

WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS OF DACA DEFERRED (ACTION FOR CHILDREN ARRIVALS) IN THE UNITED STATES?

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ABSTRACT

Background: The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program was established by the Obama Administration in June 2012. President Barack Obama announced it on June 15, 2012, and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), an agency of the Department of Homeland Security, began accepting DACA applications in August 2012.

Objective: This study aims to research The purpose of DACA to protect eligible immigrant youth who came to the United States when they were children from deportation. DACA gives young undocumented immigrants: 1) protection from deportation and 2) a work permit. The program expires after two years, subject to renewal.

Design and Method: The research method is based on peer-reviewed literature consisting of scholarly articles, journals, dissertations, and online articles. DACA, an acronym for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, is a policy that protects around 800,000 young people — known as “DREAMers” — who entered the United States unlawfully as children. The program does not grant them official legal status or a pathway to citizenship. Still, it does allow them to apply for a driver’s license, social security number, and work permit.

Results: The significance of this study is that President Trump repeatedly tried to dismantle the program established by President Barack Obama in 2012. A federal judge ruled in December 2020 that first-time DACA applicants could apply after the Trump administration stopped accepting new applications. He also extended the renewal period to two years, from one year. *In* October 2022, the Biden administration’s final DACA rule went into effect shortly after a federal judge ruled that the program could temporarily continue. However, new applicants would still be barred from applying. As of 2023, no date has been set for additional hearings to confirm DACA’s future, long-term status.

Conclusions: The two are viewed differently in society, but both outcomes are often not similar enough to be interchangeable with the same outcomes for the individual. In July 2021, a federal judge ruled that first-time DACA applicants were barred from applying USCIS has confirmed that all individuals whose DACA requests were approved prior to July 16, 2021, will continue to

have DACA status. All DACA requests that were approved before July 16 will continue to be eligible to renew DACA and DACA work permits. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will also continue to accept the filing of initial DACA and employment authorization requests. Still, they cannot approve initial DACA and EAD requests on account of the judge's ruling. Despite the Biden administration's persistent efforts to preserve DACA, in October 2022, a federal judge ruled that the program could continue only temporarily and that new applicants would still be unable to apply. As of January 2023, no future hearings have been set to confirm DACA's status or whether the program can open up to new applicants. The Biden administration published a final rule on the program in late October 2022. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has stated it will continue to protect the program and call on Congress to pass legislation solidifying its permanent status. If a judge ends the program in the future, the current government will appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Keywords: *DACA, Immigration, Education, Legal status, Government Issues, Citizenship*

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background and Overview

What are the pros and cons of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) in the United States? This question many may think is not relevant to all USA citizens to ask. This question does not get asked frequently. In 2012, President Obama and Vice President Biden announced the DACA program, which protects immigrant youth who came to the United States when they were children due to deportation (Walters, 2017). Approximately 800,000 immigrants are protected through DACA and are often called “Dreamers.” The DACA program protections from deportation and gives youth a work permit while they live in the United States (Walters, 2017).

However, while the DACA program allows for the ability to work, it does not yet lead to a path to United States citizenship. Mwangi et al. (2019) describe a study on how universities' responses and decisions help to gain knowledge of DACA. Perhaps, it is time to open new perspectives to political and human views. Although, nowadays, we live in a society where we are moving towards a path for equal rights, there is still a lot to do that can lead to a path to citizenship for DREAMERS.

There are limits to gaining rights to the DACA program (Patler et al., 2021). Nevertheless, legalizing rights for marginalized groups can improve mental health. Still, those improvements may be short-lived if broad social acceptance does not accompany the rights-granting programs and often involve social or political backlash. This study examines the relationship between legal transitions and stress in undocumented immigrants. In addition, it can inform policy on other marginalized groups who experience increased rights while remaining

socially marginalized, such as LGBTQ individuals after gay marriage legislation or formerly incarcerated people in the wake of correctional reform programs.

Furthermore, DACA recipients navigate barriers to higher education (Macías, 2018) These youth are ineligible for federal student financial aid and are classified as international students in most states, increasing their tuition costs. This article contributes to the literature on DACA by focusing on the alternative methods students employ to provide for their educational expenses. It is of the utmost importance to have this research done because, as time goes on, the DACA program will eventually benefit many people to become citizens. These dreamers will help our country to get more financial, jobs, and many more opportunities.

This research aims to show how DACA or DREAMERS receives a path to citizenship and the benefits they can bring to the country. Having more citizens will help our country's economy and have them working in jobs that will help our country to be better. In our current time, we need people who will help us keep growing and to keep understanding the country's future and understand.

Overall, 47% of individuals likely eligible for DACA were uninsured, compared to 10% of U.S.-born individuals in their age group. Based on survey data, these estimates are higher than other uninsured rates among DACA recipients, likely reflecting differences in the group being analyzed and the data source. Although most individuals who are likely eligible for DACA are in a family with a full-time worker, as noted above, they are more likely to be low-income, which probably reflects disproportionate employment in low-wage jobs that are less likely to offer employer-sponsored health insurance. Those without access to affordable coverage through an employer or who cannot afford coverage on the individual market are left with limited options since they are prohibited from enrolling in Medicaid, CHIP, and Marketplace coverage. As such,

DACA recipients currently have the same access to health coverage and care as undocumented immigrants. Those uninsured primarily rely on care through community health centers and public health services and can receive treatment for emergency conditions. In addition, some states provide fully-state funding to individuals regardless of immigration status for which DACA recipients can qualify.

This study will focus on three questions:

RQ#1: What is DACA and the future of DACA?

RQ#2: What are the Pros and Cons of DACA?

RQ#3: What are the statistics and governmental issues with DACA?

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

DACA: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals is a program to allow young immigrants to live and work in the only country they know as home (Waters, 2017, para. Walters, J. (2017) What is DACA and who are the Dreamers? *The Guardian*. 1-6.).

Immigration: The process of moving to a new country or region to stay and live National Geographic. (2023). United States Immigration. *National Geographic Society*. (National Geographic, 2023, para. 1).

Education: The process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or Education. (2023, May 1). In *Wikipedia*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education> (Wikipedia, 2023).

Legal status: Status means a person's legal condition, whether personal or proprietary. In the context of immigration law, it is the name of the visa category a person has been assigned and the group of privileges received upon becoming either a permanent resident or a non-immigrant (temporary visa LII Legal Information Institute. (2023). Status. [Blog] *Cornel Law School*. <https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/status>.

Citizenship: The position or status of a citizen of a particular Merriam-Webster. (2023). Citizenship. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/citizenship>. (Merriam-Webster, 2023).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

There are a lot of political issues that are happening in our country; some of them are more noticeable than others. However, one of the most significant issues that many people don't know about is immigration, especially with the DACA (Deferred Action for Children Arrivals and often called Dreamers) recipients. I have seen people with DACA working hard to get something done and follow some of the stories to get their citizenship and say they are Americans, just like any other person in the United States. DACA recipients have access to get driver's licenses, social security, and employment authorization. Still, they cannot travel outside the country, vote, or get help from Financial Aid if they are in school. This situation is because DACA recipients are not considered "U.S.A. citizens." DACA recipients contribute to housing, food, and medical bills.

Additionally, DACA recipients pay US taxes yearly and may help American citizens by providing health insurance. So DACA recipients may be assisting American citizens who have low income or may not be working. Still, somehow DACA recipients cannot get a status of citizenship or any other benefits.

