

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY SAN MARCOS

THESIS SIGNATURE PAGE

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF ARTS

IN

SOCIOLOGICAL PRACTICE

THESIS TITLE: The Lives of Latina/o Children in Mixed Immigration Status Families

AUTHOR: Diana García-Mellado

DATE OF SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE: May 03, 2017

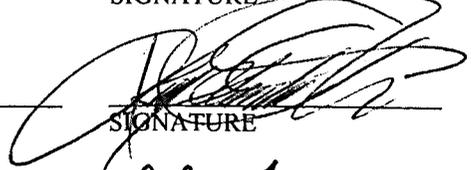
THE THESIS HAS BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE THESIS COMMITTEE IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN
SOCIOLOGICAL PRACTICE.

Dr. Marisol Clark-Ibáñez
THESIS COMMITTEE CHAIR


SIGNATURE

5-10-17
DATE

Dr. Xuan Santos
THESIS COMMITTEE MEMBER


SIGNATURE

5/10/17
DATE

Dr. Christopher Bickel
THESIS COMMITTEE MEMBER


SIGNATURE

5/10/17
DATE

The Lives of Latina/o Children in Mixed Immigration Status Families

Thesis Submitted by:

Diana García-Mellado

Department of Sociology

Graduate Program in Sociological Practice

California State University San Marcos

May 10, 2017

Thesis Committee Members:

Dr. Marisol Clark-Ibáñez

Dr. Xuan Santos

Dr. Chris Bickel

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	3
Acknowledgements.....	4
Introduction.....	7
Statement of the Problem.....	8
Literature Review.....	9
Social Services.....	10
Deportation.....	14
Identity.....	21
Theory.....	26
Methodology.....	28
Photo Elicitation Interviewing (PEI).....	30
Gaining Entry & Participants.....	32
Sample.....	33
Continual Assent in the Research Process.....	33
The Photo Elicitation Interview Process.....	34
Ethical Implications.....	35
Findings and Discussion.....	35
Children and Politics.....	36
Deportation.....	42
Separation.....	44
Family.....	49
Storytelling as a Source of Resiliency.....	51
Interests and Likes – Children “Being Children.....	55
Technology and Social Media.....	59
Recommendations.....	61
Conclusion.....	64
References.....	67
Appendix A.....	78
Appendix B.....	80

ABSTRACT

This study focused on the experiences of Latina/o undocumented and U.S. born children growing up in mixed immigration status families and explored how they navigate their worlds. This study was employed the method called, Photo Elicitation Interviews (PEI). Seven children took photographs to document what was important in their lives. They shared their photographs with the researcher, which led to discussions about the images they captured. The participants included 3 undocumented children and 4 U.S. born children, ranging in age from 11 to 14. Careful analysis of the photo interviews yielded the following five primary themes: children's awareness of politics; deportation and fears of family separation; children's play and fun interests; and the active role of technology and social media in their lives. The children in this study emphasized the fears of punitive immigration policies, including an acute awareness of the immigration statuses in their families. They reflected on their social realities, which was driven by fears, characterized by feelings of sadness, and experienced heightened awareness of deportation. Children in this study also demonstrated remarkable resilience and involvement as they incorporated their unique challenges into strategies of potential activism. Overall, this suggests maintained hope and optimism.

KEYWORDS: Children, Children and Politics, Children and Technology, Children and the President, Deportation, Immigration, Mixed-Immigration Status Families, Photo-elicitation Interviews, Photo-voice, Resiliency, Storytelling, Undocumented, Undocumented Families

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This M.A. thesis is the product of empowerment, mentorship, guidance, support, love, strength and resilience. These are the tools that have driven my academic journey and motivated me to accomplish a degree that seemed impossible, just some years back. I want to acknowledge the influential people who provided me with such powerful tools in order to tackle the challenges that crossed my path while navigating the academic institution and negotiating life. I am eternally grateful to my family, committee members, friends, and the children who participated in my study, for forming part of this process.

Para mis queridos padres: Adelit Mellado y Mauricio Garcia, ustedes son mi motor de vida y la razon por la cual segui adelante con mis estudios. Esta Maestria es el resultado de sus sacrificios, esfuerzos, apoyo, amor y fortaleza. El proceso para escribir mi tesis fue largo, doloroso, y aveces frustrante, al punto que quise darme por vencida en varias ocasiones pero gracias a las enseñanzas de vida que ustedes me han dado, segui adelante. Este gran logro se lo debo a ustedes por todo lo que han sacrificado para que mi hermano y yo salgamos adelante. Y ahora puedo decirles que sus sacrificios no fueron en vano. En mi corazon y mente siempre llevo sus sabios consejos y el gran amor que me dan. Gracias por ser mi mas grande inspiracion y por no dejarme sola en ningun momento durante este proceso. Al fin lo logramos! Agradecida por vida con ustedes. Los amo!

To my brother Edgar Garcia: As your older sister, I always wanted to set a positive example for you. This is one of the reasons why I pursued this journey. I hope that I've made you proud. Thank you for being a supportive brother and having my back no matter what. I love you with all my heart.

Para mis abuelitas: MamáElena gracias por sus bendiciones, oraciones y por apoyarme desde el otro lado de la frontera. Abuelita Maria Felix, se que desde el cielo esta conmigo y que esta muy orgullosa. Despues de su muerte pense que no me quedaria fuerza para terminar mi maestria pero usted siempre fue fuerte y yo sigo sus pasos. Las amo!

To my committee members/mentors/professors: I am so thankful to all of you for your mentoring, expertise and empowerment during this process. Your mentorship, guidance, assistance, and support have been instrumental to my academic formation. You all have inspired me to become the best I can be, not only as a scholar but also in other areas of my life.

Dr. Marisol Clark-Ibáñez, thank you for motivating me to embark on this journey four years ago. Your enthusiasm and passion for what you do has been strong encouragement since day one. You have helped me develop my research agenda and sharpen my scholarly focus. Thank you so much for your nurture throughout stressful moments and for reminding me that things can get done despite the difficulties. I feel honored to have you as my graduate advisor.

Dr. Xuan Santos, I want to express sincere appreciation for your academic and emotional support throughout this process. The knowledge that you produce helped me understand Sociology in a different way, and I learned to love it even more. Thank you for always instilling in me courage, trust, and confidence. Because of your mentorship, I have learned to always reflect on my privileges as a graduate student in order to help others. I am thankful for everything.

