

California State University, Northridge

Immigration Policy:
Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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Abstract

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This paper explores the impact of undocumented immigration on the United States economy, taking into account the composition of the immigrants' population. There are different opinions about the number of immigrants in the United States (US), immigration being considered a disadvantage to the economy by some and a benefit by others. This thesis project examines whether immigrant workers have been an essential part to the growth of the economy. It will also examine if the Dreamers, assisted through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy, can help the United States economy by paying State and Federal taxes, participating in commerce.

Introduction

When considering the different aspects of a society, one can argue that it is a system comprised of interrelated parts, each operating through social structures and regularity. Analyzing these various components allows one to have a better understating of the makeup of society, its strengths, and even its flaws. An essential part of any society is public administration, as it is vital to creating a sound administrative infrastructure for the community. A prominent principle of public administration has always been the economy, efficiency, and that is, the provision of public services at the minimum cost (Mosher and Chapman, 2013). In essence, the study of what happens to efficiency in the economy when new concepts or elements are introduced, such as justice, equal treatment, or immigration and what happens when the policies that are created gravely affect a significant identified population in the economy.

As a prevalent issue in the United States, immigration appears to not only have an impact on policies surrounding the economy, but the effects said policies have on the nation as a whole. Hence, it can be argued that immigration is a social or cultural problem that is difficult or impossible to solve (Austin Center for Design, no date) as there are arguable notions of advantages and disadvantages to the United States economy. The question then becomes if immigration as a whole is harmful or if there are specific functions that may be lucrative for the economy. Younger populations deserve a particular focus of analysis because they are an influential population in regards to childbirth, cultural integration, and economic growth. Therefore, how does policy regarding immigrants between the ages of eighteen (18) to thirty-two (32) impact the economy of this country? Does Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) immigrants positively impact the United States economy?

Background

“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free...” (Lazarus, 1883). These famous words are embedded in the Statue of Liberty and invoke the spirit of acceptance that welcomes immigrants from all parts of the world. For many, the statue has symbolically welcomed immigrants to this country. It represents aspects of the “American Dream” or the notion that anyone can prosper and have freedom in the United States. People come to this country for many reasons but primarily in the hopes of making a better life for themselves and their families. They arrive in the United States in search of the American Dream: to achieve success through determination, perseverance, and hard work. Many immigrants migrate to the United States because they cannot provide for themselves or because they face dangerous situations in their countries of origin. In the United States there is a similarity to early generations of European settlers including the Pilgrims and Quakers who fled to what is now the northeastern part of the United States. These immigrants came looking for better economic opportunities which were not available in their native country or because they were fleeing religious persecution or both.

However; unlike in the early 1600s, today there is a stigma associated with immigrants surrounding the economy and the overall impact immigration has on the country. In the past, policies like The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (Chin, 1996) have been implemented surrounding immigration in order to take control of the immigration influx. The Nationality Act of 1965 was meant to control or minimize the number of non-white immigrants, immigrating to the United States (Chin, 1996). Many policies have been introduced but none have ultimately reformed the impact of immigration. In order to better understand the need for a study on the DACA immigration

policy, we need to explore the different immigration policies of this country. There have been many policies introduced but none have addressed the impact of immigration.

The Immigration Act of 1917 (the first Bracero Program)

History has demonstrated that the United States has relied on foreign labor to perform much of its least desirable work (Finch, 1990). For example, to ensure the economy remains prosperous by utilizing foreign workers as they have been an essential component to the workforce since the colonial period (Farnsworth, 2016). One of the first known agreements the United States had to recruit foreign labor was in 1917 when they established a series of bilateral agreements with Mexico, which led to a seasonal migration of men from 1917 to 1921 (Önel and Farnsworth, 2016). Some refer to this agreement as the first “bracero program”. Mexicans nationals were allowed to migrate into the United States to work in the farm fields due to the War with Germany. It was considered a “national defense policy” the bracero program was coined from the Spanish word “Brazo”, which means arm (Briggs, 2004) primarily to describe one who works using his arms (Longley, 2018). It is estimated that during the lifespan of the program, seventy-six thousand eight hundred sixty-two (76,862) Mexican workers were admitted to the United States (Önel and Farnsworth, 2016). The program was terminated in 1922 a few years after World War I concluded. It was regarded by some to undermine the economic welfare of citizen workers and greedy employers could continue to tap onto the manpower of docile workers (Briggs, 2004).