This research aims to show how DACA or DREAMERS gets a path to American citizenship and the benefits they can bring to the country. Having more citizens will help our country because the Dreamers work in jobs that contribute to our economy. In our current time, we need people who will help us keep growing as a country and contribute to our country's future. The following questions guided my research:

RQ#1: What is DACA, and what is the future of DACA?

RQ#2: What are the Pros and Cons of DACA?

RQ#3: What are the statistics and governmental issues with DACA?

Definition of DACA

President Obama created the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program on the 30th anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision in *Plyler v. Doe*, which held that children lacking legal immigration status have the constitutional right to the same free education that states provide their citizens. *Plyler* restricted states' ability to penalize young immigrants for their unlawful status, not Congress's decision to refrain from providing a status for them in the first place. Therefore, even after *Plyler*, over two million noncitizens living in the United States remain unauthorized and subject to deportation. A decade after *Plyler*, Congress enacted the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, which made it significantly harder for unauthorized immigrants to find a way to remain in the country legally. (p4) according to Dussault (2018), The current U.S. immigration legal system divides people into two categories: citizens and noncitizens. Noncitizens must receive advance permission to enter the U.S., typically through a visa. Childhood arrivals who qualify for an immigrant visa through one of the five existing paths face a second hurdle: the visa they qualify for must be available. The most oversubscribed employment-related preference categories are for Indian skilled workers, professionals, and other workers. Since the 1920s, the majority of childhood arrivals in the U.S. have been brought to the U.S. from Mexico with their families. The U.S. economic expansion through the 1990s attracted more unauthorized workers from Mexico. Most childhood arrivals from the Northern Triangle region of Central America are young people under 18 who make the perilous journey to the U.S. without any parent or guardian. They are fleeing crime, gang threats, violence, and extreme poverty.

To qualify for the DACA program, applicants must meet a series of criteria, including arrival in the U.S. before the age of 16, continuous residence in the U.S. since June 2007, and

school enrollment/graduated high school or its equivalences (Singer & Prchal Svajlenka, 2013). DACA recipients cannot receive amnesty, vote, or federal benefits (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, n.d.). DACA recipients can, however, get a temporary stay against deportation for two years and apply for an arriver's license. They are required to pay federal income tax (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, n.d.). Many young adults eligible for the DACA program have not applied to the program due to reasons such as not being able to afford the \$495 application fee missing paperwork, legal concerns, or fear of sending personal information to the government (Gonzales & Bautista-Chavez, 2014).

Rao et al. (2021) pointed out:

An institutional speech act would typically take the form of the first-person plural. Even though it might be spoken by an individual, such as a vice chancellor, it would be an institutional speech act if that person is speaking for or even as the institution. An institutional speech might make claims about an institution, as well as on behalf of an institution...Institutional speech acts, in making claims about the institution, might also point toward future action (pp. 54-55)

I think they used sed this definition as a means to frame the institutional responses that we analyzed as institutional speech acts. Our inquiry considered how institutional leaders use language to communicate messages as they speak on behalf of their institutions about diverse populations, institutional values, and the role of a campus in engaging in social change.

DACA Pros And Cons To A Path To Citizenship

Roth (2018) point out:

Recent research on the experience of youth with DACA has begun to explore the programmer's impact. Beneficiaries are more likely to obtain arriver's license, open a bank account, and find a better-paying job (Pope2016). DACA also positively impacts their education and helped them access better housing (Gonzales et al.2016; Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco, andSuarez-Orozco2015; Wong and Valdivia2014). These gains translate into real financial benefits, reducing the likelihood of poverty for DACA households by 38 percent (Amuedo-Dorantes and Antman2016) and accelerating economic inclusion. Many are also more

civically engaged (Martinez and Salazar2018; Wong and Valdivia, 2014), and there is some evidence suggesting DACA has the potential to improve the health and mental health of beneficiaries (Venkataramani et al.2017). While these studies point to the positive impact of DACA, they also underscore that the benefits of DACA are limited (Martinez, 2014; Yoshikawa, Suárez-Orozco, and Gonzales, 2017) and conditioned by state context (Abrego2018; Abrego and Schmalzbauer, 2018)

These studies suggest that while DACA provides certain (if limited) benefits, the value of these benefits depends on the climate of the state policy context where one lives. Building on these studies, I examine the case of South Carolina to examine how a restrictive environment conditions the impact of DACA. South Carolina is a “blocked “state, meaning that state law prohibits undocumented immigrants from attending all public colleges and universities, including community colleges. DACA beneficiaries in South Carolina can enroll in these institutions, but they are classified as international

Interviews were audio recorded and professionally transcribed. A modified grounded theory approach was used to analyze the transcripts, and quotes are used extensively throughout this article to strengthen the credibility of the findings. Sofia came to the United States from Mexico as a teenager to join her parents in South Carolina. When her father was deported, she suffered panic attacks and depression, but after receiving DACA she was able to go to college in South Carolina and pursue a degree in nursing. She summarized the effects of DACA with comments like "My life has changed, but we still struggle", and said she still feels anxious about being deported.

Roth (2020) points out:

He explains that all three options are available to him because DACA “opens the door for me when I actually graduate...to legally work”. Believing he can work in one of these fields gives him hope and motivation. Otherwise, he states, he would have to ask himself “so why am I getting this degree...if I’m not going to be able to use it?”

Although the double bind is that college is now possible because of DACA, the cost of a college degree is inflated because they are only liminal legal. The degree itself is not the means to an end that beneficiaries expect. The door to a career is opened because they can earn the requisite degree, but professional licensing laws obstruct employment because they are not citizens. As a result, they must pay more for the degree than their citizen peers, and it is worth less to them in the labor market. Those aware of this “wall,” like Mauricio, can change paths before committing the time and resources required for a degree, but others run into the wall at full speed.

Macias (2018) pointed out:

A critical race-grounded methodology also acknowledges that the researcher cannot be positioned as independent of the data collection or analysis. Thus, I acknowledge my positionality as a first-generation US citizen. I connected with participants over our shared immigrant experiences such as learning English, culture shock, and even experiencing microaggressions in school. However, my experience differs from theirs because my US citizenship allows me to access educational resources in fundamentally different ways. Staying constantly aware of differences is crucial to avoid essentializing the immigrant experience. Moreover, the uniqueness of participants’ navigational strategies is a significant contribution to the study. (p. 615)

Although participant diversity is not statistically representative of Ohio, it does illuminate the variety of backgrounds among foreign-born students who grew up in the state. Moreover, sampling only DACA recipients was done with the purpose of exploring the program’s impact on access to higher education. Data collection consists of audio-recording participants’ testimonials about their postsecondary pursuits throughout ongoing conversations. Testimonials are acts of emergency narrative that denounce injustices and document the experiences and acts of survival of oppressed groups (Solorzano & Bernal, 2001).

Bogart (2018) pointed out:

According to the Second Restatement of Contracts, the injured party is entitled to restitution for any benefit that he has conferred on the other party by way of part performance or reliance. To allow the government to use the information provided by the DREAMers that was intended for one purpose, to defer deportation, to now engage in the complete opposite, having DREAMers deported to countries they have never known, away from the family and life they have established in the United States, would be to allow a breach of contract, the remedy for which, in this instance, is performance.¹⁵³ Performance of this promise, at this time, would best come in the form of the passage of the DREAM Act bill currently making its way through the legislative process in Congress. (p 657)

After being introduced in July, the bill for the DREAM Act of 2017 in the House of Representatives has been referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and then to the Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security.¹⁵⁵ The bill has been “read twice “in the Senate and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.¹⁵⁶ Although technically garnering bipartisan support in its co-sponsors—193 Democrats and five Republicans in the House of Representatives ¹⁵⁷ and seven Democrats and three Republicans in the Senate¹⁵⁸—mostly Democrats sponsor this bill in a Republican-majority Congress. The government breached its contract with DREAMers by using information obtained under an agreement conceding it would not deport these individuals. The DREAM Act will remedy this breach.

