

Immigration and Workplace Discrimination

By

Josselyn Torres

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_____, Prof. Alexis Silver

_____, Prof. Leandro Benmergui

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Abstract

This study incorporates in-depth interviews with undocumented immigrants in the United States, particularly in the suburban area of Peekskill, New York, to determine how workplace discrimination affects immigrants and their families. A total of 15 Latinx immigrants participated in this research. The findings suggested that immigrants experience challenges and discrimination in workplaces because they are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse due to their marginalized position in this country. Immigrants are subjected to poor working conditions, low payments compared to their Caucasian counterparts, long working hours, and exploitation by being overworked and without resting hours, among many others. The project also identifies the elements that contribute to the perpetuation of these atrocities toward immigrant workers, which include negativity in the media, hostility toward immigrants, and racial profiling. I argue that exploitative work environments affect not only immigrants but also their families, due to discrimination and retaliation from their employers.

Key Words: *Immigrants, Immigrant families, Workplace discrimination, Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), Racial profiling.*

Introduction

As of 2019, the Brookings Institute estimated that around twelve million undocumented immigrants work in the United States. This is a conservative estimate considering the difficulties in accurately counting these individuals. Many people from Latin America were compelled to leave their homeland owing to a combination of circumstances, including lack of access, economic hardship, and violent crime. Nonetheless, it has never been simple for migrant workers to locate a safe atmosphere in a region where they are required to perform their jobs. Most are employed in low-paying sectors like farming, construction, catering services, cleaning, and day jobs. These workers' legal rights and protections are severely restricted by federal regulations such as the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986.

Businesses establish an environment of intimidation and manipulation in which unauthorized immigrants are unwilling to expose abusive workplace practices by using the fear of immigration laws and enforcement to develop a culture of oppression and exploitation. According to research by Baptiste (2015), immigrant employees are subjected to 350 more fatalities and 62,000 more accidents yearly than native-born employees. Furthermore, undocumented immigrants are much more susceptible to dangerous workplace circumstances than legal immigrants.

New York is frequently cited as one of the most important cultural centers in the United States due to its long history of warmly welcoming people from different countries and immigrant workers. As of 2021, the proportion of immigrant laborers working in the construction industry in New York was higher than in any other industry. Immigrants made up only 37% of New York's overall populace between 2016 and 2020, but they made up 45% of the

city's working population and 64% of its building and construction laborers (Moyce & Schenker, 2018).

Immigrants play an essential role in developing New York's vibrant and diverse neighborhoods and contribute significantly to the well-being of all New Yorkers through their roles as neighbors, taxpayers, and employees. However, despite their contributions to the country's economic progress, immigrant workers face discrimination in their workplace, which negatively impacts their families.

A review of the existing literature shows that economic disparity and hazardous conditions are widespread across the whole construction sector, which compromises high percentages of immigrant workers. For instance, in their study, Moyce & Schenker (2018) found that immigrant construction laborers in remote areas of New York and the U.S. are particularly vulnerable to abuse and hazardous working conditions, even though immigrants perform a vital role in this industry. Immigrants face a number of challenges when trying to enter, bargain, and progress in this sector. These challenges include a need for job approval, social security systems, English proficiency, identification of credentials, and access to training programs. To better understand how workplace vulnerability and abuse affect immigrant families, I interviewed 15 immigrants employed in and around Peekskill, New York. I used these interviews to investigate how undocumented workers in New York land a job, obtain their work schedules and navigate the obstacles and circumstances that potentially harm their families' health, stability, and economic well-being.

This research investigates the discrimination that primarily undocumented immigrants suffer in places of work. It also analyzes how the workplace discrimination of immigrants affects their families' well-being through a closer review of the existing literature as well as interviews

with immigrants about their experiences at the workplace and the ripple effects of their work experiences on their families. I argue that immigrants suffer from harassment and discrimination which will cause stress affecting their family's well-being.

The research describes the various forms of prejudice at work, such as exploitation, bullying, hazardous work environments, unequal pay, and assault both physically and emotionally, and it identifies the elements that contribute to its perpetuation (e.g., negativity in the media, hostility toward immigrants, and racial profiling) (Moyce & Schenker, 2018). This senior project also provides an assessment of the coping skills for the adverse consequences of job discrimination. It discusses social workers' and activists' approaches to supporting the immigrant community from workplace discrimination.

