Chavez & Guido-DiBritio, 1999). As Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001) reaffirmed, immigrant children experienced widespread discrimination. For many of these immigrant children, the experience is traumatic (Garcia-Coll & Magnuson, 1998). Traumatic experiences can be either structural, such as academic tracking at schools or limited job and housing opportunities or attitudinal, such as hostility and resentment (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Whether structural or attitudinal, these experiences interfere with the child's emotional and physical health as well as the social adaptation process.

Complexity of Latin@ Identity Development

One of the most problematic issues of racial identity is with the level of rigidity of contemporary racial classifications (Cross, 1991; Wijeyesinghe & Jackson, 1996; Phinney, 1996). As Omi and Winant (1993) point out, "race is often treated as an objective fact: one simply is one's race; in the contemporary U.S if we discard euphemisms, we have five color-based racial categories: black, white, brown, yellow, and red" (p. 6). As racial identity has expanded to include a global perspective, many people do not fit in these categories, as is true of Arabs, Brazilians, Southeast Asians (Davis, 1991; Harris, 1964; Omi & Winant, 1993). Hence, traditional racial categorization is problematic on several levels in the construction of race.

Gibson and Ogbu (1991) maintained that for young people of color, historical, social and economic circumstances have critically impacted their identity. One example is how people of Latin American heritage are often perceived as foreigners (Flores & Benmayor, 1997; Oboler, 1995). Among all the multiple racial identity development

theories, perhaps none are as complex as the theories addressing Latin@ identity formation (Alba; 1990; Anzaldúa, 1987; Ferdman & Gallegos 2001; Quinones-Rosado, 1998). Ferdman and Gallegos (2001) declared "much of the thinking on race in the United States stems from the history of Blacks and Whites and their relationship" (p.33). Latin@s' sense of identity development is based upon a complexity of issues including, one's skin phenotype, citizenship, and class (Rosaldo & Flores, 1993). Latin@s who do not fit any racial category, but are racialized, often belong to several racial categories (Bejarano, 2005; Quinones-Rosado, 1998).

Ferdman and Gallegos (2001) argued the complexity in the identity of Latin@s where they challenge the established racial order in the United States. Therefore, they reasoned that in defining Latin@ identity, race is secondary, whereas nationalities, language, and geography are more pertinent. This is best reflected when one attempts to broadly or narrowly define who is or is not a Latin@. Utilizing current racial categories, being a Latin@ in the United States is a complex identification that transcends many traditional boundaries.

Six Racial Categories

Ferdman and Gallegos (2001) presented six categories of racial identity that reflect self-identified perspectives. These six categories include: Latin@-integrated, Latin@-identified, Subgroup-identified, Latin@-as-Other, Undifferentiated or Denial Latin@, and White-identified Latin@. The first three groups share a commonality in that individuals view themselves from an internal positive lens. The next three groups are viewed from an external lens and are perceived as either negative or non-existent.

From the Latin@-integrated perspective, individuals are considered within a group context that is dynamic and socially constructed. For example, Grillo (2000) explained how early in his life others attempted to categorize him as an African American when he knew he was a Latin@, simply because he was Afro-Cuban. Yet, over the course of the past 50 years, the external concept of Latin@s has expanded to include people with various phenotypes. A benefit to this perspective is that one may choose particular situations to share one's identification.

In contrast, the Latin@-identified perspective holds a positive view of Latin@s based upon a strong group identity. One can solidify one's self with others, creating a comradeship and unifying against potential barriers. The potential of being Latin@-identified would be making oneself vulnerable to negative stereotypes of Latin@ness.

In the third classification, the subgroup-identified perspective places nationality, ethnicity, or culture as more prominent than race. For example, many Puerto Ricans consider themselves as a subgroup-identity and feel very proud of their culture (Novas, 2003). In comparison to the first two categories, the subgroup-identity has an advantage of being the most unified and resilient group. Of course, the disadvantage is realized when one attempts to broaden the context to a larger arena, and so the subgroup-identified Latin@ may find it more difficult in bonding politically or socially with other Latin@s. Of the first three groups, the subgroup identified Latin@s are the most exclusionary of including other Latin@s. Nonetheless, all three groups view themselves as positive.

The last three categories are more congruent within the dichotomous Black/White racial ideology in the United States. The Latin@-as-Other category includes a person

who divides race as white and non-white. An example of this is a fourth or fifth generation person of Latin@ heritage. That individual may choose to identify as Latin@ even though s/he outwardly embraces mainstream U.S. culture than Latin@ culture. The disadvantage of this stance is that it depends on the contemporary norms of society. Consequently, it only becomes an advantage when Latin@s are viewed positively.

The Undifferentiated or Denial Latin@ perspective is one of being color-blind and wanting to treat people as individuals, while accepting and not challenging the socially dominant norms. Unlike the Latin@-as-Other identity, individuals are able to exclude themselves from confronting the realities of being Latin@. Often times these are individuals who consciously or subconsciously deny their own heritage.

The White-identified Latin@ perspective applies to those individuals who prefer to be viewed as White and who hold a negative perception of people of color. This perspective may be the most detrimental within the Latin@ community, as individuals accept a hierarchical view of race. One such group that has received prominent attention has been the white and wealthy Cuban exiles who arrived to the United States after the 1959 Cuban revolution and who later discriminated against the *Marielitos* who came in 1980 (Garcia, 1996). The *Marielitos* were the 125,000 Cuban émigrés who left the Cuban port of Mariel. Because some of the exiles had been released from prison or mental health facilities, the new immigrants received negative attention from the United States and Cubans who had migrated within the past twenty years. Evidently, the privilege of holding a White-identified perspective is that one can reap the many benefits of being white in this country. However, the last three groups still are held within the context of a Black/White paradigm.

Based on the model designed by Ferdman and Gallegos (2001), these six perspectives frame a starting point from which one can see the complexity involved in the definition of a Latin@. In the examination of Latin@ identity formation, being undocumented should be considered when attempting to look at undocumented Latin@ immigrants and understanding how their identity formation takes place. The immigration status of undocumented Latin@ immigrants should be interwoven with race, class and gender (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Thus, identity formation for undocumented Latin@ immigrants is complex and within the context of a racialized society.

Identity for Undocumented Latin@ Youth

Building upon the social mirroring concept by Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco (2001) and the Latin@ racial identity model (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001), one needs to examine and illuminate the impact of the experiences of being an immigrant and a person of color while being undocumented. As explained later, border theory expands and redefines the concept of borders proposed by the Students' Multiple Worlds Model (Phelan, et al., 1998). Border theory is an interdisciplinary paradigm that examines and addresses the immigrant and native-born minorities experience (Bejarano, 2005).

For immigrant youth, these borders add to the complexity of identity development as they literally and figuratively cross borders (Flores & Benmayor, 1997; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). The challenge for immigrant children is to find their own identity within the two worlds in which they live (Igoa, 1995). Du Bois' (1903/1989) proposition of double consciousness is an excellent metaphor for the struggle of racial identity development of Latin@ immigrants. Du Bois articulated the nearly impossible reality to live in a duality where neither is ultimately accepted by society:

> It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn under. (p. 3)

The challenge for Latin@s, specifically undocumented Latin@s, is to recognize the boundaries placed on being American while at the same time defining the group boundaries and their own identity within them (Bejarano, 2005; Flores & Benmayor; 1997; Oboler, 1995).

Bejarano's (2005) proposed that the border/ethnic identities of Latin@s born in the United States and immigrant Latin@s are divided into subsets of sub-categories of identities. In addition, she described that this theory "assists us in understanding the perimeters created around language wars and identity, as well as the boundaries placed around notions of 'citizenship'" (Bejarano, 2005, p. 7). Within the Latin@ communities exists a social hierarchy that places Anglo citizens at the top, Latin@ citizens in the middle, and immigrants at the bottom (Bejarano, 2005; Suarez-Orozco, 2000).

In discussing the experiences of Latin@s, Anzaldúa (1987) pointed out that borders are created "to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them" (p. 3). As mentioned earlier, laws have been created to keep foreigners out of the United States and the term "alien" continues to be equated with "enemy." Anzaldúa proposed that borders divide nations and create a *herida*, an open wound in which undocumented Latin@ immigrants are often on the receiving end of the physical and emotional brutality. What is unique for undocumented Latin@s is that the concept of borders is not contained only in the geographic region of the southwest of the United States (Bejarano, 2005). Rather, they must carry with them their experience and identity

without any detection. As a result, undocumented Latin@ immigrants are forever engrained with the reality of a new kind of double-consciousness (Hill-Collins, 1986; Wolf, 1996).

According to several scholars (Hill-Collins, 1986; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001; Wolf, 1996), the contemporary term "double-consciousness" is described as viewing the world, as a double vision and an outsider within. The lives of Latin@ undocumented immigrants, their lives are paradoxically meaningful and meaningless (Bejarano, 2005). Whatever world they live, whether school or work, they must learn how to act as a legal Latin@ immigrant, yet they cannot hide from being perceived as an illegal alien sub-human (Bejarano, 2005). In other words, they purposefully remain invisible to avoid deportation and frequently their needs are ignored. Simultaneously, there is a desire to be seen with dignity but are often racialized in a negative manner.

Border theory adds to the understanding of being Latin@ (Rosaldo, 1997; Gonzales, 2005; Vila, 2000). Through the lens of cultural citizenship (Flores & Benmayor, 1997), many undocumented immigrants are seen as cultivating their identity within the small network of a select group of family and friends. Often, their priority lies in attending to the needs of the family rather than themselves. Consequently, their responsibility to family members runs deeper at the expense of educational and economic long-term opportunities in school and work (Bejarano, 2005).

The identities of undocumented Latin@ immigrants are typically placed in a negative context, which shape their identity formation (Flores & Benmayor, 1997; Gomez-Pena, 1996; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Gomez-Pena (1996) best described the image of how undocumented Latin@ immigrants are defined:

> Undocumented immigrants are being stripped of their humanity and individuality, becoming blank screens for the projection of American's fear, anxiety and rage…Sadly, sectors of the United States communities also subscribe to these bizarre nativist beliefs, forgetting that they themselves are perceived as part of the problem (p. 66).

Stereotypes such as non-brand name clothing, inability to speak proficiently in English, or having brown skin are common examples that undocumented immigrants contend with in their everyday lives (Bejarano, 2005; Martinez, 1994; Tabuenca, 1997). Regrettably, undocumented Latin@ immigrants are sometimes ostracized from not only the English speaking community but also the Spanish speaking community (Gomez-Pena, 1996).

Understanding the identity development of undocumented immigrants requires going beyond traditional research (Rosaldo, 1989). In essence, it is more significant to listen differently to how their stories are told rather than to create another objective category for undocumented Latin@ immigrant identity (Bejarano, 2005; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). This type of counter-storytelling of individuals is supported by critical race and LatCrit theory. As critical race theorists (Bell, 1993; Delgado, 1995; Omi & Winant, 1986) declared, people of color come from a different perspective than the dominant paradigm of thinking and therefore their experiences are unique to mainstream society. In addition, LatCrit theorists described the complexities in defining the pan-ethnicity of Latin@ identity that does not easily fit into categories (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Valdes, 2001;Yosso, 2005).

Social Movements

Impacts of Participatory Action Research

Freire (1998) clarified the value of Participatory Action Research as a process and role that educators should take in while working with an oppressed group of people:

> A more critical understanding of the situation of oppression does not yet liberate the oppressed. But the revelation is a step in the right direction. Now the person who has this new understanding can engage in a political struggle for the transformation of the concrete conditions in which the oppression prevails. (p. 31)

Horton and Freire (1990) specified that the role of the educator should be to facilitate a process in which the participant is able to name their existence. Often, this takes place in the form of having the participant(s) formulating the problem and allowing the human creative potential to envision their own solution (Torres, 1995; Freire, 2000; Park, 1993).

One of the most significant developments in educational reform specific to Latin America has been the rise of popular education and participatory action research (Torres, 1995). Participatory action research is the combination of research, popular education, and social justice (Freire, 2000; Hall, 1975; McLaren & Leonard, 1993). Both approaches begin with the premise of involving community members to fully participate in creating, analyzing and critiquing their existence (Mora & Diaz, 2004; Tandon, 1981). Popular education is similar to critical race theory in that it is highly critical of mainstream education, not limiting itself only to disenfranchisement of one's race but also to the disenfranchisement of all those who are marginalized (Freire, 1998; Torres, 1995).

The impact that one or both approaches have on participants and their communities can be profound (Fals-Borda, 1988; Lykes, 1997; Tandon, 1981). The work of the Highlander Institute affirmed the impact that popular education can have in a community, and in this case, the mobilization of thousands of African Americans during the Civil Rights Movement of the United States (Horton & Freire, 1990). Another example of one outcome from participatory action research is the research of Lykes (1997) in Guatemala where one of the core programs developed was the Creative Workshop for Children designed by community leaders, child-care workers and

educators. In essence, the concept of community building becomes a natural result from both practices (Escobar & Alvarez, 1992; Mora, 2004).

Although Latin@ communities have traditionally established social capital practices of sharing resources, they are often unsuccessful in developing community coalitions (Orozco, 1994). Part of the problem includes the failure of traditional research to understand the dynamics within the Latin@ community in regard to the construction of knowledge (Mora & Diaz, 2004). As Freire (2000) criticized, knowledge is a social construct, rather than an objective fact. The current debates on immigration are more complex than the simple issues of legality. Thus, the approach used to acquire knowledge and creating change must be reconsidered.

Recent Events Related to Undocumented Immigrants

Debates on immigration have been part of the history of the United States since the draft of the Constitution (Hayes, 2001; Chavez, 1984; Perea, 1999). Anzaldúa (1987) clarified that borders immediately gives a sense of who is in and who is out. For example, the rise of undocumented immigrants has increased the nativism that exists in contemporary society. Regardless of news reports that demonstrate that undocumented immigrants are increasing unemployment for citizens (Ohlemacher, 2006; Veiga, 2005), many people including news reporters such as CNN's Lou Dobbs promote anti-immigrant propaganda (Eviatar, 2006).

Moser's (2006) recent interview with native born citizens from Nashville illuminated the anti-immigrant sentiment that many people have towards immigrants "Sadly, I've gotten to where I can look at a row of houses now and say 'They're legal, they're illegal'...They're here because they want money and that's it" (p. 14). Nativism is

based on fear, as described by one citizen who professed when asked what are immigrants doing in the United States; “I think there’s a plan to move Hispanics into the Southwest and vote it back to United States. I think there’s a big plan to do that” (p.16). It does not take long for historians or researchers to reveal that the United States has had similar anti-immigrant sentiments of the past (Renshon, 2005; Olsen, 1997; Zinn; 2003).

As immigration relates to undocumented youth and education, there has been historically a federal government protection towards promoting education for these youth while a regional backlash of not supporting their education. Such examples include Supreme Court decisions such as *Plyler v. Doe* (1981) to provide education up to the end of high school, as well as the California proposition AB540 (2001) allowing undocumented students to attend California universities by paying in-state tuition. However, this decision has been recently challenged as news reports stated that U.S. Representative Bilbray of San Diego has sued the University of California, allowing undocumented immigrants to pay in-state tuition while maintaining higher rates for out-of-state students (Swarns, 2005).

Media has played an important role in shaping the debate, often highlighting undocumented immigrants when they cross the border or day laborers, typically men, living in cramped quarters or in large masses looking for work (Hayes, 2001; Jonas, 2006). Yet, the Pew Hispanic Center (2006a) reported that the majority of undocumented immigrants did not cross the border, but rather allowed their visa to expire. This is in contradiction to the widespread belief that most undocumented immigrants have crossed the border without detection. In addition, most undocumented immigrants have been living in the United States for more than 5 years. Finally, half of the undocumented

population are either children or female. Regardless of the opinion for or against immigration and with much attention being given to immigration, it is essential for the undocumented immigrants themselves to have a voice. Immediate and long-term decisions towards immigration have to consider that Latin@s through sheer numbers represent a significant percentage of the population (USCB, 2001), and must also address the plight of the undocumented immigrant from their perspective.

Summary of Literature Review

This literature review consisted of four sections correlating with the research questions of this study. In order to understand the concept of being undocumented, a historical analysis of immigration in the United States was provided. It is necessary to understand that the current immigration debate is a result of the immigration policy shaping the United States in the last 200 years. The second section addressed the influence that race and racism have had in the different immigration periods and how they relate to Latin@s as well as undocumented immigrants. The investigation of how race and racism impacted undocumented immigrants is essential in order to provide insight on how undocumented immigrants navigate through society. The third section put forth the multifaceted theories on identity development as related to undocumented Latin@ immigrants who grow up in the United States. Various identity theories, such as racial identity, border identity and youth identity development illustrate the complex factors that young undocumented Latin@ immigrants encounter. Finally, the fourth section examined how participatory action research has impacted participants and social movements. Within the context of race and racism, this study examined the identity development of undocumented Latin@ immigrants through the lens of the participants.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

> It sounds as if maybe if I had not married, I wouldn't be having a baby…But I don't want to see my baby as a mistake. I don't blame myself, but maybe if I had a chance, I probably would have stayed at the university. If I had known more, I would have…And probably most definitely I would not have gotten married if it wasn't for [being undocumented]…[tears start flowing and pauses for a few minutes]…I think about it and it upsets me that I chose this way because I don't want her [my baby] to be a mistake. It's not her fault. I know this sounds horrible, but maybe it's because I felt that I owed it to him [getting married] because he was helping me out [becoming a resident]. I feel that I could have made better decisions if I didn't have that stigma [being undocumented] (Maria, June 6, 2006).

In our third dialogue, Maria contemplated the impact of her being undocumented on the choices she made. The question posed to her was what role did being undocumented have on decisions she made. For Maria, the most significant impact of being undocumented began during her first semester in college when university officials became aware of her immigration status and revoked her financial award. Because her immigration status kept her from receiving financial assistance, Maria attempted to acquire her residency by marrying her boyfriend of two months. The following year, she later gave birth to her daughter and separated from her newly wed husband. This quote by Maria illustrates the analysis that she has in critically reflecting on her life.

Freire (1998) elaborated on the power and unique perspective that individuals can have by defining their own experience as opposed to having their experience be defined by someone else when he stated, "If it is in speaking their word that people, by naming their world, transform it, dialogue imposes itself as the way by which they achieve significance as human beings" (p. 88). By having the participants reflect on their

experience, they are able to express the impact that being undocumented has on their lives both consciously and subconsciously. The very essence of this study is to provide the forum for each participant to name their experience so that the reader can truly understand the lives of the undocumented immigrant.

Research Design

Neutral objective science is not neutral at all; rather it is biased by the researcher's values and epistemology from which facts can never be separated from the domain of values (Carspecken, 1996; Kinchloe & McLaren, 1994). In deciphering truth from opinion, fact from value, Foucault (1977) expressed:

> Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true, the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as truth. (p.131)

Building upon the work of Foucault (1977), Omi and Winant (1986) argued that the notion of truth has come from the predominant paradigms of race, class and gender, which have been present within any given historical period of the United States. Consequently, traditional research has taken a narrow view frequently from the perspective of the dominant race, class and gender in society. Scheurich and Young (1997) postulated that epistemological racism lies within any kind of research that often inaccurately portrays other minority groups. The impact has resulted in policies and practices that lend themselves to hampering, rather than empowering oppressed groups (Vigil & Munoz, 2004).

In contrast to traditional quantitative research, Creswell (2003) pointed out that qualitative research investigates the human phenomena in a depth which quantitative

research cannot. Carspecken (1996) added that understanding a phenomenon from the point of view of the participants and its particular social and institutional context is largely lost when textual data are quantified. The foundations of qualitative research came from the inquiry of social scientists to study the social and cultural phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Of the many different aspects of qualitative research, data collection, such as observation, interviews, and researcher's impressions provide this study the depth needed to appreciate the human experience.

One branch of qualitative methods is participatory action research. According to several scholars (Ada & Beutel, 1993; Fals-Borda & Rahman, 1991; Kieffer, 1981; Mora & Diaz, 2004; Parks; 1993), this method best understands people in the social and cultural context in which they live in and challenges the social conditions as well as the possibilities for justice. Participatory action research is best described as "a process of collective, community-based investigation, education and action for structural and personal transformation" (Maguire, 1993, p. 157).