DACA and College Research:

The study was conducted in Northern Virginia, a state with a mixed or negative record of assisting undocumented youth. However, in 2014, the Attorney General made an unprecedented decision to allow students with DACA to receive in-state tuition. As a result, students with DACA are most likely to attend college in Northern Virginia, with the most students at George Mason University and various community colleges in Newport News and Norfolk.

Price and Mowry-Mora (2020) pointed out in *DACA Holders in New Destination Southern States*

the policies towards undocumented youth accessing higher education in the South (p.439). All southern states have no tuition-equity programs or bar undocumented students from accessing in-state tuition under any circumstances, even with DACA. This Capstone examined how undocumented youth access higher education in Virginia, and how different states and cities treat undocumented youth. The study was conducted in Northern Virginia, a state that has a mixed or negative record of assisting undocumented youth. In 2014, the Attorney General made an unprecedented decision to allow students with DACA to receive in-state tuition.

TABLE 1—DACA HOLDERS IN NEW DESTINATION SOUTHERN STATES

STATES	DACA HOLDERS (2019)	STATE POLICY TOWARDS IN-STATE TUITION FOR THOSE WITH DACA
North Carolina	24,480	No tuition-equity policy
Georgia	21,110	Bar students from accessing in-state tuition
Virginia	9,710	Offered in-state tuition for those with DACA (2014-2020). Tuition equity for undocumented youth signed into law April 2020.
Tennessee	7,790	No tuition-equity policy
South Carolina	5,850	Bar students from accessing in-state tuition
Alabama	4,030	Bar students from accessing in-state tuition
Mississippi	1,340	No tuition-equity policy
Total	74,310	

Source: Migration Policy Institute DACA data tool; Price and Svajlenka (*in press*).

Price and Mowry-Mora (2020) stated, “Undocumented youth face unique challenges, including financial barriers, access to social capital, and psychological burdens, but they also engage in activism and assert high levels of the agency. Undocumented youth are financially disadvantaged because they are not eligible for federal financial aid or loan programs. Therefore, they are likelier to leave college because they cannot afford it” (p.441). Eighty-four percent of surveyed students agreed or strongly agreed that finding enough money to pay for college was their greatest challenge, and 81.5 percent reported working while in school.

Casas, Benuto, and Newlands (2019) pointed out that although DACA has increased the opportunities for DACA recipients, this group continues to experience challenges in the educational arena. These realities are reflected in state laws that block college enrollment, the limited access to financial aid and scholarships, the lack of easily accessible information about the application process, and the inability to relate to and engage with university staff and resources, among other factors (Gonzalez et al., 2014; Rhoads, 2016; Suárez-Orozco, 2015).

DACA recipients face several challenges with regard to their physical health, mental health, and access to healthcare, among other things. As a result, there is a need for interventions that aim to improve the educational experiences of this unique group, beginning in early childhood and stemming into higher education. This qualitative case study explored the educational experiences of DACA recipients who had successfully been admitted to college. This qualitative study was part of a more extensive study on the educational experiences of DACA students. The interview protocol consisted of 17 questions, of which six were analyzed for the current study. Once the interview protocol was finalized and IRB approval was received, participants were recruited using the university's SONA system. They could complete the semi-structured interview in person (n = 7) or via phone (n = 1).

The illustration below (p124)

Table 2. Weighted Characteristics of California Health Interview Survey Sample, by Legal Status and Time Period

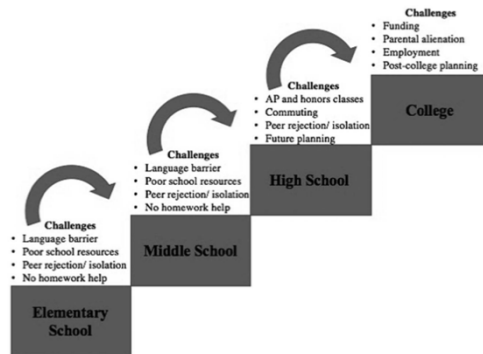
	Pre-DACA (January 1, 2007–June 15, 2012)				Stability (June 16, 2012–June 16, 2015)				Threats (June 17, 2015–November 8, 2016)				Election and Beyond (November 9, 2016–January 31, 2019)			
	DACA-elig.	Docu-mented	Undoc.-inelig.	U.S.-born	DACA-elig.	Docu-mented	Undoc.-inelig.	U.S.-born	DACA-elig.	Docu-mented	Undoc.-inelig.	U.S.-born	DACA-elig.	Docu-mented	Undoc.-inelig.	U.S.-born
K6 score, 0–24 (mean)	4.03	3.72	4.32	4.20	2.71	4.45*	4.77*	4.46*	3.43	3.66	2.95	4.35	4.36	4.41	3.31	4.98
Moderate-to-severe distress, K6 ≥ 5 (proportion)	0.38	0.35	0.40	0.31	0.19	0.35*	0.40*	0.42*	0.25	0.31	0.30	0.40*	0.35	0.35	0.27	0.46
Age in years (mean)	17.53	21.43*	24.36*	19.15*	20.75	24.42*	25.30*	22.10*	23.19	26.00*	27.80*	22.87	22.38	26.96*	27.71*	23.40
Male (proportion)	0.49	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.55	0.46	0.51	0.49	0.54	0.44	0.43	0.51	0.49	0.46	0.46	0.51
Household income (as times 100% of FPL)	1.15	2.19*	1.16	2.81*	1.19	2.48*	1.52	2.66*	1.73	2.88*	1.40	3.00*	1.70	3.07*	2.37	3.61*
Observations	404	722	249	4,769	108	281	78	1,977	88	274	171	2,093	83	312	122	2,566

Source: 2007–2018 California Health Interview Survey

Notes: Sample is Latinas/os who meet the following DACA eligibility criteria: aged 15–30 in 2012, have a high school diploma or General Educational Development, are currently enrolled in school, or served in the U.S. armed forces. The DACA-eligible and Documented satisfy the additional criterion of entering the United States during or before 2007.

*Significant difference from DACA-eligible ($p < .05$, two-tailed test)

shows us about the educational experiences in our sample, we identified a clear process that DACA recipients experienced, which is illustrated in the educational staircase (see Figure 1), and our findings are presented in relation to early educational experiences (i.e., elementary, middle), secondary educational (i.e., high school), and higher education challenges and successes (i.e., college)



Examining Research on Legal Rights

Patler, Hamilton, and Savinar (2021) pointed out a table that explains legal status and time periods (p.259). Table 2 shows the weighted characteristics of the CHIS sample by legal status and treatment period. We focus our comparisons on the documented control group but include information for the undocumented-ineligible and U.S.-born control groups in the Appendix. During the pre-DACA period, average K6 scores in the past 30 days hovered around four across the groups, and the DACA-eligible immigrants' scores were not statistically different from the documented. However, during the Stability period, DACA-eligible respondents had significantly better mental health reports than the control group: K6 scores of 2.71 for the DACA-eligible, compared to 4.45 for the documented. The likelihood of moderate-to-severe distress was also significantly lower for the DACA-eligible during the Stability period: only 19 percent of DACA-eligible had a moderate-to-severe level of distress (down from 38 percent in

the pre-period), compared to 35 percent of the documented control group in both the pre-DACA period and the Stability period.