Although there is more diversification in the workforce than ever before in the working place, discrimination and prejudice against immigrant workers in the industry is still a widespread problem that has a negative influence on both the immigrants' health and the well-being of their respective families. This research study examines the effect of prejudice in undocumented workers, specifically how it affects their psychological and physical well-being, prospects for career progression, and relationships with their families. This study aims to highlight the necessity for effective legislation and procedures that combat workplace discrimination against immigrants and enhance inclusion and equality in the workplace.

Discrimination in the workplace has been described as having various adverse impacts on immigrant workers and their families, where some of the immediate effects include reduced income, increased anxiety and stress, and reduced access to different basic needs, including healthcare and social services. Thus, discrimination has physical and psychological impacts on immigrants. With the various adverse impacts present, this study seeks to provide additional

knowledge on the effects of discrimination not only on workers but also on their families in suburban New York.

This research incentivizes increased public understanding and involvement in tackling workplace discrimination by illuminating how workplace prejudice affects the well-being and welfare of immigrant workers and their families. Additionally, the study dispels dangerous assumptions and myths about immigrants and shows the significance of promoting and valuing their contributions in New York and the U.S. at large. The research also promotes compassion and comprehension between ethnic groups by shedding light on the individual opinions and challenges faced by immigrant families who face discrimination.

Literature Review

Overview

A review of the existing research shows a widespread problem in the United States with workplace prejudice against immigrant workers. It is not just the immigrant workers who are affected, but also their households. At their places of employment, U.S. immigrants are subjected to various forms of discrimination (Buckley et al., 2016). Linguistic discrimination is among the most prevalent forms of prejudice. Immigrants who cannot communicate effectively in English, work in low-level positions. They are also subjected to severe remarks and quips about their linguistic abilities, affecting their self-confidence and sense of self-worth.

There is also discrimination directed toward immigrants depending on their citizenship rights. It is common practice to deny employment chances to undocumented immigrants, and when they do find work, they are rewarded less than their legal colleagues. They are also in danger of being taken advantage of by their bosses, who threaten to disclose them to immigration

agents if they come out against unjust treatment. The financial security of immigrant families is another area that may be negatively affected by discrimination. It is difficult for immigrants to make ends meet for their families if they are refused employment chances or paid less than their American counterparts (Choi, Shane & Chih, 2022). This can result in higher poverty prevalence among immigrant communities, which in turn can have an impact on the academic and social results of the children in such homes.

By applying social identity theory and deportability theory, it is evident that discrimination might isolate social groups in immigrant communities. Social identity theory posits that an individual's sense of identity and self-esteem is derived from the groups they belong to, including but not limited to their profession, race, or gender (Buckley et al., 2016). The occurrence of workplace discrimination can result in adverse psychological outcomes such as ostracism, isolation, and diminished self-esteem, not only for the affected individual but also for their family members who share the same social identity.

DeGenova (2002) argues that immigrants must contend with a constant fear of "deportability." DeGenova's theory of deportability implies that immigrants can never feel fully settled due to a legal context that puts them in chronic jeopardy of deportation. I build on this concept by applying the chronic unease associated with deportation to full family units. Interviews illustrate that children feel anxiety about their parents' potential deportations. Therefore, Immigrants may have a more difficult time forming social bonds and experiencing a feeling of being included in their communities as a direct consequence of prejudice. This may harm the psychological wellness of immigrant families, especially the children within those homes, who may experience feelings of isolation from their contemporaries (Buckley et al., 2016). This literature review serves to analyze immigration laws and how they ignore their duties

to protect immigrants, some of the common challenges faced by immigrant workers in the construction industry in New York, and how workplace discrimination affects their families.

Rights and Protections of the Undocumented Immigrant Workers

Choi, Shane & Chih (2022) argue that Immigrant workers without proper documentation possess rights and benefits that should be protected. Both federal and state laws prohibit discrimination in the workplace and provide remedies for employees whose employers violate these rules. Protections in the workplace are enforced regardless of a person's immigration status by both the "National Labor Relations Board" (NLRB) and the "Department of Labor" (DOL). Unregistered immigrant workers have the right to the minimum wage, extra compensation, breaks, and bonuses. They are protected by laws about safety and wellness and those prohibiting discrimination. However, these undocumented immigrant workers are discouraged from legal action against exploitative labor treatment due to persistent systematic failures to implement employer punishments and limit the participation of immigration rules in labor negotiations.