Bracero Program 1942 to 1964

During World War II, the United States had a shortage of workers, once again, especially in the agricultural sector, which has a long history of dependence on foreign workers (Önel and Farnsworth, 2016). The farming industry was suffering due to a shortage of people willing to work on the fields since American farm workers either joined the military or took better-paying jobs in the defense industry (Longley, 2018). President Franklin D. Roosevelt noticed the shortage of workers in the farms, and on June 1, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked the Department of State to negotiate an agreement with Mexico on the importation of foreign labor (Longley, 2018). This agreement was the initiation of another Bracero Program, but was coined the Mexican Farm Labor Agreement. This agreement allowed Mexico to send workers to legally work in the United States temporarily. The agreements ultimately allowed nearly 4.6 million Mexican nationals to enter the United States temporarily to work on farms, railroads, and in factories between 1942 and 1964 (Longley, 2018). Beyond the initial Bracero Program of 1917, the Mexican Farm Labor Agreement established some necessary conditions for the Mexican workers. Mexican farm workers were to be paid a minimum wage of thirty (30) cents an hour and guaranteed decent living conditions, including sanitation, housing, and food (Craig, 2014). Bracero workers were under the impression that they would be protected from racial discrimination, such as being excluded from public facilities posted as whites only (Longley, 2018). During a period of five (5) years after the program had started, about two hundred sixty thousand (260,000) Mexican braceros were hired, amounting to less than ten (10) percent of the total number of workers hired in the U.S. over the period (Longley, 2018). The bracero program was extended by President Harry S. Truman in 1951

(Robinson, 2010). The program ended in 1964 when President John F. Kennedy ordered the Department of Labor to enforce Bracero regulations.

Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986

After several years of debate and controversy dealing with immigration in November of 1986, President Ronald Regan signed the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), known by many as Amnesty of 1986 (deGuzman, 2012). The law was created to control the flow of illegal immigration into the United States. The law also made it illegal for employers to knowingly hire individuals that did not have any legal authorization to work in the United States. With the new law, employers were required to verify the legal status of all employees. If employers knowingly hired unauthorized workers, legislation imposed civil and criminal penalties on employers. (Goodis, 1986). The Immigration Reform and Control Act did not only require all employers to verify legal working status from employees but penalized those employers that did not follow the new law requirements (Donato, Durand, and Massey, 1992). The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 also granted legal status to undocumented immigrants living in the United States (Badger, 2019) but in order for undocumented immigrants to qualify for legal status they were required to meet some basic requirements such as: immigrants had to have entered the United States prior to 1982 (Badger, 2019), undocumented immigrants needed to be residing in the United States continuously since 1982 (Moffett, 2019), undocumented immigrants must not have been convicted of any felony or at least three misdemeanors, and had a minimum understanding of the English language and United State Civics (Finch, 1990). Through this initiative three million undocumented immigrants applied for legal

status under IRCA. Ultimately, about 2.7 million immigrants were granted legal status (Badger, 2019).

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals was an executive branch memorandum by President Barack Obama on June 15, 2012 (Fiflis, 2013). The implementation of this policy meant many immigrant children that were brought to the United States by their parents illegally would be able to apply for temporary protection of deportation. President Obama stated that his administration would stop deporting young undocumented individuals who met certain requirements (Cohen, 2012). Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) did not give these young adults a path to become United States citizens or even legal permanent residents (Shoichet, Kopan, and Cullinane, 2017). Under DACA, Dreamers were able to apply to defer deportation and legally reside and work in the United States for two years. Once the two years expired the Dreamers could apply for renewal. (Shoichet, Kopan, and Cullinane, 2017).

Those that were considered to be eligible to receive DACA had to meet basic key guidelines. The requirements to apply for DACA are as follows:

- Provide proof of identity
- Provide proof of arriving in to the United States before the age of sixteen such as school enrollment and attendance
- Be under the age of thirty-one on June 15, 2012
- Have no pending order of removal proceedings by United States Citizenship and immigration Services

- Be at least fifteen years old on the date of filing the request
- Proof of continuous residence in the United States since June 15, 2007
- Proof of physical presence in the United States on June 15, 2012
- Be present the day they were making the request for DACA
- Provide proof that they were currently enrolled in school, graduated from high school or recipient of a certificate of general educational development (GED), honorable discharge from the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the United States
- Provide proof that they had no convictions for felony offenses, a significant misdemeanor offense, or three or more misdemeanors offenses, and proof that the requestor does not otherwise poses any threat to national security or the safety of the public (Fiflis, 2013).

Under DACA, recipients were able to obtain valid driver's licenses, enroll in college and pay in-state tuition rates not out-of-state tuition rates and legally secure employment (Matinez, 2014). They are given work permit (Social Security Number) in order to be able to pay income taxes (Shoichet, Kopan, and Cullinane, 2017). The DACA program granted many individuals the ability to work legally in the United States (Gonzales, Terriquez, and Rusczyk, 2014). Data by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) shows that they received 748,789 out of 1.7 million estimated eligible candidates initial applications for the DACA program (Patler, Cabrera, and Angeles, 2015). From all the applicants ninety (90%) percent were approved, ten (10%) percent were denied, were pending, or they did not apply (Patler, Cabrera, and Angeles, 2015). From all the

applications the USCIS received for DACA, 212,088 were from residents in California (Patler, Cabrera, and Angeles, 2015).