Results comparing DACA-eligible to documented immigrants show that the predicted probability of moderate-to-severe distress declined by nearly half from the pre-period to the first post-period but increased during the Threat and Election & Beyond periods.

Ishiwata and Muñoz (2018) stated,

Committees such as these typically gather a usual collection of stakeholders who then volunteer ways in which their individual departments can contribute to the task of problem-solving. The set of available solutions has become routinized, consisting of official condemnations, poster campaigns, fundraisers to remunerate damages, film screenings, and expert panel discussions, all of which ultimately work to re-stabilize an institution's status quo. The result is a cycle that sequences through a tenuous system equilibrium→ conflict→ institutional response→ recovery→ tenuous system equilibrium (p. 575).

With this new knowledge, the response of CSU to the DACA repeal was a counter-intuitive leverage point, which meant that CSU's response to its ethnic-racial hate must also be a counter-intuitive leverage point. Tuck and Yang contend that a 'multicultural' approach to oppression must include the repatriation of land and a recognition of how the land has always been understood and enacted differently.

Undocu/DACAmented Exclusionary Policies and Educational Environments

Nienhusser and Oshio (2020) explained what the Undocu/DACAmented youth face with exclusionary policies and educational environments that deter their postsecondary education trajectories. The theory of liminal legality is used to frame how DACA has created a liminal status for undocu/DACAmented youth that largely results in illusory postsecondary education aspirations. Federal policymakers have debated ways to fix our broken immigration system for

decades, but hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants are deported yearly. In 2012, President Obama created the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program to partially address the issue. However, during the 2016 presidential campaign, Donald J. Trump professed xenophobic positions that would harm DACA recipients, their families, and the country.

The termination of DACA would harm these youth by dampening educational aspirations, heightening fear of deportation, and reducing economic prosperity. The researchers examined the experiences of 12 families with 16 undocu/DACAmented youth and 16 parents from three urban centers in Michigan to examine the juxtaposition of possibilities and impossibilities DACA has presented undocu/DACAmented youth and their families with regard to postsecondary education aspirations and access. We are not the first scholars to use the term "(im)possibilities" in relation to undocumented students. Given its smaller undocumented immigrant population, this research is needed in a state like Michigan. This investigation followed a phenomenological research design and focused on the perspectives of undocu/DACAmented youth and their parents about the impact of youth's immigration status on their postsecondary education trajectories.

In 2016, there were 100,000 undocumented immigrants in Michigan, 1.4% of the state workforce was undocumented, and 2.2% of K-12 school students had at least one undocumented parent. This study examined undocu/DACAmented immigrants' legal-spatial consciousness through a state geographic lens. Interview transcripts were analyzed using a hybrid approach of deductive and inductive coding and theme development, which included using the concept of liminal legality to frame two findings of this study.

Initially, youth and parents believed DACA would provide tremendous opportunities for their families. A young woman from Detroit described DACA as a huge opportunity for her and her family. Family members expressed positive sentiments regarding opportunities provided by DACA. Youths and parents described feeling relieved that they were protected as a result of DACA and spoke of DACA status as instrumental in youths' identity development. Several research participants believed DACA status was necessary to apply for and enroll in postsecondary education. Some parents believed that DACA was a great opportunity for their children to continue studying and have a better future. Parents described how their lives changed after their children received driver's licenses. They noted that their children gained more independence and could help transport family members who did not have valid driver's licenses. A young man from Detroit, aware of exclusionary federal financial aid policies, described how he worked long hours after graduating high school to help finance his postsecondary education. Participants described narrowed college options for undocu/DACAmented youth, primarily due to the high cost of attending postsecondary education. Many youths enrolled in less selective and less expensive institutions, but their families struggled to pay for tuition and scholarships. While DACA has provided tangible benefits to undocumented youth, such as employment authorization and the ability to apply for a driver's license, it has also presented them with barriers, such as ineligibility for federal financial aid to help finance college. Family members welcomed the benefits afforded by DACA but also recognized the challenges associated with this liminal status. This study found that most DACAmented youth could not enroll in the postsecondary institutions they aspired to attend. Participants spoke of the contradictory nature of DACA, including the ability to obtain a driver's license and work authorization, but also the ineligibility for many scholarship opportunities. Such sentiments fuel the continued social

exclusion of DACAmented youth into our society. DACA became a legalized category, but its liminality is dreadfully present, as this investigation revealed. DACAmented youth and their families are affected by this liminal status, which has a detrimental effect on their social-emotional well-being. Recent scholarship has begun to analyze how DACA has been weaponized to inflict harm on an already vulnerable population. This investigation supports the notion that DACAmented youth and their families have encountered perpetual incidents of legal violence triggered by their desires to pursue postsecondary education.

Barriers to Higher Education

This article shows us that 1.76 million youth in the United States are undocumented. Therefore, they are ineligible for federal student financial aid and are classified as international students in most states, increasing their tuition costs. DACA recipients who want to attend college in Ohio are ineligible for federal financial aid and are classified as international students. They navigate the financial difficulties that complicate their college enrollment by paying entirely out of pocket for their tuition. This article contributes to the literature on DACA by focusing on how students navigate financial obstacles to fund their education. Solorzano (1997) identifies five tenets of CRT to inform educational research and theory development. These tenets include the centrality of race and racism, challenge to the dominant ideology, commitment to social justice, centrality of experiential knowledge, and interdisciplinary approaches. Latina/os, other POC, and immigrant students persist in their education by drawing upon multiple forms of accumulated assets and resources within their communities.

Additionally, they feel a duty to reciprocally share their information and resources gained with their social networks. Educational researchers have utilized hip-hop to inform culturally

relevant pedagogical practices and curricula, and hip-hop has also been at the center of innovative STEM education. This work uniquely contributes to the existing body of educational literature by situating hip-hop outside of the classroom.

Participants in this study used hip-hop terms to describe their experiences with racist, nativist marginalization in their pursuit of higher education and how they navigated the barriers of a formal economy and an informal economy to sustain themselves financially. A critical race-grounded methodology acknowledges the researcher's positionality as a first-generation US citizen. This theory allows the researcher to stay constantly aware of differences and avoid essentializing the immigrant experience. The data analysis in this work consists of using analytic codes, particularly conditional matrix coding while embracing collaboration with participants. The connection between codes is apparent in conversations like the one with Cristina, in which she explains why she has not been able to afford her first semester. Analytical collaboration between participants and myself, the researcher, was key in the development of the scheme game. Participants used terms like grind and hustle to describe their funding endeavors, which sparked a lively and complex group conversation that named and framed their navigational strategies.

The participants of this study articulate the myriad institutional obstacles they navigate in pursuing higher education as foreign-born POC, including the financial barriers they face as forms of nativist and racialized forms of exclusion. DACA participants work full-time or part-time jobs to pay for their tuition and living expenses. They refer to this as grindin', which is mechanically working beyond capacity and/or working against the grain. DACA recipients are excluded from federal student loans and have to rely on private student loans with a high-interest rate and a US citizen cosigner. Tandas/ayudas are the only continuous support to help

them pay for college and living expenses. Participants in this study capitalize on the permissions granted by their temporary work permit by working long hours and often at multiple places of employment. However, their need to work excessively and under considerable pressure stems mainly from their inability to rely on federal subsidies. The theory and enactment of the scheme game reflect CRT's and LatCRIT's tenets, challenging dominant ideologies. Hasan's testimony about his revoked scholarship is in conversation with CRT scholars who dispel meritocracy by identifying the structural inequalities POC experience. The scheme game explores the interrelationship between race and immigration status by highlighting the case of Hasan and Jin, who were denied admission to BMU because of their shared immigration status.