Dr. Christopher Bickel, I want to thank you for helping me to clarify and organize my writing. Your instruction and feedback have strengthened my work and showed me how to present it. Thank you for providing so many wonderful compliments about my work and for being extremely supportive at a personal and academic level. You have impacted my academic journey in a powerful way.

I value every single one of you and feel honored to have you as role models.

To my compañera y amiga Erendira Irais Hernandez: Thank you for making the graduate experience fun. I look back to the beginning of this journey and I feel happy that we experienced it together. Thanks to this program, we created memories that will never be forgotten and we established a strong friendship that will always remain. I am thankful for all the support you provided, not only academically but emotionally as well. I am proud of us for what we've accomplished and for empowering

one another during the process. We are occupying spaces that weren't meant for womxn of color and breaking barriers. Not only are you my colleague and an amazing scholar but my best friend. Gracias por todo amiga. #friendshipgoals.

To my special friends and family: Familia, muchas gracias por el apoyo infinito hacia mis estudios. Gracias por entender mi ausencia durante varias ocasiones familiares tan especiales. Agradesco mucho sus bonitos deseos y el que creyeran en mi siempre. Ustedes forman gran parte de este logro. L@s quiero mucho familia. Arely, thank you for supporting me throughout my education ever since we graduated high school together. You have been my best friend and know exactly what this means for my family and I. Gracias por tus porras y por siempre expresarme lo orgullosa que te sientes de mi. You have been by my side in every area of my life ever since the beginning of our friendship and I am happy to have you as part of this accomplishment. Te quiero mucho mi mejor amiga. Luz, thank you for keeping me sane throughout this process. You were constantly pushing me and I appreciate the encouragement and support, not only with school but in my personal life as well. I don't know what I would've done without your texts and kind words.

To the children in my study: Thank you for welcoming me into your worlds, for courageously sharing your unique experiences and allow me to present your stories. I am grateful for your participation and the trust that you posited in me. You are all brave children for maintaining resilient in the midst of punitive immigration laws that affect your lives as members of mixed immigration status families. Despite the challenges you all face, you are all powerful agents of social change as you have demonstrated in this study. Your contribution to society is valued. I know that you deeply feel the inequalities of an oppressive immigration system but I am hopeful that your strong voices catalyze the attention of society. It's only fair to reclaim our humanity! You inspire me to continue on challenging and infiltrating the academic pipeline. Thank you, kiddos!

INTRODUCTION

Immigration status has been of concern not only for my parents and I, who are undocumented, but for my brother as well, who was born in the United States. I can recall my mother's telephone conversations with her mother and sisters in México about the urge to save money in order to buy a house and small business in our homeland because she wanted to be closer to her family and since she had no documents she couldn't travel. I could see that these conversations often caused tears and frustration in my mother. She had dreams for me, but she also had dreams for my brother. My mother was aware that if we left to México, my brother would be taken away from the privileges that U.S. citizenship grants. If we stayed I would be facing challenges that would limit my freedom in this country. She wanted the best for all of us, but living under a mixed immigration status complicated our lives. It has meant living with harsh laws rooted in U.S. immigration policy designed to oppress the lives of Latina/o immigrants, regardless of immigration status.

Regardless of status, Latina/o immigrant families all feel the oppressive nature of immigration enforcement. Furthermore, the challenges that children growing up in mixed immigration status families face can highly impact their lives as they experience unrecognized developmental threats as a result of their families' experiences (Suárez-Orozco, Yoshikawa, and Teranishi, 2011). As I think about my mother's tears and frustration, I am reminded of other families that negotiate multiple immigration statuses as well. These families are defined as "mixed status" immigrant families, which include one or more U.S. citizen children or other authorized family members in addition to unauthorized family members, such as siblings, parents, or extended family members (Mapp and Hornung, 2016). My interest in mixed immigration status families derives from my personal experiences. The purpose of this study is

to understand how Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented children in mixed immigration status families experience and navigate their worlds.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is currently estimated that approximately 11 million unauthorized immigrants live in the USA (Warren, 2016). Approximately two thirds are from Mexico and Central America; specifically about half are from Mexico, and 15 % from countries in Central America (Passel & Cohn, 2014). The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) states that 5.1 million children in the USA live with at least one unauthorized immigrant parent (Capps, Fix, & Zong, 2016). The vast majority of these children—4.1 million—are US citizens (Capps, Fix, & Zong, 2016), creating mixed-status families.

The condition of mixed immigrant families is a pressing social issue that needs further attention. U.S. immigration policies shape the opportunities for 16.6 million mixed immigrant families (Dreby, 2012). The experiences of mixed immigrant status families need to be in sharper focus, especially the effects on children growing up in these families. Children of immigrant parents have been the fastest growing group of the nation's child population in the United States between 1990 and 2007, accounting for 77 percent of the increase of children born in the United States (Fortuny and Chaudry, 2009). As of 2009, the number of immigrant youth defined as children under the age of 18 who are either foreign born or U.S. born to immigrant parents was 17.3 million, or 23.2 percent of all children in the United States. By 2050 they are projected to make up one-third of more than 100 million U.S. children.

With rapidly changing demographics and restrictive immigration laws, it is essential to concern the voices of children in mixed immigrant status families and pay attention to their unique experiences. The nature of immigration policy dehumanizes individuals in mixed status

families through practices that threaten and harm, such as deportation procedures, which is when a migrant is formally removed from the United States and is banned from reentering (Golash-Boza, 2012). Immigration policies and practices are impacting the lives of children growing up in mixed status immigrant families. Children living in mixed immigration status households live with fear of deportation threats of parents or themselves. They often feel scared, sad and worried about possible separation. As a result, children may interpret and process their realities as depriving and cruel. This can be traumatic and have negative effects on children's overall well-being (Suárez-Orozco, Yoshikawa, and Teranishi, 2011).

Aside from the statistics and numbers, dominant narratives about immigrants are primarily. It can be easy to dismiss the unique needs and challenges that children in mixed immigrant families encounter on a daily basis. Therefore, it is of high importance to bring attention to their experiences in this country and the impact that a mixed status has on them. Policy makers, the media, and society in general tend to individualize immigration instead of examining the larger structural processes that affect children in these families who are also contributors to our society and deserve to be understood through their own realities. Children are rarely given a voice. My research focuses on how Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented children in mixed-immigration status families experience and navigate their worlds.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on immigration in the United States typically has reflected on men and labor, leaving out the children of undocumented parents and how children are affected by their parents' immigration status. It is important that immigration is also studied in terms of family formation in the United States. When we refer to individuals as immigrants, we often see them in relation to their country of origin, immigration status and as laborers in the United States, while ignoring

the whole person and his/her social networks. Many times we might ignore that they are parents of not only undocumented children but U.S. citizen children as well. Immigration discourse should also reflect on the policies that affect the family as a whole due to a mixed status (e.g., undocumented, U.S. born) that exists within the household. The effects of migratory status resonate within families and the children living in them because they are also aware of the realities of living as undocumented migrants in the United States, regardless of being U.S. born or non-U.S. born. This literature review reflects the diverse ways that undocumented families and children interact with American social institutions.

