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IMPACT OF RESOURCE SCARCITY ON UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Sebastian Melendez Lopez

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IMPACT OF RESOURCE SCARCITY ON UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS IN
HIGHER EDUCATION

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Social Work

by
Sebastian Melendez Lopez

May 2024

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May 2024

Approved by:

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ABSTRACT

Background: Much progress has been made in understanding the impacts of identifying as an undocumented student in higher education, but knowledge of the scarcity of resources impacting undocumented students remains limited.

Objective: This descriptive study examined the relationship between accessibility to social support and the psychological well-being of undocumented students in higher education. **Methods:** Quantitative data was gathered cross-sectionally from participants recruited using nonprobability sampling methods.

The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale and Social Support Survey Scale were used to gather data on participants' psychological distress and social support. A descriptive analysis was performed to yield summary statistics of participants' demographics, psychological well-being, and social support. **Results:** All participants identified as Hispanic or Latino, most are attending a 4-year college, and most participants' parents have less than a college education. The data suggests that 100% of participants reported struggles with mental health.

Additionally, most reported less than favorable levels of social support throughout their academic career in higher education.

Conclusion: The mental health of undocumented students may be more complex than anticipated, where mental well-being may be impacted by factors beyond the levels and types of social support received. Future research should consider exploring other factors that might impact the mental wellness of undocumented students. Furthermore, Colleges serving undocumented students

should ensure that this vulnerable group receives adequate educational support in efforts to boost their mental health.

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CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEM FORMULATION

The purpose of this paper is to raise awareness of the hardships of undocumented students within the American education system, in particular, how lack of resources can impact and harm their learning process and assimilation into our society. This topic is of importance as the United States is a diverse country consisting of a growing number of ethnic and immigrant groups. Therefore, it is essential to establish equality amongst immigrant children entering the United States educational system to ensure becoming contributing members of society. This paper will first define undocumented status. Then, the paper will provide the prevalence of undocumented students in the United States, followed by a description of the challenges of undocumented students. Next, the paper will describe the legislation related to undocumented students and ends with an exploration of the types of resources available to undocumented students, and the impact of lack of resources. Overall, the lack of accessible resources can not only significantly impact the student, but can, in turn, affect the entire family unit.

Defining Undocumented Status

As the United States is increasingly becoming a nation of immigrants, it is good to contextualize what undocumented status means. Having undocumented status refers to any immigrant who resides in the US who does not hold legal status (Budiman, 2020). Some reasons why an individual would be an

undocumented immigrant include: entering the US without inspection, overstaying a work visa, having Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and/or are currently in the process of gaining citizenship, permanent residency, or DACA status.

Challenges of Immigrant and Undocumented Individuals and Families

There are various obstacles and challenges that individuals with undocumented status experience, making it increasingly difficult for them to achieve success and attain security. One of the biggest challenges most immigrant and undocumented individuals and families face is the language barrier, where there are major gaps in communication with larger systems (Karoly and Gonzalez, 2011). Some of these larger systems include the education system, legal systems, and the workforce, in which being proficient in English is required for transactions. Furthermore, there are also inner challenges that come along with leaving your home country and trying to assimilate into society. Some of these inner challenges include mental health issues where there are often feelings of unhappiness, low self-esteem, personal views on society in the host country, and issues with a sense of identity (Suarez-Oroco et. al, 2015).

Furthermore, there are some significant challenges that can occur due to biases and discrimination. While immigration has become more common and assistance for immigrant families has expanded, families still face challenges with enrolling in k-12 settings. According to Evans (2020), immigrant

discrimination is still a very prominent issue within the United States and its education system, where there are still hindrances to children's right to an education. These hindrances include delayed, diverted, and denied enrollment. While there are laws in place to ensure there is no discrimination taking place, biases are still existent and can significantly affect a child's education and the parents' involvement.

Along with the challenges immigrant families face in a K-12 setting, similarly, there are barriers that undocumented students go through in higher education. Commonly reported challenges in which undocumented undergraduate college students face include being the first in their family to attend university, mixed status family unit, and showing symptoms of anxiety, depression, and stress (Suarez-Orozco, et. al, 2015). Since most undocumented college students are the first in their family to pursue higher education, presenting challenges include navigating college applications, financial aid and funding, and the capacity to build meaningful and professional relationships faculty and staff (Collier and Morgan 2008).