Legally Illegal

Nationally, only 26% of non-United States (US) born Hispanic youth ages 18 - 24 enroll in college, compared with 56% of their US-born Hispanic counterparts. This underrepresentation is due to structural barriers to enrollment, including limited access to informational resources and in-state tuition rates. DACA recipients are not entitled to the full panoply of benefits afforded to citizens and are charged at out-of-state or international student rates. This study will help educators in communities with large numbers of immigrant youth to familiarize themselves with policies relating to higher education in their states. According to immigration reform activists, DACA complicates life for youth in at least four fundamental ways, including not having a court to appeal rejected cases, being temporary, and having no path to citizenship or lawful residency. As of this writing, 18 states provide provisions for undocumented youth to access higher education, but North Carolina is not one of these states. Undocumented youth in North Carolina fear immigration enforcement policies, mistrust people

in authority, and report facing discrimination that limits their access to essential health and social services.

This study explores the experience of DACA recipients in a state that continues to deny access to in-state tuition. This paper presents the results of a photovoice project conducted by academic researchers and DACA recipient youth in North Carolina. The project highlighted the structural barriers faced by undocumented youth in NC and discussed the implications of advancing comprehensive immigration reform to address the educational needs of DACA youth. In this study, they use a constructivist approach to photovoice to present problems associated with DACA. This approach uses photographs to elicit individual perspectives and engage in discussion to generate new knowledge and pose solutions to bring about change. Public health researchers use the socioecological framework to understand how health and other determinants are manifested through the interaction of the individual within multiple levels of context. The first two authors co-facilitated the photovoice sessions, the third author helped determine the research questions, and the fourth author helped write the paper. The authors believe this work has immediate implications for high school educators and administrators. Their team used a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach to identify concerns of DACA-recipient youth and then used a facilitated process called SHOWED to guide group discussion of images—the process aimed to mobilize action among the participants and influencers via exhibitions and public forums. Two graduate student researchers read all transcripts and notes during data collection, developed a coding scheme based on the SHOWED approach, and discussed emerging themes with study participants. They then presented their findings to their families and other students in the graduate course.

The secondary analysis process was launched two months after the original analysis, and the investigative team reread the transcripts and discussed the original codes, and decided on additional topical and interpretive codes. The team met weekly over a period of four months to discuss codes, generate themes, and discuss implications. During one of our photo sessions, Image 4 was the topic of great discussion. It showed a parked car with a dream catcher hanging in the rear-view mirror and an anonymous individual sitting in the driver's seat. Participants explained that although they obtain a social security number after being approved for DACA status, the number does not provide them with the benefits afforded to American citizens, such as access to federal financial aid. In addition, DACA recipient youth often speak about wanting residency status for all undocumented individuals, not just DACA recipients. This labyrinth of liminality deserves greater attention due to the impact on the youth affected.

Navigating The Health Care Landscape

Getrich et al. (2019) examine how fragmentation by state factors into healthcare access for DACA recipients in Maryland and how cities and counties play a crucial role in constructing policies that assess immigrants' eligibility differently. DACA recipients have experienced punctuated coverage throughout their lives and continue to face constrained access despite temporary gains in status. This paper highlights the importance of examining young adult immigrants' access to care over time as they weather changes in the broader policy context. President Trump rescinded the DACA program on September 5, 2017, leaving recipients' fate in further limbo. However, a federal appeals court ruled against phasing out the program, and the administration asked the Supreme Court to take up the case. States and localities have been enacting policies to address immigration in the absence of broader comprehensive reform at the federal level. The policy context is characterized by marked

federal-, state-and local-level differences. State-level policies play an important role in legitimizing or delegitimizing the presence of DACA recipients specifically.

California has the most favorable policy climate nationwide, including granting undocumented young adults in-state tuition eligibility, opening up private scholarships to them, and allowing them to apply for state financial aid. The literature on DACA has focused on education and workforce participation, with a secondary focus on other facets of daily life, like driving and banking. The health of DACA recipients is understudied. Undocumented young adults' mental health is affected by chronic stress and fear of deportation, and transitioning from undocumented status to lawful presence has positive emotional consequences. However, recipients continue to face gaps in mental health services and a lack of culturally competent and bilingual providers. Both undocumented and DACAmented young adults face barriers in accessing health care more broadly. The 1996 welfare reform law restricted public benefits access to immigrants residing in the United States under qualified status for five years or more. DACA recipients may have increased access to employer-based health care. However, many still work jobs without benefits and rely on safety-net institutions for health care like their undocumented counterparts. In 2016, Maryland had the 12th most significant concentration of DACA-eligible populations nationwide, and in 2017 9957 applications were approved out of 34,000 individuals estimated to be eligible. However, unlike nearby Washington, D.C., Maryland does not allow undocumented or DACAmented immigrants access to publicly-funded health care. DACA recipients are not a cohesive community but a group defined by their common experience bases. They are young adults with vulnerable status enrolled in community colleges or universities. We recruited 13 participants through personal networks, a community-based organization, and a social media group. We solicited referrals from these

participants and recruited 17 from social networks, ten from community-based organizations, and one from the local social media group. The questionnaire collected demographic data, measures of access to health care and health-seeking practices, and a validated Patient Health Questionnaire to assess psychological distress. A semi-structured interview assessed participants' lives pre- and post-DACA, exploring their immigration story, experiences finding out about and applying for DACA, and health. The parent codes immigration story, family/social network, school, work/employment, DACA experiences, health (physical and mental), health insurance, health-seeking behavior, belonging/identity, political climate and policy, surveillance, and document security, emerged as important to understanding access.

Thirty DACA recipients participated between April and December 2016. They were a median age of 21, from 13 different countries of origin, and were evenly split between two counties of residence: Prince George's and Montgomery. Participants' access to care was punctuated throughout their lives. Most went to clinics for mandatory school physicals or immunizations, delayed care because of the cost, or relied on home remedies. Seven individuals (23%) lacked health insurance altogether, and 23 individuals were underinsured. Elisa, a 20-year-old Honduran, works at a doctor's office but doesn't get insurance because she doesn't have enough financial stability to afford it. Most participants who had insurance through their parents' work had the best continuity of care. Still, they will likely lose their insurance if their parents' Temporary Protected Status expires and they can no longer work legally. We asked participants about their parents' and siblings' healthcare access and found significant variability in coverage within families dependent on status. Many parents lacked coverage, and many children talked about their family's collective decision-making around avoiding medical bills they could not afford. Many of our participants had younger U.S.-born

siblings who had access to better health care than they did. Even as children, it was clear to Annisa and José how different their access to care was based on their status. José does not resent his brothers for the benefits they have and sees it as everyone having their strengths and advantages. A 22-year-old Mexican male experienced a loss in coverage when his family moved, though this time within the D.C. metropolitan area. He noted that his family knew they would lose their insurance while moving, but other more pressing reasons motivated their move. Multiple participants described losing their health insurance because they had to cut back on full-time employment to be able to prioritize school. For example, Rebeca, a Nursing Assistant, lost her health insurance when she started working per-hour jobs to accommodate her academic schedule. She has continued to graduate school in social work but still lacks health insurance despite working three part-time jobs.