Mora and Diaz (2004) stated that participatory action research questions the notion of objectivity and distance between the researcher and subject. In doing so, it further enlarges the notion of knowledge by asking who is acquiring, obtaining and producing the knowledge. As Vigil and Munoz (2004) proposed, this type of research generates ideas more freely in order to address difficult questions of power, race, ethnicity and gender. Therefore, the methods of participatory action research enable community members to collectively participate in the research design, data collection and dissemination of information.

Participatory action research intends to develop a consciousness within the lives of those who are involved in the research process while transforming institutionalized structures and relationships that are oppressive (Ada & Beutel, 1993; Freire, 2000; hooks, 1994; Kieffer, 1981; Maguire, 1987; Park, 1993). Those involved as researchers often view participatory action research as more than an exercise beyond the research itself as a way to change the world. In addition, Freire's (2000) concept of conscientization is central to participatory action research in that social justice is realized through the development of critical consciousness so that participants work themselves toward social change. From this vantage point, the goal of participatory action research is the process of transformation in three areas (Maguire, 1987; Stoeker, 1999; Torres, 1995).

First, the intention of participatory action research is to empower those who are oppressed through the development of critical consciousness for both the researcher and participants. Second, the research must involve the participants in the investigation, analysis and action of the research so that they become self-reliant in order to have the tools to change their condition. The third area of transformation is in society itself where the beneficiaries of the research are the community members themselves.

In order to raise critical consciousness, the use of dialogical retrospection empowers the participants to shift the power of knowledge from solely the researcher to both researcher and participant (Kieffer, 1981). Despite traditional research methods, Latin@ communities have not had adequate levels of attention from researchers who often confine participants as passive subjects of the research instead of active researchers (Vigil & Munoz, 2004). In addition, Vigil and Munoz have questioned whether conventional approaches have yielded findings to help reduce unequal social relations.

Undocumented Latin@s are excluded by most traditional data research since they are legally not accounted for. Hence, a dialogic approach fosters the partnership between the undocumented Latin@ immigrants and the researcher to collectively name the problem, investigate, analyze and develop action steps.

Maguire (1987) suggested that the dialogue process is unique in that its purpose is to "help people see themselves and social situations in a new way in order to inform further action for self-determined emancipation from oppressive social systems and relationships" (p. 14). To dialogue is to be engaged in a conversation bringing in prejudices, creating a context where the participant and researcher can together reach understanding through inquiry not in defense of arguments. The very fact that one addresses influences such as racial backgrounds, historical consciousness, language, etc. suggests that one is attempting to transcend one's prejudices. Critical to ensuring that the dialogue goes deeper, the researcher must listen effectively for empowerment, personal and social change. In order to accomplish these results, the researcher should encourage the participants to reflect on the meaning of ideas, value claims made in response, and work through the feelings that may interfere with thinking clearly and making decisions (Weissglass, 1990). Freire (1998) characterized this deep dialogue as "praxis," the action intersecting with reflection.

It was my intention that my role as a researcher followed the suggestions of Freire (2000) that stated, "The leaders do bear the responsibility for coordination and, at times, direction – but leaders who deny praxis to the oppressed thereby invalidate their own praxis" (p. 107). By acting as co-researchers, the participants and I took part in the re-appropriation, development and production of knowledge as reported in the data

collection and analysis. Unfortunately, participants often deny their suffering with a sense of hopelessness, not knowing where to begin in naming the complex problem (Park, 1993). All too frequently, I heard an undocumented Latin@ lament there is no point in doing anything because of their documentation status. As both Park (1993) and Maguire (1993) have declared, people who suffer from oppressive environments often find it difficult to admit, articulate or discuss their problems in public. The hope is that in choosing this method, the process of the research itself will raise consciousness of one's identity development and empower participants to realize the oppressive circle in which they live.

Entry into the Community

Ada and Beutel (1993) acclaimed, "As a researcher you need to construct a solid connection with the community in which you will be working" (p. 63). Mora and Diaz (2004) suggested that entry into the community requires authentic interaction with community members. I have been working for six years with community members in various aspects of their lives primarily in developing successful programs for youth to succeed in school through a non-profit organization. Along with working with other colleagues and community members, my role has been to establish an after school program that incorporates leadership groups among the youth, develop parent programs, provide direct social services, and establish academic workshops in order to graduate the students from high school and enroll in college.

Within the Latin@ community, participatory action research offers several advantages by examining unique social conditions, being sensitive to the history of the individuals and understanding the impact in relation to their social, cultural, and political

institutions (Vigil & Munoz, 2004). It provides an opportunity for participants to explore, reflect, and even challenge their own racial identity development collaboratively. Not realizing these advantages of participatory action research, the staff and I had several trainings and conversations together, always asking for the best method that will motivate young students to find hope in their future. Of the many topics that have surfaced over the past six years, one's lack of documentation status had been a recurring theme.

From these conversations, several parents, students, and co-workers began to share their struggles in being undocumented themselves. I inquired as to the struggles that many of them have encountered. They expressed the impossibility of staying invisible in society due to being racialized as a Latin@ as well as the discouragement and lack of hope in being undocumented. As I would engage in dialogue with some of these undocumented immigrants, we began to unconsciously formulate the problem of being undocumented in society. From these dialogues, two of the original participants suggested the possibility of my selecting the topic of being undocumented for my research. As the time to write a research proposal came closer, at least these two participants expressed willingness to continue our dialogue, analysis and recommendations in addressing the issue of undocumented Latin@ youth through a more formal process. From this perspective, the participants and I collectively named the problem and decided to follow up with an investigation.

The crucial role of the researcher is always to respect the participants and facilitate the process through dialogue and listening while allowing the participants the room to struggle. Park (1993) stated, "Empowerment is realized through the experience of engaging in collective social action" (p. 4). The goal of this research was to provide a

high degree of authenticity, while honoring and giving dignity to the participants by having them become co-authors of the research findings (Vigil & Munoz, 2004). Through this process, Park suggested that participants were empowered to take action toward improving conditions in their lives. Coincidently, these original two participants in this study provided a high degree of authenticity since they had been working with me for the past six years. Through several years of successfully assisting undocumented Latin@s to go to college, I believe sufficient trust had been built among the potential participants.

Identifying Participants

Due to the sensitive nature of being undocumented, a convenience sampling was used to find participants. Convenience sampling is effective in identifying participants when there is a limitation in obtaining the population (Krathwohl, 1997). In this study, I needed to have a relationship with participants strong enough that they would trust I would not reveal their personal information. This sample population aligned with the principles of participatory action research in that two of the participants have been working with me for the last few years in addressing how best to educate undocumented children. These two participants then made recommendations for others they thought might partake in the study. I followed up with those recommendations to determine if the potential participants self-identified as undocumented Latin@ immigrants.

Since the goal of this research design was to listen to the perspectives of participants, their self-evaluation was essential to the integrity of the study. The criteria used for identifying participants was their trust in me as a researcher and their self-identification as undocumented Latin@ immigrants. Of the nine original recommendations from the first two participants, only six participants decided to involve

themselves in the study. Two of them had only resided in the United States for less than four years. Another potential participant was the spouse of one of the participants who felt awkward to do the study with her spouse. Once participants had been identified, I sent a formal invitation to take part in the research. Following their agreement to participate, an Informed Consent Form was distributed, which they all signed.

Protection of Human Subjects

The procedures of the University of San Francisco's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) were abided by throughout the study. I kept the identities of the participants confidential using pseudonyms and stored all research materials in a locked file that were destroyed after the research was completed. The population for this study included six self-identified undocumented Latin@ immigrants. Participants developed a journal regarding their lack of documentation, racial awareness and immigration experience. In addition, the participants chose their own pseudonym or had me choose one to ensure confidentiality.

Restatement of the Research Questions

The following research questions guided the initial dialogue with the participants and further developed the primary research questions. They were developed out of conversations that two participants and I identified as the key issues of being undocumented.

1. How do undocumented Latin@ youth define the term "undocumented"?
2. How does being undocumented impact the racial identity development of Latin@ immigrants?

3. How do undocumented Latin@ youth negotiate the socialization process as immigrants?
4. What effect did this research have upon the participants?

Questions To Lead the Dialogue

The two participants and myself developed the following questions to guide the initial dialogues in order to expand on the original research questions. The participants had the opportunity to provide input about further questions in their final dialogue. As a result, additional questions resulted from the participants and me in guiding the research process.

1. How do undocumented Latin@ youth define the term undocumented?

A.¿Cuándo y cómo vino a comprender que no tenias papeles como residente legal?

When and how did you come to realize that you lacked the legal documentation status?

B. ¿Cómo lo ha formado sabiendo que no tienes papeles?

Having realized your documentation status, how has it shaped you?

C. ¿En no tener papeles, como es tu participación en la sociedad?

How does being undocumented shape your participation in society?

D. ¿Como un Latin@ indocumentado, cuales derechos legales crees que tienes?

As an undocumented Latin@, what legal rights do you believe you have?

E. ¿Cómo manejas su presencia en los Estados Unidos como un Latin@ indocumentado después de los eventos del 11 de septiembre de 2001?

How have the events of September 11, 2001 shaped how you negotiate your presence in the United States as an undocumented Latin@?

2. How does being undocumented impact the racial identity development of Latin@ immigrants?

A. *¿Qué significa ser Latin@, la raza, el racismo, y identidad de raza como un Latin@ indocumentado?*

What does Latin@, race, racism, and racial identity mean to you as an undocumented Latin@?

B. ¿En ser Latin@, cuales experiencias sociales te enseñaron sobre el racismo?

What social experiences taught you about racism as a Latin@?

C. ¿Cómo te influyó tu familia en tu opinión sobre identidad?

How did your family influence you in your view of identity?

D. ¿Qué experiencias personales han resaltado tu identidad de ser Latin@?

What personal experiences have highlighted your racial identity?

3. How do undocumented Latin@ youth negotiate the socialization process as immigrants?

A. *¿Qué significa a tu ser Americano con éxito en los Estados Unidos como un Latin@ indocumentado?*

As an undocumented Latin@, what does it mean to you to successfully socialize in the United States?

B. ¿Cómo un Latin@ indocumentado, cómo retiene tu cultura y participación en la sociedad?

As an undocumented Latin@, how do you retain your culture and participate in society?

C. *¿Cómo describiría tu interacción con otros que son Latin@s documentados?*

How would you describe your interaction with others who are documented Latin@s?

D. *¿Cómo te sientes diferente y similar en contra de tus amigos quienes son documentados?*

How do you feel different or similar from your friends who are documented?

4. What effect did this research have upon the participants?

A. ¿Cuáles son sus sueños sobre tu futuro y cómo te mueves más cerca para realizarlo?

What are your dreams about your future and how do you move closer to realize them?

B. ¿Cómo y por qué es crítico o no sé documentado para ser parte de la sociedad?

How and why is it or not critical to become documented for you to be part of society?

Data Collection

Participatory action research operates on the assumption that knowledge is a social construct that is not exclusive to the researcher (Reza, 1995). In this case, the participants and I had been formulating questions over the last six years on the issues of being undocumented. As Ada and Beutel (1993) noted, the solidarity between the participant and researcher is imperative in order to facilitate the democratic interaction of the research.

In this study, I limited the research to three dialogues between the participants and myself as researcher, but these dialogues did not capture the totality of my work during the previous six years. Nonetheless, the two participants and I decided that three dialogues would be sufficient. The researcher and the participants used a content analysis of the transcriptions to extract themes from the dialogues, which we did collectively. Each dialogue was audio taped and I transcribed all the recordings myself in order to become more familiar with the dialogue and to facilitate the process.

The first dialogue was with each participant individually. Transcriptions were delivered to the participants prior to the second dialogue so that they were able to reflect, clarify and elaborate on the transcription. The participants had the opportunity to make any changes or clarifications of the original themes. The participants reflected on the transcription and could elaborate in writing their original thoughts. All six participants wrote on the transcriptions given to them, not only clarifying their statements but also offering suggestions for further questions and even correcting my Spanish grammar. Using this approach, participants were more engaged than with an interview process as they thought about and responded to the transcripts, fostering a more accurate retrospection and self-validation of interpretations (Ada & Beutel, 1993).

In the second dialogue, the two participants and I provided the group with various themes that arose from the initial dialogue. We came together to explore the topics that emerged from the first dialogue. A group dialogue provided a forum for participants to critically reflect and use each other's experiences to collectively analyze the issues of being undocumented. This dialogue was video-taped so that we could note any observations of body language. From the second dialogue, we focused on suggestions regarding how to navigate successfully while living undocumented in a racialized society.

In the third dialogue, I met with each participant separately to reflect on the ideas that arose during the second dialogue. The two original participants and I had made some changes on the initial questions to guide the third dialogue. These changes included the highlights of the last dialogue as related to the inequities of power, their own development, and the overall impact. The purpose of the final dialogue was to develop a critical analysis for the participants so that we could collectively suggest both long and

short-term solutions. Park (1993) indicated that participatory action research is not intended to finish with new insights; rather it continues through a commitment to action. It is in this third dialogue that I asked the participants what actions they anticipated taking to assist other undocumented Latin@s to navigate through society.

Throughout the research process, the researcher and the participant each kept a journal reflecting on our individual experiences. Ada and Beutel (1993) maintained that a self-analysis and self-critique are integral parts of the participatory action research process. These entries were created after each interaction to capture the subjectivity of the researcher and participants. This was important for me to place any biases on the forefront in order to enter each dialogue session with an open mind. It was during the course of reflecting on the journal entries that I became aware of the potential gender biases that I may have placed upon the participants as I initially analyzed each session that I had with the participants.

The participants shared their journals with me individually as they all felt it was too private to share with the group and they did not want to be judged by other members in the study. However, I shared my journal with all the participants to enhance the focus of group discussion and demonstrate any of my own biases. What became evident in sharing my journal was that I seriously underestimated the participants resiliency to endure barriers that society placed upon undocumented Latin@s. Those challenges in being undocumented which seemed overwhelming to me, were considered by participants to be obstacles they had no choice but overcoming in order to survive.

Data Analysis

For data analysis, the two original participants and I identified themes that arose from the dialogues, after reading the transcriptions and developed a code. Utilizing a scheme suggested by Carspecken (1996), the original two participants and I took the transcripts and filed them in our computers. On our own time, we split the screen with the transcription and a blank word document. As keywords or appealing passages were noticed to our individual preferences, a code was assigned in detail and given a file number, the page number, and the line number. Throughout the study, preliminary coding and analysis of the data took place after each transcription.

The original two participants found the process to be time consuming but were still able to complete the process. Initially, they did not identify many codes until after I shared with them my initial codes. The other participants had an opportunity from the first dialogue to identity other significant points as well after I sent them the transcriptions. It was when I provided them with my initial transcriptions and comments that all the participants had much more to offer. Therefore, I learned that even though the dialogues, transcriptions and analysis were completed, a continued reading of the primary coding was essential because of the rich feedback provided by the participants. The two participants and I together continuously re-read the primary codes in order to categorize into higher codes. These higher codes later became our themes.

From each dialogue, we followed the same process so we could gather similar codes together to form concepts into larger preliminary themes. Examples of similar codes were the significant time lapses and determining what questions preceded these time lapses. After each dialogue, all the participants had the opportunity to provide

feedback on the concepts and preliminary themes, as I would present them during the following session. Thus, they could add new concepts that came from the previous dialogue. Throughout the research, the participant and researcher provided their initial opinions on the initial generated themes due to the larger concepts that were constructed.

Once all the dialogues were completed, one of the other participants asked to attend one of the sessions where the two participants and I were analyzing the entire data. During this process, the four of us developed the concepts and title for this study. The first step was finding quotes that illustrated the themes that were generated from the dialogue. The second step was providing a biography of each participant. The third step merged the quotes and the biography of the participants to determine any significance between the participant and the quotes.

Although the findings of the study cannot be generalized for all undocumented Latin@ immigrants, they represent the first step in capturing the experience of this unique group of individuals. Participatory action research serves its purpose if participants have been empowered to take action toward improving the conditions in their lives (Park, 1993). The goal of this research was to bring awareness to the lives of an oppressed group of individuals and add a body of knowledge to the dominant structures of society who often ignore the collective wisdom and experiences of oppressed people.

In order to determine credibility and accuracy of the findings, the researcher utilized a strategy known as "member checks." Member checks are when the researcher shares his/her notes with the participants to determine whether the notes are accurate or not (Carspecken, 1996; Creswell, 2003). Prior to each session, I provided each participant with my notes, the guiding questions, and the analysis of the dialogue before. Although

participants always had the opportunity to clarify any portion of the transcript or findings, it was during the beginning of each dialogue that I received feedback. Throughout the study, participants were able to express, clarify, or add to the analysis of concepts and themes after being given the transcription from the dialogues.

Freire (2000) challenged the educator to be aware of his/her own power as an educator. Aware of the need to create a more democratic approach to research, one possible obstacle was the participant being overwhelmed with this new knowledge. Consequently, it was essential that I fostered the self-reliance and self-confidence of the members and did so by constantly probing them for their thoughts. Since participatory action research is biased toward action (Ada & Beutel, 1993; Vigil & Munoz, 2004), my intention was to keep the participants focused on the possibilities of action.

Profile of the Researcher

From an early age, I have been conscious of racism and its negative impact on individuals and institutions. As a Latin@ immigrant born in Brazil to Nicaraguan parents, I remember being told how different I was from everyone else in almost every context. Two deeply rooted experiences shaped my life as it relates to race that occurred at age 6. First, before going to school each day, I would attempt to wash the brown skin on the back of my hand so that it would be lighter like the palm of my hand. Second, I recall shouting to my first African American playmate *nigga* without comprehending the meaning. I somehow knew that although I was not black, I was not white but a person of color. In my interactions with European Americans, I always held an intuitive fear that whites seemed to have power over me. These experiences taught me that I must learn how to navigate between a Black/White context in the United States and that a color line

existed between the back and front of my hand, just as it did in society. Unfortunately, the most negative experiences I had came when interacting with European Americans.

Having moved often, my own cultural background was the minority to the dominant culture whether it was Mexican, Cuban, Southern white, Southern black, or Caribbean. Regardless of the community I lived in, I never seemed to fit in just right. From these experiences, I learned the complexities of being Latin@ or racialized in the United States. There were incidents where I was not accepted as a Latin@ because I was not Mexican or Cuban as if Latin@ meant a nationality or geography. Yet, in other situations, I was somewhat accepted by the African American and Caribbean population because I was a person of color. Nonetheless, I learned most importantly that I was not white or American. As a result, my method of navigation came to be language. I became skilled at mastering the accents of languages as to best disguise my identity whenever possible. Ultimately, I found myself most comfortable with the Caribbean culture simply because of its openness to diversity.

In selecting the International and Multicultural Education program at the University of San Francisco, I wanted to further my understanding of how racism plays a significant role in contemporary society. Having worked over a decade with young people of color as a teacher, administrator, basketball coach and counselor, students of color always stressed how their race impacted their lives either negatively or positively. After learning that race is a social construct and racism is as one professor stated “in the air we breathe.” I am struck by how much race and racism define people of color, particularly those who are not easily categorized as non-whites who eventually must learn to navigate their social-political world. Interestingly, as I worked with the Latin@

immigrant population in Florida, I observed that darker skinned Latin@s combined with those who had recently immigrated, were more sensitive to identifying themselves by race.

The last five years working in the Bay Area has brought me the opportunity to work with an undocumented Latin@ population. I am involved with a non-for-profit organization that provides a wide array of social services, including immigration, social work, and education. The efforts of undocumented Latin@s to survive on a daily basis have been both inspirational to observe as well as depressing. In working with many undocumented Latin@ immigrants, I see that they seem to be more cognizant of being Latin@ than other Latin@s born in the United States. I am captivated with the often stated response, “people who look like me don’t make it” when asked about their future. Almost simultaneously, they struggle instead of thrive in society. In developing programs to assist undocumented Latin@s break through seemingly impenetrable barriers, other undocumented Latin@s participating in the programs have brought out their own perspectives, leading me to this research topic. Through the countless efforts to empower undocumented Latin@ immigrants, this research study has been informed by the numerous experiences of young people of color, immigrants, and undocumented Latin@s.