Challenges for undocumented individuals and families are not only limited to educational settings, as barriers can also present themselves in a medical setting. According to Samra and colleagues, undocumented immigrants face unique disadvantages in accessibility to quality healthcare and render them reliant on emergency department services (2019). The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (2010) aimed to expand affordable and private health

insurance but left out undocumented residents. In turn, it hindered undocumented immigrant individuals and family to access affordable and quality healthcare, resulting in turning to lower quality health services and fewer doctors' visits. Furthermore, language barriers within healthcare settings became more prominent and less access to interpretive services.

While it is apparent that undocumented individuals and families are faced with challenges within larger systems, they are also left behind during world-wide crisis. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, undocumented individuals and families were a population that was overlooked. Some challenged undocumented individuals faced include the greater exposure to covid-19 due to a majority working essential jobs such as agriculture and food service, inability to access services available to citizens, and inability to receive financial assistance (Morfo, 2022).

Prevalence of Undocumented Students

K-12

As previously mentioned, the immigrant and undocumented populations is a population increasing in numbers. Approximately 620,000 K-12 students in the United States are undocumented (FWD.us, 2021).

Furthermore, more than half of K-12 undocumented students (54%) are from Central and South American countries, including Mexico (130,000), Honduras (50,000), Guatemala (40,000), and El Salvador (30,000).

Another 22% are from Asia, while 7% are from sub-Saharan African

countries and 5% are from Caribbean countries. While most of these students are awaiting their asylum application to be accepted, this is still a considerably large population.

Higher Education

According to Higher Ed Immigration Portal (2020), there are approximately 408,579 undocumented students in higher education, where 141,111 are considered to be DACA eligible 5ocument in higher education and 267,468 are non-DACA eligible students in higher education. This statistic demonstrates the wide array of students undocumented students across the United States. It is important to make the distinction between DACA eligible and non-eligible students as it demonstrates the difference in challenges that may be presented.

Legislation of Undocumented Students

K-12

Although undocumented students have limited access to resources States, there are various policy implementations that have helped. These policies include the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, the Equal Education Opportunities Act, Plyer vs. Doe, DACA, and Every Student Succeeds Act established in 2015 by President Obama (Mars Area School District, 2001).

There are 5 million English Language Learners in the US public schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023). These 5 million k-12 students are all benefitting from the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, which mandated schools to provide bilingual education programs (Justia Law, 2023). Within the

state of California, there are 250,000 undocumented children who are benefitting from Plyer v. Doe, a supreme court decision that guarantees undocumented students' free access to k-12 education (The Education Trust-West, 2023)

Higher Education

While the legislations previously mentioned have benefitted students within a k-12 setting, a legislation that benefits students in higher education is DACA. DACA is a policy implemented during the Obama administration that allows undocumented individuals who entered the United States as children to have a temporary work permit, social security, and protection from deportation (Alulema, 2019). The process for being able to take part in this policy is a lengthy one, which consists of rigorous background checks and constant renewals. As undocumented students are not allowed to apply for financial aid, which is an important aspect of higher education, DACA allows undocumented students to work and save funds to pay for schooling legally. Although DACA does not address the other issues associated with undocumented status, it helps minimize some challenges, notably, the ability to work and attain higher education.

For undocumented students in higher education, there is also financial assistance that is provided through Education Code 68130.5, commonly known as AB540, which exempts undocumented students from paying out-of-state tuition and allows them to apply for and receive state aid in California (California Aid Commission). Although this resource will significantly empower and allow undocumented students to seek out higher education, the quantity of funds

provided will not be as much compared to residents or US citizens. Furthermore, the State of California houses public universities (the UC and CSU systems) that participate in providing services for undocumented students on campus.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Undocumented student was not a commonly used term up until the historic Supreme Court case of Plyer v. Doe (1982) ruling, which gave the right to immigrant children who are not US citizens to attend K-12 schools (Lopez, 2005). This ruling gave a premise to how immigration would be viewed throughout the United States. Although there have been policies on the state and the federal level that have been implemented to benefit undocumented students in K-12 and higher education, there have also been negative aspects that have hindered students as a result. Furthermore, research has been conducted to better understand the impact of federal and state policies and institutional-level policies. Research has found that there has been an array of negative aspects that come along with being an undocumented student in higher education that can range from financial, social, and psychological burdens (Bjorklund, 2018). This chapter summarizes the various studies that have accomplished in providing insight into the barriers of undocumented students. This includes but is not limited to psychological impacts and social capital, both of which can hinder the academic achievement of students.