Suppose it is discovered that an unregistered immigrant worker brought a lawsuit to court. In that case, they run the possibility of being punished for using false papers to get a job. For instance, an illegal worker who was fired from a job without cause does not have a legal right to back compensation or to be rehired since such measures would explicitly violate the "Immigration Reform and Control Act" (IRCA) (Choi, Shane & Chih, 2022). Because of anti-retaliation regulations, it is against the law for a company to discontinue employment based on an employee's immigration status in response to the employee filing a complaint. Despite this, "Immigration and Customs Enforcement" (ICE) can still investigate a petition and make an effort to deport illegal workers even if their employers retaliate against them in any way (Buckley et

al., 2016). Even while states like New York and California have enacted legislation that is supposed to aid and protect the interests of unregistered workers in legal cases, most immigrant workers constantly have to work hard to get jobs in these jurisdictions. The ones who get lucky to get any jobs, particularly in the construction industry, are subjected to abuse, and their rights are violated despite these legal establishments to protect immigrants. For instance, Siniavskaia (2015) provides a case scenario that within Suburban New York in 2016, there were 26 deaths involving construction employees. 19 of those fatalities involved undocumented immigrants, with 14 workers from Latin American Countries. This is a prime example of the low working conditions undocumented workers are subjected to, 26 deaths could have been prevented if proper training was provided. While their employer prepares for the substitution of their positions with new undocumented workers, the death of the laborers has caused an extreme financial and emotional burden to their families.

The author contends that law firms who specialize in workplace accidents legislation in New York are very well versed in the fact that a significant proportion of construction personnel is immigrants from Latin American provinces and that several countries from Latin America and the Caribbean are reflected in the factory worker working population (Xu & Chopik, 2020). These employees frequently have very little control over the potentially hazardous aspects of their tasks. They are commonly assigned actions that put employees at an increased risk of harm or death (Siniavskaia, 2015). It is common practice in this legal field for attorneys to recount clients' experiences in which they were terminated from their jobs or intimidated by deportation and reported to authorities if they attempted to report insufficient safety mechanisms or unsafe circumstances at work. On the other hand, this should not be the case because these attorneys and the existing laws are supposed to protect these immigrants from being mistreated and threatened.

In addition, Research by Baptiste (2015) indicates that people who have been hurt due to a construction site can be subjected to various challenges. Victims risk sustaining life-threatening and disabling injuries, including amputations, significant head trauma, and even fatality. In addition to suffering from physical injuries, those who are hurt by occupational injuries may also have to face severe financial circumstances, such as being unable to work and paying expensive medical bills (Siniavskaia, 2015). These circumstances affect the immigrant family by creating financial instability, resulting in lower income for the family. In the longer term, the fallout in these circumstances affects the new family generations resulting in fewer financial resources for higher education. Those who have been through any of the adversities listed above are probably interested in the advice and representation of skilled worker's compensation attorneys. Despite this, they continue to be disappointed, which makes their lives challenging both in the job and in general in the United States.

Challenges Faced by Undocumented Immigrants in the Construction Sector

In the United States, the construction and agricultural, and manufacturing sectors are known for their heavy reliance on undocumented immigrants. This is primarily because legal immigrants are just not accessible, and if they are, engaging them is at a far higher cost. Over the years, there has been a substantial rise in the percentage of workers who are immigrants in the construction industry, with the large majority of these laborers coming from nations in Latin America. Most Latinos employed in the building sector are unskilled employees, typically working in building occupations that pay the lowest wages.

According to Baptiste (2015), immigrant employees generally experience a higher incidence of workplace prejudice and accidents than other employees. During 2010 and 2015,

there was a 23% rise in hiring employees born outside of the United States, but there was also a 42% rise in fatalities among these individuals (Segal, 2019). This increased risk is attributable, in significant portion, to the reality that immigrant laborers are disproportionately represented in sectors and professions that provide more significant hazards, including construction projects.

The construction industry in the United States has the most significant rate of fatal accidents among immigrant employees than any other sector. According to Xu & Chopik, 2020. Between 1995 and 2000, the construction sector was responsible for roughly one out of every four foreign employees killed on the field. It seems likely that immigrant employees are more likely to get hurt than was previously stated. If an undocumented immigrant worker is injured, they might be less inclined to report the incident or get checked out for their condition. This is especially true for employees who do not have proper documentation and are engaged in informal employment, notably day employees who engage in building work. Some other factors include language barriers, culture differences, decreased higher learning rates, immigration status, reduced level of unionized workers, and dread of retribution. A lack of research is available to evaluate the effect of these different variables.