On September 5, 2017 President Donald J. Trump orders, the end of the DACA program (Shear and Hirschfeld Davis, 2017). The DACA program protected many undocumented immigrants from being deported and allowed them to work legally in the United States (Hsin and Ortega, 2018). Attorney General Jeff Sessions stated, as he made the announcement of the end the DACA program, those in the country illegally are lawbreakers who hurt native-born Americans by usurping their jobs and pushing down wages (Shear and Hirschfeld Davis, 2017). The official explanation that the Trump administration gave for the termination of DACA was that they had no choice, but to end it because the policy was unlawful (Tang, 2019). President Trump urged Congress to pass a policy that would protect current DACA recipients from deportation within six months but no new policy was introduced (Shear and Hirschfeld Davis, 2017).

Review of the Literature

Introduction

Throughout the Trump presidency, the media has covered various aspects of immigration, including the pros and cons. Some policies have changed, and others are in the process of changing, particularly the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy implemented by President Barack Obama in 2012 (Walters, 2017). DACA allowed its recipients a two-year, renewable period of deferred action from deportation and the ability to work legally in the United States (Fiflis, 2013). President Trump has sought to end DACA on September 5, 2017 (Tang, 2019). As Eller, Gerber, and Robinson stated, "the best decisions made by public sector managers are based not on instinct, but on an informed understanding of what's happening on the ground. The policy may be directed by ideology, but it must also be founded on reality" (Eller, Gerber, & Robinson 2013, p.1). The purpose of the literature review is to outline the current legal working permits, the composition of the immigrant workforce, their contribution, and the importance of how education and deportation of immigrants affect the economy. The literature review will also show that there are gaps in research that must be studied to determine if the current administration considered all of the outcomes of seeking to end DACA and the need for research to address the DACA immigrant's impact on the economy.

Public Opinion

Perceived economic competition and ethnic prejudice were some influences on deportation. Latino immigrants, as one of the largest immigrant groups in the United States, have become the target of deportation and the center for the debate to reform the United

States immigration policy (Golash-Boza and Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013). To understand the public support for immigration policies, one must explore the understanding of the United States perceptions about the negative connotations of both documented and undocumented Latino immigration (Becerra, Androff, Cimino, Wagaman, and Blanchard, 2013).

Anti-immigration supporters argue that the nation is in a deficit because of the people immigrating to this country illegally (Bilke, 2009). Anti-immigration supporters argue that the arrival of illegal immigrants creates a problem that is often under the radar. For example, they argue that illegal immigration creates a black market for goods and services, services traded, and they do not contribute to the tax base (Chomsky, 2018). These individuals see immigrants as being a burden to the country. They believe that federal detention and deportation is the only solution to the problem (Armenta, 2012).

These opposing views have posed a dilemma for many years, and a solution to the problem has not been reached. Instead, a new complex issue has arisen through the increase in the immigration of children and young adults. The Dreamers who are fighting to not only obtain an education but also seeking to be employed legally create an underestimated impact on the economy (Leonardo, 2009).

-Unemployment

One of the many controversial issues that deals with the perception of immigration is unemployment. There are varying opinions on the effect immigrants have on the unemployment rates in the country. In 2009, when the United States economy was declining, fifty-one percent of the polled favored deportation, this was most likely a consequence of dramatically changing economic circumstances (Cosby, Aanstoos, Matta, Porter, and James, 2013). Americans were struggling with steady employment, attribute

the problem with immigration, and hence, the high poll rate (Orrenius and Zavodny 2012). Even though in 2009 unauthorized immigrant population was eight percent below its peak from 2007 (Orrenius and Zavodny 2012). Those that oppose immigrants argue that illegal immigrants are taking all the resources that are meant for United State citizens. Yet, the group most adversely affected by additional immigration is earlier immigrants because they are the closest substitutes for new immigrants (Orrenius and Zavodny 2012). Since President Trump took office the economy had added six million new jobs, and unemployment rate dropped to the lowest level in nearly fifty (50) years (Jackson, 2019). Under the Trump administration the illegal border crossing nearly doubled from 2018 to 2019 (Jackson, 2019). The influx of undocumented individuals arriving to the United States has not caused the unemployment rate to rise again.