Psychological Impact

Research has found that undocumented students attending a community college or a four-year university face adverse experiences that impact them psychologically and socially (Jacobo & Ochoa, 2011; Teranishi et al., 2015). In

the qualitative mixed methods study conducted by Ochoa and colleagues (2011), researchers were able to identify the various barriers undocumented students face by interviewing 30 participants. For this exploratory study, the participants all identified as being from Mexico, came to the US when they were between the ages of 2 and 5, and are currently pursuing a higher education degree. The study concluded that there are four major issues impacting the success of students in an academic setting: Identity and membership, microaggressions, and structural violence (Jacobco & Ochoa, 2011). Moreover, undocumented students in higher education have the legal right to pursue their academic career, however, many students live in fear of disclosing their undocumented status.

Studies have found that due to having an undocumented status, these students experience significant psychological stressors and obstacles that hinder their academic perseverance and grit. Furthermore, many undocumented students show signs of depression and anxiety that can be correlated to their undocumented status (O'Neal et al., 2016; Perez et al., 2010). In the study conducted by O'Neal and colleagues, researchers were able to identify the stressors non-citizens face that have negatively impacted their academic grades by surveying and interviewing 48 students. This cross-sectional, mixed methods study had consisted of non-citizen and citizen first generation college students in Maryland. The study found that non-citizen student expressed having stressors of paying tuition and stress due to immigration policies affecting their academics, while their counterparts expressed stressors of course load affecting their

academics. This study concluded non-citizen students do not turn to anyone outside of their family for support but engage in positive self-talk (O'Neal et al.,2016).

Social Capital

Studies have found that due to their undocumented status and being first-generation immigrants, most undocumented students lack strong social capital within academic settings, which prohibits students from getting access to essential resources and information necessary to ensure success (Cebulko, 2013; Garcia & Tierney, 2011). Social capital within higher education is an important component necessary to enhance good academic standing and opportunities provided through peers, school staff, and professors (Tonkaboni et al., 2013). In the systematic analysis conducted by Tonkaboni and colleagues (2013), it analyzes the importance of social capital and the investment that comes along with creating meaningful relationships in an individual's personal life and professional career. In addition, the study highlights the importance of social capital in an academic setting as it provides the social skills necessary for professionalism while simultaneously providing meaningful relationships with individuals who share similar values and beliefs (Tonkaboni et al., 2013). By lacking social capital and overall social support within the academic setting, undocumented students lack the guidance and social skills necessary to ensure success.

Gaps in Knowledge

Several studies have examined the psychological well-being of undocumented students in postsecondary education. Furthermore, there have been various studies that have contributed to idea of social support and its importance in personal and professional relationships. However, this body of studies has yet to determine whether the mental health of undocumented students in postsecondary education is linked to the level and types of social support they receive.

Theory

According to the buffering theory, social support is the most beneficial during high-stress situations or circumstances (Lo, 2019). Conversely, not having sufficient social support can be detrimental to one physical and mental health.

Aim of Study

The aim of this study was to gain insight on specific barriers that are affecting the population of undocumented students in higher education, in particular the association between mental well-being and social support. The undocumented student population is a significantly understudied population, where barriers are often overlooked as hindrances affecting the well-being and academic success of the individuals. Furthermore, this study will allow for further research to be conducted on the variables that can impact undocumented students based on their intersecting identifies. Guided by the buffering theory,

this study tests the following hypothesis: undocumented students with higher levels of social support will report higher levels of psychological well-being or lower levels of psychological distress.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

This descriptive study aimed to gather cross-sectional data on undocumented students' level of social support and their mental well-being.

Participants

Eligible clients are 18 or older, enrolled in postsecondary education (two-year, four-year universities, or trade schools), and self-identified as being undocumented. Individuals who are DACA recipients are eligible to take part in the study.

Recruitment Strategy

This study used non-probability sampling, specifically convenience combined with snowball sampling, to recruit participants. Recruitment was carried out through a recruitment flyer, which was posted on the CSUSB campus and the co-PI's personal social media account, in particular Instagram. Prospective participants interested in the study scanned the QR code or clicked on a link provided on the recruitment flyer, which directed them to the study's informed consent document. They were invited to read the informed consent document and provide consent to participate by checking a box at the bottom of

the document that reads, "I have read and understood the consent document and agree to participate in your study."

Study Procedure

After the informed consent process, participants were invited to complete a screening questionnaire to ensure their eligibility to participate. Once eligibility was established, participants completed a self-report research survey consisting of demographic questions, a scale that measures psychological distress, and another measure that assesses the levels of social support. Participants were invited to complete a survey only once. The survey took about 15 minutes to complete. Participants did not receive monetary compensation.