Nevertheless, the study by Baptiste (2015) in New York with a sample size of fifty immigrant construction personnel found that union membership and proven legal standing were the most deeply linked to improved safety outcomes. Nevertheless, economic disparity and dangerous conditions are rampant for undocumented immigrant workers across the construction business (Baptiste, 2015). The research contends that despite immigrants' significant contribution to the construction sector in New York and other parts of the U.S, immigrant building workers are particularly vulnerable to abuse and work in environments fraught with risk. Immigrants have a number of challenges while trying to enter, compete, and progress in this profession (Segal,

2019). These challenges include a lack of job work authorization, social security, English competence, recognition of certificates from the country of origin, and lack of access to training or development opportunities. To better understand the challenges undocumented workers face, it is important to critically approach discrimination on the basis of sex, race, gender, and national origin.

The Basis of Discrimination

Baptiste (2015) argues that workplace discrimination against unregistered Latinx immigrant workers can be comprehended as a consequence of a more extensive, more dynamic sociological sequence whereby positive values and qualities are credited to in-groups and, likewise, negative values and qualities are identified to out-groups. The rejection of members of so-called "out-groups" has its roots in implicit bias and preconceptions, which in turn give rise to discriminatory practices. The widespread anti-immigrant sentiment that fuels discrimination against Latinx immigration is frequently linked to misguided beliefs about the accessibility of assets and economic opportunities. For example, in 2015, Donald J. Trump was still a contender for president; he fostered anti-immigrant sentiment by using media interviews to announce that Mexico had only been giving the U.S. drugs, crooks, and rapists (Siniavskaia, 2015). This language makes Latinx immigrants into outcasts and encourages people with biased opinions to reinforce those biases.

Ethnic-racial segmentation and criminalization are facilitated by perpetuating negative stereotypes of undocumented Latino immigrants. Because they fail to recognize the subconscious and conscious biases of those in power, laws such as "*Arizona's SB-1070*," which establishes "reasonable suspicion" as a rational justification for questioning people to prove their

immigration status, keep perpetuating an "illegality" of all immigrant individuals (Buckley et al., 2016). Moreover, our welfare structures routinely criminalize individual undocumented immigrants who are the second generation in their families to immigrate to the United States. They do this by concluding that these individuals do not deserve assistance or possibilities (Xu & Chopik, 2020). They also ignore the difficulties and traumas they faced before migrating, which are the circumstances that compelled these individuals to leave their homes. These societal and political perspectives converge in the working environment (Segal, 2019). Organized and structural marginalization aggravates political and cultural types of prejudice because those in authority are reluctant to adhere to existing laws or advocate for the procedural fairness of those viewed as a susceptible "out-group." Therefore, undocumented immigrants lack knowledge of American employment laws, privileges, and safeguards. They also lack opportunities for assistance and social ties while experiencing language and culture barriers that could ameliorate their vulnerabilities in minor ways. Because public rhetoric and law routinely dehumanize immigrants, their humanity is likewise not valued in the workplace. The context of mass deportation thus increases their vulnerability at work, which in turn increases stress on their families who fear that their family members can be hurt or exploited at work.

In addition, social standing and social capital influence them. Since immigrant groups tend to live at a deficit in terms of social assets and have a tendency to rely on family and ethnic relationships to generate returns that are generally homogenous, poor socioeconomic standing may be readily maintained among immigrant communities (Xu & Chopik, 2020). In addition, having a low socioeconomic position can cause psychological damage, which can immediately contribute to poor wellness and anxiety, raising a person's susceptibility to developing various diseases (Baptiste, 2015). The tedious and demanding job schedules of undocumented immigrant

workers make it easier for them to eat poorly, which increases their risk of gaining weight and decreasing their ability to get enough sleep. These behaviors, in turn, generate health issues that cannot be treated because undocumented immigrants do not have access to primary medical care.

The overt fear of reprisal from one's workplace and the likelihood of "Immigration and Customs Enforcement" (ICE) searches at one's home or place of employment have a significant and detrimental effect. These risks create an atmosphere of heightened awareness, which, although a preventive mechanism, can also be harmful. Research has demonstrated that higher vigilance and distrust can hinder learning and promote underperformance. This is the case even while being alert for prejudice may provide some protection from unfavorable effects. First-generation undocumented immigrants may have a more challenging time navigating working contexts where more nuanced types of discrimination occur. This is because subtle and difficult-to-detect prejudice could cause more significant harm to people than overt prejudice does. The complexities necessary to understand the event induce psychological anguish because of the uncertainty. According to a study on adult immigrants of *Latino descent living in New York*, overt prejudice was linked to a decline in beneficial impact. At the same time, subtle bias was directly connected with depressive symptoms.