Portraits of the Participants

Many of the participants I have worked with are now in higher education, all of which have participated in the same organization. The participants are undocumented because of having expired visas or crossed the border without detection, and all came before they were 12 years old and having spent over half of their lives growing up in the

United States. The community in which they live in supports the service industry within a wealthy county, and they are well known among the county in having the lack of legal documentation. Many residents share apartments with other families for economic survival because of the high rent. Each participant wrote a self-portrait of their lives that included the stories of how they arrived to the United States, how they came to learn about their documentation status and what impact it has had on their lives.

Each participant had a unique dynamic process in his/her immigration story that allowed us to understand the impact of the immigration debates had on the individual. Even with such a small population, the participants were diverse in that there were variations in the immigration status of being undocumented. In addition, during the collection of the data, two of the six participants received temporary and permanent resident status of the United States. In fact, toward the end of completing this chapter, Pablo visited me to proudly show me his green card. The analysis of the participant's profile provides a richer understanding of their experience. Below is a biographical profile of the participants and my relationship to the participant.

Sophia

At the time of the first dialogue, Sophia was a 28 year-old resilient mother of a two-year old son and was three months pregnant expecting her second child. She is married to her husband, an apartment manager, whom she met while in high school. As an immigrant from Mexico, she moved at the age of 12 to the United States and has managed to blend both cultures to create her own reality. She entered the country by airplane with a tourist visa along with her mother, father and younger sister that eventually expired. According to her, she came to the United States because her parents

chose to sacrifice their careers to provide a better opportunity for their daughters. Although she is undocumented, she has gone through the junior college and state college system to receive her college degree. She currently works as a certified teacher in the same community she immigrated to as a child.

In addition, Sophia and I have spent the last five years discussing informally the issues around being undocumented and how race, class and gender have impacted her life. We have explored not only her life history, but, as colleagues, we have also developed curriculum that might better address the needs of the undocumented children. From these numerous conversations, many questions were raised that later initiated projects of how to work in the community and eventually developed this dissertation topic. Despite being undocumented, she has managed to obtain a driver license from California and Oregon, a social security card, purchase a home, maintain her employment, receive her college degree and California teaching credential. She has proven over time how spirited and determined she is to move through society without having the proper documentation.

By the time we ended the one-year data collection process, the major change in her life was that she gave birth to her second son. Her pursuit of attaining a Masters degree in education is still limited by her inability to find the time and money to support her graduate program, compounded by her inability to receive federal financial aid. Although her immigration status has not changed since our initial dialogue, she was viewed by all the participants as someone who best adapted to being undocumented. In fact, several participants commented their surprise upon seeing her during the first

dialogue session because she had a teaching credential and college degree. To most participants, Sophia emulated a typical immigrant story achieving the American dream.

Maria

The second participant is Maria, a cheerful 21-year old college student who recently married in hopes to gain legal status. Although married, she lives with her parents and three other siblings. She immigrated to the United States by airplane from Mexico at the age of four with her parents and her five-year old sister with a tourist visa. Her parents owned a small business but her father would often go to the United States to bring in more money. The parents chose to come to the United States so that the family could stay intact while her father worked but always with the intention of returning back home, but instead, they have stayed in the country. Maria is enrolled at the local community college while working at a local department store.

I met Maria a year prior to the research, at a time of crisis in her life. She had been recently asked to leave a local private university because of her immigration status. During this process, she decided to get married in order to change her legal status. By the time we ended our last dialogue, she had enrolled in community college and given birth to her first child. Her immigration status rapidly changed during the short time we engaged in our dialogue as she went from an undocumented immigrant to an immigrant pending residential status. A unique aspect of her immigration status is that her status has fluctuated from documented to undocumented since she came to the United States.

Although Maria attributed her struggles to the fluctuation of her immigration status changing over the years, the events in Maria's life during the study were the most volatile. The impact of being undocumented adversely affected her such that her

decisions were impulsive. The experiences of Maria were unique in that all the other participants had already come to terms with their immigration status, whereas Maria was still coping with being undocumented.

Sara

Sara, the third participant, is a quiet 20-year old college student. I have known Sara as a high school student and observed that she has stayed out of the eyes of many but always pushes forward academically. She came at the age of 10-years old with her mother and older sister as they hid in a car so immigration officials would not see her. Her father and older brother had come already to the United States because there was not enough work to survive in Mexico. Sara lives with her boyfriend of two years, but spends her weekends cleaning homes or selling items at the flea market to help her mother.

Although Sara does not exist according to government records, she has held several jobs, and is in her second year of college. Throughout the entire data collection process, Sara's presence had a significant impact in that only one other participant is completely unidentifiable by the government. Both participants are also the only ones to have experienced deportation either personally or within the family. In her case, her brother has been deported twice. She provides valuable insight as to how being virtually invisible to society has impacted her life.

Antonio

Antonio is a 25-year old college student who is the most spirited of the group. It took him two tries to enter the United States at the age of eight by walking with his father and younger brother because they were caught initially. The family unit came over after his mother had died and his father needed to find another way to support the family. Then

when Antonio was only 16-years old, his father died. Therefore, he was not only undocumented, but also became the primary caretaker for his brother. Similar to Sara, he is virtually invisible to society and yet he currently is enrolled in a university, working several jobs to support himself and his younger brother.

His own personal immigration story is both disheartening and inspirational. Antonio, his brother and father were captured the first time crossing the border because they reached an immigration check-point. Yet, their journey crossing the border was adventurous for a eight-year old boy as he recalled crossing the second time along the beach of California playing with his brother. By the time we ended our dialogue, Antonio had been most vocal outside of the research process on the issue of immigration. He assisted in coordinating an immigration march in the spring, created a video documentary as well as sharing his own poems and artwork with community members. His actions inspired several participants to view him as the leader of the immigration movement.

Mario

The fifth participant is Mario who is a 25-year old father, husband, and college student who is viewed as the one with the strongest composure despite his numerous negative experiences of being undocumented, Latin@, poor, and young. Mario entered the United States at age nine as he described "running up a hill" with his brother, while his parents and two sisters awaited for them in Los Angeles. His uncle and father were on the other side of the border to assist them once they crossed over. According to Mario, his family came because it was too hard to survive economically in Mexico.

Even though his immigration status has not changed since our first dialogue, both desires to pursue education and his resolve to support his family have become stronger.

When I first met Mario in 2001, he worked as an office assistant and now he has risen to supervising employees and working with youth. Along with Sophia, Mario has been crucial in the development of the youth program and this dissertation. Similar to Antonio, he has had several negative experiences as a young man of color, which had a compounding impact in his life.

Pablo

Pablo, at age 24, was the 8th of 10 children who all came at one point across the border undetected. At age 12 he came with seven members of the family, his parents, and four sisters. The reason the family came to the United States from Mexico was because of a family dispute that left his parents without a home to live in. Crossing the border for Pablo was a harrowing experience as they became separated often from each other. According to Pablo, they came because they had an established relationship with other family members in the United States through the Bracero Program.

By the time we completed the last dialogue, I learned from Pablo how successful he had become in school as valedictorian of high school, graduating from the university and beginning a graduate program in psychology. He was the only participant who had not attended the local high school in the bay area, but rather grew up in the southern valley of California where there was a majority of Chicanos or Latin@ immigrants. Currently, he works in the city with homeless people who are affected by H.I.V. and drug addiction. In addition, he received his permanent residency soon after our dialogues ended in 2006.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

> Undocumented immigrants have to do whatever they need to do in order to be safe. I think people that pretend to be white or do all these things, they do it to be safe, whether it's self-esteem or safety to stay in the United States and not be deported. I mean some people take it to an extreme, but I think sometimes that is just what you have to do (Pablo, August, 1, 2006).

This quote expresses the overall goal of survival that undocumented immigrants must embrace in order to endure living in the United States. Pablo's description was echoed by other participants who demonstrated similar sentiments concluding that their need to survive was greater than their need to abide by laws. In addition, Pablo not only highlights the internal strength that undocumented immigrants must have, but later elaborated the concept of being safe. For many undocumented youth who grew up in the United States, a sense of safety often was limited when they were within their community or immediate family. As a result, many participants articulated that going back to their birthplace was as foreign as it would be to a native-born Latin@.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section clarifies the similarities and differences among the participants. The second section presents the participants' responses and interpretations of the research questions: 1) How do undocumented Latin@ youth define the term "undocumented"? 2) How does being undocumented impact the racial identity development of Latin@ immigrants? 3) How do undocumented Latin@ youth negotiate the socialization process as immigrants? 4) What effect did this research have upon the participants? Since the participants were an integral part of providing their responses and interpreting the data, a high level of genuineness exists in this study.

Backgrounds of the Participants

The voices of all six participants conveyed a deep understanding of the journey to cross the U.S./Mexico border: what it means to be undocumented, the impact of being undocumented, and what it takes to navigate through society. In the analysis of the findings, participants revealed valuable insights in the comparison of their experiences to others depending on one's immigration status, gender, class, and skin complexion.

Table 1 presents a snapshot of the participants that includes their date of birth, self-defined skin color, type of entry to the United States and determining factor for coming to the United States. This information is relevant in that these factors influenced how the participants navigated through society undocumented. For example, Mario and Antonio expressed more racial discrimination than the others and attributed this to their dark skin color and being male.

Table 1

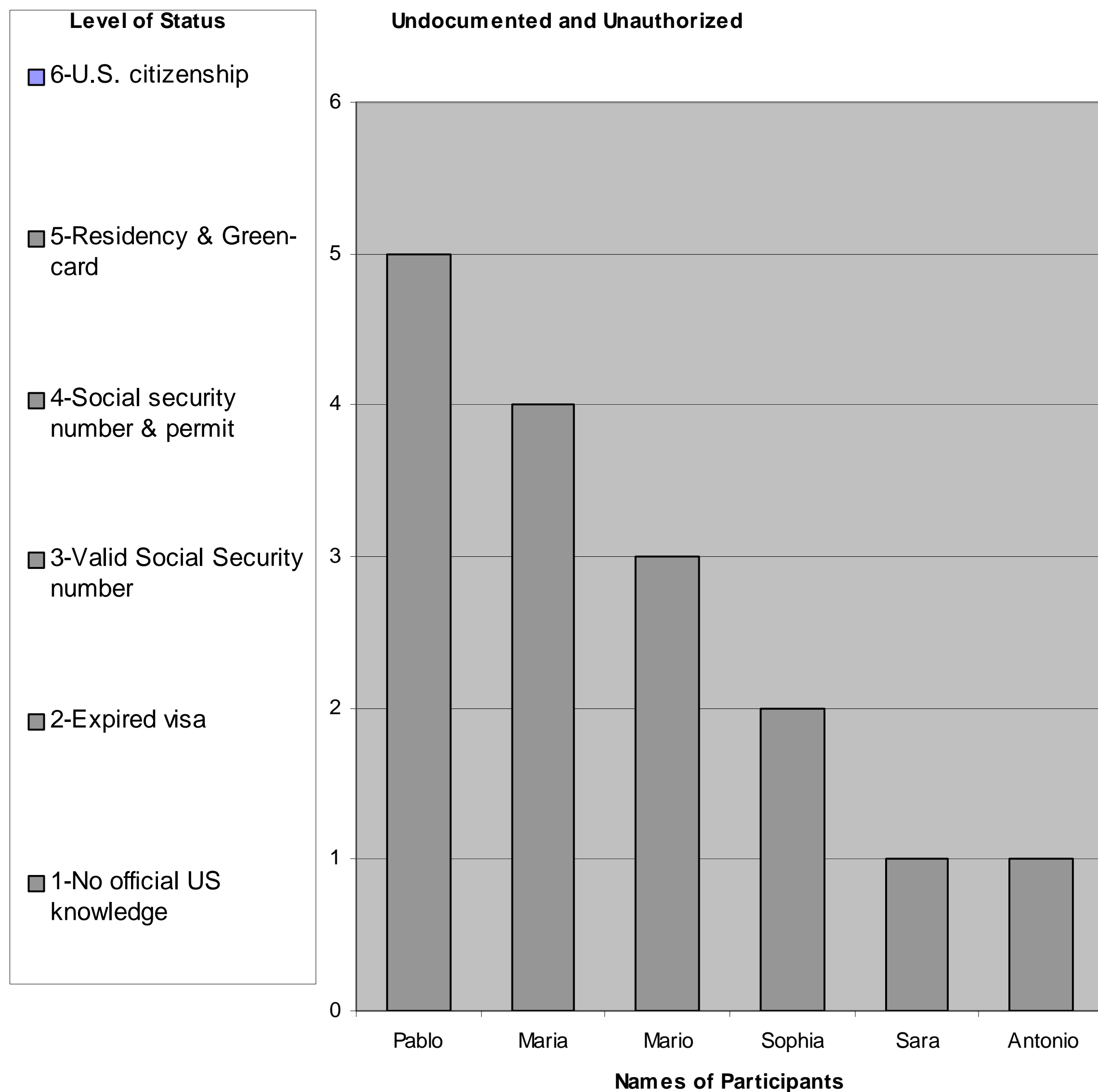
Differences of participants

Name	D.O.B.	Skin Color	Type of Entry	Determining factor
Sophia	1/22/77	Dark	Passport by plane	Economic
Maria	8/9/85	Light	Passport by plane	Temporary economic
Sara	1/26/86	Dark	Hidden by car	Economic
Antonio	5/1/81	Dark	By foot	Economic
Mario	2/23/81	Dark	By foot	Economic
Pablo	7/21/82	Light	By foot	Loss of home

Note. Participant's date of birth, self-defined skin color, type of entry to the U.S and their parent's reason to come to the U.S.

While being documented simply means having a green card, being undocumented is more complex. The Migration Policy Institute (2005) proposed that the undocumented population should not be treated as a monolithic whole. The following figures display the variety of undocumented status that participants have in the United States, all of which had an impact on their identities.

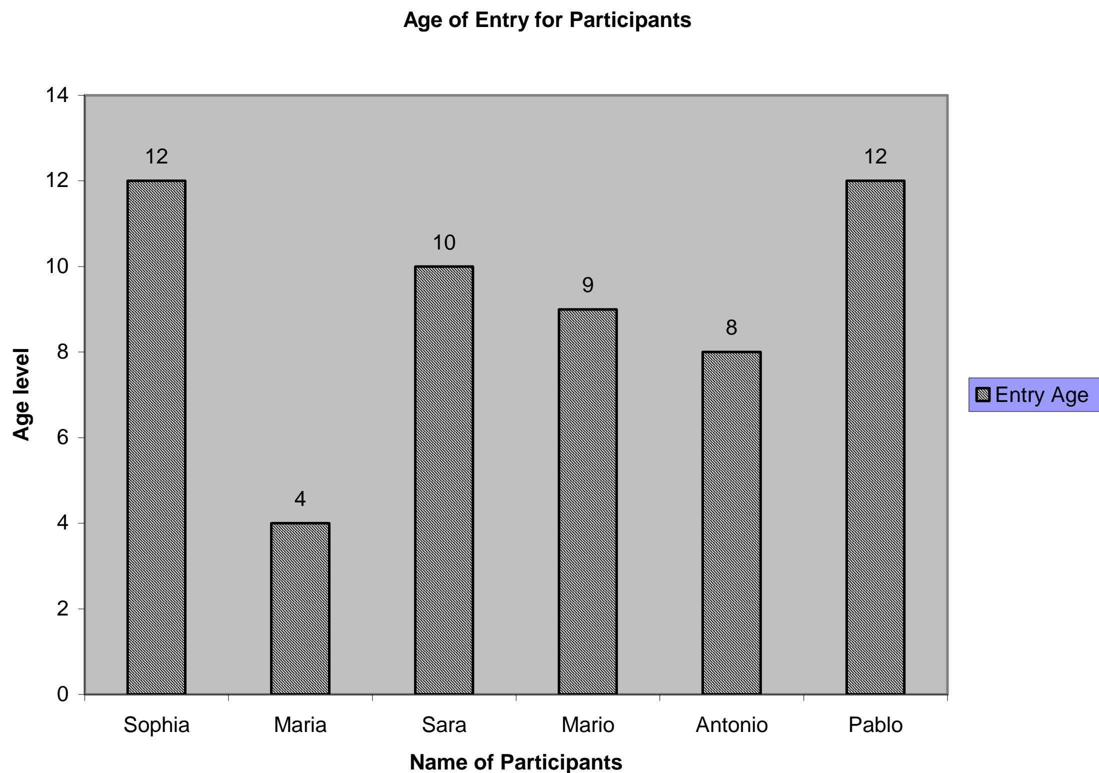
Figure 4.1



The distinctions among the undocumented status reported by the participants illustrate the various levels of undocumentedness that exist. For example, Antonio and Sara were undocumented in the sense that the government did not have record of them in their system. Sophia was undocumented because her tourist visa expired soon after her arrival. Mario, Maria, and Pablo were considered undocumented immigrants because they had valid social security numbers but were not authorized to leave the county, seek employment or obtain social services. This diversity within undocumented status impacted the participants' experiences.

The age of entry for participants proved to be another influential factor in shaping their identity. The figure below displays the age differences in which participants entered the United States.

Figure 4.2



In this figure, Maria was the youngest to enter the United States in comparison to the other participants. Ferdman and Gallegos (2001) noted that the level of exposure to other ethnic and racial groups during the formative years of development has an impact on one's identity. Consequently, Maria learned the racial order in the United States early on, such that she considered herself to be White American. According to Maria, she considered herself to be white as a young child because, as she stated, "all of my friends were white…my friends always use to tell me that I wanted to be European." After reading the transcripts of our dialogue, she attributed this comment to her unconscious desire to fit into society as a young girl that positively portrayed being White as better than being Latin@.

Differences among participants became apparent in terms of level of stress, gender, class, and racial discrimination. For Pablo, Maria, and Sophia, being undocumented did not create a continuous state of stress and fear as it did for the other three participants. They attributed this to the fact that they were considered legal at one point in their lives. Although Pablo crossed the border without a passport, he entered the documentation process soon after arrival. Because both Sophia and Maria entered with an approved tourist visa, they were not preoccupied with their immigration status as they assumed their parents had taken care of everything. Consequently, Pablo, Sophia and Maria's experience of going to college was the first time when being undocumented became an overwhelming barrier.

On the other hand, Antonio, Mario, and Sara had experienced stress and fear on a more consistent basis. They all credited this to their darker skin complexion, gender, and having had to cross the border without detection. Crossing the border was an intense

event for the males, whereas the females did not recollect much about crossing the border. All the males crossed the border and described their experiences as both thrilling and frightening. Although Sara crossed the border without any papers, she came in a car, hidden in the backseat, so she did not recall much of the experience. Finally, Antonio, Mario and Sara had the most difficulty navigating society because they did not have a support network or the good luck of the other participants. This was due to the fact that the other three participants had family members who had lived in the United States prior to their arrival. For example, Pablo mentioned how his grandfather was part of the Bracero Program and Maria's father would often come to the United States for work and return back to Mexico.

Participants were aware that living as undocumented in the United States meant dealing with the threat of deportation. Interestingly, however, only Sara expressed concern about deportation. Because her brother had been deported twice, Sara had always been afraid that immigration officers might come after her one day. "Si, porque no sé si va inmigración por mi hermano, nos preguntan de nosotros." (*Yes, because when immigration goes after my brother, I don't know if they may him ask about us.*) Even though a history of immigration sweeps have occurred in the area where they lived, the other participants stated that they did not worry about being deported since they were so far away from the border.

Gender played an important role in the participants' experience. The males crossed the border by foot, and purchased false social security cards. Generally, the males were independent as they negotiated their undocumented status. Each of the females had either her father or another adult assist her when she had to deal with her undocumented

status. Sophia highlighted this as she described her first attempt to get a job. "For the [job] application, [my dad] went with me to fill out the application at the store. When I needed to fill in the box [asking for my social security number], he got out his card and mixed the numbers." Sara and Maria had similar experiences when they applied for their first jobs. In contrast, the males applied for jobs on their own.

Another important dimension of difference noted by the participants was socioeconomic status. Sophia's parents were educated professionals, and Maria's parents owned a local store in Mexico. As a result, their parents stressed the importance of education to them more than the parents of the other participants. Mario came to a similar conclusion about the importance of economic status when considering the age of immigration to the United States.