-Government Benefits

Another societal component that has a divisive public opinion when related to immigration is the allocation of government benefits. There are those that believe that immigrants are reaping all of the benefits from the welfare system and take advantage of the benefits (Ruhs, 2010). Immigrants pay into the system but are not able to receive the same benefits native-born Americans do, such as welfare funds (Grisworld, 2012). Even though undocumented immigrants are ineligible to receive most federal public benefits such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), in California refer to as CalFresh, regular full scope Medicaid coverage, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in California known as California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) (National Immigration Forum,

2018). However, there are a few benefits they are able to use under their current status. The public benefits that undocumented immigrants do qualify for are those deemed necessary to protect life or guarantee safety in dire situations, such as emergency Medicaid which grants them access to treatment in emergency rooms, and access to healthcare and nutritional programs under the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) (National Immigration Forum, 2018).

Furthermore, immigrants do not have the resources to have their children attend private schools, their only option is public school. Public schools receive federal funding per student, and so immigrant children are expenditure because the federal government now must to pay for these children (Tienda and Haskins, 2011). However, the federal funding that schools receive for educating immigrant children eventually will be returned when those children enter the workforce. Immigrants cost state and local governments in the short-term, but in the long-term they pay off (Farmer, 2017). The children of immigrants will eventually enter the workforce and contribute to the economy. If the children remain undocumented once they are ready to enter the workforce, there are programs which will allow them to work and contribute to the United States economy. These programs include DACA and The Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN). The taxpayer money used to educate them will be paid in full essentially.

Immigrant Worker's Regulatory Framework

-H-1B Visas

The Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Department requires that in order to be a recipient of the H-1B visa, applicants need to have a Bachelor's degree or

higher (Kerr and Lincoln, 2010). The H-1B Visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows United States companies to employ graduate-level workers in specialty occupations (Monroe, 2019). United States employers who are seeking highly skilled foreign professionals and are not able to fill the positions with qualified citizens, can submit a petition for an H-1B visa candidate (Cromwell, 2008).

However, with all the debates happening in Congress, American companies have a complicated process of hiring foreign skills workers. They have identified problems with the current system for hiring skilled foreign-born professionals on temporary visas and green cards. Companies who use H-1B visas, nearly forty (40) percent said the lack of H-1B visas caused by Congress' not raising the H-1B cap has negatively impacted their company when competing against other firms globally (Anderson and Platzer, 2006). American companies are not able to compete with other companies around the world and produce more revenue, not only for their company, but also for the United States economy, because of the cap impose on H-1B visas (Banerjee, 2006). Thus, if Congress would allow more working visas, the immediate effect would be the contribution to the growth of the economy. Lastly, work visas are essential to the growth of the United States economy (Kerr and Lincoln, 2010). The solution, however, is not to close the labor market to new immigrants and deport unauthorized immigrants, the United States should prioritize their employment-based immigration (Orrenius and Zavodny, 2012). In other words, the United States should increase high-skilled immigration but at the same time, have immigration programs for low-skilled workers. These companies should not be looking for highly educated individuals in other countries when there are many foreign-born individuals in the United States who were brought into the country as children and have been educated in

the United States, such as DACA recipients. A company that has utilized DACA recipients is Apple Inc. when they hired 443 DACA recipients because they come from diverse backgrounds and display a wide range of skills and experiences that will help them to tackle different problems from different perspectives that they may face as employees for Apple Inc. (Duffy, 2019)

-Taxation

Everyone that lives in the United States is required to pay state and local taxes. The state and local taxes that everyone pays are in the form of sales tax or excise tax. Excise tax are paid when people pay for gas for their vehicle or when they purchase alcohol. When it comes to paying The Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) is a number issued by the Internal Revenue Service to ensure individuals comply with United States tax laws even if they have not been awarded a social security number (Blum, 2006). ITIN's are not social security numbers and do not provide legal status or work authorization (Number, I. T. I. 2017). The use of the ITIN number, as a substitute for a Social Security number, provides a means to efficiently process and account for taxes for those not eligible for Social Security numbers (Lipman, 2006). The ITIN program was introduced in 1996 by allowing foreign nationals and others to pay taxes they are legally required to pay without providing legalization (Hill and Johnson, 2011). Studies have shown that over 80 percent of unauthorized immigrants have filed federal income taxes years prior to becoming legal permanent residence (Hill, Lofstrom, and Hayes 2010). ITIN holders are essential to the economy as confirmed in 2015 when 4.35 million people paid over 13.7 billion in net taxes using an ITIN. (American Immigration Council, 2018) The implementation of the ITIN

program, although it allows immigrants to file taxes, does not solve all the problems for immigrants to find employment.