Future of DACA

The last article mentioned President Obama announced the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program on June 15, 2012. The program allowed thousands of young immigrants to pursue higher education and better job opportunities and deepen their social ties in the country. The DACA program was a litmus test for immigrant-serving organizations, which expanded overnight to serve the need of potential beneficiaries. These organizations increased the number of immigration attorneys and Board of Immigration Appeals-recognized agencies and accredited representatives and made better use of technology and publicly accessible demographic data. As a result, DACA recipients are deeply integrated into US communities and enjoy longstanding connections to the United States. Most of them speak English well, very well, or only English, and are well educated, with 55 percent graduating from high school and 36 percent having some college education. In addition,

DACA recipients participate in the US labor market at high rates, and 95 percent are employed.

Approximately 88,000 DACA recipients work in skilled occupations, including management, business, finance, healthcare providers and support, social services, legal, education, arts, design, computer, math, science, and engineering. On September 5, 2017, Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced the rescission of the DACA program, leaving hundreds of thousands of DACA recipients with uncertain futures. Congress considered legislative relief for DACA recipients, but neither House Speaker Paul Ryan nor Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell brought the bill to vote. The rescission of the DACA program in 2017 affects thousands of young undocumented immigrants at risk of removal. The Supreme Court will decide on the case between January and June 2020. The DACA program provided opportunities to its recipients, including better-paying jobs, access to higher education, an increased sense of belonging, and improved mental health. The program also allowed beneficiaries to pursue academic opportunities and increased high school attendance and graduation rates. DACA allowed immigrant youth to work in occupations and industries better aligned with their area of study and interest. Some recipients stated that DACA motivated them to go down an educational path and eventually graduate.

In contrast, others noted that DACA inspired them to go into medicine. DACA has allowed individuals to become more active and contributing members of their communities. The program has also improved the mental health of DACA recipients and offered other health benefits. It will likely positively impact the children and other family members of DACA recipients. The Supreme Court should consider the numerous contributions of undocumented immigrants and their deep connections to the United States. State and local policymakers

should consider implementing and supporting policies that offer a path to citizenship to the undocumented community. DACA recipients are contributing members integrated into the fabric of US society. They had strengthened their bonds to a nation that received them when they were children yet has not recognized them legally

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

Design of the Study

The design of this study was qualitative and descriptive and explored the pros and cons of the DACA program. The study included researching the beginning of the DACA program, education systems, and government influences on how to continue the program. The Purchase College Library Database was used to search for literary evidence for the research. Some databases used were: Academic One File, Hein Online, Nexis Uni, Gale OneFile, ProQuest Central Essentials, ABI/INFORM Collection, EBSCOhost, and Academic Search Complete. Another source used outside the Purchase College Library Databases as Google Scholar.

Literature Search, Databases, and Inclusion

When using these databases, some keywords used were: *DACA research, schools, education system, methods of law, and legal services*. The search produced an abundant number of results. I combined terms that lessened the produced results and allowed for literature that narrowed the topic. The problem with DACA is that there are a lot of documents that are not well concentrated. The choice was to include the relevant research. Many well-researched peer-reviewed articles also had graphics whose information could be used. With that being said, I considered the removal of all biases and emotions about DACA and DREAMERS. I conducted a thematic analysis of the literature, with the theme being DACA and the benefits and adversity to gain knowledge if there is a middle ground. Overall, I believe a literature search was the best method for this study because it allowed versatility in results and subtopics discussed in the literature review.

When starting my research, I knew I was connected to the topic because I have many DACA friends and heard many DACA testimonies. As a result, of witnessing the DACA program, my inclination to the pros and cons is very valuable. However, I kept an open mind when doing research and did not exclude any articles contradictory to my research question. Although, as a patron of governmental and political topics, I believe it is important to investigate ways to get legal proceedings done faster and more efficiently; that is why it is crucial to get accurate knowledge about a topic like the DACA program.

Research Questions

I chose this topic as a point of research because its growth and development are starting to dominate mainstream ideology, and being able to write alongside that growth in some cases, days or weeks after events, could not be ignored. Furthermore, experts have conducted a lot of research delving into the DACA program.

The following questions guided my research:

***RQ#1:** What is DACA, and what is the future of DACA?*

***RQ#2:** What are the Pros and Cons of DACA?*

***RQ#3:** What are the statistics and governmental issues with DACA?*

Rationale

Conducting this research is of the utmost importance because, as time goes on, the DACA program will benefit many individuals who want to become American citizens eventually. These DREAMERS will help our country to get more financial, jobs, and many more opportunities. This research aims to show how DACA or DREAMERS receive a path to citizenship and the benefits they can bring to the country. Having more citizens will help our country's economy and have them working in jobs that will help our country to be better. In our

current time, we need people who will help us keep growing and to keep understanding the country's future and understand.

I added more information about further research and made sure the evidence of the study was a guide to accurate information and that the reader understood the importance of the topic due comes with the many obstacles that Dreamers faced and no one talked about. But unfortunately, some individuals instead ignore DACA and stay quiet and do not support the DREAMER. Therefore, knowledge about this topic can support the country and help America better control the DREAMER situation and how it will lead to American citizenship.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

DACA has impacted the United States for many individuals who came to this country when they were underage. Since the individuals were underage, they did not live in their original country for too long. So, most DACA individuals call the United States home. During DACA, many movements have helped to achieve the goal of having immigrants have a community and successful careers. These movements supported their future and provided the DACA individuals with the pros and cons of DACA, so they could choose to stay or go back to their original country. This section aims to elaborate upon the research findings by addressing the proposed research questions, with supporting information from the information gathered while exploring this topic.

RQ#1: What is DACA and the future of DACA?

The theory of liminal legality is used to frame how DACA has created a liminal status for undocumented youth that largely results in illusory postsecondary education aspirations. Liminal legality was a term coined by Cecilia Menjivar (Menjivar, 2006). Menjivar used this term to describe the United States Temporary Protected Status (TPS) Program. The benefits are “inherently limited” (Del Real, 2022, as cited in Antoniou, 2022, p. 6). Liminal legality may provide “temporary legal status, no path to permanent residency or citizenship...[and] the programs’ continuation is dependent upon decisions of the executive branch” (Antoniou, 2022, p. 6) of the United States government. Federal policymakers have debated ways to fix our broken immigration system for decades, but hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants are deported yearly. In 2012, President Obama created the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program to address the issue partially. During the 2016 presidential campaign, Donald J. Trump professed xenophobic positions that would harm

DACA recipients, their families, and the country. The termination of DACA would harm these youth by dampening educational aspirations, heightening fear of deportation, and reducing economic prosperity. The researchers examined the experiences of 12 families with 16 undocu/DACAmented youth and 16 parents from three urban centers in Michigan to examine the juxtaposition of possibilities and impossibilities DACA has presented undocu/DACAmented youth and their families with regard to postsecondary education aspirations and access. We are not the first scholars to use the term "(im)possibilities" in relation to undocumented students. Given its smaller undocumented immigrant population, this research is needed in a state like Michigan. According to Nienhusser and Oshio (2020). Initially, youth and parents believed DACA would provide tremendous opportunities for their families. A young woman from Detroit described DACA as a huge opportunity for her and her family. Family members described positive sentiments regarding opportunities provided by DACA. Youths and parents described feeling relieved that they were protected as a result of DACA and spoke of DACA status as instrumental in youths' identity development. Several research participants believed DACA status was necessary to apply for and enroll in postsecondary education. Some parents believed that DACA was an excellent opportunity for their children to continue studying and have a better future. Parents described how their lives changed after their children received driver's licenses. They noted that their children gained more independence and were able to help transport family members who did not have valid driver's licenses. A young man from Detroit was aware of the exclusionary federal financial aid policies. He described how he worked long hours after graduating high school to help finance his postsecondary education.