Social Services

Social service utilization is particularly challenging for mixed-status families comprising of U.S. born children who live with undocumented parents. Children in mixed-status families are at risk and precisely the types of clients targeted by many social services, social workers, and public health organizations (Vargas, 2013). Mixed immigrant status families are less likely to participate in public social service programs such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, and food stamps (Capps, Hagan and Rodriguez, 2004). While, unauthorized parents are not eligible for these programs, their U.S. born children are righteous of the benefits of such programs as they are citizens protected under the 14th amendment – “all persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside...” yet, children in these families are less likely to be enrolled in needed social service programs (Vargas, 2013).

Major programs, including Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) provide economic, health, and nutritional support to low-income

families, including many that work at low wages. Research suggests that these programs reduce hardship, improve health and nutrition (particularly for children), and contribute to stability in families' work and home lives and better outcomes for children (Cohen-Ross and Hill 2003; Miller et al. 2008; Mills, Compton, and Golden 2011; Nord and Golla 2009). However, even though immigrant families may have greater need for these programs as a result of low wages and limited health insurance in comparison to U.S.-born citizens, these low-income, working immigrant families have less access to health and human services programs. This limited access reflects stricter program eligibility requirements, and additional barriers to access that lead eligible immigrants to take up these benefits at lower rates than U.S.-born citizens (Capps and Fortuny 2006; Capps et al. 2004; Chaudry and Fortuny 2010; Fix and Passel 2002; Friedberg and Jaeger 2009).

In a study done by the Urban Institute's research team, they visited multiple locations within the Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Texas between May 2011 and September 2011. The purpose of the study was to understand local variations in immigrant access to health and human services; therefore, the sites in these states were purposely selected. Within each state, researchers conducted in-person and phone consultations with key service providers and public officials including officials from state and local public agencies responsible for administering Medicaid/CHIP, SNAP, and TANF programs, and law enforcement officials. Researchers also spoke with *community-based, nonprofit service providers* including managers of state and local health care organizations (e.g., federally qualified health care organizations) and community-based and faith-based organizations that immigrant families turn to for assistance. In addition, researchers spoke with *advocates* including directors of grassroots and statewide advocacy organizations, local community leaders, and immigration legal aid experts.

In this same study, all consultations conducted before and during the site visits followed a conversation guide designed to elicit information about respondents' experiences serving immigrant clients and their knowledge of standard practices, barriers, and innovative or promising practices influencing immigrants' access to health and human services. Where applicable, researchers probed relevant themes to understand the intersection of policy and practice across the primary health and human services programs (SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, and CHIP). Overall, the team received feedback from 104 individuals across 58 different organizations in Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Texas. Findings in this particular study found that though many immigrants and/or their children may be eligible for health and human social services, consultations in the study revealed that many may never apply for these benefits and others may begin but not complete the application process. Factors that contribute to lower application and take-up rates among eligible immigrants included fear and mistrust. Parents feared that showing up at a public agency to apply for benefits on behalf of their U.S.-citizen children would expose them to immigration enforcement authorities and result in deportation. Moreover, for those who were lawfully present within a mixed status family, the fear remained because they felt hesitant about another family member who was unauthorized and their legal status to become known.

The limit or delay of services for children due to fear of deportation and that lead to avoidance of institutions (Abrego and Menjivar, 2011; Yoshikawa, 2012), or withdraw from programs altogether (Hagan et al., 2003; Xu and Brabeck, 2012) can be best described as "legal violence" (Abrego and Menjivar, 2011). Moreover, legal violence serves laws that protect the rights of some while marginalizing other groups, leaving the unprotected and ultimately more vulnerable. Unauthorized children and parents are ineligible for all publicly funded health

services except emergency room care, which does not provide financial protection nor comprehensive access. For example, in 2012, approximately 2 million undocumented youth became eligible for the 2-year deportation relief under DACA program. Although, they are considered lawful (Gonzales, et al., 2014; Martinez, 2014), DACA recipients continue to face the same restrictions to health coverage as other undocumented immigrants. This stratified access based on legal status disrupts familial ties and dynamics as it may lead to preferential treatment of some children as well as resentments and hierarchal relations within the family (Menjivar and Abrego, 2009), creating dilemmas for parents who may avoid services altogether to reduce favoritism (Perreira et al., 2012).

In a study by Castañeda and Melo (2014), they reported on health care seeking experiences of mixed-status families in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of South Texas and the impact of the recent health care reform (Affordable Care Act). The researchers utilized qualitative ethnographic methods that included 44 semi-structured interviews with mixed status families and 43 interviews with health care providers, caseworkers, and public health providers. Results indicated that that changes accompanying the health care reform directly and indirectly affect mixed-status households' ability to access care. The researchers found unequal access to care through impact of legal status. For example, a participant in the study who is mother of 5 children (3 born in the U.S. and 2 in Mexico) described the difficult decisions parents make when undocumented children become ill. Other parents in the study shared same feelings and disclosed that instead of medical treatment, treatment consisted of home remedies, over-the-counter medication, and leftover medications.

Further in their study findings, the researchers report the result in unintended consequences for U.S. citizen children. For instance, another participant, mother to 4 U.S. born

children, confirmed previous findings from other studies which have shown that undocumented parents want to avoid damaging future chances for legalization (Abrego and Menjivar, 2011; Park, 2011). Many participants, social workers, and eligibility specialists described families' hesitancy to enroll U.S. citizen children in programs such as Medicaid due to fear of deportation or jeopardizing chances of future naturalization. Similarly, other participants in this same study stated the fear to take part in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program while pregnant. Other research has come to show that in fact, health care accessibility for mixed immigrant status families, predominantly on Latino mixed immigrant families have multiple indirect and direct negative effects on the families and their children (Zuckerman, Waidman, and Lawton, 2011). Contributions to social service access disparities among immigrant children, some more affecting mixed status families (Mendoza, 2009), these families are at the margins and experience a multitude of dramatic stress and marginalization, from a social exclusion standpoint (i.e. lack of access to social services) (Yoshiwaka, Godfrey, and Rivera, 2008).