These data demonstrate that anything done in excess might have negative consequences. In the particular instance of immigrant workers, an increased skepticism in the authorities and medical centers can impede the chances of obtaining legal assistance to combat discriminatory practices or seek professional mental- and wellness, even from institutions mandated to provide service for this particular population.

Data and Methods

This qualitative study aimed to incorporate in-depth interviews with undocumented immigrants in the United States, particularly in New York, to determine how workplace discrimination affects immigrants and their families. The study intends to address workplace discrimination against immigrants in the construction sector in the suburban area of Peekskill, New York.

I conducted in-depth interviews with 15 undocumented immigrant workers so that I could provide well-formed research for my project. Since in-depth interviews are a method of qualitative data collection that enables gathering considerable information regarding the behavior, attitude, and perception of undocumented immigrants, I conducted these interviews with undocumented workers that lived in my community. I established a connection with the people I interviewed by sharing a portion of my personal history with them to foster an atmosphere of trust. Because of this, most of them could speak freely and provide factually accurate information on the difficulties they face in their workplaces and how it negatively affects their families.

It is essential to connect with the interviewee to get all the pertinent information. It is easier to tell your story to someone you can trust. It is also essential to consider how the interviewee feels; getting deeper into the person's thoughts and feelings can help create a safe environment where almost any question can be answered.

Confidentiality was the undocumented interviewees' primary concern during the data collection method. I clarified to them that I would not disclose any names or specific characteristics that would make the interviewees immediately recognizable and put at risk. The central theme I expected to collect from these interviews is the fear of deportation experienced

by undocumented immigrants who face challenges in the workplace. When doing the in-depth interviews, it is processed and can be redirected if necessary. The data for the study was gathered in the form of what it is, which is an independent research strategy capable of employing a variety of research procedures and adapting to the interviewees of the study.

I recruited participants through my social networks and recruitment on members-only community Facebook pages. I then conducted in-depth interviews and other in-person interviews, which were conducted in a private room at the public library in my community. I also utilized Zoom interviews by sending Zoom links to the participants via their emails.

Additionally, I provided a consent form to them via Google form to avoid receiving the consent form over email, thus avoiding any connection between the email and the consent form. The open-ended questions focused on workplace experiences, daily routines, experiences with discrimination, finances, and family dynamics and took around 30 minutes.

Through the interviews, the subjects were given pseudonyms names so that their real terms would not be stated in the data or written work produced from the study. I also informed my respondents that academic research is confidential and that they should do their best not to use the names of anyone they reference during the interview. Instead, I asked them to do their best to use pseudonyms or no words when talking about others in the community or their families. Lastly, I reminded them that I would not use any names in my notes, transcriptions, or data analysis to guarantee confidentiality.

Research Findings and Analysis

From the conducted qualitative research on 15 undocumented immigrant workers and a review of the existing literature about workplace discrimination of undocumented workers in New York, the following findings were made.

While navigating through the interviews, 14 out of 15 interviewees responded that the language barrier has displayed major wage disadvantages leading to lower house-hold income. For instance, respondent “*Angelica*” who is a 45-year-old woman interviewed for this research suggested that her biggest challenge and disadvantage was the language. “In my job they are not willing to give me a raise because I don’t have any knowledge of the English language, they only pay me \$10 an hour even though I explained to them that my husband died at the border and the money I am being paid is not sufficient for me and my 3 kids. So they said that they will simply find another person with documents that speaks English. Last time the owner told me to keep working or else she wanted me to call ICE to ask them why I can’t get a raise”. Nonetheless, interviewee “*Lola*” tells, “it was very hard for us to find a job because they required for people to speak english. We had just arrived so of course I didn’t know any English. But one day one of my friends told me that their boss needed someone to work in the kitchen that didn’t need for someone to speak english. So of course I immediately asked her to give me her phone number, she explained that I will be getting paid \$9 an hour. But my friend who worked in the same area and knew some english made \$13 an hour. It might not seem a lot but for me it is. My husband passed away two years ago due to COVID complications and I need all the money I can make to sustain my 2 kids. I don’t think it’s fair for me to not get paid the same amount, if I am completing the same tasks as her”. Findings point out that undocumented workers who cannot communicate effectively in English, like “*lola’s*” and “*Angelica’s*” case, work in low-level positions and make less hourly wage’s unlinke their counterparts who speak english. This affects