Measurement or Interview Protocol

Data on participants' demographic characteristics was gathered (e.g., gender, age, race, and ethnicity). Additionally, the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale and Social Support Survey Scale was used to gather data on participants' psychological distress and social support. Respectively. For the Kessler Psychological, there are a total of 10 questions, where there are questions that ask if the individual has felt nervous or hopeless over the course of their college career. There were total of five responses available for the individual to answer: *None of the time, a little of the time, some of the time, most of the time, and all of the time.* For the Social Support Survey Scale, there are a total of 5 subscales, where the only ones being used are emotional/informational support, tangible support, positive social interaction, and additional items. Some examples of the

questions asked include: *do you have someone you can count on to listen to you when you need to talk, do you have someone to help you with daily chores if you are sick, and do you have someone to get together with for relaxation?* The social support scale has five possible responses: *None of the time, a little of the time, some of the time, most of the time, and all of the time.* The measure was self-report survey that was done within 10-15 minutes, will be done individually, and was done in one sitting. The responses to the surveys were summed to derive a composite score so that higher scores represent higher levels of distress and social support.

Data Analysis

Descriptive analyses were performed to yield summary statistics of participants' demographics, psychological well-being, and social support. Bivariate analysis (e.g., two independent-sample t-test and Pearson's chi-square test of independence) were performed to examine the relationship between social support and psychological well-being. Statistical significance was determined at p -value $< .05$. Analyses was performed with SPSS using data from participants with complete information.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter begins by presenting the participants' demographics. Then, it presents the findings of a series of univariate analyses conducted to determine participants' social support and psychological distress levels. It ends with the presentation of correlation analysis results to determine the strengths and direction of the relationship between participants' mental health well-being and levels of social support.

Demographics

Table 1 displays the demographic characteristics of the study. The study was comprised of 10 undocumented students. The average age of the participants was 25.2 ($SD=7.2$). Participants range from 18 to 39 years old. Most participants identified as female ($n=7$, 70.00%), and all participants identified as Hispanic or Latino ($n=10$, 100.00%). Most participants attended a four-year university or higher ($n=8$, 80.00%). On average, participants immigrated to the United States during their early childhood years ($M=7.3$, $SD=4.3$). Most participants reported their parent's highest educational attainment to be high school or less ($n=7$, 70.00%).

Table 1
Sociodemographic Profile of Participants (N = 10)

	<i>n</i> (%)
Age, <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	25.2 (7.2)
Gender	
Female	7 (70)
Male	3 (30)
Race and Ethnicity	
Latino	10 (100)
Type of Higher Education	
Four year	8 (80)
Two year or community college	1 (10)
Trade school	1 (10)
Age at immigration, <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	7.3 (4.3)
Parents' Highest Education	
High school or less	7 (70)
Some college	3 (30)
Levels of Psychological Distress, <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	27.9 (4.7)
Levels of Social Support, <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	
Emotional	3.0 (1.1)
Informational	3.2 (1.1)
Tangible	2.9(1.4)
Positive social interaction	3.9(0.9)

Univariate Analyses

The mean scores of the four types of social support were generated. On average, participants scored 3.0 (*SD*=1.9) in the category of emotional support, indicating they have some social support regarding emotion. Some participants experienced having some support or more (up to 6), whereas other indicated

having little to no support. On average, participants scored 3.2 ($SD=1.1$) in the category of informational support, indicating there is some social support regarding information that will be beneficial to the individual. This can include having someone that can provide advice or feedback on a situation. Up to five participants indicated having little to no informational support. On average, participants scored 2.9 ($SD=1.4$) in the category of tangible support, signifying participants had little support where someone is providing physical services or assistance. On average, participants scored 3.8 ($SD= 1.0$) in the category of positive social interaction, indicating the participants felt as though they have identified a person who provides a healthy relationship.

The mean score of psychological distress was generated. On average, participants scored 27.9 ($SD= 4.7$), indicating that participants are likely to have a moderate mental disorder.