Further, the majority of noncitizens that live and work in the United States are subject to paying income taxes, payroll tax deductions, excise tax, and estate and gift tax (Hill and Johnson, 2011). On average immigrants ultimately make state and local governments more money than native-born Americans (Farmer, 2017). Immigrants are making contributions through taxes or other forms of revenue more so than native-born Americans. DACA recipients are entitled to pay the same sales tax and excise tax as any other individual living in the United States. The sales and excise taxes that DACA recipients pay when they purchase goods help contribute revenue to the state and local government that they live in (Hill and Wiehe, 2018). Hence, the increase of enforcement of immigration will affect the federal budget as there will be a decrease in revenue from taxation. With higher border security and the improvement of internal implementation, additional federal funding would be required for personnel, improved border infrastructure, and technologies. However, with deportation, the amount of taxes collected would decrease since the number of undocumented people living and working in the country decreases (Martin and Midgley, 1996). The funding for these extra border security measures would need to come from other sources creating a change in the economy overall.

Composition of the Immigration Workforce

There has been a significant change in the structure and functioning of the United States labor market and the demographic composition of the labor force. The number of foreign-born workers increased from 12.9 million to 23.9 million. (Briggs, 2012) The jobs

that these members of the workforce are contributing include construction, building and grounds cleaning, maintenance, production, food preparation, transportation, and material movement. By 2010, the foreign-born population had soared to forty (40) million persons and was 12.9 percent of the populations (Camarota, 2011 as cited in Briggs, 2012) of this number, 11.2 million persons (or 3.7 percent of the population) were illegal immigrants (Passel and Cohn, 2011 as cited in Briggs, 2012). Many of the foreign-born adults over the age of 25 in the United States come from Latin American countries like Mexico, Central and South America and about 30 percent come from Europe (Briggs, 2012).

Impact of Deportation

At the moment, the total number of unauthorized immigrants' residing in the United States is about 11.3 million (Fairlie, 2012). If massive deportations are enforced the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) would immediately reduce (Warren and Kerwin, 2017). Mass deportation would immediately reduce the nation's GDP by 1.4 percent, and ultimately by 2.6 percent, and will continue to reduce cumulative GDP over ten years by \$4.7 trillion (Edwards and Ortega, 2016). With the implementation of mass deportation, revenue losses would begin at \$50 billion and rise to \$860.00 billion over ten years (Edwards and Ortega, 2016). With massive deportation, there will be \$900 billion lost reserves for the federal government over the next ten years (Hinojosa-Ojeda, 2012). The immigration labor and entrepreneurship are believed to be powerful forces of economic revitalization for communities struggling with population decline (Edwards and Ortega, 2016). Undocumented workers are unevenly spread across industries, the highest concentration of undocumented employees are in the field of agriculture, construction,

leisure, and hospitality sectors (Griffith, 2007). Massive deportations eventually would affect California by \$103 billion annually (Edwards and Ortega. 2016).

Unauthorized immigrant workers generally have fewer years of education. Earnings of undocumented workers are systematically lower than those of authorized immigrants and natives with the same observable characteristics (Bratsberg, Ragan, Jr, and Nasir, 2002). It is estimated that the share of undocumented workers is highest in the agriculture sector; crop production, forestry, logging, and fishing (Luckstead and Devadoss, 2019). Massive deportation will impact government budgets, and United States taxpayers would be most immediately impacted. It will be more expensive for the government to execute and enforce a policy to remove 11.3 unauthorized individuals (Papademetriou and Terrazas, 2009). The economic and fiscal harm from mass deportation is severe. The Center for American Progress previously estimated the direct cost to the government from physically deporting these many unauthorized immigrants at \$114 billion (Edwards and Ortega 2016). This will decrease government revenue and national income. The American Action Forum estimates that it will cost about \$100 to \$300 billion in total for removal and enforcement of the deportation (Gitis and Collins, 2015). An additional three hundred and fifteen (\$315) billion dollars in the prevention of individuals from entering illegally for the following twenty (20) years (Gitis and Collins, 2015).

Contribution

Many immigrants start their own businesses that contribute significantly to the United States economy (Saxenian, 2000). Many of the company's that immigrants create are very successful; they hire employees, they can export goods and services to other

countries. Immigrant business owners make important contributions to the United States economy (Fairlie and Lofstrom, 2015). Immigrant entrepreneurs start seventeen (17%) percent of all new businesses in the United States and represent thirteen (13%) percent of all business owners (Fairlie, 2012). Immigrants are contributing back to the economy by creating jobs that did not exist before. The businesses that they are creating are successful and continue to grow to create more jobs for individuals to continue being members of the workforce and not having to depend on assistance and be consider a public charge to the United States government. Having immigrant labor means that they are likely to buy a home if they immigrated to this country is likely they want to make a life here. Among immigrants, fifty-two (52%) percent own a home compared with seventy (70%) percent of Non-immigrant (Fairlie, 2012). Many immigrants want the American dream of owning their own property, if immigrants are homeowners, they are helping the economy; by paying property taxes (McConnell and Marcelli, 2007). They are helping the economy by paying their mortgage. Lastly, the current market capitalization of publicly traded immigrant founded venture backed companies exceeds Five hundred (\$500) billion dollars, adding significant value to the American economy (Anderson and Platzer, 2006). These immigrants are successful and can contribute to the economy and help the economy grow.