the family in a broader spectrum because less income will be available for their needs and necessities. In another finding related to language barrier, undocumented workers were subjected to severe remarks and quips about their linguistic abilities, affecting their self-confidence and sense of self-worth. In this case “*Santiago*” one of the subjects interviewed whose name has been modified to protect his identity, explained the complex challenge of the language barrier. “The first day at my job, my coworkers called me “spik” and made fun of me for not knowing the language. Apparently “Spik” is the name they give you if you are illegal and you don’t speak any english. It was very offensive to me because they would yell it in public and people around would simply start laughing. When I am laying in my bed, I cry because I am so tired of the constant bullying”. These finding suggest that undocumented workers like “*Santiago*” face english proficiency challenges, as a result of discrimination and bullying in the work-place. Nonetheless the discrimination he is suffering from his co-workers due to his language disadvantage, has created a negative emotional overwhelming feeling resulting in depression.

Findings collected from the interviews propose that undocumented workers do not feel safe at their workplace. In the case of “*Viviana*” a 50 year old woman who lives with her 3 kids and her husband, explains “I work at 6 AM in the housekeeping business of one of my friends. I get payed \$160 from 6 AM to 5PM. We only clean 5 homes a day but we are always in a rush so sometimes I don’t eat. I take my own facemask to protect me from the chemicals we use, I really don’t feel safe at my job because I am constantly hurting myself when I fall in the slippery floors, sometimes I cut myself with razors while trying to clean the bathrooms. We don’t have any protection”. Not being able to be properly protected from any injuries at her job makes it an unsafe environment for “*Viviana*” to work in. The results from her cuts with razors can be catastrophic which will then impact the family’s well-being by creating a sense of untranquility

pertaining to “Viviana’s health”. Carlos who is a 45 year old man who lives with his 17 year old son and 26 year old daughter, proceeds to say “ I work in the construction field, usually they tell us to come in at 6 AM so the sun doesn’t tire us too much and we can’t hold the day. I found this job because I was waiting in the Parada and then one day, this truck came by and ask if we wanted to work the whole day for \$110. It was our opportunity to make some money for my family so I took it. The environment at my job is not safe at all, we don’t wear any protective gear and we didn’t get any training either, it is all knowledge that came with us from our country. Last week “Ponce” was finishing up the beams on a 3rd floor when he accidentally lost his balance and fell to the 1st floor. There was blood everywhere, he had to be taken to the hospital where they found he will be in a vegetative state for the rest of his days. It is really concerning because about 2 weeks ago I cut my index finger while I was trying to cut some wood. I called my son to come get me and he took me to the hospital, I felt so bad for him because he was crying from when he picked me up, up to where they had me in the doctor’s office. I think he is traumatized because now before I leave to work he tells me to be careful and to come back in one piece but I can’t promise that because my job is not safe and I don’t know if I am going to be back home or I will be found in the hospital”. Not being able to be in a safe environment causes distress within the undocumented worker’s family’s. Improper training and restricted gear protection availability will cause high fatalities among undocumented workers.

Findings from the interviews show that undocumented parents’ feel their children overwhelmed with the fear of deportation. In the instance of “*Julian*” a 40-year-old Ecuadorian native, he tells the constant discrimination at his last job and how it emotionally affected his family. When an occurrence of the employer to not pay the undocumented employees for a week of work, “*Julian*” Explains “ We kept insisting that he must pay us the 50 hours worked at his

landscaping sight but he kept rejecting us and told us to “go back to Mexico”, the 6 of us called the police on him. The policeman and the “Mr.Scott” said to come back tomorrow and he will be ready with our cash. The next morning when we were going to park in the yard we noticed a white truck with blue letters that read “ Homeland Security Federal Protective Services”. We quickly left the place because it was clear that “Mr.Scott” had called ICE on us. We were never able to get that money we worked for back because we were very very scared to be deported. At that moment I felt useless and helpless to my family, We basically ate very very little that week in order for the food to last. My wife and I didn’t eat breakfast or lunch so my kids could have more food, unfortunately our children heard the conversation we were having with my wife where I was explaining to her how I almost got deported. My kids were scared that ICE would show up to our house looking for me, they wake up in the middle of the night to check if I am there, they feel a constant need to know exactly where I am all the time, sometimes I hear them cry at night so I go check up on them and ask what is wrong and they simply say we don’t want to be separated from you. It simply just breaks my heart but I need to go out and find the money to bring home”. The effects of workplace prejudice on immigrant families are far-reaching and widespread. In this case “Julian’s” children are suffering emotionally, they fear their parents deportation and have a strong sense of insecurity in their own home. The family’s dynamic is being broken up with the children constantly fearing of the separation from their parents affecting their interactions with peers, friends and most importantly family. Rosita a 20 year old undocumented worker liberates her concerns with the fear of deportation affecting her 2 year old toodler. She explains “ I work in a popular restaurant here in Peekskill where they pay me \$16 an hour. My 2 year’s old daughter is babysit by the lady who rents us a room to live. At a very early age she knows that “ICE” means that someone is going to be taken away. Crossing the border