Correlation Analysis

The correlation between the various social supports and levels of psychological distress can be found in Figures 1, 2, and 3. Findings indicate a strong negative correlation between levels of psychological distress and emotional social support, $r= -.77$, $n= 10$, $p< .001$, so that higher levels of psychological distress were associated with lower levels of emotional support (see Figure 1). Findings from the correlation analysis indicated a strong negative correlation between mental health symptoms and informational support, $r= -.64$, $n= 10$, $p< .001$, with high levels of psychological distress associated with lower

levels of informational support (see Figure 2). In addition, a negative correlation between mental health symptoms and tangible support, $r = -.52$, $n = 9$, $p < .001$, where high levels of mental health disorders are associated with lower levels of tangible support (see Figure 3). This suggests that individuals feel as though they cannot confide in their significant relationships to assist in forms related physical labor. Furthermore, the correlation analysis indicated a strong negative correlation between mental health symptoms and positive social interaction, $r = -.58$, $n = 10$, $p < .001$, with high levels of mental health disorders associated with lower levels of positive social interaction. Despite the individuals having some positive interaction, it is not sufficient social interaction to demonstrate positive well-being.

Figure 1
Scatter Plot Depicting the Relationship between Emotional Support and Levels of Psychological Distress

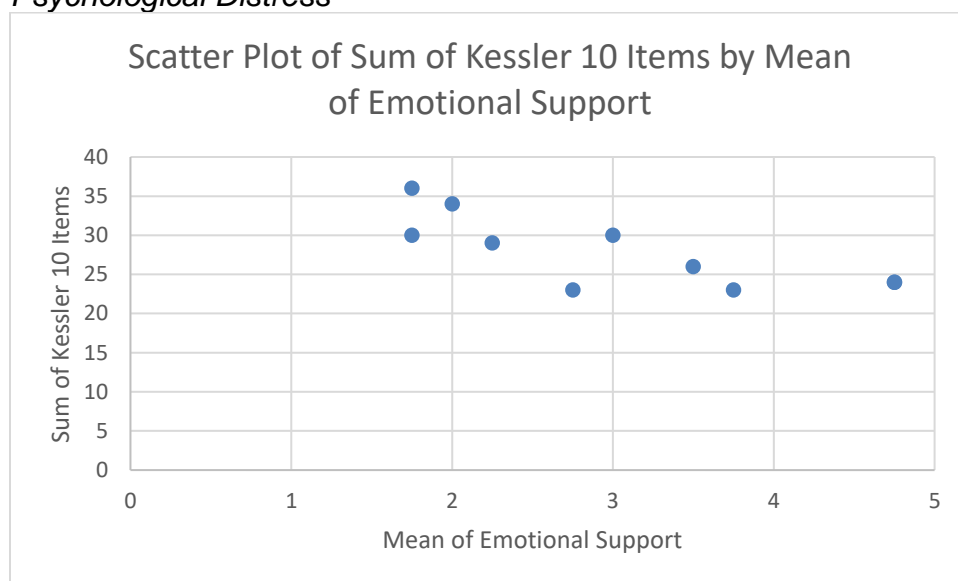


Figure 2
Scatter Plot Depicting the Relationship between Informational Support and Levels of Psychological Distress

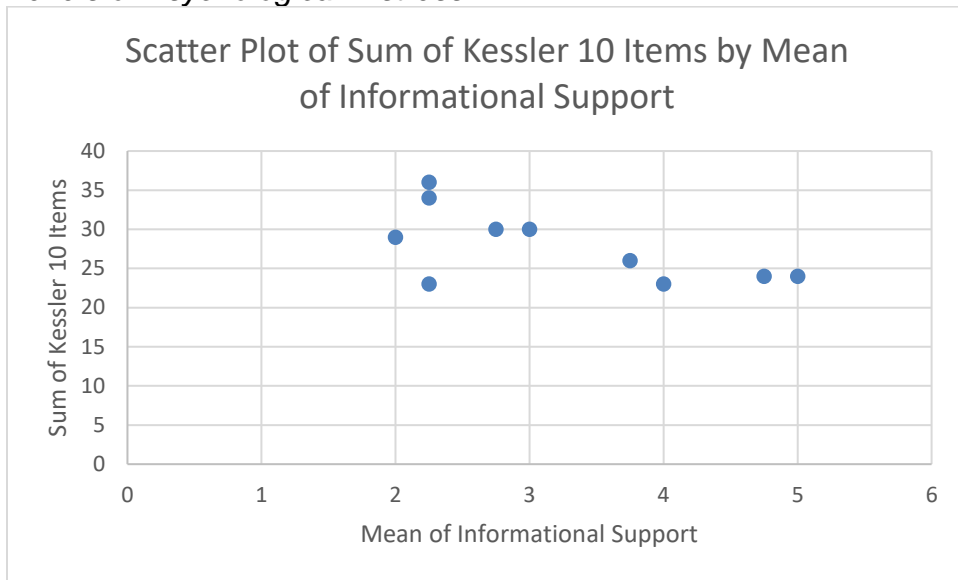
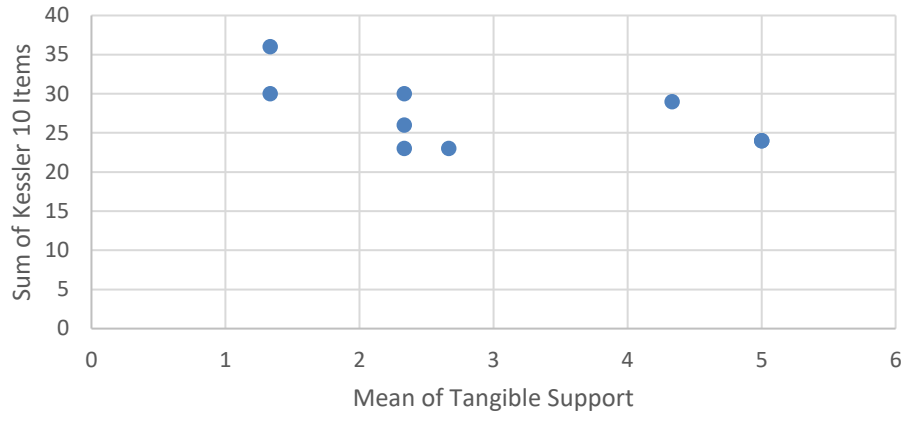