Deportation

Although, mixed-status family members who are born in the United States are granted the rights and privileges that result from U.S. citizenship, those who are not can be detained and deported at any time, thereby creating a constant state of threat and stress for the entire family (Capps and Fortuny, 2006). Between July 1, 2010, and September 31, 2012, nearly 23% of all deportations or 204,810 deportations were issued for parents with U.S. citizen children (Wessler, 2012). In addition, Homeland Security reported that 315,943 immigrants were removed from the U.S. in 2014 alone (U.S. Homeland Security, 2014), which is added to the nearly two million people who had been deported since President Obama took office (Corones, 2015). The number of these removals, has progressively increased since 1990 (Passel et al., 2013). Deportations are

the result of federal policies that began over two decades ago as well as more recent legislations; these have profoundly affected the lives of immigrants and their families (Kanstroom, 2008).

On average, there are over 33,000 men and women separated from their families and kept in immigration detention facilities in the United States yet, most of these facilities receive scant attention because of their remote locales (Jacobson and Durden, 2014). As a consequence, the government's enforcement of its immigration policy has created several problems. For example, the foster care system is now more overwhelmed; families are being destroyed; and children are being emotionally, psychologically, physically, and academically affected by these deportations. ICE is separating family members, especially undocumented parents from their citizen children, by deporting parents and leaving children behind in either the foster care system or with relatives (Wessler, 2011).

Children living in mixed status-families face several stressors that pose psychiatric risk, including loss of friends, family, language difficulties, poverty, discrimination, isolation, fear and hopelessness (Mahoney, 2008). These children, regardless of legal status, carry greater psychological risk than children from documented families. This is highlighted in Ortega, Horwitz, Fang and Kuo's (2009) study findings when they found that Mexican children with undocumented parents have greater parent-reported developmental risks than Mexican and white children with documented parents. Living in mixed-status families, children experience a tremendous amount of stress and anxiety, especially regarding deportation; they live in a culture of fear (Mass et al., 2016). Further literature indicates that the psychological stress suffered by undocumented adult immigrants can be transferred to young children, which is then carried into adolescence (Yoshikawa, 2011). In addition, the American Psychological Association (2012) explains that these children are also at heightened risk of mental health issues, including anxiety,

fear, depression and anger. Their stress levels are high, and family relationships often become strained because of the constant threat of family separation (Chavez, Lopez, Englebrecht, and Viramontez Anguiano, 2012). Roblyer, Grzywacz, and ApanecatI-Ibarra (2015) found that major sources of stress for those in mixed-status families include fear of their loved ones not returning home, encounters with police, and family fragmentation. Deportations in the community add to stress levels in children, who then have more reasons to fear the same will happen to their family (Human Impact Partners, 2013).

Studies on immigration status and immigration enforcement have elucidated the impacts of such events on younger children. Policy reports examined what happened to mainly U.S. born children after workplace immigration raids detained and deported parents without contingency plans in place to care for their children (Chaudry et al. 2010) and looked at the number of children of deportees being placed in the U.S. foster care system: 5,100 in 2011 (Applied Research Center 2011). A quantitative and ethnographic project in New York City explored the role of parents' immigration status in shaping young children's well-being, looking at the emotional well-being and cognitive development of young children in Mexican, Dominican, African American, and Chinese families, finding cognitive delays among children of undocumented immigrants, mediated by parents' economic hardship, psychological distress, and difficult work situations, as well as by children's lower access to center-based care (Yoshikawa 2011). Interviews with parents and children in New Jersey and Ohio showed that children of immigrants had very strong fears that their parents will be deported and separated from them, sometimes even if their parents were legal immigrants, suggesting that deportations are creating a broad sense of fear in immigrant communities that shapes children's emotional well-being (Dreby 2012).

Studies on detention of undocumented parents have found that detentions during deportation proceedings create a state of crisis for the family, especially children. When detained, parents are generally not released pending deportation hearings, but rather, are held in detention as they await hearings; this leaves no time for to see family or to make appropriate arrangements or preparations, including childcare for their children (Androff et al., 2011). For example, a Guatemalan indigenous Mayan woman was detained in a raid at a Massachusetts factory where she was manufacturing backpacks for U.S. soldiers in Iraq (Brabeck, Lykes, and Hershberg, 2011). In the study, it was disclosed that this woman's 2-year-old son was with a babysitter when she was detained; he was waiting by the windowsill, as was his habit, for his mother on the day she didn't return from work. Furthermore, it was found that as a consequence during the separation, the child suffered from tantrums, nightmares, difficulty sleeping, eating, speaking, and extreme separation anxiety. This case supports similar research that have found children affected in multiple psychological and behavioral aspects, including loss of appetite, difficulties sleeping, anxiety, increased fears, crying, withdrawal and clinginess (Chaudry et al., 2010).

Often separations are indefinite, altering family dynamics and even the family structure in enduring fashion (Enchautegui & Menjívar, 2015). Families end up divided, reconfigured or even broken up as a result of deportation (Hagan, Castro & Rodriguez, 2010), and new step-families are formed (Menjívar et al., 2016) with critical consequences for all members, both in the U.S. and in the origin countries. Long-term consequences for children include changes in daily routines, family roles and responsibilities, and new childcare arrangements (Dreby, 2015). In addition, since the overwhelming majority of deportees are men, remaining women often abruptly become single mothers in charge of all financial, household and childcare

responsibilities (Dreby, 2015). These new female single-headed households struggle with financial hardship in addition to the emotional stress of the separation. Further Studies also find significant cognitive, developmental and psychological effects on children of undocumented parents (Brabeck, Lykes & Hunter, 2015; Yoshikawa, 2011; Yoshikawa et al., 2016). The possibility of losing a parent to deportation, having to hide a family member's legal status, and living in fear of authority and in social marginality has consequences on children's mental wellbeing including high rates of anxiety, depression, fear, attention problems and rule-breaking behaviors (Delva, Horner, Sanders, Lopez and Doering-White, 2013).