Macías (2018) shows us that 1.76 million youth living in the United States are considered undocumented and, therefore, ineligible for federal student financial aid and are classified as international students in most states, increasing their tuition costs. For example, DACA recipients who want to attend college in Ohio are ineligible for federal financial aid and are classified as international students. However, they navigate the financial difficulties that complicate their college enrollment by paying entirely out of pocket for their tuition. This article contributes to the existing literature on DACA by focusing on the ways students navigate financial obstacles to fund their education.

Solorzano (1997) identifies five tenets of Critical Race Theory (CRT) to inform educational research and theory development. These tenets include the centrality of race and racism, challenge to the dominant ideology, commitment to social justice, centrality of experiential knowledge, and interdisciplinary approaches. Latina(os), other POC, and immigrant students persist in their education by drawing upon multiple forms of accumulated assets and resources within their communities.

Additionally, Latina(os) and POC individuals feel a sense of duty to reciprocally share their information and resources gained with their social networks. Educational researchers have utilized hip-hop to inform culturally relevant pedagogical practices and curricula, and hip-hop has also been at the center of innovative STEM education. This work uniquely contributes to the existing body of educational literature by situating hip-hop outside of the classroom. Participants in this study used hip-hop terms to describe their experiences with racist, nativist marginalization in pursuing higher education and how they navigated the barriers of formal and informal economies to sustain themselves financially. A critical race-grounded methodology acknowledges the researcher's positionality as a first-generation US

citizen. This methodology allows the researcher to stay constantly aware of differences and avoid essentializing the immigrant experience.

RQ#2: What are the Pros and Cons of DACA?

According to Roth (2018), Recent research on youth experience with DACA has begun to explore the program's impact. Beneficiaries are likelier to obtain a driver's license, open a bank account, and find a better-paying job (Pope, 2016). DACA also positively impacts their education and helps them access better housing (Gonzales et al., 2016; Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco, & Suarez-Orozco 2015; Wong & Valdivia 2014). These gains translate into real financial benefits, reducing the likelihood of poverty for DACA households by 38 percent (Amuedo-Dorantes & Antman 2016) and accelerating economic inclusion. Many are also more civically engaged (Martinez & Salazar 2018; Wong & Valdivia 2014), and there is some evidence suggesting DACA has the potential to improve the health and mental health of beneficiaries (Venkataramani et al., 2017). While these studies point to the positive impact of DACA, they also underscore that the benefits of DACA are limited (Martinez 2014; Yoshikawa, Suárez-Orozco, and Gonzales, 2017) and conditioned by state context (Abrego 2018; Abrego & Schmalzbauer, 2018) These studies suggest that while DACA provides certain (if limited) benefits, the value of these benefits depends on the climate of the state policy context where one lives. Building on these studies, I examine the case of South Carolina to examine how a restrictive environment conditions the impact of DACA. South Carolina is a "blocked" state, meaning that state law prohibits undocumented immigrants from attending all public colleges and universities, including community colleges. DACA beneficiaries in South Carolina can enroll in these institutions, but they are classified as international.

Interviews were audio recorded and professionally transcribed. A modified grounded theory approach was used to analyze the transcripts, and quotes are used extensively throughout this article to strengthen the credibility of the findings. Sofia came to the United States from Mexico as a teenager to join her parents in South Carolina. When her father was deported, she suffered panic attacks and depression. However, after receiving DACA, she was able to go to college in South Carolina and pursue a degree in nursing. She summarized the effects of DACA with comments like "My life has changed, but we still struggle" (Roth, 2020, p. 2554) and said she still feels anxious about being deported.

Roth (2020) explains that all three options are available to him because DACA "opens the door for me when I actually graduate...to legally work" (p. 2557). Believing he can work in one of these fields gives him hope and motivation. Otherwise, he states, he would have to ask himself, "So why am I getting this degree...if I'm not going to be able to use it?" (p. 2557). Although the double bind is that college is now possible because of DACA, the cost of a college degree is inflated because they are only liminal legal. The degree itself is not the means to an end that beneficiaries expect. The door to a career is opened because they can earn the requisite degree, but professional licensing laws obstruct employment because they are not citizens. Therefore, they must pay more for the degree than their citizen peers, which is worth less to them in the labor market. Those who are aware of this "wall," like Mauricio, can change paths before they commit the time and resources required for a degree, but others run into the wall at full speed.

Only 26% of non-United States (US) born Hispanic youth ages 18 - 24 enroll in college, compared with 56% of their US-born Hispanic counterparts. This underrepresentation is due to structural barriers to enrollment, including limited access to informational resources

and in-state tuition rates. DACA recipients are not entitled to the full panoply of benefits afforded to citizens and are charged at out-of-state or international student rates. This paper will help educators in communities with large numbers of immigrant youth to familiarize themselves with policies relating to higher education in their states. According to immigration reform activists, DACA complicates life for youth in at least four fundamental ways, including not having a court to appeal rejected cases, being temporary, and having no path to citizenship or lawful residency. As of this writing, 18 states provide provisions for undocumented youth to access higher education, but North Carolina is not one of these states. Undocumented youth in North Carolina fear immigration enforcement policies, mistrust individuals in authority, and report facing discrimination that limits their access to essential health and social services. This paper explores the experience of DACA recipients in a state that continues to deny access to in-state tuition. This paper presents the results of a photovoice project conducted by academic researchers and DACA recipient youth in North Carolina. The project highlighted the structural barriers faced by undocumented youth in NC and discussed the implications of advancing comprehensive immigration reform to address the educational needs of DACA youth. In this paper, they use a constructivist approach to photovoice to present problems associated with DACA. This approach uses photographs to elicit individual perspectives and engage in discussion to generate new knowledge and pose solutions to bring about change. Public health researchers use the socioecological framework to understand how health and other determinants are manifested through the interaction of the individual within multiple levels of context.

RQ#3: What are the healthcare and governmental issues with Daca?

Getrich, Rapport, Burdette, Ortez-Rivera, and Umanzor (2019) examine how fragmentation by state factors into healthcare access for DACA recipients in Maryland and how cities and counties play a crucial role in constructing policies that assess immigrants' eligibility differently. DACA recipients have experienced punctuated coverage throughout their lives and continue to face constrained access despite temporary gains in status. This paper highlights the importance of examining young adult immigrants' access to care over time as they weather changes in the broader policy context. President Trump rescinded the DACA program on September 5, 2017, leaving recipients' fate in further limbo. However, a federal appeals court ruled against phasing out the program, and the administration asked the Supreme Court to take up the case. States and localities have been enacting policies to address immigration in the absence of broader comprehensive reform at the federal level. The policy context is characterized by marked federal-, state-and local-level differences. State-level policies play an important role in legitimizing or delegitimizing the presence of DACA recipients specifically. California has the most favorable policy climate nationwide, including granting undocumented young adults in-state tuition eligibility, opening up private scholarships, and allowing them to apply for state financial aid.