Education

Some argue that immigrants are a burden to the United States government. Individuals opposing immigration state that “Immigrants with less than a high school education cost the United States [eighty-nine thousand dollars] \$89,000 more than what they contribute in taxes over their lifetimes. In contrast, immigrants with more than a high

school education contribute [one-hundred and five thousand dollars] \$105,000 more in taxes than they use in public services. In other words, low skilled immigrants, much like low skilled United States natives, are a fiscal drain on taxpayers” (Orrenius and Zavodny 2012(b), p. 950).

Essentially, if education is one of the benefits immigrants reap off the United States; it seems that it would benefit the economy to educate immigrants as they would produce more towards the economy (Massey, Durand, and Malone, 2002). Robert Teranishi believed this notion, that enrollment in higher institutions of learning is necessary for the vulnerable population to succeed in this country. The skills needed to assimilate into American society will determine how successful an individual will be, which correlates with how much he or she will contribute to the economy (Teranishi, Suárez-Orozco, and Suárez-Orozco, 2011).

In 2010, twenty-six (26%) percent of immigrants in the labor force did not have a high school diploma compared to only five percent of the United States native born (Briggs, 2012). The reason why many of the immigrants in the labor force do not have a high school diploma is due to the fact that they come from some of the poorest countries on the planet, and they do not have the opportunity to an education or any training as many United States citizens do (Abrego, 2006).

The majority of the foreign workers are from Mexico and Central America (Cordero-Guzman and Nuñez, 2013). California has the most significant number of foreign-born members part of the workforce (Marcelli, 2004). Foreign born individuals between the ages of sixteen (16) to twenty-four (24), only about forty-six (46%) percent enrolled in school the majority of them are from Mexico and Central America (Cordero-

Guzman and Nuñez 2013). “Close to [fifty-five] 55 percent of workers from Mexico and Central America had less than a twelfth-grade [12] education” (Cordero-Guzman and Nuñez, 2013, p.21). Immigrant youth ages sixteen (16) to twenty-four (24) make about fifty-eight (58%) percent of the labor force out of the group seventy-eight (78%) percent were born in Mexico and Central America (Cordero-Guzman and Nuñez, 2013). Immigrant youth ages sixteen (16) to twenty-four (24) have the lowest unemployment rate at about twenty (20%) percent compare to native born youth whose unemployment rate is about twenty-eight (28%) percent (Cordero-Guzman and Nuñez, 2013). Immigrants that come to the United States are immigrating in order to work and better themselves to provide for their families have little educational backgrounds.

Previous Studies

Previous research has looked at DACA recipients with an education as opposed to DACA recipients without an education and they calculated that a DACA recipient with an education will earn a salary of approximately \$73,921 per year (Albright, Brannon, and McGee, 2018). DACA recipients without an education will earn approximately \$37,595 (Albright, Brannon, and McGee, 2018). The study also determined that DACA will generate a total revenue of \$39.2 billion to the United States government in the next ten (10) years (Albright, Brannon, and McGee, 2018).

Other studies have focused on high school students and how they cope with the emotions of living in the United States legally but still having the fear of deportation (Sahay, Thatcher, Nuñez, and Lightfoot, 2016). The study found that DACA youth feel that they are in a state of uncertainty. Their study also shows that DACA high school

students feel that they do not have any role models like themselves they could look up to (Sahay, Thatcher, Núñez, and Lightfoot, 2016). The study did not focus on how working DACA recipients cope with their temporary legal status and how they contribute to the United States economy.

Limitations in Existing Research

All of the previous research discusses the effects of deportation and the relationship of the immigrant to the economy, but it fails to concentrate on the young population (Dreby, 2012). The research discusses the impact that the economy will face if immigrants are deported in large (Brabeck and Xu, 2010). The previous research also explores how immigrants contribute to the United States economy (Dean and Wilson, 2009). Also, there needs to be research on the impact of the changes recently made to the immigration policy in relation to DACA. More emphasis on the exploration of how the termination of the DACA program has impacted the economy of the United States is needed.

Research Questions

Do DACA immigrants positively impact the United State economy?

Research Aim

The purpose of this study is to identify the contribution to the United States economy by DACA recipients between the ages eighteen (18) to thirty-two (32).

Research Purpose

The current research on the effect of DACA immigrants and their contribution to the United States economy is limited. This study hopes to fill the gaps and further understand the overall relationship between DACA immigrants and the United States economy.