Studies have also found that because fear of deportation is rooted in the everyday lives of mixed-status families, they are faced with limited options. Parents try to insulate their children from these fears and risks, but at a great expense: families limit public exposure and disengage with the surrounding community and social supports (Hagan et al., 2010). Moreover, children living in mixed-status families are constantly pressured to remain under the radar, inconspicuous to authorities and community members, in order to protect family members from exposure (Goździak, 2014; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2011). A few studies have shown parents in mixed-status families avoid going out in public, even keeping children home from school, or refrain from engaging in certain activities or seeking help for employment, health, and language skills difficulties they encounter (Hagan et al., 2010; Hardy et al., 2012). When an undocumented parent of a U.S. born child is detained that parent must make what Zayas (2010) calls a "Solomonic decision." The undocumented parent may move the child to a linguistically and culturally foreign environment, where the child will likely lose access to the educational, health, and other benefits afforded to them as a U.S. citizen, or they may leave the child in the United States under care of others (Brabeck et al., 2011; Dreby, 2012a, 2012b; Lykes, Brabeck, and

Hunter, 2013). These others often times include extended family or friends and in some cases, the child welfare system.

Forced decisions upon deportation proceedings of moving their children to a foreign country or leaving them behind suggest that families end up forming transnational families. When this happens, families tend to struggle emotionally because of the long-term separation caused by the restrictive immigration policies (Abrego, 2014; Dreby, 2010; Montes, 2013). Further research uses the perspective of social control theory and strain theory (Cullen and Agnew, 2006), to highlight how a parent's detention and deportation disrupts family processes and family resources; specifically, income, parental involvement, and parental supervision all decline, while school and housing instability increase. Dreby (2012a, 2012b) found that one quarter of families in her sample that experienced deportation were unable to keep their transnational family together post-deportation. In addition, Dreby (2012a, 2012b) pointed out, when a parental deportation results in a single parent household, it's typically a single mother household (often with a tenuous legal status), as deportees continue to be male at overwhelming rates (Brotherton and Barrios, 2011; Kohli et al., 2011).

Children in a single parent household are 4.2 times more likely to live in poverty, and the poverty rate is double for single mother households compared to single father households (Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund, 2011). Dreby (2012a, 2012b) continues in her study, that for family members remaining in the United States, loss of the deported person's income lead to housing insecurity, food insecurity, and sliding from low income into poverty. In addition, findings suggest that the loss of the deported parent creates a crisis in childcare, and older siblings may be increasingly relied on for care of younger siblings. Research has also found that when deportation causes the forming of transnational families, as a result of the employment

challenges and inability to fulfill the provider role, as well as the stigma, shame, and depressive symptoms, many deported fathers lose contact with their children in the United States. In this way, deportation severs paternal bonds, and forces many single mothers into very difficult positions as both family caretakers and providers (Dreby, 2012a, 2012b). For female deportees, it has been found that deportation increases the risk for physical and sexual assaults and increased prostitution in the context of financial insecurity (Robertson et al., 2012).

In the case that undocumented and deported parents decide to bring children with them to their country of origin, these children are called de facto deportees (Argueta, 2010). Just as children left in the United States under a single parent household and/or with other people face abundant challenges, children who return with deported parents to the host country face a number of difficulties. According to the Pew Hispanic Center (2012), 300,000 U.S. citizen children have returned to Mexico alone since 2005 (Passel et al., 2013). Additional research, finds these children often feeling like exiles, and experience difficulties with language and discrimination (Boehm, 2011). Children in these situations are returned to living situations of extreme poverty, as documented in *La Prensa*, which described the experiences of an 11-year-old U.S. born girl who returned with deported parents to a remote Guatemalan village. As a result of the sudden and drastic change in standard of living, she began to experience health problems, dietary issues, academic regression, and loss of English Fluency (Ventura, 2012).

Deportation impacts entire communities as it instills fear of family separation and distrust of anyone assumed to be associated with the government, including local police, school personnel, health professionals, and social service professionals (Menjivar and Abrego, 2012). Moreover, the fear that deportation instills, extends beyond the undocumented population, to include documented Latino immigrants who also learn to fear deportation, experience

discrimination, and as a result, feel less optimistic about the future for their children and more mistrusting of the government (Becerra, Androff, Cimino, Wagaman and Blanchard, 2013). The potential for deportation of a family member creates a state of constant hyper-vigilance and fear for an entire family, even if only one member is at risk (Chavez, Lopez, Englebrecht, & Viramontez Anguiano, 2012; Dreby, 2015; Enriquez, 2015).

Fear of deportation created by restrictive immigration legislation is the strongest contributing factor to reported stresses within and outside of the family for both authorized and unauthorized immigrants (Arbona et al., 2010). The fear of deportation does not only impact children in mixed status families by what was previously discussed in this section, but it also shapes the formation of identity in U.S. born children who grow up in these families (Dreby, 2012). Continuously, Dreby (2015) finds that deportation enforcement practices not only affect children within mixed status families, but these practices serve to instill legal uncertainty among children of unauthorized families.

Identity

Legal status and membership in a mixed-status family affects the lives of children as they navigate private and public worlds (Gonzales, Suárez-Orozco, and Dedios-Sanguinetti, 2013). This is partly because of the multiple identities that children living in these families carry and which can be difficult to hold (Mass et al., 2016) outlines the ways legal status has deepened social status distinctions within and outside the family for both documented and undocumented family members. In some instances, legal status has a greater impact on children's identity and self-esteem if they learn that they themselves are undocumented. Bonifacio (2013) learned that undocumented youth are at a heightened of depression and anxiety compared to documented peers, and often feel uncomfortable talking to mental health professionals, or anyone in a

position of authority for fear of them disclosing their immigration status. Following, a study by O'Leary (2014) adds that negative psychological ramifications are in part due to the fact that they face discrimination not only from outside groups but also from their documented Latino peers, who sometimes wish to separate and differentiate themselves from undocumented children.

Research finds that youth from mixed-status families often face additional negativity specifically in regards to their family members' undocumented status. The negative portrayals that immigrants receive in the media, particularly of undocumented immigrants shape children's view as they might learn to view themselves as family members of these negatively portrayed immigrants (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2011). Additional research on Latino groups asserts that Latinos have become an underclass, and that immigration policies affect Latinos in the same way that the criminal justice system affects blacks (Massey, 2012). Similar research on Latino students found that the more they internalize the stigmatization, the worse the effect on their self-esteem (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2011). Dreby (2012) drew on data from a large ethnography study on experiences growing up in different types of Mexican immigrant households and found that U.S. citizen and immigrant children alike conflate immigration with illegality. In addition, for a number of children, fearing illegality, lead them to dissociate with their immigrant heritage and identity. Dreby (2012) highlights that the conflation that children make between immigration and illegality is particularly devastating for children's identity and sense of self.