with her was so traumatic because we saw really chaotic things like girls getting raped along the way. What really disturbed her innocent mind was getting separated from me when the coyote told us that we needed to turn ourselves over in order to get working papers. We both were released within one week, the coyote met us and brought us here to New York. But to to that separation anxiety she developed through that harsh week, she wants for me to stay next to her at all times but I can't. I need to work in order to buy her the things she needs, I want her to be someone better and to get over her fears and anxieties but it's hard after she went through the things she had to go through at a very young age." From a very young age "Rosita's" daughter is unfortunately suffering from fear of deportation. The findings suggest that the spill over effect of discrimination and unsafeness has created repercussions on the undocumented worker's families from children among's the ages 2 to 18.

How Workplace Discrimination Affects Immigrants' Families

According to the research findings, undocumented immigrant laborers in the construction industry face various workplace discrimination, such as unequal pay, restricted benefits and opportunities, and dangerous work environments. In addition, the research showed that immigrant employees' families are impacted when there is workplace prejudice against immigrant workers. For example, immigrant employees whose wages were stolen have a lower income overall, making it more challenging to provide for their families financially. Families of undocumented workers are also put in danger when they are forced to endure hazardous workplace conditions and denied the benefits they deserve.

The research also indicated that immigrant employees and their households are more likely to suffer from mental health issues due to workplace prejudice. Anxiety and sadness are

common mental health issues affecting immigrant employees and their families. Immigrant workers are more likely to experience harassment and bias at work. Moreover, the research findings demonstrated that unscrupulous employers frequently take advantage of the precarious situation of immigrant employees in the construction industry and exploit them for their labor. It is challenging for immigrant employees to report instances of exploitation because of a lack of enforceable protection and the dread of being deported, which furthers the pattern of prejudice and contributes to its perpetuation.

Several cultural elements influence how immigrant workers interact with their professions. These aspects include differences in perspectives regarding speaking out and lobbying for change and how risks, injuries, and illnesses are seen. These factors shape immigrants' connections to their jobs, unions, and concerns about their well-being and security. Many immigrants arriving in the United States have an entirely different impression of building and construction supplies because they are from nations where safety procedures must be highlighted and are likely not controlled. Furthermore, many immigrants originate from nations without regulation of safety procedures. These workers frequently have limited or unfavorable relationships with organizations in their home country, mainly those regulated by the authorities. Their perspectives on unions may be influenced by their prior history in their home country. Therefore, they should be informed about the advantages that working for a union in the United States might bring them. The union's leadership, the undocumented immigrants, and other members must work together to build trust.

Additionally, the government should invest in aimed outreach activities to educate immigrant workers regarding their privileges and the process of filing a complaint with the "Equal Employment Opportunity Commission" (EEOC). Many immigrant employees may be

either ignorant of their legal rights or afraid to report discrimination because they fear retaliation. Outreach efforts should be adapted to the specific requirements and issues of immigrant workers and available in several languages.

When a company mistreats an employee in hiring, dismissal, recruitment, or recommendation for a fee depending on the individual's citizenship status, this is an example of citizenship status prejudice. Similar to racial discrimination, ethnic background discrimination occurs when an employer regards a worker differently due to the individual's actual or apparent nationality. Laws should be implemented that prohibit employers and organizations from mistreating immigrant workers. This law also prohibits employers from demanding more or different documents than are necessary. Security against retaliation and intimidation implies that an employer is prohibited from intimidating, threatening, coercing, or otherwise retaliating against employees for utilizing their freedoms.