Figure 3
Scatter Plot Depicting the Relationship between Tangible Support and Levels of Psychological Distress

Scatter Plot of Sum of Kessler 10 Items by Mean of Tangible Support



CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Given that the undocumented student population is an underserved and under-studied population, the aim of this paper was to gain insight into the barriers undocumented students in higher education face, in particular, how social support can be of significance to their mental well-being. Based on the study conducted, participants who identified as undocumented students in higher education reported having significant mental health issues with high levels of distress as measured by the Kessler 10 Psychological Distress Scale. In addition, participants reported having average social support, where there was support some of the time on an emotional, informational, tangible, and positive social interaction level. Additionally, there was a statistically significant negative correlation between social support and the mental well-being of undocumented students in higher education. This finding suggests that if there were more social support from peers, family, friends, faculty, and staff, the mental health symptoms of students would be lower. Given this information, it can be concluded that the hypothesis of the study was confirmed.

What this study has found is congruent with past studies, where it has been concluded that undocumented students in higher education face a multitude of barriers that hinder their academic performance (Bjorklund, 2018). Although past studies have highlighted the challenges of identifying as undocumented, there was very limited focus on the relationship between social

support and mental health. The studies that have examined the mental health of undocumented students find that due to having an undocumented status, these students experience significant stressors and obstacles that hinder their academic perseverance and grit, which is consistent/inconsistent with the findings of the present study (O'Neal et al., 2016; Perez et al., 2010).

Furthermore, past studies have failed to report the importance of social support on a population that faces adverse experiences of immigration. Moreover, there are various theories that support the idea of the Importance of social support on a person's mental well-being. Systems theory supports the idea of the inter-related larger systems that come together to influence the life of a person (Friedman and Allen, 2010). These systems can include home life, work life, academics, relationships, and any other larger systems the person is a part of daily. Furthermore, these systems can have a direct impact on the decisions and approaches to how life is navigated. Having support within these systems can ultimately provide an individual with the necessary tools and experience to take steps in their life in a positive direction.

Limitations

Although the study has allowed for more research on a significantly understudied population, there were some limitations within the study. To begin, the study consisted of 10 participants, and if there had been more participants, it would have solidified the conclusion and possibly diversified the population. In addition, all the participants in the study were from a Latino/Hispanic background.

Although a majority of immigrant and undocumented students are of Latino/Hispanic heritage, it would have been beneficial to the study to gain input from undocumented students of various ethnic and racial identities.

Conclusion

We profiled an understudied group in the undocumented immigrant population, where undocumented students are susceptible to high levels of psychological distress due to barriers that come along with being undocumented. The hope of this study is to identify the barriers that hinder academic success and offer recommendations that will benefit the population. First, providing a learning environment and curriculum for school staff to be educated on the population and ways to support. Second, create safe spaces for undocumented students to receive social support (e.g. support groups, information sessions). By equipping this population with the skills to engage with peers and school staff, it would allow for students to seek assistance when needed and create support systems. This study provides insights on one specific barrier but can allow for further research to analyze various barriers that can hinder success academically and positive mental well-being.