Researchers find that the family becomes a place where children develop an identity and a sense of membership. The act of cohabitating a space, and of engaging in everyday activities, allows members to form intimate emotional ties with each other (Falicov, 2007). For immigrant children, attachment to places happens through continuous exposure over time (Gonzales, 2016).

Their integration into different social contexts aids immigrant children in redefining notions of belonging. For example, Gonzales' (2016) findings express that childhood for some undocumented young adults was one lived in sunshine not in the shadows. Furthermore, Gonzales (2016) finds that time and experiences allows undocumented children in mixed-status families to render themselves an identity indistinguishable from their U.S. citizen peers. This is partly due to the idea that citizenship is linked to a sense of belonging and is often expressed as a personal identity (Stolcke,1997; Tilly, 1995). In this case, immigrant children learn to form that sense of belonging and identity through membership during childhood development. However, their journey in accomplishing an identity during crucial development years is thus complicated by the differential statuses as childhood in mixed-status families is articulated by ambiguity (Hernandez, 2015; Gonzalez, 2011).

The family's differential legal status becomes the central organizing principle with the family's everyday activities operating around it. Consequently, legal status becomes an avoidable subject (Kroll, 2009). Mixed-status families play a crucial role in the ability to create and maintain identities for their children (Dreby, 2015; Falicov, 2007; Menjivar, 2006). According to Bloemraad, Korteweg, and Yurdakul (2008) legal impacts shape the way U.S. citizens in mixed-status families experience citizenship. While laws regulating legal status are developed to target the undocumented population, their multi-faceted consequences impact the entire family, regardless of status, reducing the economic, social, and emotional well-being of whole families and communities (Dreby, 2012, 2015; Waters and Pineau, 2016). An undocumented status and the widespread consequences of status limitations lawfully impose the inequality of the parent onto the child. Citizen children share with their families the risks and restrictions associated with lacking authorized status (Waters and Pineau, 2016), thus, becoming

de facto unauthorized as they learn to be “illegal” in the United States and experiencing the same stigma, poverty and legal violence (Enriquez, 2015).

Citizen children in mixed-status families can suffer from many of the same stressors associated with immigration status as do unauthorized immigrant children and also experience the disadvantages (Mapp and Hornung, 2016). For example, some research has found that Latino immigrant youth grow up fearing the deportation of themselves and their families (Dreby 2012, 2015; Hagan et al., 2010), living in a context of antagonism both their ethnicity and their social identity (Mapp and Hornung, 2016). The perpetuation of a hostile environment and growing anti-immigrant sentiment (Rubio-Hernandez and Ayón, 2016) based on legal status, children in mixed-status families learn to classify themselves as “others” as their parents’ immigration status extends on to them (Fix and Zimmerman, 2001). An example of this is well presented in a study that explored the experiences of twenty-two mixed status families through in-depth, semi-structured interviews (Lopez, 2015). This study reported U.S. children living in foreign countries (parents’ country of origin) in order to be together as families in the case of undocumented parents not being documented in the United States. Such events, lead to these children to be subjugated into a “second-class citizenship” that fails to protect their constitutional rights (Rosaldo, 1997). The literature on identity presents legal status as an important role in identity formation of children in mixed status families.

Previous literature explores on effects of migratory statuses in mixed status families. Social services, deportation, and identity are themes that emerged from current literature and they have shown to have serious repercussions that affect mainly U.S. born children in mixed status families. The limitations of access to social services, the emotional damage of deportations, and the shaping of identity have been measured by parents’ immigration status,

ultimately altering U.S. born children's experience. Although, these areas are central to the lives and experiences of children in mixed immigrant status families, there are aspects left to explore in order to further understand their experiences. It is important to acknowledge other areas of interest that could possibly influence the experiences of children in mixed status families in order to give them a voice that implies a positive change in every way possible.

My study builds upon the current research by examining the experiences of not only U.S. born children in mixed status families as previous research concerns but also undocumented children in these families. My study looked at how children regardless of legal status within these families negotiate their lives in daily settings such as home, school, and communities and how their consciousness is developed based on their experiences as members of mixed status families. The focus of my research enhances what has been previously reviewed in the body of literature, as it provides different insight from additional areas that contribute to the shaping of their unique experiences.

The experiences of children in mixed status families have been encompassed by significant literature. However, the research that has been analyzed leaves areas yet to explore in order to obtain a more in depth sense of the realities of children in mixed immigrant status families. This is why my study drew upon the voices of children in mixed immigrant status families to examine the complexities of their worlds as their experiences are shaped by the settings that surround them. My study amplified the voices of children in mixed immigrant status families with the intention to complicate what has already been found in previous research findings. By complicating what has already been studied, children were given the opportunity to share their social worlds that are often limited and how those worlds shape their childhood as members of mixed status immigrant families in powerful ways. Importantly, in my study I

complicate what has been previously researched in order to welcome and build upon stories and knowledge that children employ and develop as they navigate life in mixed status immigrant status families.

THEORY

This study utilized Latino/a Critical Theory (LatCrit) as theoretical framework to critically analyze the complex and dynamic worldviews and experiences of Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented children in mixed immigration status families. My decision to draw from LatCrit resided in the need to illustrate and understand the ways in which these children experience their worlds and how such are impacted and shaped as they grow in mixed immigration status families in the United States. LatCrit offered a strong conceptual framework to assign meaning to my findings in this study and to critically analyze them. Moreover, this study adopted LatCrit because its critical lens helped to analyze issues that concentrate on language, immigration, ethnicity, culture, identity, phenotype, and sexuality (Hernandez-Truyol, 1997; Montoya, 1994; Martinez, 1994) with a focus more specifically on the experiences and realities of Latina/os (Valdes, 1996).

LatCrit is derived from Critical Race Theory (CRT). It grew out of a need to explore the unique issues of Latino/as/xs. Aoki and Johnson (2008) have noted that LatCrit emerged in the mid-1990s, building on CRT, to push civil rights analysis beyond the Black-White race binary to include other issues regarding nationality, gender, sexual orientation, and class. LatCrit is seen as a complement or a supplement to CRT (Valdés, 1996; Villalpando, 2003). It is a theory that elucidates Latinos/as multidimensional identities by addressing the intersectionality of racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of oppression (Solózano and Delgado Bernal, 2001). As a branch of CRT, LatCrit addresses issues that may be dismissed in CRT such as previously

mentioned, immigration status, ethnicity, language, phenotype, and culture. Additionally, LatCrit challenges dominant ideology, recognizes the centrality of race, makes a call to a historical context, and validates the experiential knowledge of Latinos/as and other underrepresented communities in an effort to work toward a social justice agenda (Solórzano and Delgado Bernal, 2001; Villalpando, 2004).