> When children entered middle school [in Mexico], parents could no longer send them because it was really expensive. I've noticed poor people in Mexico make the same choice, at least in my family, to send the children [to the U.S.] after elementary school.

Although no statistical data supports Mario's analysis, the other participants agreed that young male teenagers would often be taken out of school in Mexico and sent to the United States with relatives in order to provide for the family back in Mexico.

Finally, the darker-skinned participants commented on how they encountered more negative experiences due to racism than did the other participants. In addition, Antonio and Mario attested that their male identity complicated the situation further. Mario expressed his frustration as he explained his incidents with the police due to his darker skin complexion. "Being pulled over [by police] for reasons that I shouldn't have been pulled over…Of course [because I'm] a brown male." Those participants with a darker skin complexion revealed more racially charged incidents and more interactions

with society as racialized Latin@s. These rich similarities and differences provide essential background information in order to analyze the participants' responses to the research questions.

Findings and Interpretation

This next section is organized according to the four research questions. Responses to these guiding questions are part of the overall findings in this research. Aligning with the principles of participatory action research, the generative themes that emerged are presented separately in Chapter V.

Research Question 1:

How Do Undocumented Latin@ Youth Define the Term Undocumented?

The participants defined being undocumented by describing the barriers, both situational and institutional, that affected their lives. Undocumented status played a significant role when individuals engaged with institutions such as colleges, banks, and government agencies, namely the Department of Motor Vehicles. Although they experienced differences in the severity of their experiences, all six participants elaborated on the limiting effect that their undocumented status had on them.

All six participants defined undocumented status from a deficit perspective or as lacking something official. To be undocumented means to not have papers, namely work permits and valid social security numbers, documents that permanent residents possessed. Maria defined being undocumented as "not having a green card…not having papers." She described the term as a state of incompleteness. Sophia, on the other hand, defined being undocumented as a limitation. She stated, "It is like living in a *jaula de oro* [gilded cage]. Yeah, I have everything that I might have dreamed of in my home country, yet I cannot

leave. I am caged in." Sophia described being undocumented as a limit or trap, an inescapable one, and saw she could only maneuver around being undocumented. All of the participants distinguished being undocumented as not having something.

Situational Barriers in Being Undocumented

A unifying response to the first research question among all of the participants was the importance of having complete legal immigration documentation status in certain situations. The areas where the participants said they faced barriers included: having access to health care, entering nightclubs, applying for credit cards, purchasing a cell phone, opening a bank account, renting an apartment, purchasing a home or car, reporting a crime, and traveling internationally. All participants mentioned how their consciousness about being undocumented was usually only heightened when they encounter one of these barriers. Antonio summarized it best when he stated: "You don't really feel the load of being illegal in this country until you reach 16 or 17." This was in spite of the fact that the participants, with the exception of Sophia and Maria, knew that they had entered the country without proper documentation. Antonio specified the ages 16 or 17 as a critical time, because during these years being documented was important to obtain a driver license and/or a job.

The timing and situation in needing "papers" varied among the participants, as demonstrated by the experiences of Sophia and Mario. Sophia recalled her first experience of acknowledging her undocumented status when she shared "I think it was when I was looking for a job and I didn't know that you needed to have the social security card." From this account we see that Sophia's family had not explained to her the importance of documentation and she did not have any prior experience to tell her

differently. In contrast, Mario explained how early on in high school, he realized the importance of having documentation.

> I think [being undocumented] hit me really big in 9th grade. I was taking a Spanish class and we were given a scholarship to study for 6 months in Spain…The teacher really wanted me to go but asked about [my] papers.

Unfortunately, he was unable to go to Spain with his classmates. Mario then grasped the magnitude of being undocumented as a freshman in high school, the first of many limitations he would encounter in his life.

Another area where the participants' experiences varied was healthcare. Sophia, Mario, and Maria were very concerned about staying employed and receiving health care benefits because they have children. Sophia stated that parenthood had changed her view of being undocumented, "Because now my priorities have changed. My priorities are not only me, it's now my family…I want to make sure above all, my family, and my kids are taken care of." Mario further stressed that services like healthcare were not important to him until he became a father, "Now that I am a father, I think about it [healthcare]…" In essence, the importance of being undocumented changed once that they were parents. Antonio stated that since he had been without parents for so long, he knew little about going to the doctor and even less about the dentist. Healthcare was an area that illustrated how the same scenario could impact the undocumented individuals in different ways.

The awareness of being undocumented could also be raised when considering hypothetical situations. For example, all participants noted the limiting factor of traveling internationally. Maria refers to this limitation when she expresses her wish simply to reconnect with her family. "Yo quiero regresar a ver a mi abuelita y a mi familia." (*I want to go back to see my grandmother and family).* Others shared similar sentiments as

Maria's. None were as painful as Antonio's inability, at age 16, to see his father before he died, "My dad was deported to Mexico and that's when I got the news that he passed away." Because Antonio came to the U.S. at a relatively young age, he was not able to connect with any family in Mexico. Fortunately, after his father passed away, he and his brother found families in the U.S. willing to open their home to them until they finished high school.

Because of the differences among their undocumented status, they had different views on traveling. Sophia, Maria, Antonio and Pablo had an interest in traveling within the United States but hesitated due to their anxiety of being questioned for documentation. Mario's desire was to travel only to Southern California by car to see his family, and he was always concerned about immigration checkpoints. Sara was the most restricted, as she preferred not to even venture outside of her community, a self-imposed restriction.

As mentioned above, being undocumented was situational for all participants and depended on the individual's particular undocumented status. For some participants, it was an everyday situation. For example, Sara and Antonio had no official government identity and Mario had only a valid social security number. Sara, Mario, and Antonio illustrated how being undocumented was a constant reminder, whereas the other three typically were only reminded when they had to give information to financial institutions, like registering for the first time with a bank or applying for a credit card.

Although participants represented varying degrees of undocumented status, certain barriers prohibited them from full inclusion in society. This exemplifies what Flores and Benmayor (1997) termed U.S. "cultural citizenship" as opposed to legal

citizenship. All six participants participated in American culture developing their identity by virtue of growing up in the United States for at least 10 years. Yet their immigration status prevented them from gaining full membership and acceptance into the dominant society.

Institutional Barriers in Being Undocumented

Being undocumented limits participation in mainstream society in several ways, but always under government constraints in travel and education. Since all the participants were limited from traveling internationally on an airplane, they simply avoided traveling by plane. All participants confronted limits while getting a driver license. As for education, not until these undocumented immigrants decided to pursue college did their immigration status become relevant. Therefore, the two government institutions, which created the most restrictive barriers for all six participants, were the Department of Motor Vehicles (D.M.V.) and schools of higher education.

Department of Motor Vehicles. Participants' opportunities for driving with or without a license depended either on legislation or their own documentation status. Since 1994, the California Department of Motor Vehicles has required people to pass a written test, verify their legal residence in California and show proof of a social security number in order to obtain a driver's license. Prior to 1994, however, any undocumented immigrant above the age of 16 could successfully apply for and receive a driver license.

For example, before 1994, Sophia and Pablo were both able to get through loopholes to apply for and receive a driver license. Sophia received her California driver license before 1994: "Well, when I got it, you could still get it." But later, Sophia was faced with the dilemma of what to do once her license expired after 1994. She went to

Oregon to obtain her driver's license because legal residency was not required in that state at the time. In this case, her status became relevant because the law changed, requiring her need to be documented.

Pablo, on the other hand, was able to acquire his driver's license not because of a change in the law, but rather because of a change in his status. At first, Pablo had legal residency as a minor and could apply for and receive a driver's license. He conveyed his luck, "What I did with a working permit is I got my driver's license and it expires next year, so I don't know if I can renew it." Since his permit expired after he received his driver's license, his social security number became invalid and he became ineligible to renew his license. Though Pablo's brother, a legal resident, had renewed his license, he was not sure this would be an automatic process: "My brother's has been renewed so I'm hoping that I can [renew my license] as well. Hopefully I can renew it without problems." Compared with Sophia, Pablo had moderate success as an undocumented person as a result of having had prior legal status in the United States.

Unfortunately, the other participants did not have the luxury of any legal protection at any point while living in the United States. Maria and Mario had a valid social security number but no work permit. In contrast, Antonio and Sara had no official government documentation, nor did the government know that they even resided in the United States. Like Maria, Mario took and passed the Driver's Education course. They both went to the Department of Motor Vehicles office and encountered the obstacle of being undocumented. Maria lamented, "They ask you for a photo identification card and either your U.S. passport or green card and we didn't have any of that." This example illustrated the restrictiveness of being undocumented, placing limitations Maria's

complete legal participation in society. Sara and Antonio had not even attempted to get their driver's licenses because they already knew the outcome.

Since 1994, pro-immigrant groups in California waged an unsuccessful campaign to allow undocumented immigrants to apply for a driver's license. This came to an abrupt end in 2005 when Governor Schwarzenegger overturned the previous governor's amendment allowing undocumented people to obtain a driver's license. For all of the participants, including Sophia and Pablo, the driver's license was a major roadblock that created an overwhelming, if not impenetrable, barrier from participating fully in society.

Higher Education. Participants' ability to deal with access to higher education depended on their networking ability and changes in legislation. In contrast to the anti-immigrant sentiment surrounding access to driver licenses, legislation for undocumented immigrants to receive an education has gained momentum. As noted Chapter II (p.40), the Supreme Court decided in the case *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) to support undocumented immigrant children in attending school from kindergarten through 12th grade. In 2003, California legislators passed the AB-540 measure that allowed undocumented immigrants to pursue higher education and pay in-state tuition if they had attended a California high school for at least three years. In 2006, there has been a push for The DREAM Act (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act, 2005), which would allow students who graduate from high school and enroll in college to be eligible for residency.

Among the participants, only Sara and Maria graduated high school after the AB-540 legislation passed. Since Maria attended a private university and was initially awarded financial assistance to attend, the legislation was irrelevant in her case at first. Fortunately, Sara benefited directly from this new resolution because she graduated after

2003. Yet, like many poor students who experience poverty, they still faced the enormous hurdle in finding money without federal financial assistance.

The other five participants experienced much difficulty in fulfilling their dreams to go to college. As Antonio declared, “You know, if I was documented, I would have graduated a long time ago, but instead, I’m 25 and still going to college. It will just take me longer.” Antonio expressed his frustration that he could only take a few classes at a time because of the high cost of tuition. In spite of the new legislation AB-540, students like Antonio must still find ways to pay for the in-state tuition without public financial aid. Except for Maria and Pablo, the other participants were aware of their inability to further their education and simply identified and pursued those colleges that would not verify their undocumented immigrant status.

Sophia’s attitude of persistence while attending college was similar to that of Antonio, Mario, Maria and Pablo. After graduating from high school, Sophia had to find a college that would not verify documentation status as she explained, “When I was trying to apply to a university, I was told that San Francisco State was the only one I could apply to because they were the ones that didn’t check your papers.” Even though she could enroll, she was unable to apply for scholarships and the cost of tuition was nearly prohibitive. Coincidently, Antonio, Mario and Pablo attended the same university.

The level of undocumented status also had an effect on the participants’ perception of attaining their education. Since Antonio, Mario and Sara experienced the greatest limits in being undocumented, the challenges of going to college were not surprising. In contrast, Sophia, Maria and Pablo were particularly shocked to find out that their paths to college would be difficult. Although Maria was initially accepted to the

university with scholarships, university officials later withdrew the financial package once they learned of her immigration status. As Maria said in exasperation, “It wasn’t until I started applying for financial aid and stuff, and I couldn’t get my grant. I couldn’t get to do the FAFSA and that’s when it got…I hate not having papers!” Consequently, she withdrew from the university after attending her first semester. For Maria, this event was the most poignant in her life as an undocumented immigrant. What followed were desperate attempts to become legal by marrying her boyfriend of three months.

For Pablo, like Maria, graduating from high school became the most significant episode in being undocumented. He was selected as the valedictorian of his high school in the Central Valley only to find out that he was ineligible to receive thousands of dollars of scholarship money and denied entry to all of the universities to which he applied. In fact, he even disclosed, “I thought about just giving up my title [valedictorian] to the next person in line who would have at least benefited from receiving the scholarships” Since the local universities in his area denied him admissions, he needed to search elsewhere to attend college. Fortunately, his family’s connection to the Bay Area provided him with a job where a local university admitted him.

These institutions of higher learning have represented enormous hurdles in the participants’ struggle to thrive in the United States. Moreover, the type of undocumented status impacted the severity of the limitations that each participant encountered. As will be explored in Chapter V, each participant had found a way to navigate the systems despite these obstacles. In conclusion, the participants’ particular type of undocumented immigration status, networking ability and social capital not only determined the limits that they encountered but also impacted how they navigated through society.

Research Question 2:
How Does Being Undocumented Impact the Racial Identity Development of Latin@ Immigrants?

Navigating through society while being undocumented represents one of the best manifestations of the resiliency of the human spirit. A common strategy employed by the participants was to find ways where they would not to be perceived as undocumented. In the words of Pablo, “You have to do whatever you need to do in order to be safe.” Hence, the elements of basic survival were epitomized by the participants’ resilient behavior through demonstrating certain attitudes and networking ability necessary to assimilate. Each participant assessed every situation to determine the appropriate action to successfully present themselves as documented individuals. Because Antonio and Sara were truly under the government radar, their navigation depended much more on networking ability than for the other participants. Pablo and Maria had the least need to navigate covertly through society due to their near-legal status. Mario and Sophia used their quasi-documented status to carefully navigate through several techniques as will be explained later.

Attitude Patterns

Navigation through society was dependent on the participants’ attitude towards successful survival in the United States. Hope, denial, secrecy and laughter all surfaced throughout the dialogues, suggesting that these strategies served as useful tools in navigating through society. Even though many participants realized that becoming documented would not happen anytime soon, hope became an important ingredient in surviving each day. Sara disclosed, “I knew it would take a long time, I just didn’t think it

would take this long?" Sara, like Antonio, was far from receiving her papers, but still carried that hope inside. In addition, hope translated into waiting for laws to change. All the participants were either waiting for their own children to turn 18, for their parents to become legal so that they could enter the process, or to get married to a citizen.

Another strategy that participants used to navigate was to consciously or subconsciously ignore their immigration status. Mario best embodied this attitude when he expressed what he needs to do to overcome this challenge:

> I guess its not because I don't see myself as being illegal, but because of just trying not to. I just wake up every morning like any other person. [and tell myself] I'm in a world where there are no papers or there is nothing that you need.

Mario's navigation technique involves a psychological process of giving himself a sense of worth. This description clearly demonstrated that people are resourceful and will do what they feel they need to do in order to survive. Mario described this transition after reacting to the dialogue transcripts:

> It's just while I'm reading [the transcript] I get mad and probably after two hours I can pretty much let [the emotions] go and think of living in the moment, and forget that I am illegal or at least ignore it.

By ignoring their immigration status, participants were able to focus on what they needed to do to successfully navigate in society. As a result, participants sometimes became surprised to find out the implication of their immigration status. Maria lamented, "I never thought it would be this hard." Ignoring their immigration status also meant that participants did not necessarily follow closely to immigration law changes. In fact, the only source of information on immigration laws for the participants was the Spanish language media.

The degree of secrecy varied among the participants, depending on the type of immigration status and the amount of interaction with certain community members. For Pablo, it was not much of a secret as he stated, “I think another thing that helps is that being undocumented, is something very acceptable at least within a community. So it’s something you talk openly with some people and you share things like that.” But other participants simply kept it a secret. For example, Antonio did not drive as a way to keep his immigration status a secret. Sara explained that she simply would stay home to keep her identity from others, “Me quedo en mi comunidad” (*I just stay in my community*). Antonio and Sara’s level of undocumented status directly correlated with their feelings of safety, such that participants felt it necessary to keep his/her status a secret.

Laughter was a technique shared among participants to reduce the level of stress of being undocumented. Several quotes demonstrated this attitude, such as Antonio’s response, “What do you think, I’m green?” when asked if participants were illegal aliens. When participants were asked how they did not want to be identified as an undocumented immigrant, Mario shared, “You know you’re a newcomer if you come with your tight jeans.” Antonio used his humor when he would be confronted by anyone as to why he didn’t drive: “I’m one of those people who are environmentally conscious. I can’t harm the environment and so if I get another car, I will harm the environment.” Comments such as these kept the dialogue moving, but more importantly reflected the spirit of the participants to keep moving ahead. Laughter seemed to give the strength needed to face the obstacles.

Each of these techniques assisted participants in dealing with the pain and anger that they experienced. When asked why laughter was an important technique, Sophia expressed this was essential for struggling every day:

> I try not to stay with it [being undocumented]. You know para que. *(for what)* It's not healthy. I don't want to, it's not healthy for my kids or my family, I don't want to bring that energy. But sometimes it does stay for awhile and of course that's when you feel you are nothing and you feel pa' que vine aquí, *(why did i come here)* and when you want to go back to Mexico and when you want to visit your family the most.

The other participants supported Sophia's attitude as they conveyed their sense that life was still easier in the United States. This partially added to their resilient behavior. Antonio recalled having to remind his brother that they did not have anywhere else to go because they had lived so long in the United States: "Why would you go back to Mexico? Why would you do that, we didn't grow up over there. You don't know anything about what is going on over there in Mexico." Consequently, Antonio and the others had to look forward to make the best of their current situation.

Behavior Modified through Assimilation

To be perceived as documented, the participants used several approaches such as acting as if from a higher socio-economic class, speaking English without a foreign accent, driving with a license or driving safely, having friends who were white or U.S. born Latin@, obtaining false documents, and applying for legal documentation. All of these approaches were used to mediate interactions with government institutions and employers. Most importantly, each participant alluded to determining the best ways to "act American" as the primary mechanism to successfully navigate society. Acting American meant different things for participants, but fitting into society was the ultimate goal.

Flores and Benmayor (1997) drew the distinction between “legal” and “cultural citizenship” of Latin@s in the United States to define the limitations that Latin@s have in being fully accepted by mainstream society. Although U.S.-born Latin@s are legal citizens, they are still often ostracized from society. In the case of undocumented Latin@ immigrants, being perceived as “foreigners” was alright as long as no one questioned them about their immigration status. For example, Pablo’s goal in acting American was to adjust as an immigrant: “I remember I wanted to be in the group of immigrants that were well adjusted…not pretending to be white, but pretending to be well adjusted, like pretending to have papers.” Because a majority of Latin@s made up Pablo’s school population, he became aware early on that he was not white but thought he could still act documented if he merely pretended to be like a U.S.-born Latin@.

On the other hand, other participants defined acting American as losing their accents or presenting themselves as being of a higher socio-economic status. Participants used a variety of tactics whether speaking without a foreign accent, or making comments to suggest that they fit in. One example was Maria’s account:

> Yeah, because they assume that you’ve been here as I’ve been told a lot and I say that I’ve been raised here. One example where I applied for a job, I used fake papers. During the conversations in my interview, I just let them know that I grew up here and they said, “Oh, what part?” And so they think I’ve been here all my life and so I’m not some immigrant or illegal because you’re educated and raised here.

Maria’s comprehension of how to navigate successfully was based on having no Spanish accent, growing up in the United States during her formative years, and attending a university. Similar to Maria, Sophia had evaded questioning by showing her Oregon license and letting people know that she grew up in Oregon. These participants learned to assimilate in the ways Gordon (1964) defined cultural and structural assimilation. That is,

Maria and Sophia learned that culturally they should lose their Spanish accents and that structurally, Sophia needed a driver's license. Although these participants could adapt to some of the cultural norms, they were still limited from fully participating in society due to the structural limitations of valid identification.

Creating the illusion of being from a higher socio-economic status was a clear navigation technique. Pablo in particular mentioned several times the importance of dressing nicely to fit in. Antonio described this point best when he shared, "There are all these images on television of how you [should] dress. People look at the ways you dress. You know, that [clothes] they always bring it up and we even say it. *Acaba de llegar.*" (*They have just come*). Of course fitting in with peers is important to all youth but in the case of these participants, it was important to avoid further questioning about their immigration status.