Design

The hypothesis for this research study is that the contributions DACA recipients make to the United States economy are significant and their removal will negatively impact the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The statistical test that the researcher will use to test the hypothesis is a simple linear regression test. A cross sectional research design will be used for this study in order to identify the correlation between DACA and the United States economy. A cross sectional approach for this study is the best design because it will allow the researcher to proof that DACA recipients have a positive effect to the United States Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The data collected for this study will be quantitative data. Quantitative data is the best approach for collecting data for this study because the focus of the study is the monetary contribution by DACA recipients to the United States economy. The study will focus on the correlation between the independent variable and dependent variable. For this study the independent variable is DACA recipients. The dependent variable is the DACA recipients' monetary contributions to the United States economy. The researcher has identified DACA as the independent variable because it cannot be changed. If DACA recipients are deported, their contributions to the United States Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will be affected. Therefore the dependent variable is the United States GDP. Quantitative data will provide a specific number of the impact the removal of DACA individuals will have in the United States economy.

The researcher will follow the same sample group from each County for period of six (6) years. For the first year the sample group will be given the first survey (see appendix B) to gather general information about their tax contributions. Throughout the six (6) years

data will be collected every two (2) years with a follow up survey (see appendix C). The second survey has additional question that will address changes in the participants income through the years. Six (6) years was selected to be able to see any significant changes in the economic contribution by DACA recipients due to the fact that DACA recipients must reapply every two (2) years.

Sampling

The researcher will use a stratified approach to select the sample size. Stratified sampling approach is when the researcher divides the sample size data into groups. The researcher will focus on five (5) counties in Southern California, the counties selected are counties with big Metropolitan areas. The counties that have been selected are: County of Los Angeles, County of San Diego, County of San Bernardino, County of Orange, and County of Riverside. The researcher will request the number of DACA recipients employed by each County. From the total number of DACA employees working for each County the researcher will create two (2) subgroups of five (5%) males and five (5%) females for a total of ten (10%) percent of the DACA employee population from each County. The researcher will use a nominal unit of measurement for each variable used to calculate the data. Nominal is used because it allows the researcher to assign a number to better categorize the data.

Individuals that are willing to complete the survey, as an incentive, will be entered into a raffle to win one (1) out of five (5) fifty (\$50) dollar gift cards. Governing bodies for each county will be given five (5) gift cards to raffle to the DACA recipients that

participated and work for their Counties. The raffles will be conducted inhouse to reduce any identifiable markers that may affect the individual after the research is completed.

Demographic Analysis

The focus will be working individuals who have been recipients of programs such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) or individuals that are using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) because quantitative data can be obtained and if there is indeed an impact to the economy. The age group for this focus group can range from eighteen (18) to thirty-two (32) since that is the age group that was protected under the DACA policy.

Data Collection

Using a quantitative approach will help the researcher measure the effects of the independent (DACA recipients) and dependent variables (DACA contributions to the economy). In order to properly address the research question a cross sectional approach with a quantitative data collection will be the best research design. First, the researcher will reach out to the governing bodies of each county with a letter explaining to them the research, the purpose of the study, and the outcome that the researcher hopes to find. A sample of the letter is located at appendix A. The counties that will be contacted by the researcher will be County of Los Angeles, County of San Bernardino, County of Orange, County of San Diego, and County of Riverside. In order to reduce identifiable markers, the name of the counties will not be displayed in the research findings. Instead the counties will be given an alias with a number.

Surveys

A survey has been created, a sample of the survey can be located on appendix B and appendix C. Once the sampling size has been selected, individuals will have the option to complete the survey in paper form with the researcher or if they feel more comfortable completing the survey at home individuals can provide their email to have a link emailed to them. The researcher has created an online survey using survey monkey. The link to the survey is <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-WPVJQ8KF7/>. When an individual decides to complete the survey from the comfort of their own home they have seven (7) days to complete the survey.

Discussion

The study aims to help guide current or future administrations implement immigration policies that would benefit not only the American population, but also the United States economy and the individual immigrant. By understanding how immigration policies affect the United States economy, public perception, and immigration influx, the United States government can implement better immigration policies.

Ethical Consideration

Due to the current situation with the sentiment in the country towards immigration, some DACA recipients may not be willing to participate in a survey. DACA recipients will be assured that all information disclosed is for research purposes only. Information that could be used to identify them will not be disclosed, and all data will be confidential. The only individuals looking at the information will be the researcher doing the study and the professor overseeing the researcher project. The professor would not have access to names or any information that would identify the county or the employee. The researcher will ensure the participants that all information provided will be kept confidential in an encrypted flash drive with password protection. Data will not be kept on any cloud service provider due to possible hacker attacks, and the counties and employee's identification may be compromised.