Although this study has been effective in reaching a conclusion, some recommendations to further this study are as follows. To begin, getting a larger sample size would allow for more diverse experiences and solidify the conclusions of the study. In addition, it would be beneficial for the study to include mixed methods, in particular, having qualitative data such as interviews.

This would allow for the study to learn more in depth of various barrier and implications that can affect the population of undocumented students in higher education. Overall, these recommendations would allow researchers to gain further knowledge of the population while creating better recommendations that could benefit the population.

APPENDIX A
INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are being asked to participate is designed to investigate the impact of resources scarcity on undocumented students in higher education, specifically how it can impact their well-being. This study is being conducted by Sebastian Melendez Lopez under the supervision of Dr. Caroline Lim, Assistant Professor of Social Work at the California State University, San Bernardino. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board, California State University, San Bernardino.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study is to understand the social support and mental health of undocumented immigrants in higher education.

DESCRIPTION: You will be asked to answer a few demographic questions in the beginning followed by questions of your experience while in higher education regarding your Mental Health and social support.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation is completely voluntary. You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. You may skip or not answer any questions. You can also freely withdraw from participation at any time. To do so, simply exit the survey. The alternative to participation is not to participate.

CONFIDENTIALITY: We will be gathering anonymous data. This means we will not collect any information that will identify you (e.g., your name, social security number, contact information, video recording). We will present findings from this study in group format only so that no results will be connected to a participant. We will protect the data against inappropriate access by restricting data access to authorized study personnel. We will store the data on CSUSB Google Drive with individual ID plus password protection. Additionally, the folder containing the data will be protected with a password known to authorized study personnel. We will destroy the data three years after the project has ended.

DURATION: Your participation in the study will last approximately no longer than 15-20 minutes. You will be asked to complete the survey only once and in one sitting.

RISKS: Some of the questions may make you feel uneasy or embarrassed. You may also provide sensitive and personal information. You can choose to skip or stop answering any questions that make you uncomfortable. You can also withdraw from participation at any time with no consequences.

BENEFITS: There are no direct benefits to the research participants. However, findings from this study have the potential to advance knowledge the social support and mental health of Undocumented college students.

CONTACT: If you have any questions or concerns about this research study, please contact Dr. Caroline Lim caroline.lim@csusb.edu or 909-537-5184. You can also contact the California State University, San Bernardino, Institutional Review Board at 909-537-7588.

RESULTS: After the completion and publication of the study, results can be found at California State University, San Bernardino, John M. Pfau Library (5500 University Parkway, San Bernardino, CA 92407; 909-537-5090/5091).

CONFIRMATION STATEMENT

- I understand that I must be 18 years of age or older to participate in your study, have read and understand the consent document and agree to participate in your study.

APPENDIX B
SURVEY QUESTIONS

Mental Health and Educational Support amongst Undocumented Students.

Q1 • I understand that I must be 18 years of age or older to participate in your study, have read and understand the consent document and agree to participate in your study.

- Yes (1)
- No (Thank you for considering this study. Please feel free to exit this survey) (2)

Q2 Thank you so much for your interest in this study. Before continuing, we need to ensure that you meet the study's eligibility criteria. Please take a minute to respond to the following questions.

Q3 Are you 18 years old and older?

- No (1)
 - Yes (2)
-

Q4 Do you hold the legal status of being undocumented?

- No (1)
 - Yes (2)
-

Q5 Please answer the following demographical questions

Q6 What gender do you identify as?

- Male (1)
 - Female (2)
 - Non-binary / third gender (3)
 - Prefer not to say (4)
-

Q7 What is your age?

Q8 Please specify your ethnicity.

- Hispanic or Latino (1)
 - Caucasian (2)
 - African-American (3)
 - Asian (4)
 - Native American (5)
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (6)
 - Two or more (7)
 - Other/Unknown (8)
 - Prefer not to say (9)
-

Q9 What type of higher education institution are you currently attending?

- Four year University or higher (1)
 - 2 year/community college (2)
 - Trade School (3)
 - Other (4)
-

Q10 At what age did you immigrate to the United States?

Q11 What was the highest level of education completed by your parents?

Q12 These questions concern how you have been feeling over the course of your college education. Tick a box below each questions that best represents how you have been feeling.