Because Mario's experience had been racialized, his behavior was specific to avoiding the police when driving his car. He believed that pretending that he was wealthy by driving an expensive car would help his situation. Therefore, he decided to purchase a Mercedes-Benz:

> I don't want to show my Latinoness as much because there is that negative consequence. So, while I'm driving my car, I don't want the police officers to think I'm Mexican because there's this racist attitude and they'll pull me over just because [I'm Latino]. So I'd rather not try to hide [being Latino] it but I can hide by the car I drive in order to not get pulled over. I had to buy a car that was expensive and that I don't like in order to do like someone who has been here for I guess who is doing well, who is making enough to drive a Mercedes. So I did, so that I could stop getting pulled over and it's worked so far.

Mario's take on assimilation was steeped in racially charged experiences as a young Latin@ male with school officials and law enforcement officers. Because others did not have similar racialized experiences as Antonio and Mario, their understanding of

assimilation was to blend in as best as possible within society so that they had minimal little interaction with government institutions and officials.

Another tactic participants used to navigate through society was avoidance. The most common technique to avoid problems was obtaining a false social security card. Antonio shared the process:

> You're walking down Mission, people come up to you, "¿Quieres mica? ¿Quieres seguro social?" They say it in front of your face… "¿Quieres mica?" Yeah, yeah. I gave my information. You know, name, birth date. Gave it to them. "All right. Come back here in like 2 hours. Come back here in 2 hours and we'll have it ready for you." So that's what I did.

All participants knew that to avoid questions by authorities or employers, having a social security number was important in the United States. Once participants had their social security card, navigating through the employment industry was different.

Those who drove without a license believed that they needed to drive as carefully as possible. Mario, Maria and Sara drove cautiously: "Si manejas con cuidado y cuando veas a la policía le bajas la velocidad...y ella nunca te persinas cuando manejas, y yo sí!" (*I drive carefully and when I see the police, I slow down…and she [Sara's sister] never prays when she drives and I do!)*. Their technique to avoid the police lay in the belief that if they drove with caution, they would not have to interact with police officers. Antonio was the only participant to decide to not drive at all. He was able to rely successfully on mass transportation or friends to take him where he needed to go. The other participants, Sophia and Pablo, did not carry the same fear when driving because they had a valid driver's license. However, all participants shared the same behavior of consistently lying to avoid potential altercations.

Another example of avoidance was participants determining which institutions did not routinely investigate students' immigration status. For example, after entering into the college system, obstacles still appeared in the classroom. In one instance, Sophia's difficult task of explaining to her professor why she did not vote when extra credit was being given for those students who voted. Her response was to say to the teacher, "I don't believe in that or you know I would be just radical, like a hippie or something. 'Who cares, I don't care about the government,' when it wasn't really true." In this case, Sophia connected that being a hippie was sufficient to pass her as an American. This lack of participation proved similar to other participants in regards to school activities, which possibly had negative impression on the classroom teachers.

Networking ability was an important tool to navigate through society successfully. In order to attend college, participants utilized their networking skills and false social security numbers to register for classes. They had to rely on their social networks to make their enrollment in college a possibility. Although all members of the group were accepted to college, they still had to find the means to pay tuition. All expressed gratitude for having assistance at one point or another along the way.

Antonio acknowledged the benefits of networking, "But what helped me out a lot was that my counselor saw my situation and she said, 'You know what, I'm going to give you $300 and that's going pay for your school'." Antonio's circumstance was a fortunate example, yet all participants expressed how lucky they were to have some sort of networking circle. Regardless of how successful all participants were in pursuing their education, the condition of being an undocumented immigrant in the United States never escaped the minds of the participants, no matter how much they tried to forget.

Research Question 3:

How Do Undocumented Latin@ Youth Negotiate the

Socialization Process as Immigrants?

One's identity is influenced by several factors such as family and society, which are within the context of race, class, and gender. For participants, understanding how being undocumented impacted their Latin@ness as a cultural and racial identity within the framework of the United States represented a unique aspect of this research. In this section, the responses of the participants are organized into experiences and beliefs on identity. Participants shared their experiences of crossing the border, having a sense of security, being invisible to society, viewing schools as having low expectations of their potential, being racialized by society, and having limits imposed or self-imposed on them. These experiences shaped the participants responses in forming their identity, including a negative U.S. identity, a stronger Latin@ identity, and an in-between identity.

Antonio and Mario were the individuals who most expressed a heightened awareness of racial identity, in part because they were males with a dark skin complexion, whereas the other four participants shared minimal racialized experiences. Although Pablo and Sophia spoke of the challenge of defining their identity, Maria's early entry to the United States best displayed the complexity in identity for children who immigrated at an early age, whereas immigration status most impacted Sara in defining herself as Mexican because of being undocumented.

Experiences in Being Undocumented

The varied experiences of the participants all had a resounding message that was engrained into their minds. As Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001) postulated from

their own study, the impact of social mirroring were profound in shaping children's identity. Antonio, Mario and Pablo as children clearly understood that they were different from others. Antonio described the first time he crossed the border:

> I guess it was at that moment that I figured out [that we did not belong] because we [his father, brother and himself] tried crossing the border one time and they [Immigration officials] caught us. So they took us to the immigration station and questioned us. [Immigration officials asked] 'And where are you from.' As little kids, we said de la estación (*from the station*). I don't know where I'm from, so I said la estación (*the station*). So they [Immigration officials] sent us back and that was my first experience facing that pain that oh, I don't belong.

In other words, Antonio learned at the moment he crossed the border that he was not welcomed and did not belong in the United States.

The sense of not belonging was equal to not having security while living in the United States. Although participants continued in their struggle, being undocumented was still an undercurrent in their minds. Sara demonstrated her anxiety of continuing her studies as a result of having negative experiences being undocumented. She tentatively expressed her attitude when she shared apprehensively,

> I don't know if they [the university] will accept me without papers. To tell you the truth, I don't think I'll make it at the university because I have seen so many people not go because they [admissions office] ask for your papers.

Both Sara's personal and learned experience taught her to have a lack of trust in the system that reminded her that she did not belong in the United States. As a result, her lack of security created an inhibition to pursue her educational dreams.

Sophia recollected her sense of insecurity on graduation day, despite having succeeded for several years at the university level: "When I graduated, I said 'Oh my god, what if they [the university] don't give them [diploma] to me.' You know, what if, the big what if?" This undercurrent of an overall insecurity continued to surface

repeatedly knowing that their entire lives would be changed at a moment's notice. Sophia further disclosed the intensity of this insecurity of living life as an undocumented immigrant:

> Probably you [being undocumented] wouldn't have that security as an American that the job you're at maybe doing really well, you might lose that one-day. You might have to work a little harder so you don't lose that [job]. So that you might have the same things [material items], but you might not feel like it's yours yet Como que (*Like if*) they find out, that I am undocumented then I'm out of [The United States].

Sophia carried this sentiment of always having to look over her shoulder and never feeling truly at home. These experiences were such a harsh reminder that the participants often chose to ignore or try to forget about their status.

For Antonio and Sara, their immigration status was such that the government did not even know of their identity. Their very existence was concealed so much that they were invisible to society. Antonio illustrated this point:

> Yeah, they [U.S. government] don't know that I'm here. Because there was this one time I got stopped by the cops and they asked me for my i.d. [identification] and I showed them my school identification. They [police] went to search me and found some other Antonio somewhere else that they were looking for. I was like this is crazy. They [police] took me out of the car and they were putting handcuffs on me and said you have to stay here until we find out who you really are. I was like ah man, no. I told them [police] I got some papers of school right here and I go to school here, I live here in …county, because this other guy [they were looking for] was in Concord. I said I don't even know where Concord is and the police said that they get many of you [Latin@] people to tell them that they [Latin@s] live here. Finally, he [Police officer] went in [his car] and came back and said o.k. 'You can go'.

From this experience, Antonio was reminded once again that he did not exist in the eyes of the United States government. Therefore, to be undocumented meant many things, but none more powerful than invisibility. Although universally being undocumented meant

that they were not welcomed and did not belong in the United States, Antonio and Sara were non-existent according to the United States government and its institutions.

School and racial experiences illustrated society's narrow perception of being an undocumented immigrant of color. First, although Pablo and Maria had relatively good personal experiences in school, they recognized themselves as exceptions compared to other participants. Secondly, while Antonio and Mario shared personal experiences of being racialized, the other participants acknowledged that Latin@s were racialized as well.

One example shared by the group was the low expectation of Latin@s held by school officials. Sophia and Mario recounted their story of the school system not pushing them enough: "If they [school officials] would have told me that there were the college prep classes. Just for me, I didn't know that I didn't speak English perfectly and that I wasn't cut out to go to college." Sophia revealed her resentment that her school did not hold the same high expectations as for her non-Latin@ classmates. Mario supported Sophia's experience:

> Yeah, I've a had a teacher tell us that we're never going to become anything…and [Latin@s] are going to end up working at a McDonalds or something…I guess back to what was I said, knowing my options. Not treating me as a dumb person, not pushing me to college prep classes [by the teachers]. I wasn't getting D's but I was an A student in school.

For participants, their school experience demonstrated that they were not expected to do well in school or to attend a university. Instead, going on to college was reserved for students other than Latin@ immigrants. This experience also meant that school officials did not pay close attention to undocumented immigrants. Antonio shared the example that his own school never knew that his father passed away the last two years he was in

high school. For Antonio and the other participants, these incidents were part of the larger institutional experiences, which conveyed that undocumented immigrants are irrelevant.

West (1994) proclaimed that people of color are racialized and were often relegated to negative stereotypes that are reproduced regardless of the actual experience. Although Antonio and Mario articulated that they had personally experienced racism, the others shared similar accounts about other immigrants they knew. Antonio expressed his first awareness of racism when he crossed the border with his father and brother, "I guess if you look white, they'll [immigration officials] let you go by you. They [immigration officials] saw my dad driving; he's Mexican you know as well as the passengers…so they stopped us." Antonio learned at an early age that identity was categorized by skin complexion and often added a positive or negative value.

In addition, Mario learned that not only immigration officials racialized Latin@s. His experience with police officers supported his suspicion of being racialized:

> I guess my own experience and getting pulled over [while driving by police] for no reason. For reasons that other colors [white people] wouldn't get pulled over… not only was the car a target, but also me being brown and being young. I was a big target.

Although Mario acknowledged that driving certain vehicles impacted a police officers' decision to detain a driver, he also attributed that to being a young male of color. Mario further disclosed another situation in which an older white woman became fearful of him for being a young Latin@ male while cleaning a laundry center:

> I was cleaning a Laundromat at night and there was a European lady, white lady there. The doors get automatically locked [at a certain time]. So as soon as the doors locked, the lady came up to us [his partner] and said that she was really scared, that we shouldn't have the doors locked. She was scared for her safety. It is as if we can never be trusted, because we're young and we have color on our skin. It seems like it's always the same thing. People just can't trust you. They think we are going to rob them or do something to them.

In this instance, his interaction did not involve immigration officials or a police officer, but rather a white citizen. According to Mario, he was viewed as a criminal no matter with whom he interacted.

As to being undocumented, having lighter skin allowed the benefit of being able to pass as an American and cross the U.S.-Mexican border. Both Sophia and Mario shared their stories of family members crossing the border:

> I [Sophia] remember who went. He [her cousin] spent two months [in Mexico], came back and drove the mustang [across the border]. He [her cousin] looks African American, and has his head shaved. That's just his style and it's the look of most African Americans and he spoke in English without an accent. And he just told them [immigration officials]…I am just coming back from the other side.

This experience taught Sophia that to cross the border, factors such as type of vehicle, language, and skin phenotype were all relevant. In Sophia's example, not being racialized as brown was the key to being perceived legal. Mario added that he personally self-imposed his limitation in crossing the border because he was brown:

> Actually it is easier and I know that for a fact because I have a cousin who is very light skin and has blue eyes. It's very easy because I know he [his cousin] has gone down to Mexico and said 'You know I've forgot it" [his U.S. passport]. He [his cousin] was able to cross the border without problems. Yeah, I wouldn't be able to do that. In fact all he [his cousin] showed was his high school identification…but I can't do that.

The messages sent to all the participants was how race mattered in being legal as well as being accepted into the mainstream. Although every participant regarded their Mexican identity as a positive attribute, they were challenged with fitting in not only socially but also legally as Latin@ immigrants. Combined with their own personal painful experiences of being racialized and undocumented, each of their identities were shaped by complex definitions of what it meant to live in the United States.

Living in society underground daily affected the participants' relationships with other people as well as their own identity. Pablo articulated, "If you are here since you were 4, your told that you don't have papers, that you're not American…it would be harder." Mario further added "I've seen friends or family go into depression…to the point of trying to commit suicide. I've had some family members try to do that, for being depressed in being undocumented." In summary, the experiences of avoiding, lying, acting white, or driving without a license deeply impacted one's identity.

Complexity in Identity Development

As Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001) showed the impact of negative social mirroring on immigrant children, the participants shared the constant negative signal they received while growing up in the United States as undocumented. Mario shared a statement that emphatically exemplified being undocumented:

> Well I think it's the whole thing, I mean everything. Basically [being undocumented] it's again reminding me that I am illegal, I'm not welcome here, and that they [United States] don't want me here. So when I read it [transcription], it's just everything [the emotions] brings the same thing, the overall message. That I'm not welcome here!

This phrase is best understood from the context that all the participants came to the U.S. at such a relatively young age with parents who made the decision for them to migrate. Consequently, their immigration status did not come into play for some until 16 years of age, or with Pablo, not until he graduated from high school. In essence, the participants came to learn that being undocumented was undesirable and that they were perceived as non-humans.

Not belonging to a place where the participants lived had a deep impact on their self-esteem. Even though participants had different reactions to being undocumented,

they all expressed a wide range of emotions about experiences that produced a major setback in their lives and restricted their participation in society. Feelings of inadequacy, sadness, helplessness, inferiority, anger and guilt reflected the wide variety of their emotions. As Pablo disclosed, "You just get depressed thinking about…" Mario further revealed his anger as he conveyed, "You know it gets me angry again and you know it brings up all the emotions. And I was like yeah, yeah, oh yes, repeating the same thing over and over." For Mario, he knew his anger would surface every time he consciously thought about being undocumented. Although the participants were not certain how much of their emotions impacted them on a daily basis, the theory of social mirroring by Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001) suggests that these participants must overcome the obstacle of negative messaging they receive from society for being undocumented.

Hence, the reality of being undocumented might not be an everyday conscious experience but it is a continual sub-conscious experience. Pablo revealed profound emotions as he disclosed, "It's rejection, you feel rejected, you feel like you don't belong, and you feel disrespected, like this [country] is not your place, like you are taking advantage of someone or something just by being here." The impact on how the participants navigated through society as well as their own identity development was heavily influenced by these kinds of painful realities.

For participants like Antonio and Sara, most of their daily routine reminded them of their immigration status. This experience was in contrast to that of Pablo, Maria and Sophia, who obtained partial legal status with valid driver licenses or social security numbers. Nonetheless, the anguish that participants felt was common. Sara unveiled an intimate internal struggle when she disclosed, "Yo siento porque como deje todo haya,

pues nosotros no pertenecemos aquí. Yo luego digo voy ha regresar a México, porque haya tengo licenciá, tengo mi permiso para trabajar, y pertenezco al país. (*I feel because I left everything over there, that over here, we don't belong. I later say, I'll go back to United States, because over there I have a license, I can work and I belong to the country).* This relentless reminder wore down on each individual differently, but always with an everlasting impact.

Pablo offered a clear message about shaping one's identity: "If you are here [in the United States] since you were four and you're told that you don't have papers, that you're not American, in other words you don't belong here and this all you know, it would be harder." His analysis is consistent with the research by Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001), who claimed that because the identity of children have not been solidified, children often have more of a traumatic experience than adults who immigrate.

This was also illustrated in Maria's internal struggle. Her confusion of identifying as white while associating being Mexican or Latin@ as negative was expressed in this statement: "I don't know, my friends tell me that [I'm white] because I use to say I always wanted to be European. They would be like why, because you don't have papers [legal immigration status]." Maria equated being legal with being white. In addition, when asked why she thought she was not questioned about her immigration status during high school, Maria responded: "We [Maria and her friends] look like regular documented, you know white teenage kids, I don't know, we just don't look undocumented, we look legal." In reflecting on the dialogues, Maria admitted that she unconsciously used the term white, but did recall wanting to fit in as a teenager.

Later in our dialogues, Maria acknowledged that the negative images of Latin@s

kept her from having strong pride in being Mexican. Maria's experience created a belief that one's culture was one or the other and so she did not belong to either culture completely: "I do fit in, but I'm not American…I think I fit in as Mexican because I look Mexican and I fit in American because I act American or act the part." Maria attributed her sense of belonging to the American culture to how being American was racialized in the United States.

On the other hand, the participants' positive sense of being Mexican or Latin@ could be attributed to their sense of established identity before they came to the United States as well as to have a need to belong. As Sophia expressed, "What if I don't want to be American?" Sophia felt bitterness about not wanting to be American because of her negative experiences with Americans.

On the other hand, Mario elaborated, "I've always been really proud of being who I am, of being Mexican, of being a person of color…but it might not also be a negative thing of being American but an extremely positive thing of being Mexican." In this case, Mario placed his identity not in juxtaposition to being American, but rather showed his own pride in being Mexican. First generation immigrants tend to have a stronger tie with their country of origin than to their racial makeup (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001).

The tension between being American and Mexican was not only limited to the number of years of residence in the United States, but also due to the participants' image of being American. All the participants unanimously defined it meant "*Ser Americano*" (to be American). When asked about defining what "*Ser Americano"* all participants responded that clothing and language were important. However, one's skin color, specifically white, was the ultimate factor that determined if one were truly American.

Sophia articulated this sentiment for all the participants when she said: “Cuando yo pienso en la palabra Americano, lo que socio es el color, el color de tu piel, el color de tus ojos, el color de tu pelo.” (*When I think of the word American, what I associate it with is one’s color. The color of your skin, the color of your eyes, the color of your hair…*). The message that undocumented immigrants received on being American was no different than for documented immigrants or any other person of color. Consequently, they realized that they were not welcomed because they did not have proper documentation and even if they did have documentation, they did not belong.

Parallel to multiracial theories (Wijeyesinghe, 2001), society taught the participants that there was an either/or identity in the United States of being American or being Latin@. Sara considered herself as Mexican, while Pablo and Antonio called themselves Mexican American. Even Maria saw herself as a mixture of both while hesitating to fully acknowledge both as she clarified her thoughts, “I’m proud of being Mexican but I’m not super proud… I think I will see myself more as an American even if I don’t want to see myself as American.” Maria reluctantly identified herself as an American due to her length of time residing in the United States. These dialogues revealed the complexity of trying to fit in to mainstream society so as to be perceived as legal while not necessarily eradicating one’s Latin@ heritage. Sophia summarized her concern about the bi-polar relationship:

> It’s good to be or to act like an American, to get the house in the American community. I guess that’s what I meant last time when I say in a way we are all American even if we don’t want to be, because we are following these things. It’s good to act American when we are following the rules, when you know you are not suppose to litter in the streets, because it makes the place look better and it makes you be healthier. So in those ways it’s good. But personally I don’t want to lose my heritage, my Latina person. I don’t, so that’s why I fight it [being American] sometimes.

Sophia understood that she needed to navigate as an American in order to survive and also acknowledged some benefits in being American. However, because she had to constantly hide her Latin@ identity and act American, she feared losing her cultural identity. Even though immigrants might have similar experiences in losing their culture of origin, undocumented immigrants faced the unique challenge of navigating through society as legal residents.

In summary, it was difficult to determine which experience influenced each participant's identity. Because they were not welcomed, they might have strong Latin@ identities, or because they grew up early on in the United States, they might have believed that they were Americans. Since the message was more often mixed, the participants might claim both a Mexican and American identity. As Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001) claimed, negative school and racial experiences could easily shape the feelings of isolation, rejection and anger that the participants described. These participants encountered the same difficulty as Bejarano (2005) articulated in describing the border identity for immigrants along the U.S.-Mexican border.

Research Question 4:
What Effect Did This Research Have Upon the Participants?