The literature on DACA has focused on education and workforce participation, with a secondary focus on other facets of daily life, like driving and banking. The health of DACA recipients is understudied. Undocumented young adults' mental health is affected by chronic stress and fear of deportation, and transitioning from undocumented status to lawful presence has positive emotional consequences. However, recipients continue to face gaps in mental health services and a lack of culturally competent and bilingual providers. Both undocumented

and DACAmented young adults face barriers in accessing health care more broadly. The 1996 welfare reform law restricted public benefits access to immigrants residing in the United States under qualified status for five years or more. As a result, DACA recipients may have increased access to employer-based health care. However, many still work jobs without benefits and rely on safety-net institutions for health care like their undocumented counterparts. In 2016, Maryland had the 12th most significant concentration of DACA-eligible populations nationwide, and in 2017 9957 applications were approved out of 34,000 individuals estimated to be eligible. However, unlike nearby Washington, D.C., Maryland does not allow undocumented or DACA-mented immigrants access to publicly-funded health care. DACA recipients are not a cohesive community but rather a group defined by their common bases of experience. They are young adults with vulnerable status enrolled in community colleges or universities. We recruited 13 participants through personal networks, a community-based organization, and a social media group.

Thirty DACA recipients participated between April and December 2016. They were a median age of 21, from 13 different countries of origin, and were evenly split between two counties of residence: Prince George's and Montgomery. Participants' access to care was punctuated throughout their lives, with most going to clinics for mandatory school physicals or immunizations, delaying care because of the cost, or relying on home remedies. Seven individuals (23%) lacked health insurance altogether, and 23 individuals were underinsured. For example, Elisa, a 20-year-old Honduran, works at a doctor's office but does not get insurance because she does not have enough financial stability to afford it. Most participants who had insurance through their parents' work had the best continuity of care. However, they will likely lose their insurance if their parents' Temporary Protected Status expires and they

can no longer work legally. We asked participants about their parents' and siblings' healthcare access and found significant variability in coverage within families dependent on status.

Recipients Await Biden Rule That Would Grant Them Access to Affordable Health Care

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, about a third of DACA recipients — an estimated 34% — do not have health insurance coverage. As a result, President Joe Biden announced a plan to expand federal health care to hundreds of thousands of immigrants who came to the United States as children but did not qualify for government insurance plans because they lacked legal status. Under the proposed rule, nearly 580,000 individuals enrolled in the DACA program can obtain health coverage through Medicaid or the Marketplace Health Plans. Initially, the Marketplace had two public health insurance programs for which undocumented immigrants were ineligible.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This research explored the pros and cons of DACA recipients in the United States for our economy and the impact that brings on our government. Perhaps, it is time to open new perspectives to political and human views. Although, nowadays, we live in a society where sometimes we are moving towards a path for equal rights, there is still a lot to do that can lead to a path to citizenship for the DREAMERS. This research aims to show how DACA or DREAMERS gets a path to citizenship and the benefits they can bring to the country. Having more citizens will help our country's economy and have them working in jobs that will help our country to be better. In our current time, we need people who will help us keep growing and to keep understanding the country's future and understand.

In 2012, President Obama and then Vice President Biden announced the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program to allow young people to live and work in the only country they know as home. Over the last decade, DACA has brought stability, possibility, and progress to more than 800,000 Dreamers. However, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy has been fraught with uncertainty in the last couple of years. Despite the many advantages of this program for young people who have grown up in the United States, DACA continues to suffer attacks by conservative entities who argue that DACA was an overreach of executive power, with the most current legal challenge pending in Texas. Because of this, it is important to consider what other long-term options DACA recipients have and what benefits they can acquire while maintaining their DACA deferred action. This practice advisory will first cover some options to consider when screening DACA recipients, like some new developments in deferred action grants, and how it is important to screen for parent immigration petitions and applications.

While DACA protects an individual from removal action for a certain period of time, it does not provide a pathway to U.S. citizenship, and people with DACA status remain ineligible for federally funded health coverage. Individuals with DACA status can be authorized to work. Studies have found that DACA eligibility helps improve Physical and mental health, particularly among individuals with low incomes, and can improve the well-being of children of DACA recipients. However, individuals with DACA have limited options for health insurance coverage if they do not have access to employer-sponsored insurance since they remain ineligible for many federal programs, including health coverage through Medicaid, CHIP, and the ACA health insurance Marketplace.

So What?

Throughout this study, the most stand-out research was The Let's Discuss the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy. (DACA) program was created to protect eligible young adults who were brought to the U.S. as children from deportation and to provide them with work authorization for temporary, renewable periods. As of December 31, 2022, there were roughly 580,000 active DACA recipients from close to 200 different countries of birth residing all over the U.S. While individuals with DACA status can be authorized to work, they remain ineligible for many federal programs, including health coverage through Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and the Affordable Care Act (ACA) health insurance Marketplaces. These restrictions result in higher uninsured rates among DACA recipients, contributing to barriers to accessing health care. On April 26, 2023, the Biden Administration published a proposed rule: to expand eligibility for health coverage to DACA recipients. Such an eligibility expansion would likely reduce uninsured rates among DACA recipients and, in turn, facilitate

access to care and enhance financial protections from medical costs. The future of the DACA program remains uncertain, with it subject to pending court rulings.

Now What?

Through this research, I became increasingly aware of how easily individuals process anxieties and fears differently. For future researchers to continue to understand the ways in an overview of DACA and who DACA recipients are and provide estimates of health coverage, work status, and income among individuals who meet eligibility criteria for DACA since there are no administrative data on these measures available for DACA recipients. It is based on an analysis of data on DACA recipients from the United States Citizen and Immigration Services and an analysis of individuals who are likely eligible for DACA using the 2022 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS-ASEC) data.

The Biden Administration published a final rule. in 2022 that would codify DACA largely consistent with its existing eligibility requirements and scope, but its implementation is limited subject to court orders. Promulgation of this rule followed a rescission of the program by the Trump Administration in 2017, ruled unlawful by the Supreme Court in 2020. While the Biden Administration's final rule became effective on October 31, 2022, its implementation is limited and subject to ongoing litigation. A federal appeals court ruling in early October 2022 found the original 2012 DACA policy unlawful and remanded the case to the district court for further proceedings per the new regulations. Subject to current court orders, as of October 31, 2022, recent DACA approvals and work authorizations remain in effect, and the Department of Homeland Security will continue to process DACA renewal requests and related requests for employment authorization. It is also accepting initial DACA and employment authorization

requests. However, it cannot process initial requests under the current court orders, so they remain on hold.

Expanding eligibility for federally funded health coverage options to DACA recipients would likely reduce their uninsured rates and improve their access to care. On April 26, 2023, the Biden Administration published a proposed rule to expand eligibility for health coverage to DACA recipients. Under this proposed rule, DACA recipients would be considered lawfully present for purposes of the ACA. As such, those who meet other eligibility requirements would be eligible for ACA coverage, including Marketplace plans and subsidies Basic Health Plans, and Medicaid and CHIP, if they are pregnant or under age 21 and in a state that has taken up the option to cover lawfully residing pregnant women and children. Comments on the proposed rule are due by June 23, 2023, and the final rule is planned to take effect on November 1, 2023, to coincide with the open enrollment period. Such an eligibility expansion would likely reduce uninsured rates among DACA recipients and, in turn, facilitate access to care and enhance financial protections from medical costs. Expanding this coverage would increase federal and state costs. Still, the number of individuals who would be eligible for coverage is limited, and not all individuals who are eligible would enroll. The expansion would also offset some state costs in states that provide state-funded coverage to individuals regardless of immigration status for which DACA recipients qualify.

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