Therefore, the government should strengthen the regulation of anti-discrimination laws already in the Constitution. Claims of discriminatory practices in the construction sector should be investigated and prosecuted more thoroughly. The "Equal Employment Opportunity Commission" (EEOC) should be provided with the required resources. To discourage discriminatory actions on the part of business owners, anti-discrimination regulations ought to be enforced strictly, and offenders should be subject to severe punishments such as monetary fines and the termination of business relationships.

The government needs to invest in social services like affordable homes, healthcare, and schooling to support the families of immigrant workers subjected to workplace discrimination. Immigrant workers subjected to discrimination are frequently coerced into accepting jobs that pay less or require them to work in hazardous conditions, which can affect their families. By

lending assistance to these households, we can help reduce the detrimental effects of discrimination on the families' overall economic and social well-being.

Another recommendation that should not be overlooked is encouraging inclusiveness and diversification in the construction sector. Companies should be incentivized to seek out and hire workers from different cultural backgrounds, including immigrants. They should be required to provide assistance and training for employees of all different backgrounds. This will not only assist in reducing workplace prejudice, but it will also result in an overall more productive and creative industry.

Some of the limitations of the study included the following; Some interviewees had feelings of discomfort and anxiety about revealing vulnerable information. Several immigrants did not speak English fluently, which hinders their ability to articulate their observations and views on job discrimination. This also necessitates translators, which adds to the complexity of the interviewing process. Trying to gain access to immigrant communities to conduct interviews was difficult. This could be because of worries about confidentiality, dread of employer consequences, or other considerations. Because of worries about stigmatization or dread of reprisal, interviewees were reluctant to express unpleasant experiences or views regarding workplace harassment. This may cause individuals to misreport negative observations and opinions.

Conclusion

This qualitative study aimed to incorporate in-depth interviews with undocumented immigrants in the United States, particularly in New York, to determine how workplace discrimination affects immigrants and their families. The study addressed workplace

discrimination against immigrants in the construction sector in the suburban area of Peekskill, New York, and the entire country. As a result, most businesses in the New York have established an environment of intimidation and manipulation in which unauthorized immigrants are unwilling to expose abusive workplace practices by using the fear of immigration laws and enforcement to develop a culture of oppression and exploitation.

From the findings of this study, it is evident that many undocumented immigrants suffer from harassment and discrimination, adversely affecting their families and the family's well-being. The study also unveiled various forms of prejudice at work, such as exploitation, hazardous work environments, unequal pay, and assault both physically and emotionally. It also identifies the elements contributing to its perpetuation, such as negativity in the media, hostility toward immigrants, and racial profiling.

According to the research findings, undocumented immigrant laborers in the construction industry face various workplace discrimination, such as unequal pay, restricted benefits and opportunities, and dangerous work environments. In addition, the research showed that immigrant employees' families are impacted when there is workplace prejudice against immigrant workers. For example, immigrant employees whose wages were stolen have a lower income overall, making it more challenging to provide for their families financially. Families of undocumented workers are also put in danger when they are forced to endure hazardous workplace conditions and denied the benefits they deserve.

Moreover, the study showed that immigrant employees and their households are more likely to suffer from mental health issues due to workplace prejudice. Anxiety and sadness are common mental health issues affecting immigrant employees and their families. Immigrant workers are more likely to experience harassment and bias at work. Moreover, the research

findings demonstrated that unscrupulous employers frequently take advantage of the precarious situation of immigrant employees in the construction industry and exploit them for their labor. It is challenging for immigrant employees to report instances of exploitation because of a lack of enforceable protection and the dread of being deported, which furthers the pattern of prejudice and contributes to its perpetuation.

Various recommendations have been made to resolve this issue, including forming federal anti-discrimination laws and implementing social services and affordable homes that will constitute the immigrants' families' well-being. Other recommendations included educating immigrants about their rights and privileges and advocating for diversity and equality in workplaces in different sectors, including the construction sector.

Overall, a comprehensive literature review, analysis of pertinent data, and interviews with crucial immigrant workers revealed that immigrant workers in the construction industry face numerous challenges, including job discrimination, low wages, bullying, inaccessibility to benefits, and poor working conditions. It also emphasizes the need for policies and programs addressing the root causes of discrimination and inequality and the significance of understanding immigrant construction workers' difficulties.

By enhancing the working conditions and opportunities for immigrant workers, we can contribute to more excellent economic stability and social justice for them and their families and communities. The results of this study may be available as a senior project in a library or used for teaching purposes and is essential to individuals who want to learn more about workplace discrimination directed at immigrant workers in the United States.

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