From the dialogues that discussed action steps, participants gave several insights for success and survival. Participants provided their own unique solutions as steps to help undocumented immigrants, they centered on building social capital. The two key elements were the development of an undocumented network and knowledge of survival skills. However, Antonio seem to be the only participant that placed a priority on addressing the issue of undocumented immigration nationally rather than his own

immigration status. Mario and Sophia conveyed the limitations in being undocumented of building any larger movement, whereas Maria was inquiring on the issues of immigration. Pablo and Sara were not willing to go forward in changing immigration laws, but for different reasons. Pablo shared his mental exhaustion in being undocumented, and Sara described the self-boundaries that she created out of fear in being undocumented.

Building Social Capital

All participants noted the importance of building networks, what Baron, Field, and Schuller (2000) describe as “social capital.” Antonio and Pablo announced they would write a book on being undocumented; Antonio and Mario would continue an undocumented immigrant group. Sara and Maria would share their stories with high school students who were undocumented, and Sophia would add tips for students in her classroom on how to navigate being undocumented.

As Sara noted along with the other participants, the group dialogue was particularly helpful in that it brought awareness to the issue. For many, this was the first time they could openly discuss their fears and dreams as an undocumented immigrant:

> Como que me dio fuerza, me dieron fuerza porque ellos los veo tan tranquilos, y no se preocupan entonces me dio fuerza para hacer así, no preocuparme y seguir la vida normal. Que disfrute la vida y que no me preocupe. *(It’s like it [the dialogues with other participants] gave me strength, they [the other participants] gave me strength in that I see them so calm and they don’t preoccupy themselves so it gave me strength to be like that, to not worry and continue my life normally. To enjoy life and not worry.)*

Sara shared that the research process allowed her to open up with other undocumented immigrants and, for the first time, to recognize the assets the other participants carried to successfully navigate through society.

Even though all the participants privately expressed their own anxieties, when in

the group, they were individually viewed as success stories. For example, Maria commented on Sophia's experience as one who had made it successfully:

> I think she [Sophia] has done a really good job of not letting people know [she is undocumented] by the way she lives her life. I mean, she graduated school and she drives and she has a job. And I thought 'Is that why she is not teaching' and so it got me thinking.

Maria's astonishment at Sophia's immigration status challenged the stereotype that Maria assumed of undocumented immigrants. Hence, as the participants were measuring each other, they held one another in high regard.

Only Antonio epitomized the resiliency that undocumented immigrants had inside themselves. Antonio clearly demonstrated leadership in that he formed a student college group for Latin@s disguised as a forum to discuss immigration issues, organized immigrant youth marches from 2004 to 2006, and created videos and poems to share the plight of undocumented immigrants. When asked about his determination to not falter despite the myriad of obstacles, he concluded that he simply did not have any other choice:

> Hope and faith, I guess I have within myself of trying to get there [being documented] just keeps on moving me…I think in a way I'm pressured from my younger brother and from other people I've encountered. And once in awhile they fall into a minor depression and start thinking about it [being undocumented]. But if they [other undocumented immigrants] see me fall down, they're going to believe it's true. So in a way it's pressured me to try to see the good things…I'm going to find a way to solve it, because if I let it [being undocumented] get to me, it's going to continue down like a domino effect, keep going from person to person and I just feel like, there needs to be someone to stand up.

Antonio's presence as a true warrior seemed fitting for him since he took on the awesome responsibility of being the caretaker of his brother since he was 16 years old. Even though other participants could not match Antonio's energy, they all agreed to participate in any forum group, though not necessarily to facilitate the process. Moll and Gonzalez

(2004) recognize that oppressed communities do have resources available to them to assist in navigating through society. Nonetheless, participants stated that the challenges of creating change for undocumented immigrants often appeared as an overwhelming barrier.

Basic Survival as the Most Important Issue

While all the participants expressed desire to partake in a movement to give documentation to undocumented immigrants, they identified the main obstacles as trying to survive economically and having a lack of faith and patience. As Mario shared, "But it takes a lot of time and a lot of money but I have been involved with a group although it has been very slow." Unfortunately, the participants realized that this kind of slow pace for change would not solve their immediate problem. Pablo highlighted the most fundamental dilemma in attempting to solve the issue of undocumented immigrants in the United States:

> I think people need to evolve. I think people need to change in order to think that way. And I think right now, the way I think is that I just want to be happy. I don't want to have the pressure of saving the world on my shoulders… Sometimes I think that I feel that I am contributing enough already. I think you need to take care of yourself before you can take care of others. Maybe after working at the [homeless] shelter, it's draining me because it is a lot.

This quote by Pablo expressed his immense challenges in simply surviving from day to day and acknowledged that it is privilege to confront the social ills of the world. He seemed to be overwhelmed in resolving the plight of undocumented immigrants as he worked at a homeless shelter and noted the enormous task in addressing numerous social justice issues. Moreover, the other participants who would not be receiving their documentations anytime soon had not only the need for survival but also overall faith in the system. Sophia expressed this sentiment plainly:

> I guess I'm being selfish, I am more worried about me getting my basic needs met right now, than trying to help somebody else. Trying to create this network [of undocumented immigrants] might take that hour away from me that down the road might be useful [for my immigration status]. Maybe I'll meet that somebody that will want to marry me…I think a lot of people are in that same position. You really want it [documentation] for yourself just to feel more at ease you know. And then you can devote your time to say, Ok, this is how you can do it, so let me show you.

In reading the transcript, her reality of concentrating on her immigration status instead of others was shared by the other participants. Maria added that when a person did receive his/her documents, "You forget about those who don't [have documentation] and you become that white person, you become that racist person." In other words, if an undocumented immigrant did receive documentation, that immigrant would no longer help the cause of other undocumented immigrants. In addition, Maria related that becoming documented could lead to the same ambivalence and racist attitudes of white people. This belief only added to the negative perception that participants had towards white people and in being American. These struggles illustrated repeatedly the numerous hurdles that each participant had to overcome to arrive where they were today.

It was with the admiration of each other, including my own, that I realized the notion of autonomy was one of the core issues. As Mario eloquently stated, "I want to have the freedom that a lot people have." Mario's remarks highlighted the challenges that undocumented immigrants encountered. Sara and Sophia's observation about being caged and limited from participating in society was one clue to the massive challenge faced by undocumented immigrants to create social change. Furthermore, the impact of being trapped ran deep within the soul of the participants. Sara provided the painful description of feeling caged in society as she revealed, "Yo siento porque como deje todo haya, pues nosotros no pertenecemos aquí. Yo luego digo voy ha regresar a México, porque haya

tengo licenciá, tengo mi permiso para trabajar, y pertenezco al país. (*I feel because I left everything over there, that I don't belong here. I say, I'll go back to Mexico later, because over there I have a license, can work and belong to the country).* Although this relentless reminder wore down on each individual differently, the impact was profound.

In the end, the priority of trying to survive successfully in the United States became too overwhelming that participants were not able to stay focused on the impact of being undocumented or to continuously explore the impact in being undocumented. As we concluded our third dialogue, Sophia articulated what she and others must have in order to survive in the United States as an undocumented immigrant:

> No voy ha vivir no mas por eso. No me van ha arruinar mi vida pensando y teniendo miedo. Ay! Y si me vienen a buscar a la casa. Ay! Si no hago mis taxes! Ay y si no hago esto, no voy estar viviendo! Como que soy rebelde como que voy ha decir no mas porque tu no me quieres dar papeles voy ha vivir la vida como a ti se te de la gana. Me entiendes, yo voy hacer y voy ha disfrutar de todo lo que puede tener. Igualito que al otro como te da la gana! *(I'm not going to live only for that [getting documentation]. They [The U.S. government] are not going to ruin my life worrying and being scared saying, 'Oh, if they come to my house. Oh, if I should do my taxes. Oh, if I don't do this, I won't be able to live here' [in the U.S.]. I'm like a rebel and I'm going to say if you [U.S. government] don't want to give me papers, I'll still live life like how I want to. You understand! I will do and enjoy all I can that you [U.S. citizens] can have that you desire!)*

Sophia's determination to not be subjugated to society's definitions reflected the courage she used to fuel her resilient attitude, similar to other participants. Sophia illustrated the attitude and behavior necessary to navigate through society and to not be entrenched by the fear of deportation.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

> It just makes me angry, I should be, I grew up here! For a lot of the people, it wasn't there choice to come over here. I was 4 when I came here. Most of the kids were young when they came here. They grew up here. And you know, my parents pay their taxes, I pay taxes, Why can't they just...(Maria, June 6, 2006).

In this quote, Maria's inability to complete the sentence reveals the lack of words that describe the depth of xenophobia and racism towards undocumented immigrants as a permanent underclass. Her emphatic statement reflects the dilemma of living in the United States and lack of legal status that in some ways denies her very existence. As she expressed, she is frustrated in having not choice to immigrate and that she is not fully accepted in mainstream society despite the fact that she grew up in the United States and contributes to society. Maria represents the growing number of undocumented youth as well as the recent phenomenon of immigrants of color and undocumented immigrants entering the United States since 1965 (Bean, et al., 1990; Hayes, 2001).

Briggs (1984) compared this current exploitation of undocumented immigrants to slavery in that during that era, the United States allowed a permanent underclass to exist and institutionalized a subclass of people. The United States is still dealing with the ramifications of that legacy. Ultimately, the responsibility rests on us as contemporary citizens to determine what kind of legacy we want to leave for future generations in this country.

Chapter V is organized into four parts. First, the summary of the results from this participatory study with undocumented Latin@ immigrants is provided. Second, a presentation of the generative themes that emerged from the dialogues. The third part

includes recommendations for both the practitioner as well as for further research. The fourth part provides the researcher's reflections on the research conducted and offers insight into the experiences of the participants who grew up in the United States.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate the lives of undocumented Latin@ immigrants who came as children and now as adults were encouraged to reflect on their experiences living in the United States. An additional purpose was to understand the meaning and impact of being undocumented so the participants could become more aware of the obstacles that exist in order to better navigate their lives in society.

This participatory research study employed a three-step dialogue format with six participants. The first and third dialogues involved only the individual and researcher, while the second dialogue encompassed the entire group. After transcribing the data from the dialogues, participants were provided with the transcription in order to refine and expand the text. The participants and I embarked in the analytical process of coding the data from the transcriptions. Together, we produced the findings as well as the themes that emerged from the data. Finally, each participant had the opportunity to highlight and clarify the initial findings.

The participants offered their unique stories and demonstrated the similarities and differences that they had with one another with the desire to bring a consciousness to society encountered by the plight of undocumented immigrants. Their responses to defining the term "undocumented" clearly illustrated that the institutional and situational limits they encountered depended on their level of undocumented immigration status. In addition, participants seemed to define being undocumented as having a valid work

permit and social security number. Finally, being undocumented meant that the participants felt not welcomed and did not belong in the United States.

Participants identified certain behaviors they used to navigate through society as a documented individual. Possessing certain attitudes such as hope, laughter, denial and secrecy were essential to venture out from their community. Furthermore, participants varied on how they specifically changed their behavior to blend into society. Ultimately, learning the U.S. system of education was crucial and learning "*Ser Americano"* was critical. These behaviors included the act of simulating wealth through the purchase of popular clothing or expensive cars, speaking without a Spanish accent, driving safely, or getting married to legal citizens.

In determining the impact that being undocumented had on one's identity, participants disclosed the feelings each held inside. Participants expressed the complexity of explaining one's identity in the United States. All participants shared their understanding of being American to mean racially white. However, Maria, Sophia and Pablo considered themselves American even though they were ethnically Latin@. Other participants such as Antonio, Mario and Sara had more negative racialized experiences living in the United States, attributing this to their darker skin complexion. Participants revealed their difficulty in living within two cultures masked with the pressure and dangers of being undocumented.

Finally, trying to comprehend the impact that the research itself had on the participants was challenging for both the researcher and participants. Many participants expressed gratitude for the opportunity to have a forum to speak about their experiences as well as to learn from each other how to better navigate through society. In addition, the

risk and vulnerability that the participants had in being undocumented left a void as to determining what next steps were necessary to collectively end the oppression of living as an undocumented immigrant.

Conclusions: Generative Themes

Several themes surfaced as a result of this study that emerged from each dialogue when we reviewed the transcripts. However, when the participants were asked to provide their expertise as to what transpired from these dialogues, one overarching theme emerged. What stood out noticeably from the entire research was the confinement that each participant felt. They identified this as in being constantly limited from participating in society by a multitude of borders. Mario, Antonio, Sophia and myself synthesized the data to describe the concept of *jaula de oro*. Two of the participants, Sophia and Maria, had originally articulated in the dialogues that to be undocumented is similar to living in a *jaula de oro*. I later learned from them that the term *jaula de oro* is the title of song by Los Tigres del Norte. This song is very popular and tells about the experiences of undocumented immigrants. This song acknowledges the struggles about crossing the border and living in the United States. Inspired by this song, the participants and I further developed this concept and provided the analogy of *La Jaula* that has seven components.

Jaula de Oro (Gilded Cage)

The United States-Mexican border is a realistic and symbolic marker that poses limits for both documented and undocumented people, but has more immediate negative consequences for undocumented individuals. In addition, the overall restriction that undocumented immigrants experience is not limited to the geographic border but also occurs once they arrive. After participants reviewed the initial findings, they all

confirmed that the concept of *jaula de oro* best portrayed the relationship of documented and undocumented people living in the United States.

Both Sara and Sophia used this phrase in our individual dialogues when they described that these borders represented "*una jaula de oro*!" Sophia's statement epitomized what living in the United States is like:

> You know, [the U.S.] yeah, it's beautiful and its gold, but its nevertheless a jaula, a cage…you have everything that you might have dreamed of in your home country, yet you cannot leave, you are caged in. And now its even worse. You know at least I could travel from here to New York. You know at least the jaula was a little bigger. Now it seems like it is shrinking.

In other words, once Sophia migrated to this country, she continued to learn how she was limited from taking advantage of an array of opportunities and fully participating in society. All the participants acknowledged that they must carry inside of them these limitations that are not easily seen by the public. Instead, they must silently navigate this minefield. Hence, the following generative themes are presented through the interpretive guided imagery of undocumented Latin@ immigrants who grow up in the United States.

Several images are possible to describe oppression and many authors have used a cage as an example. Frye's (1997) compelling analysis of a cage clearly articulates the experience of oppressed people:

> Consider a birdcage. If you look very closely at just one wire in the cage, you cannot see the other wires…determined by this myopic focus, you could look at that one wire, up and down, the length of it, and be unable to see why a bird would not just fly around the wire any time it wanted to go somewhere…There is no physical property of any one wire, nothing that the closest scrutiny could discover, that will reveal how a bird could be inhibited or harmed by it except in the most accidental way. It is only when you step back, stop looking at the wires one by one, microscopically, and take a macroscopic view of the whole cage, that you can see why the bird does not go anywhere; and then you will see it in a moment…It is perfectly obvious that the bird is surrounded by a network of systematically related barriers, no one which would be the least hindrance to its

> flight, but which, by their relations to each other, are as confining as the solid walls of a dungeon. (p.8.)

The description of this birdcage articulates what the participants had stated throughout the dialogues. Although Frye's (1997) example illustrated the struggle of all oppressed people, it is useful in illuminating the challenge of undocumented immigrants. Participants expressed their sentiment that living in the United States is like the *jaula de oro*, and learning the intricacies of how to navigate in between these bars, barriers, and barricades is the key to survival.

The Idealized Image of the United States

Imagine if the geographic border of the United States lay flat and were decorated with the flag of the United States. The ideal, versus the reality of life in the United States is so far apart from each other that the reality often is non-existent to those living in the ideal United States unless you are oppressed or fighting against the oppression. Zinn (2003) is one of many scholars who promoted the concept that traditional education does not accurately portray the history of the United States. Too often, students in classrooms learn about the historical triumph of the formation of the United States, but this triumph leaves out the dark past that has created this country.

The ideal professes that the United States is based on the Declaration of Independence and Statue of Liberty. The ideal endorses the notion that the United States is the land of opportunity, land of the free, and a land of immigrants. This illusion promotes the welcoming of people from all over the world to take part in the grand democratic experiment, treating all individuals equally based on their own merit. The mythical dream is further supported by the belief that education becomes the great equalizer. This idealistic United States is camouflaged as a perpetrator to the reality of

oppression and the oppressed that is often invisible to people. Therefore, invisible is the oppression and the oppressed.

The Reality of the United States

Imagine if the outlined continental United States adorned with the U.S. flag actually concealed the oppression that could only be exposed by the power of knowledge. Often knowledge comes in the form of education and the more education one attains, both in the form of classroom and personal experience, individuals slowly lift the veil. Du Bois (1903/1989) first utilized the concept of a veil to identify the oppression of African Americans over a hundred years ago. In this contemporary example, the veil still exists that has been draped in one's ignorance to promote the oppression. Hitchcock (2002) provided a similar image of a white veil that attributed oppression to the ignorance and denial of whites in the United States. Additionally, several scholars (Anzaldúa, 1987; Flores & Benmayor, 1997; Tatum, 1997; Omi & Winant, 1993; West, 1994) have championed the concept that the United States has continually refused to acknowledge the deep oppressive stance that has developed into racist, classist and sexist attitudes.

What one can expect to find if the veil were raised is that a *jaula de oro* would be revealed. This *jaula de oro* is one that we all live in, documented and/or undocumented, oppressed and/or oppressor, albeit some are smaller than others. Anzaldúa's (1987) analyzed borders correctly when she defined one group of people against another group of people that ultimately creates a tension of "us vs. them" mentality. In fact, because the United States has painted the *jaula de oro* with the ideals of "land of immigrants," "land of the free," and "all men are created equal," the cage appears to be gold. Hence, the veil itself is a cage that traps the oppressors from realizing the confinement they are in.

Living Inside the Jaula de Oro

Imagine you are inside the *jaula de oro* that it has been painted not in gold, but rather painted with the sweat and tears of the lives of oppressed people. Unfortunately, people are not aware of types of oppression. Three types of *jaula de oro* exist that confine individuals: mental, historical and physical cages. The first cage is larger than the second and third. Therefore, those in the third cage must still confront the second and first cage to experience complete freedom.

For all people, mental cages at times can imprison our minds from venturing out. Popular self-help books, articles, and programs often promote the concept of personal freedom. Even the oppressors are restricted by their own limitations that prohibit them to overcome their personal inadequacies due to their frame of mind. Freire (2000) pointed out that the oppressor "almost always bring with them the marks of their origin: their prejudices and their deformations" (p.60).

From this vantage point, the *jaula de oro* is a life-long personal struggle whether one is the oppressor or oppressed. The events of 9/11 have incited fear among individuals, resulting in citizens restricting their traveling and interaction with the unknown. Anzaldúa's (1987) analyzed that all peoples are captives of the geographic borders that divide us and this accurately depicts the policies of the United States. The "war on terror" spread through legislation and the media has created an us vs. them dichotomy, which has amplified xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiments. Hence, the immigration debate has centered on methods to keep citizens safe from the portrayed enemy of undocumented immigrants.

Because certain instances are beyond the control of the individual, a second layer of the *jaula de oro* is very real to many individuals who have been historically discriminated against. Oppression can take many forms, including but not limited to race, class, gender, language, or immigration status. These situations are the cages that create the suffering and suppress the individual from moving on. As an oppressed group, undocumented immigrants must confront these barriers. One example is individuals with a darker skin complexion are more likely to protest against racial discrimination. Regardless of immigration status, Antonio learned that "*Ser Americano"* was undoubtedly based on race whether acting white or being white. Antonio described what *"Ser Americano"* meant when he provided this example:

> One time I went to the dumpster where I was throwing out some garbage with another person. And this old white dude comes over there [to the dumpster]. Just by looking at us he actually believed I worked there (at the restaurant). And he said 'Hey, are you going to come and help me out.' I was 'What, I don't work here!' and he was shocked. He responded 'Oh, ok I'm sorry.' Wait, he didn't even say I'm sorry…and the thing is that I was with my friend, he was white and he was throwing out the garbage and he specifically chose to speak to me.

Antonio's experience was only one of many where he believed he had been racialized; sending a single message that being brown received negative perceptions and "*Ser Americano*" was to be white. From an immigrant perspective, whether one acculturates or assimilates, the boundaries of "*Ser Americano*" are expressed both overtly and covertly.