	1. None of the time (1)	2. A little of the time (2)	3. Some of the time (3)	4. Most of the time (4)	5. All of the time (5)
1) Over the course of your college education, about how often did you feel tired out for no good reason? (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2) Over the course of your college education, how often did you feel nervous? (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3) Over the course of your college education, about how often did you feel so nervous that nothing could calm you down? (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4) Over the course of your college education, about how often did you feel hopeless? (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5) Over the course of your college education, about how often did you feel restless or fidgety? (5)

6) Over the course of your college education, about how often did you feel so restless you could not sit still? (6)

7) Over the course of your college education, about how often did you feel depressed? (7)

8) Over the course of your college education, about how often did you feel that everything was an effort? (8)

9) Over the course of your college education, about how often did you feel so sad that nothing could cheer you up? (9)

10) Over the course of your college education, about how often did you feel worthless? (10)

Q13 People sometimes look to others for companionship, assistance, and other types of support. How often is each of the following kinds of support available to you if you need it? Choose one number from each question.

	None of the time (1)	A little of the time (2)	Some of the time (3)	Most of the time (4)	All of the time (5)
Someone you can count on to listen to you when you need to talk (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Someone to give you information to help you understand a situation (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Someone to give you good advice about a crisis (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Someone to confide in or talk to about yourself or your problems (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Someone whose advice you really want (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Someone to share your most private worries and fears with (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Someone to
turn to for
suggestions
about how to
deal with a
personal
problem (7)

Someone
who
understands
your
problems (8)

Someone to
help you if
you were
confined to
bed (9)

Someone to
help you with
academic
problems
(10)

Someone to
help you
become
involved in
the school
(11)

Someone to
get together
with for
relaxation
(12)

Someone to
do
something
enjoyable
with (13)

Someone to
do things
with to help
you get your
mind off
things. (14)



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APPENDIX C
IRB APPROVAL LETTER



February 4, 2024

CSUSB INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
Administrative/Exempt Review Determination
Status: Determined Exempt
IRB-FY2024-123

Caroline Lim Sebastian Melendez Lopez
CSBS - Social Work
California State University, San Bernardino
5500 University Parkway
San Bernardino, California 92407

Dear Caroline Lim Sebastian Melendez Lopez:

Your application to use human subjects, titled "Impact of Resource Scarcity on Undocumented Students" has been reviewed and determined exempt by the Chair of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of CSU, San Bernardino. An exempt determination means your study had met the federal requirements for exempt status under 45 CFR 46.104. The CSUSB IRB has weighed the risks and benefits of the study to ensure the protection of human participants.

This approval notice does not replace any departmental or additional campus approvals which may be required including access to CSUSB campus facilities and affiliate campuses. Investigators should consider the changing COVID-19 circumstances based on current CDC, California Department of Public Health, and campus guidance and submit appropriate protocol modifications to the IRB as needed. CSUSB campus and affiliate health screenings should be completed for all campus human research related activities. Human research activities conducted at off-campus sites should follow CDC, California Department of Public Health, and local guidance. See CSUSB's [COVID-19 Prevention Plan](#) for more information regarding campus requirements.

You are required to notify the IRB of the following as mandated by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) federal regulations 45 CFR 46 and CSUSB IRB policy. You can find the modification, renewal, unanticipated/adverse event, study closure forms in the Cayuse IRB System. Some instructions are provided on the [IRB Online Submission webpage](#) toward the bottom of the page.. Failure to notify the IRB of the following requirements may result in disciplinary action. The Cayuse IRB system will notify you when your protocol is due for renewal. Ensure you file your protocol renewal and continuing review form through the Cayuse IRB system to keep your protocol current and active unless you have completed your study.

Ensure your CITI Human Subjects Training is kept up-to-date and current throughout the study.

Submit a protocol modification (change) if any changes (no matter how minor) are proposed in your study for review and approval by the IRB before being implemented in your study.

Notify the IRB within 5 days of any unanticipated or adverse events are experienced by subjects during your research.

Submit a study closure through the Cayuse IRB submission system once your study has ended.

If you have any questions regarding the IRB decision, please contact Michael Gillespie, the Research Compliance Officer. Mr. Michael Gillespie can be reached by phone at (909) 537-7588, by fax at (909) 537-7028, or by email at mgillesp@csusb.edu. Please include your application approval number IRB-FY2024-123 in all correspondence. Any complaints you receive from participants and/or others related to your research may be directed to Mr. Gillespie.

Best of luck with your research.

Sincerely,

King-To Yeung

King-To Yeung, Ph.D., IRB Chair
CSUSB Institutional Review Board

KY/MG

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