This study was also guided by LatCrit Theory because it calls attention to the way in which conventional approaches to immigration dismiss the problems and special situations of Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented children in mixed immigration families. LatCrit work, for example by Pérez Huber (2010), has provided an example of more conceptual specificity in scholarship. She argued that LatCrit analysis has helped researchers develop a conceptual framework of “racist nativism” (p.77-78). She defined racist nativism as “the assigning of value to real or imagined differences in order to justify the superiority of the native, who is perceived to be White, over that of the non-native, who is perceived to be People and Immigrants of Color, and thereby defend the native’s right to dominance” (p. 81). In the current political climate of the United States, racist nativism is operationalized in the common perception that Latinas/os are undocumented Mexican immigrants regardless of legal status or citizenship (p. 81). These dominant perceptions and understandings about immigrants ignore the damages experienced by Latino/a children in mixed immigration status families in the United States

Images of family structures are understood through a Eurocentric lens that promotes and perpetuates the oppression of the Latino/a family. Immigration policies, the lack of linguistically inclusive services, the criminalization of immigrants, and the lack of political representation are all forms of institutional racial practices suited to support the marginalization and oppression of Latina/o children in mixed immigration status families. Therefore, LatCrit essentially, allowed in

my study a focus on the actual, real experiences of children in mixed immigration status families by acknowledging and validating their own experiences and seeing beyond the oppressive lens. Furthermore, LatCrit guided this study as it enabled me, as the researcher to better articulate their experiences based on the ways they create and negotiate their own worlds as members of mixed immigration status families, a perspective other similar studies have lacked. Finally, LatCrit served to amplify, critically examine, and understand the voice of a Latina/o U.S. born and undocumented children in mixed-status families who are seen by society as vulnerable and marginalized socially and politically.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized Photo-Elicitation Interviewing (Clark-Ibàñez, 2004; Harper, 2002) as a child-centered methodology because it invited children to document aspects of their lives through photos that were important to them as they shared experiences and perspectives shaped by living in mixed immigration status families.

Children's participation in society can often become more about the adults than about children. This is why childhood studies has perhaps been more likely to stress the notion of children as competent social actors to counteract traditional views of children as passive dependents (Holt, 2011). Rarely, are children studied for what they are, active social agents in their own right, with their own lives, needs and desires (Corsaro, 1997). Conventional conceptualizations about children have transformed views about children as passive beneficiaries, silent objects of concern who are dependent on adult control and care (Barrow, 2002). Although, there is still a pervasive perception of children as dependent, in a need of protection and to adequately articulate their own needs in unique and special cases (Skelton, 2007) children should be understood to be competent and so entitled to have the right to

participate in society and have a say in issues affecting their lives (Qvortrup, 1994).

Essentially, participation is an important part of children's rights; it must start from children themselves, on their own terms, within their own realities and in pursuit of their own visions, dreams, hopes and concerns. Children need information, support and favorable conditions in order to participate in a way that enhances their dignity and self-esteem (UNICEF, 2003). Participation is a means to enable children's future to be positive for them as they grow and develop into further members of society. Skelton (2007) notes that children who are encouraged to participate in their families, schools, communities, and societies are described as being more self-confident, and more aware of what is happening around. For this reason it's important to implement approaches that seek to understand children as active, creative, and important actors of society through their own creation of realities based on social context and experiences.

Research on children typically derives specifically from an adult perspective. Children are traditionally viewed as inferior compared to adults due to not having yet reached a certain maturity level (Komulainen 2007; Lee 1998; Nilsen 2003). However, researchers argue that children must be involved with data collection and other research processes in order to depict their realities (Grover 2004; Hill 2006; Hutchby 2005) thus, allowing researchers to learn from what children themselves have to say and issues affecting their lives could be addressed. For instance, Bourdillon (2004) notes that, "following a trend towards participatory research, children's groups are taught to collect information relevant to their situation and to report on this information" (103).

Interestingly, by employing a participatory method to my study, as it is photo-elicitation interviewing (PEI), children in mixed immigration status families became active participants in

the process. PEI method served to help reflect on the use of participatory photo interviewing to understand children's overall worldview, which in turn, may illuminate the trajectory of their future path in society.

Photo Elicitation Interviewing (PEI)

Photo elicitation- is a qualitative research method that has been broadly used in social sciences (Olliffe and Bottorff, 2007), particularly in the areas of education, anthropology, sociology, and psychology (Hatten, Forin, and Adams, 2013). This method is also referred to as photo interviewing (Hurworth, 2003), or photo voice (Wang, 1999). As a technique, photo elicitation allows researchers to insert a photograph into a research interview (Harper, 2002), whether the researchers supply photos or participants are asked to bring their own. In either case, the participants can be provided with guiding questions, which help them talk about the photo and/or select their photo (Jordan et al., 2009; Harper, 2002). For the purpose of my study, since I conducted qualitative research with children, photo-elicitation was an appropriate and suitable method, specifically auto-driven photo elicitation as it provided more meaning in regards to data and for the children who are research participants. Clark-Ibáñez (2004) notes, “for a more inductive research approach, researchers ask their interview participants to take their own photos to be used later as an interview stimuli” (p. 1509). This approach is also sometimes called photo-voice or photo elicitation “autodriven” interview (Clark, 1999).

Photo elicitation methodology with its “auto drive” technique speaks to my study because of its child-friendly form of communication revolving around the children's own subjective meanings and how they interpreted their photos during the interview. Auto driven photo elicitation increased the richness of the interviews. For example, Clark-Ibáñez (2007) provides an excellent description of the benefits of this method noting: “photographs used in photo

elicitation have a dual purpose. Researchers can use photographs as a tool to expand on questions and simultaneously, subjects can use photographs to provide a unique way to communicate dimensions of their lives” (p. 177). Similarly, Samuels (2007) argues that using the subjects own photographs in the interview process gives primacy to their world and provides a greater opportunity for research subjects to create their own sense of meaning and disclose I to the researcher” (p. 199).