Of the many oppressed people who live inside a *jaula de oro,* the deepest layer is the view of undocumented immigrants and the smallest cage of all. This *jaula de oro* is a very real cage that limits undocumented immigrants from participating fully in society. The legal limitations of travel that restrict undocumented immigrants create the most constraints. Antonio depicted his immigration status to be similar to criminals who have a

ball and chain attached to them. Unfortunately, participants live in all three cages, making it extremely difficult to reside in the United States. Undocumented individuals must contend with the fact they have been dehumanized and severely constrained. Pablo explained the consequence of this process when he shared, “The only reason I don’t like the word ‘alien’ is because it’s a dehumanizing term. It sets you as something other than human and that’s one of the requirements for justification of oppression.” For participants, this *jaula de oro* is a trap, a type of slavery, a life-term prison sentence that depicted undocumented immigrants in a way that allowed the continued systematic bondage of human beings.

Bars of the Jaula de Oro

Imagine the bars of this *jaula de oro* to be both imposed and self-imposed upon those who are held captive. The widths of these bars are determined by the magnitude of the barriers. The bars of a mental cage are within the control of the individual, but the bars of the historical cage are dependent on society. As it relates to undocumented immigrants, bars such as the government’s prohibition of obtaining employment, securing a driver’s license and attending a higher educational institution seem more like walls than single wires. Self-imposed bars such as traveling and speaking English are more like immovable columns. Unfortunately, many participants did not uncover each wire at once; rather they learned over time after experiencing the various limitations placed upon them.

The level of undocumented immigration status, interaction with society, and racial experiences that undocumented immigrants encounter, all determined the size of the *jaula de oro.* Because of the varied types of undocumented immigration status, bars were not as

wide for some as for others. For instance, Sophia did not have a valid social security number and so she had not been hired for all the jobs to which she applied. In contrast, Pablo's valid social security number allowed him to obtain his California driver's license.

The size of the *jaula de oro* can also be determined by the types and number of interactions participants had with society. Because Sara did not venture out of her community, she had fewer negative experiences in being undocumented, relative to Maria who continuously encountered barriers. The same principle applied to the participants with darker skin complexion who had more racialized experiences than did participants with lighter skin complexion. The size of these types of bars; immigration status, interaction with society, and darker skin complexion all depend on several factors, including one's mental and historical cage that constructed each participant's *jaula de oro*.

Once the participant's *jaula de oro* had been crafted uniquely to their experience, several more bars were imposed upon them and there were physical barriers. These bars include attaining higher education, working, traveling locally or internationally, being American, and receiving negative messages. Participants were physically limited from legally overcoming these barriers. As one raised the veil, individuals imprisoned inside discovered the bars that confined them and had to learn how to navigate in between these bars if they were to survive in the United States.

Of the many bars listed, none seemed as powerful as the illusive negative connotation that being undocumented had on participants. Mario described this image when he declared, "They're [U.S. media] always showing the same people. They never show an immigrant from Africa or Europe. They only show them [immigrants] cleaning

houses and taking care of babies or waiting for work on the street corner." Mario's frustration of immigrants being perceived as a monolithic group was furthered by Pablo's commentary: "They [U.S. media] show these people [undocumented immigrants] as if they are doing something bad, as if they are doing something wrong…they [U.S. society] try to put blame on them." Although Pablo was angered by these examples, he understood the economic issue that attracted undocumented immigrants and realized how he was considered a scapegoat in the United States society.

Furthermore, the participants' rage was fueled by the racism that supported anti-immigrant attitude. Maria expressed this clearly as she divulged her thoughts: "I think it makes me angry because these Latin@s are out there just standing looking [for work]. But what about homeless people, most of them are white and they're not looking for jobs." Participants acknowledged that the overwhelmingly pessimistic perception of undocumented immigrants was difficult because the others' attitudes were beyond the influence of the participants themselves.

Slipping Past the Bars

Imagine as the participants uncover the veil, and find themselves trapped, and then became skilled at getting out of the *jaula de oro*. These navigation tools include changing one's attitude and behavior. In essence, participants conveyed that the magic was in blending in with society and "*Ser Americano*," eventually becoming invisible in society. In order to transform into "*Ser Americano*," education became a valuable tool to complete this process. However, slipping past the bars was an illusive process as participants had to rely on society's dynamic style. What may have been a successful tactic, like acquiring a driver's license, now became an obsolete.

In order to succeed, participants masked their reality of oppression in which they lived in and adhered to the ideals of the United States. This process was often a daily routine for some as Mario confirmed, "I just wake up every morning like any other person [and tell myself] I'm in a world where there are no papers or there is nothing that you need." hooks (1994) affirmed this obstacle and how the decolonization process, even though it is not an end to itself, was still a momentous process for colonized people. It was momentous because the participants must voluntarily enter back into the cage. Consequently, participants explained that because being undocumented was so demanding, the participants developed a warrior like mentality and were constantly on guard awaiting the next battle.

In order to navigate through the bars, learning the definitions of "*Ser Americano*" beyond racial description had to be extended. These attributes include one's material possessions as defined by the English speaking media, high paying employment, language style, and length of time residing in the United States. Stereotypical attitudes of "*Ser Americano*" identified by participants to escape the cage comprised of being environmentally conscious, ignorant, and arrogant. As Pablo explained, the attitudes depended on so many variables: "People go a lot by assumptions and appearances. That's how people tend to function, to sort of make sense of the world and categorize things." Again, the fluidity of the term "*Ser Americano*" was not only being white but acting white and based on the participants' own interaction with society, immigration status and their own skin complexion.

Attaining education was such a powerful tool for "*Ser Americano*" that it would minimize the illusion of being an immigrant. Antonio provided one such example when he described how employers are often ignorant to immigration issues:

> A lot of employers know that you need papers, and don't know that undocumented people can go to school. So when you [undocumented immigrant] actually tell them [employer] that you are going to college, they already assume that you are a resident or citizen.

Through the attainment of education, undocumented immigrants increase their vocabulary and knowledge of colloquialisms, as well as minimized their foreign accents that diminish the suspicion of being an immigrant. In addition, having a greater education qualified undocumented immigrants to apply and obtain employment with increased salary, affording the participants to advance their socio-economic status. In doing so, participants believe that they would have been less suspect of being undocumented if they had graduated from college, were working in a professional field, owned their home or drove an expensive car. According to the participants, increased education reduced the suspicion about their undocumented status as well as raised awareness of the meaning of being undocumented. In the case of undocumented immigrants, the impact of having to lie to others and themselves, avoid situations, and make oneself invisible was profound. The result of these attitudes and behaviors of denying their existence in order to survive were later expressed through their emotions of anger, pain, and sadness.

Cost of Navigating a Cage

Imagine the tenderness that undocumented immigrants absorbed being inside the *jaula de oro*. The body armor was so solid that they did not often venture into uncovering what was behind their shield of strength. In the end, the *jaula de oro* was not only the oppression that the ideal United States wrapped itself over the real United States. Rather

it was also the individual undocumented immigrant who was so oppressed that she/he had not uncovered her/his identity. In negotiating one's identity, Phelan, Davidson, and Yu's (1998) described the process of youth development as crossing imagined and real borders. Furthermore, Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001) articulated that immigrant children contended with the negative images and real experiences that were constantly reflected back to them.

The complexity of one's identity growing up in the United States ran so deep that the participants themselves expressed their confusion as to being American, Mexican, Mexican-American, Latin@ and white. What was common for those living inside the *jaula de oro* was that they all were *guerreros* (warriors). They were *guerreros* who challenged the system daily, had become experts in finding the minefields, disguising themselves "*Ser Americano*," to breathe for a moment the freedom they so desperately desired only to consciously go back inside all three *jaula de oros*.

The term "*Ser Americano*" was so powerful that it came across in the most obvious and subtle ways in shaping the identity of participants. Beyond the notion that "*Ser Americano*" meant to be white, this concept also delineated the boundaries of being fully accepted in the U.S. society. Sophia described this notion of "*Ser Americano*" in the following statement: "Whether we want to accept it or not, we already are Americans…if it's having a house, going to the university and having a nice car." Later in the dialogue, she pointed out that she did not fit the idea of "*Ser Americano*" because as she says, "I look differently, or I speak another language…when I think of the United States, I think about white people and them having more money." In essence, Sophia described the complexity of "*Ser Americano*" to be dependent on skin color and class but also on

behavior modification. These depictions in turn developed into a complex understanding for her that one could act "*Ser Americano*," but could never become fully "*Americano*."

Identity was also influenced by the fears of the participants that were barely noticeable at first glance. This would be attributed to the armor that each participant had to bear with them as they navigated through society. In the dialogues, the question of fear was in the context of one's fear of deportation and not necessarily in fear in one's daily routine. Participants also expressed their fears in terms of losing their job, getting arrested, becoming physically injured or driving without a license. A fear initially that seemed minor included the embarrassment of having someone find out that they were undocumented. This was manifested in situations where they would not speak for fear that their accent would suspect them of being undocumented.

Another situation that participants avoided in order to not be embarrassed was being asked to travel out of city limits or enter nightclubs. In these circumstances with peers, participants tried to deflect the conversation to traveling or going out to places they could attend. The shame brought on by being undocumented placed a very heavy weight on their shoulders that in essence affected their personality in several situations. When one combined all the hidden fears together, one could grasp how the fear of being undocumented was more than simply getting deported, but also grew into a style of captivity.

Although the *jaula de oro* was a disheartening image to depict the participants' lives, their boldness to lift the veil one day at a time was the inspiration that kept them surviving. Antonio communicated perfectly his analysis of being undocumented: "It is like the slaves they [the United States] brought over from Africa. The slaves had the

chain that held them back, but they did not give up hope and sooner or later those in power gave in." For Antonio, he was lifting the veil each day revealing to others his *jaula de oro* with the hope that others would see his humanity.

Recommendations for Practitioners

Although the obstacles in being undocumented seem insurmountable at times, several recommendations for parents, youth, educators and policy makers provide initial steps that do not confront the larger immigration issues. Of the several issues that immigration policies raise, nothing seems more controversial than the discussion about the philosophy of borders. Anzaldúa (1987) elaborated how borders create an us against them mentality, she also advanced the notion that those living within the borders are limited. Bejarano (2005) further presented how the concept of borders is not limited just to geographic boundaries of the United States, but also throughout the United States. This turned out to be true for the participants, and therefore being undocumented was indeed pertinent in places not on the border such as the Bay Area. The recommendations suggested below are for parents, educators and policy makers.

Recommendations for Families

Approximately 1 million immigrants are under the age of 18, over 5 million children are in households where someone is undocumented (Pew Hispanic, 2006a). Hence, if one takes into account all the people who live in these families, the undocumented population grew to 14.6 million as of 2005 (Pew Hispanic Center 2006b). Therefore, it is imperative to open the conversation among family members to improve social networks to navigate through society undocumented. In the group dialogue with participants, several members expressed how the topic of being undocumented did not

come up until it became an issue or it was a taboo subject. When one takes into account that the issue of being undocumented impacts a larger group of people, it is important that both parents and children have more dialogues. The dialogue should center on methods in developing social networks to support the rights and opportunities that undocumented children and adults have in the United States. Second, it is critical that the dialogues with children should focus on promoting their self-esteem because of the immense negative connotation that has been placed on being undocumented.

Recommendations for Educators

Since educators from kindergarten through 12th grade have the legal responsibility to provide the best instruction possible, educators at large have a moral responsibility to empower every individual in their classroom. Therefore, one method that teachers can use is to provide opportunities for undocumented immigrant students to share their stories. This is clearly a delicate matter, and few curricula exist that address this possibility. The level of sensitivity has many school officials apprehensive about bringing up the issue since being undocumented can result in separation of families due to deportation. Although the work of Igoa (1998) does not address directly the student's immigration status, the curriculum she developed contains an essential piece for providing a space for students to express their own stories. The curriculum developed by Igoa discusses not only pedagogy, but provides insight as to what areas teachers should concentrate.

Although every child needs a sense of security for optimum learning, Igoa (1995) illuminated the unique experience of immigrant children who have been uprooted from their country and encounter a new environment that often ignores or resents the

immigrants for being different. Consequently, Igoa (1995) offered this suggestion for teachers. “The teacher must find ways to draw the children out of their silence and sense of invisibility…ways to acknowledge the value of what the children have to say” (p.68). Because immigrant children typically lack the native language of their new host country, Igoa focused on art as a common second language that is universal to all students. As a result of using this approach, children had an opportunity to undergo the healing process of migration as well as communicate with the teacher. As related to undocumented children, teachers must have the sensitivity to respect each individual’s privacy while still creating an environment that will allow students to find an outlet

Another essential piece for educators is to turn the focus away from the experiences of the student who is undocumented and onto the general classroom. Regardless of the potentially small numbers of undocumented immigrant students in the school, education from a social justice perspective argues that the classroom is not neutral; rather it is a place for transformation.

Curriculum developed by Bigelow (2006) is an example of a teacher’s resource to address the larger issue of immigration in a way that promotes the critical analysis of immigration. Bigelow offers lessons and readings to teachers as well as an inclusive perspective that comprises the history of the border itself between Mexico and the United States to the most recent legislation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). His curriculum enables the issue of immigration to become less of a controversial issue, and provides an understanding of the complexity and humanity of immigration. Repeatedly, education has been a tool used to bring awareness to students whose ignorance only perpetuates the oppression.

Recommendations for the Public and Policy Makers

The final recommendation is addressed not only to policy makers, but also to voters. To humanize the plight of undocumented immigrants among our society is the initial step that must be taken to address this issue. Therefore, seeking an understanding of how policies have intentional or unintentional impact on undocumented immigrants, especially children, is essential prior to making any decision. These policies can range from local, regional, to national. For example, cities such as New York and Chicago have school districts that allow any parent regardless of immigration status to vote for school board members. In other cases, Utah and Oregon have allowed undocumented immigrants to obtain a driver's license. Overall, immigration reform should focus not only on the border issue, but also on how to support the economic development of the sending countries as well as support the immigrants once they have arrived.

Of the many recommendations that are possible, an underlying common approach should be implemented prior to any decision being made. In order to form a policy, it is imperative that policy makers understand and become aware of the intentional as well as unintentional impact their decisions will have on individuals. Repeatedly, the voters and government officials do not take into account how their decisions will impact immigrants, families and the economy.

One clear example of a much needed policy change is our education legislation that acknowledges and requires all children to have the right to an education until the end of high school. The consequence of not educating all of our children negatively impacts not only undocumented individuals, but also hurts the economy as a whole. Whether the issue is financially supporting a college education, providing driver's license, or making

employment legal, policy makers should comprehend how it impacts undocumented immigrants. Furthermore, as a promoter of immigrant's rights, legislatures must understand that immigration reform is a multifaceted solution with humanity in mind.

Recommendations for Further Research

An important finding of this study is that being undocumented is multifaceted on several levels. First, levels of being undocumented range from being semi-legal to being completely unaccounted for in the United States. Secondly, the complexity of the impact that being undocumented had on each participant is intertwined with the number of years of being undocumented, along with the length of residency in the United States, and one's class, race, gender and personality.

In addition, the reaction and attitude that each participant holds in response to being undocumented is unique due to the unknown depth of impact that being undocumented can have on an individual. Being undocumented is similar to Professor Cornel West's (1994) examination that people of color cannot ever disregard their dark skin color, or author Sandra Cisneros' (1994) declaration that women cannot forget they are female. Sophia summarized the sentiments of all six participants when she revealed her inner thoughts, "Of course, that [being undocumented] is always on my mind…It's always in the air." This statement poignantly highlighted how the participants exist with the pressures of being undocumented in the United States.

The Influence of One's Resiliency

This research exposed being undocumented as having an impact on one's identity, but it did not fully explore the individual's resourcefulness. Because the resiliency that the participants demonstrated in gathering social capital to navigate through society

successfully, it is significant to better understand this process. Critical race theory's approach to overall subordination of people of color supports the notion of community cultural wealth as an asset challenging traditional interpretations of cultural capital. These various forms of community cultural wealth include aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial and resistant capital (Yosso, 2005). In particular, it would be beneficial to follow up this study from the perspective of how undocumented immigrants utilize their networking skills in order to use the resources to the maximum of their benefit.

In education, the resourcefulness of individuals has been coined "funds of knowledge" (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005), where communities make the best use of the resources that are at their disposal. "It refers to the knowledge base that underlies the productive and exchange activities of households" (Moll & Gonzalez, 2004, p.700). The main purpose for this approach is to provide tools for teachers to address the diversity within their classroom and transform it into a pedagogical asset. In doing so, educators are able to utilize their students' households in terms of social and cultural resources while also empowering the students as well.

Flores and Benmayor (1997) highlight the capacity that Latin@s have within their community to support one another. Yosso (2005) notes that Latin@s are not always recognized within the larger context of the United States since they are viewed from a deficit perspective. It would be significant to examine how undocumented Latin@ immigrants sharpen their skills of maximizing their resources to become more resilient from an assets-based perspective instead.

Identity Category for Undocumented Immigrants

The categories proposed by Ferdman and Gallegos (2001) suggested six identities that take into account a racialized understanding of the United States while focusing on place of origin, language and nationality. Because Latin@ immigrants frequently arrive with a different racial construct than that of the United States, they are unaware of how they are racialized. In addition, Latin@ immigrants place a higher level of importance on their own country of origin and language, due to the diversity that Latin@s represent.

From this study, one of the important findings is that being undocumented can affect one's racial identity over time, depending on life experiences. Although a recently arrived undocumented immigrant may self-classify as one particular identity at first, interacting with society can cause a change in self-identification to another category overtime. This was the case for Maria who in using Ferdman and Gallegos (2001) racial identity categories, self-identified as White-identity having grown up in a predominant white community. It was not until she later realized that she was not fully accepted because of her immigration status and then changed to a Latin@-integrated identity. Bejarano (2001) highlighted the concept as a border identity for youth who live in the southwest of the United States. In this case, individuals do not need to live near the border to still be impacted by the same issues of those undocumented in the Southwest. Therefore, being undocumented plays an important role that can influence one's identity over a span of time.

My initial hope in this research process was to provide an additional identity category to the model developed by Ferdman and Gallegos (2001). My research found that these experiences of being undocumented proved much more complex than this

research could encompass. Therefore, I suggest a larger study with more participants to determine if being undocumented indeed does have its own identity category. In a larger study, the ability exists for a researcher to extract any nuances among gender, age, and geographic differences that can be only determined with a larger population sample.

The Psychological Development of Undocumented Immigrants

A second recommendation for further research is to investigate the psychological impact that being undocumented has on individuals. The research of Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001) offered an understanding of the power that social mirroring has on children that can be used as of similar tool to determine how social mirroring impacts undocumented young adults. They stressed that the negative stereotypes that are placed upon immigrant children does affect their self-esteem and outlook on life. Additionally, they suggested that these negative portrayals transferred onto immigrants were not only done by the school system but also society at large.

A significant finding of my research study was that participants came to understand being undocumented through a process that was not fully realized by the end of their youth identity development stage. This can be attributed to the fact that the importance of being undocumented does not come into effect for the most part until the individual is later in her/his teens. Furthermore, because the participants were in their mid-20's, they suggested that they felt the impact of being undocumented more heavily as an adult and they are still learning how their immigration status negatively affects them. This is a result of the many more limitations that exist in being undocumented for adults than for children, such as education and healthcare.

Another recommendation is to engage in an analysis from this perspective through the form of case studies as well as longitudinal studies. A deeper understanding of identity development would provide valuable insight to how undocumented individuals wrestle with the negative attributes of being invisible and dehumanized.

Expanding the Literature on Undocumented Immigrants

Finally, a recommendation for further research on a larger scale is imperative if we are to understand the impact of being undocumented on individuals. Similar to the extensive studies that initially examined the economic impact of undocumented immigrants, researchers determined that undocumented immigrants have a wide range of characteristics (Migration Policy Institute, 2005; Pew Hispanic, 2006a, 2006b; Urban Institute, 2004). These ranges include the disaggregated data of place of origin, age, family, and labor force characteristics (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006a). Therefore, being undocumented is both a fluid and varied definition (Migration Policy Institute, 2005, Pew Hispanic Center, 2006a). Because of these larger studies, there has been improvement in collecting the data as well as demonstrating the diversity of levels of undocumented immigration.