Before the survey is completed by each participant, the participant will have to sign a disclosure agreement informing him or her that all information provided will be confidential, and any information they disclose will not be given to any law enforcement agencies. The participant will also be informed that their personal information will not be

published or any information that could identify them. Instead of using their organizations names they will be given an alias name with a numeric number. Participants will be informed that they do not have to answer any questions they do not feel comfortable answering. They are able to withdraw from the survey at any point. Participants will be aware that no repercussions will be taken if they do not wish to finish the survey. Participants will be advised that if they want a copy of the study a copy will be provided to them when the research has been completed.

Methodological Limitations

Research studies will have limitations and even more so when dealing with large, complicated, and ongoing problems. The first possible limitation of this study is the openness of Counties willing to share their employee's data for the fear that Immigration Customs enforcement agency (ICE) will try to do raids to detain their employees. Due to the current climate of fear and distrust individuals have with the United States government from being detained or deported, the amount of collected data may be affected. On the other hand, another possible limitation is the overwhelming amount of data collected since the population of undocumented immigrants is high in Metropolitan area, such as Southern California. Even though the researcher will focus on a specific group of individuals to conduct surveys, the ten (10%) percent of DACA recipients working for five (5) different counties may still be large. This large data can prove difficult to manage, but the effectiveness of the surveys will make up for the amount of data.

Conclusion

The overall goal of this research is to obtain qualifying information about the impact of policies surrounding DACA that can be utilized to understand the role of undocumented workers and the economy. To outline all the contributions that undocumented immigrants have and are currently providing to the US economy can be informative. The study will also show the federal and state funded resources being used by undocumented workers that also have an impact on the economy. The goal is to look at all of these variables and come to a conclusion about the role immigrants play in the US economy. Politicians make their decision on what is presented to them and what impacts the communities they are representing. They do not have the time to be out in the field making observations of what is happening with the workforce and what individuals are contributing to society. With this study, they will be able to understand how undocumented immigrants are participating and the value, if any, they bring to the US economy. More research needs to be done in the effectiveness of immigration policies to determine if the continuous changing policies will help the US economy or cripple the economy.

Appendix A

Saul Garcia - Graduate Student
California State University Northridge
18111 Nordhoff Street
Northridge, CA 91330

July 5, 2020

Apple Inc.
Atten: Tim Cook
1 Apple Park Way
Cupertino, CA 95014

Dear Mr. Cook,

My name is Saul R. Garcia, I am a graduate student at California State University Northridge. As part of my graduate requirements, I need to conduct research for my graduate project. For my graduate project I am focusing on the impact it would cause the United States economy if the current presidential administration goes forward with deporting all Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients. I have put together a series of questions that will help determine the amount DACA recipients contribute to the US economy. Studies suggest that DACA recipients work in a wide range of industries and occupations.

If you decide to answer the questionnaire that I included with this letter, I assure you that the information you provide will not be disclosed to any government agency and is only for research purposes. If you decide to participate in the survey, your answers would be confidential and could remain anonymous. I also included a self-addressed envelope with paid postage.

I am also including this link to the online survey if you prefer to answer the survey online or share the link with any corporations that you do business with that has hired DACA recipients. the link is <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-WPVJQ8KF7/>

I would like to thank you in advance for your participation. If you have any question feel free to reach me or my advisor Professor Anais Valiquette.

Sincerely,

Saul Garcia

Appendix B

The data collection process will follow the standards and methods outlined by the California State University, Northridge.

The following questions are some example of some of the possible proposed questions for the survey address to individuals;

1. Name of county of employment? (optional to answer)
2. Years of service?
3. Gender? (male / female) circle one
4. Age group: 18 – 22, 23 – 28, 29 – 32, and 33 – 38 (circle one)
5. What is your current job title?
6. Annual gross income?
7. Age when enter the United States?
8. Age when applied for DACA?
9. Level of Education: High School, Associated Degree, Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, or Doctorated (Ph.D) Degree (circle one)

The outcomes of this survey may reveal additional information that may not have been discussed in the literature review of this thesis project.

Appendix C

The data collection process will follow the standards and methods outlined by the California State University, Northridge.

The following questions are some example of some of the possible proposed questions for the survey address to individuals;

1. Name of county of employment? (optional to answer)
2. Years of service?
3. Gender? (male / female) circle one
4. Age group: 18 – 22, 23 – 28, 29 – 32, and 33 – 38 (circle one)
5. What is your current job title?
6. Has your job title change from the last 24 months? If Yes, what was your previous jog title?
7. Annual gross income?
8. Current level of education: High School, some college, Associated Degree, Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, or Doctorated (Ph.D) Degree (circle one)

The outcomes of this survey may reveal additional information that may not have been discussed in the literature review of this thesis project.

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