One of the most surprising findings of this study was to find differences existing between only six participants. The opinions and outlooks that the participants had in being undocumented were dependent of their level of undocumented immigration status, interaction with society, age of immigration and skin complexion. For example, Pablo and Maria were more astounded in learning about the effects of being undocumented because they were closer to being authorized immigrants. Maria was more surprised because she grew up most of her life in the United States, whereas Pablo lived in a

community with a majority of Latin@s and being undocumented was very common. Due to the size of the sample, it is difficult to determine if these findings can be generalized. Furthermore, the issues of gender, class, country of origin, and education level were not as carefully examined in this study as they could be in a larger study. Therefore, if any solution to solve the dilemmas of undocumented immigrants is to occur, more research needs to be conducted in order to appreciate the complicated situation of undocumented immigrants and documented residents.

Researcher's Reflections

After reviewing my journals over the past year and a half, several key lessons became highlighted throughout the process. First was my own frustration from the lack of support that I could provide the participants after learning about the limitations imposed upon them for being undocumented. In one session I wrote, "Even if I wanted to help, there are so many things wrong with this system, I wouldn't know where to start." This frustration continued as I discovered the depth of pain the participants held within their hearts. The participants not only encountered racism, classism, sexism, xenophobia, but they had the blanket of being undocumented that seemed to almost suffocate them. Part of my frustration came after realizing at the end of collecting the data how much anguish the participants collectively repressed.

Another key lesson included my own awareness raised by one of the female participants that the research environment was not safe enough. More specifically, she questioned if the process would have been different had a female facilitated the research process. She suggested that as a male, I may not have been attuned to the emotions that were revealed during the dialogue and the analysis of the transcriptions. Unfortunately, it

was not until the participants and I were analyzing the data that this experience was mentioned.

In reflecting on the comments by the participants, I was aware of the gender issue at the beginning of the study, but did not seek how to improve the study due to time constraints. On the other hand, because of my own personal experience, I was very conscious about the sensitivity of language and protection of their identities. Because I have worked so closely with all the participants, I am grateful for their confidence to provide this insight. As a result, in my next research, I intend to be more explicit when formulating the questions to ask about sensitive topics such as race, class, and gender.

Among the many insights that I learned along the research process, the critical analysis that the participants offered was most illuminating. I believe the methodology of participatory action research shaped the most remarkable lesson since it permitted our personal experiences to play a prominent role throughout the entire process. This lesson was the imagery that we created as we reflected over the study. Although the theme *jaula de oro* is a common phrase in English as a gilded cage of oppression or a popular song in Spanish, it was the participants who gave the depth of description that only this study could have produced. The process itself was inspiring as I was in awe by how resilient the participants were in succeeding at all costs.

As I completed the research, the issue of immigration debate garnered momentum with the mid-term elections of 2006. Unfortunately, immigration reform has moved in a restrictive and exclusive direction. I am often astonished to find that as the country focuses on immigrants entering the country, so little attention is paid to corporations that outsource employment. In a well-publicized event, our administration in the United

States approved the construction of a 700-mile wall along the U.S.-Mexican border in October 2006. However, I believe that there are no walls that can be built big enough to deter others from coming to the United States.

What has not been well publicized is the organization of so many people, including undocumented individuals willing to risk their livelihood to create a more equitable and humane society. These participants and many others intend to not only bring down the physical wall along the border, but also the walls of oppression. It is my opinion that individuals succeed not by overcoming challenges but because of them. In working the last six years with the participants and the community as well as the privilege of completing this research, I have the ultimate faith that this oppression can be transcended. The human spirit is unmistakably resilient, which is evident in all of the participants who have ensured their survival by any means necessary. In my last piece of reflection, I've included a poem on the following page written by one of the participants with his approval as an inspiration for him to move forward each day. I use this poem to share with all that we are people who deserve human dignity.

I AM
no greater no less

I AM
equal by my presence

I AM
no better no worse

I AM
an equal to the first

I AM
and I still choose what I'm worth

I AM
and I have always been equal since birth

I AM
measured not by depth rather by width

I AM
living not to conquer the weak instead to be unique

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Permission Letter from Non-Profit Agency to Conduct Study

June 15, 2005

IRBPHS, Department of Psychology, University of San Francisco
2130 Fulton Street
San Francisco, CA 94117-1080

To committee members,

This letter is in support of JuanCarlos Arauz and the research he has proposed in which we are clearly aware of the delicate nature. Our agency is interested in any findings as we anticipate that it will provide insight into potential curriculum development for our educational program. As part of his responsibility to create curriculum appropriate for the large immigrant population we serve, we believe that this work will become extremely useful not only within the education department but throughout the entire agency.

In his five years of employment, JuanCarlos has demonstrated his professionalism in numerous fashions that has earned him great respect throughout the county and especially within the community. His longstanding commitment to empowering youth to reach their full potential regardless of the person's situation has made a tremendous impact in the community and agency. Because we have personally experienced his ability to keep in confidence some of the most delicate matters, we have selected him to be involved in our administrative team. We feel confident that JuanCarlos will pursue his research in the same manner that he has served our community agency.

Sincerely,

Tom Wilson
Co-Executive Director

Nancy Rosa
Co-Executive Director

JuanCarlos Arauz
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(415) 422-5498
lopezm@usfca.edu
Project Title: Racial identity development of undocumented Latin@s

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Signature of Applicant Date

Signature of Faculty Advisor* Date

*Your signature indicates that you accept responsibility for the research described, including work by students under your supervision. It further attests that you are fully aware of all procedures to be followed, will monitor the research, and will notify the IRPBHS of any significant problems or changes.

APPENDIX B

IRBPHS Application

I. Background and Rationale

Immigration and racism have had a significant role in shaping the history of the United States. Among the numerous barriers immigrants must overcome after arriving to the United States, a significant issue is the navigation of individual identity within the dominant society. Racism has been an important factor on influencing immigration law and dictating how immigrants should adjust to American society. So much so, that the United States has had challenges with attempting to define what it means to be an American. With the increase of Latin@ immigrants within the last 20 years, there has been an increase interest in attempting to define the complexity of Latin@ identity. The lack of proper documentation status adds a unique perspective in how one's Latin@ identity is shaped by being undocumented. For individuals who are undocumented, their identity development is heightened by the vary nature of keeping their legal status guarded. This study considers the question of to what degree do the values of the dominant society have on the identity development of undocumented Latin@ immigrants. With a growing number of undocumented immigrants living in the United States, this study can provide insight in how undocumented Latin@ immigrants navigate the socialization process.

II. Description of Sample

The sample for this research will be between five to nine self-identified male or female Latin@s whose ages will range from 18 – 25 who lack the proper documentation to reside in the United States. Participants have graduated from a U.S. high school and have lived in the United States for at least two years. The identified participants have had a long-standing relationship to the researcher and some have been former recipients in receiving educational assistance of mentorship. However, the participants do not owe anything to the researcher and there is no expectation of continued service, yet participants can always render services. In addition, many participants have been involved in several discussions with the researcher on related topics within the last five years addressing the needs and issues that undocumented immigrants encounter. In doing so, the researcher has developed friendships with most of the participants. Because of these relationships, personal invitations will be extended for those who want to further the investigation.

III. Recruitment Procedure

The researcher will solicit participation from potential participants through a face-to-face request following an introductory letter.

IV. Subject Consent Process

Copy of Informed Consent Form Appendix I.

V. Procedures

The following procedures include:
1) Description of the three meetings; The first and third meetings will be held with the researcher individually. The second meeting will be a focus group with the researcher and four other participants. After each meeting, participants will be mailed an unedited transcription and have the opportunity to clarify or elaborate on the text.
2) In the first meeting, a dialogue will take place between participants and the researcher about being undocumented and how youth negotiate their identity. Participants will choose the setting where they feel the most comfortable and a time that is convenient for them.
3) In the second meeting, the focus group, the participants will engage in a discussion of how one navigates the socialization process in the United States, as well as possible action steps to assist other undocumented Latin@ immigrants. Themes that emerge from the individual dialogues and related topics proposed by the participants will also be part of the group dialogue. Before participants join together for the focus group, the researcher will request an agreement that all individuals keep the identity of all other focus group participants confidential.
4) In the last meeting, participants will reflect upon the personal and professional significance of the participatory experience.

VI. Potential Risks to Subjects

Risks can include emotional discomfort that may arise when sharing personal and professional experiences about being undocumented. Yet, participants are free to decline to answer any questions or to stop participation at any time. Another risk often found in research is that the identity of participants might be revealed. However, the researcher is clearly aware of the sensitive nature of this research among undocumented Latin@s. Therefore, the researcher will do all that is possible to keep the identities of the participants undisclosed. In particular, participants will agree that in order to participate in the focus group, they will always safeguard the identity and anonymity of all of their fellow participants.

VII. Minimization of Potential Risk

To minimize the risk of emotional discomfort, participants will be involved in the approval of the specific questions of the topics ahead of time. In order to minimize potentially the most significant risk, the identity of all participants will be confidential. Participants will have the opportunity to choose a pseudonym or have one selected for them. The researcher will be the only one who has access to the files. In working with these individuals for a number of years, the researcher understands the pressures they feel and has learned multiple ways in which the researcher can protect their identities. Moreover, the researcher will present the findings such that it will be difficult for the reader to determine who the participants might be even if the reader is aware of the geographic location and the nature of this work. Because the researcher realizes the

importance of keeping the status of the participants' documentation secret, the researcher will go beyond the normal research protocol.

VIII. Potential Benefits to Subjects

Potential benefits include the increased self-awareness of identity as an undocumented Latin@. In addition, possible action steps that may have been created will be implemented in the community for other undocumented Latin@s. Another benefit will be to the organization Canal Alliance who will better know how to serve clients as a result of this research.

IX. Costs to Subjects

There will be no financial costs to the participants as a result of taking part in this study.

X. Reimbursements/Compensation to Subjects

Participants will be reimbursed gas and mileage costs for travel. Refreshments will be provided during the focus group meeting.

XI Confidentiality of Records

The identity of the participant will be kept confidential. Research data will be kept as confidential as possible and stored in a locked file. The researcher will be the only one who has access to the files. In addition, participants in the focus group will be asked to safeguard the identity and anonymity of all other participants. While the essence of their stories will be shared, their particular identities will not be shared. The researcher will do the utmost, through the use of pseudonyms, the use of alias, and the use of blending of stories, while keeping the integrity of their stories, make certain that their stories will always protect their identities as undocumented individuals. Moreover, the researcher will in no circumstance reveal their identities to public officials.

APPENDIX C

Invitation Letter to Participants for this Study

Dear __________,

My name is JuanCarlos Arauz, and I am a doctoral student at the University of San Francisco. I am conducting a study on undocumented Latin@ immigrants. I am interested in learning how being undocumented impacts the racial identity development of undocumented Latin@ youth.

You are being asked to participate in this research study because of the previous conversations we have had over the past several years about being undocumented. If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to participate in three meetings at locations convenient for you. The purpose of the first individual dialogue is to reflect on how being undocumented impacts your racial identity. The second meeting will be a focus group with you and other participants to be held at a common location in the bay area. You will be asked about themes that emerge from the individual dialogues. The purpose is to provide a forum for you to critically reflect and hear about multiple perspectives of the challenges and solutions in navigating one's racial identity as an undocumented Latin@ immigrant. The third meeting will be an individual dialogue to explore thoughts or ideas that emerge from the focus group and reflect upon the personal and professional significance of the participatory experience. All meetings will be tape-recorded and later transcribed by me. Copies of the transcriptions will be mailed to you for review. As a participant, you will have an opportunity to clarify or elaborate on the transcription. You are free to decline to answer any questions or to stop participation at any time.

Because I understand the sensitive nature of your status as an undocumented Latin@ immigrant, I assure you that I will do everything I can to keep the knowledge of your status in confidence. Your name will be kept confidential; you will have the opportunity to select a pseudonym or have one selected for you. Transcriptions and audiotapes will be kept in locked files at all times. Your agreement to participate in this study also requires that you keep the documentation status of all the fellow participants equally confidential. Your agreement and signature therefore says that you agree.

The benefit to participating in this study will be the increased self-awareness of your negotiation process in developing your identity as well as creating action steps that either as individuals or as a group we may implement in the community. I will cover gas and mileage costs for travel and provide refreshments at the second meeting. Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any point.

You may contact me anytime if you have any questions at 415-726-8796 or email at arauzmoore@comcast.net. If you have further questions about the study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at the University of San Francisco, which is concerned with protection of volunteers in research projects. You may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 and leaving a voicemail message. If you agree to participate, I will send you by mail an Informed Consent Form and a Research Subjects' Bill of Rights. We will review these documents at our first meeting and sign the consent form. Thank you for your attention.

APPENDIX D

Informed Consent Form

University of San Francisco

Consent to be a Research Subject

1. You are being asked to participate in a research study.

2. Purpose and Background

Mr. JuanCarlos Arauz, a doctoral student at the University of San Francisco, is conducting a study on undocumented Latin@ youth. This study will reflect on the negotiation process of undocumented Latin@s as it relates to racial identity development. This study will also explore the possibilities of action steps for participants to work with others in identity development. I am being asked to participate in this study because I have been involved in previous discussion about being undocumented

3. Procedures

If I agree to be a participant in this study, the following will happen:

(1) I will participate in three meetings. The first and third meetings will be held with the researcher individually. The second meeting will be a focus group with the researcher and the other participants.
(2) In the first meeting, I will dialogue with the researcher about being undocumented and how to negotiate my identity. I will choose the setting where I feel the most comfortable and a time that is convenient for me.
(3) In the focus group, I will participate in a discussion of navigating the socialization process in the United States, as well as possible action steps to assist other undocumented Latin@ immigrants. Themes that emerge from the individual dialogues and related topics proposed by the participants will also be part of the group dialogue.
(4) In the last meeting, I will reflect upon the personal and professional significance of the participatory experience.
(5) After each meeting, I will be mailed an unedited transcription. I will have the opportunity to clarify or elaborate on the text.

4. Risks and/or Discomforts

I am aware that emotional discomfort may arise when sharing personal and professional experiences about being undocumented, however I am free to decline to answer any questions or to stop my participation at any time. My identity and that of my institution will be confidential. I will have the opportunity to choose a pseudonym or have one selected for me. Research data will be kept as confidential as possible and stored in a locked file. The researcher will be the only

one who has access to the files. In agreeing to participate in this study I also will keep the documentation status of all the fellow participants equally confidential.

5. Benefits

The potential benefit for me to participate in this study will be the increased self-awareness of my identity as an undocumented Latin@. Also, possible action steps that either as I, as an individual, or as a group might be implemented in the community with other undocumented Latin@s.

6. Costs/Financial Considerations

There will be no financial costs to me as a result of taking part in this study.

7. Payment/Reimbursement

I will be reimbursed gas and mileage costs for travel. Refreshments will be provided at the focus group meeting.

8. Questions

Should I have any questions, comments, or concerns, I may call Mr. JuanCarlos Arauz at 415-726-8796 or email at arauzmoore@comcast.net If I have any questions or comments about my participation in this study, I should first talk with the researcher. If for some reason I do not wish to do this, I may contact the University of San Francisco's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, which is concerned with protection of volunteers in research projects. I may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 and leaving a voicemail message, by FAX at (415) 422-5528, by e-mailing IRBPHS@usfca.edu, or by writing to USF IRBPHS, Department of Counseling Psychology, Education Building, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1080.

9. Consent

I have been given a copy of the "Research Subjects' Bill of Rights," and I have been given a copy of this consent form to keep.

PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH IS VOLUNTARY. I am free to decline to be in this study or to withdraw from it at any point. My decision as to whether or not to participate in this study will have no influence on my present or future status at the University of San Francisco.

My signature below indicates that I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's Signature	Date of Signature
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent	Date of Signature

APPENDIX E

Research Subjects' Bill of Rights

The rights below are the rights of every person who is asked to be in a research study. As a research subject, I have the following rights:

1. To be told what the study is trying to find out;

2. To be told what will happen to me and whether any of the procedures, drugs, or devices are different from what would be used in standard practice;

3. To be told about the frequent and/or important risks, side effects, or discomforts of the things that will happen to me for research purposes;

4. To be told if I can expect any benefit from participating, and, if so, what the benefit might be;

5. To be told of the other choices I have and how they may be better or worse than being in the study;

6. To be allowed to ask any questions concerning the study, both before agreeing to be involved and during the course of the study;

7. To be told what sort of medical or psychological treatment is available if any complications arise;

8. To refuse to participate at all or change my mind about participation after the study is started; if I were to make such a decision, it will not affect my right to receive the care or privileges I would receive if I were not in the study;

9. To receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form; and

10. To be free of pressure when considering whether I wish to agree to be in the study.

If I have other questions, I should ask the researcher. In addition, I may contact the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS), which is concerned with protection of volunteers in research projects. I may reach the IRBPHS by calling (415) 422-6091, by electronic mail at IRBPHS@usfca.edu, or by writing to USF IRBPHS, Department of Counseling Psychology, Education Building, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1080.

APPENDIX F

Letter Sent with Transcripts

Date__________________

Dear__________________,

Enclosed you will find your transcript from our conversation along with a copy of the Research Subjects' Bill of Rights. Please read the transcript and make any corrections and factual information you feel necessary. If there is any information you would prefer deleted, that will be done. If there are any names, you would prefer changed or deleted to protect privacy and confidentiality, that will be done.

As mentioned in my initial contact, there will be two other sessions. The purposes of these sessions are to ask questions generated from themes in the first interview. I can interview you in person at a time and place convenience.

I will be in contact with you during the first week in ____________ to arrange for the follow up interviews. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

Again, thank you so much for your time.

Sincerely,

JuanCarlos Arauz

APPENDIX G

Questions To Lead the Dialogue

1. How do undocumented Latin@ youth define the term undocumented?

A.¿Cuándo y cómo vino a comprender que no tenias papeles como residente legal?

When and how did you come to realize that you lacked the legal documentation status?

B. ¿Cómo lo ha formado sabiendo que no tienes papeles?

Having realized your documentation status, how has it shaped you?

C. ¿En no tener papeles, como es tu participación en la sociedad?

How does being undocumented shape your participation in society?

D. ¿Como un Latin@ indocumentado, cuales derechos legales crees que tienes?

As an undocumented Latin@, what legal rights do you believe you have?

E. ¿Cómo manejas su presencia en los Estados Unidos como un Latin@ indocumentado después de los eventos del 11 de septiembre de 2001?

How have the events of September 11, 2001 shaped how you negotiate your presence in the United States as an undocumented Latin@?

2. How does being undocumented impact the racial identity development of Latin@ immigrants?

A. *¿Qué significa ser Latin@, la raza, el racismo, y identidad de raza como un Latin@ indocumentado?*

What does Latin@, race, racism, and racial identity mean to you as an undocumented Latin@?

B. ¿En ser Latin@, cuales experiencias sociales te enseñaron sobre el racismo?

What social experiences taught you about racism as a Latin@?

C. ¿Cómo te influyó tu familia en tu opinión sobre identidad?

How did your family influence you in your view of identity?

D. ¿Qué experiencias personales han resaltado tu identidad de ser Latin@?

What personal experiences have highlighted your racial identity?

3. **How do undocumented Latin@ youth negotiate the socialization process as immigrants?**

A. *¿Qué significa a tu ser Americano con éxito en los Estados Unidos como un Latin@ indocumentado?*

As an undocumented Latin@, what does it mean to you to successfully socialize in the United States?

B. ¿Cómo un Latin@ indocumentado, cómo retiene tu cultura y participación en la sociedad?

As an undocumented Latin@, how do you retain your culture and participate in society?

C. *¿Cómo describiría tu interacción con otros que son Latin@s documentados?*

How would you describe your interaction with others who are documented Latin@s?

D. *¿Cómo te sientes diferente y similar en contra de tus amigos quienes son documentados?*

How do you feel different or similar from your friends who are documented?

4. **What effect did this research have upon the participants?**

A. ¿Cuáles son sus sueños sobre tu futuro y cómo te mueves más cerca para realizarlo?

What are your dreams about your future and how do you move closer to realize them?

B. ¿Cómo y por qué es crítico o no sé documentado para ser parte de la sociedad?

How and why is it or not critical to become documented for you to be part of society?