Additional advantages of PEI that have been explored by researchers (Collier and Collier, 1986; Clark-Ibáñez, 2004; Harper, 2002; Hurworth, 2003; Loeffler, 2004; Samuels, 2004; Taylor, 2002; Twine, 2006) are:

- *Helps interview participants take the lead and teach the interviewer.
- *Invites open expression.
- *Sharpens memory.
- *Relieves participants’ stress of being the subject of an interview.
- *Illuminates dynamics or insights not otherwise found through other methods.
- *Breaks the frame of the interviewer’s interpretation of the interview and allows interviewees to interpret their reality in their own voices.
- *Assists with rapport and trust building.
- *Often produces unpredictable information.
- *Promotes longer, more detailed interviews.

Through its child-friendly and collaborative techniques, PEI gave me the opportunity as the researcher to authenticate and amplify my participants’ voices to further evoke a sense of children’s’ affective experiences in mixed immigration status families. PEI in my study drew attention to their narratives and explanations as they led the discussion highlighting what was more important to them. By gaining direct access to voices and perspectives of children in mixed immigrant status families rather than through those of adults, PEI invited them to make their experiences meaningful and validated their insights as members of mixed immigrant status families. Most importantly, during PEI qualitative research, children in my study not only

contributed to the data but they also actively took part in the production of knowledge and analysis as themes were developed. Thus, allowing PEI method an approach in which children in mixed immigrant status families are not taken merely as containers of information to be extracted. Rather, data is produced through unexplored knowledge (Kolb, 2008) to emerge as they invoke and discuss their worlds with photo voicing.

Gaining Entry & Participants

In order to gain access, the children in my study were contacted through personal networks; I worked closely with contacts I interact with on an often basis in my community. This created a stronger sense of trust between the participants and I. The participant population is comprised of 7 elementary and/or middle school aged children who are Latina/o and undocumented and/or U.S. born living in mixed immigrant status families, and who reside within the North County area of San Diego. Both boys and girls were included in the study. Participants are as young as 11 to as old as 14 years old. This is the fastest growing group of children; therefore, it is important to understand the perspectives about their worldviews through their own experiences, as they will continue growing into active agents of society and hopefully for positive social change.

Because I was aware of the sensitive nature of this study (immigration status) and the age of the children (11 to 14 years), I only recruited children (and contacted their parents) who I already knew matched the study's criteria. Specifically, I did not come into contact with any child who was not known to me personally. I never asked the participants about immigration status. However, in the process of interviewing, children shared aspects of immigration status (own or others) and they disclosed this information through their own voice and explanations. This speaks to the impact and awareness of immigration on the everyday lives of children.

Photo-elicitation is a child friendly method and it allowed the children to take charge of the interview in terms of pace, content, and depth.

Sample: The present study includes the voices and images of seven (7) children.

The children who were undocumented included: Leo (12 years old), Carlos (14), and Alicia (13). The children who were US-born and who had an undocumented parent(s) and/or sibling(s) were: Julio (13), Lydia (11), Leslie (14), and Brenda (11).

Note, the names listed here and used in the discussion of the data are pseudonyms.

Continual Assent in the Research Process

Due that my study concentrates on children, explanation of the study and informed consent process occurred throughout the study to assure clarity. First, the participant (child) was approached to ask about interest in participating in the research project. Since there was interest, I explained the elements of assent in great detail. After explaining the assent form and after the child agreed to be part of the research project, then the child was asked to write his/her name in a designated line. Second, the parents or caregivers were contacted to explain the project. Once there was interest, I went over the assent form with them, which contains a signature line for the parent. Third, I reviewed how to use the camera with the child and the parent.

After going over the use of the camera, I checked in with the participant to assure if he/she wanted to continue participating in the research project. Interesting, it was not necessary to provide disposable cameras to the participants, as they all owned cellular phones and asked if they could use their phones instead. They appeared more comfortable using their cellular phones; therefore, photographs were taken with the cellular phones and e-mailed them to me after participants were done. Finally, during the research process, the participant was reminded that

he/she had the right to withdraw from the study. The assent in this research was an ongoing process.

The participants were given a week to take photographs of important things for them. However, during the data gathering, some participants forgot to take their pictures and have them ready by the time planned and others' schedules changed constantly. This created some challenges and delays in timing for the collection of data. Even though data collection took a little longer than expected, I avoided pressuring and/or stressing my participants by giving them only gentle reminders and checking in. In addition, I was available at any time when they were ready.

The Photo Elicitation Interview Process

Photo elicitation interviews took place in the participants' homes. My understanding of the Latina/o undocumented/documented experience suggested that families are private in regards to undocumented legal status. My approach provided the upmost level of confidentiality and secureness. Participants felt more at ease when sharing narratives; sensitive information remained confidential, protected from friends, school officials, authority, or any other person(s) that could threat their well-being.

In addition, by conducting photo elicitation interviews in children's homes, I anticipated intra-familial dynamics that could potentially provide additional context. The interviews were audio recorded on a phone (with built-in recorder). My approach was to fully focus and engage in the conversations that children evoked rather than directing my attention to writing responses. After each photo-elicitation interview, I transcribed the interviews. Consequently, reviewed the transcripts and photos in order to gather thematic, individual and group analytical coding.

Photo elicitation interviews overall generated detailed and reliable accounts of how children in mixed immigration status families experience and navigate their worlds. The nature of the photo elicitation interviews and my attention to maintaining a conversational style gave the photo interviews a natural flow. As a result, children spoke casually and comfortably about the meaning of their photographs, which elicited discussions around themes that arose from their experiences as members of mixed immigration status families, suggesting that they felt safe enough to openly share their lives with minimal obfuscation of their realities.

Ethical Implications

Although, my study was approached with sensitivity and protected with confidentiality, implications in this study included: lengthiness which took a bit much more time for the participant than expected; the participant might have felt bored when discussing the pictures as they explained why they took photographs of specific things; they expressed sadness and/or sensitive when discussing photos that brought certain memories that caused emotions and feelings in them. However, my study minimized the risks of such implications as it is centered on the perspective and everyday worldview of children (undocumented and U.S. born) living in mixed immigration status families, not necessarily about being undocumented or U.S. born. Meaning, I did not ask about the participant's (child) migratory status or asked questions about being undocumented or U.S. born. Finally, when the photographs included faces and other identifiers, I blurred them to protect private information.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Children can teach us adults so much about society and life. Sitting with the participants in the comfort of their homes and hearing about the importance of their photographs, reiterated the worthiness of this study. I came to realize that even though I invited them to participate in my

study, they were inviting me to something deeper than mere research. They were inviting me to their own and diverse worlds. My findings support the concept of children's agency and children as social actors within research. Furthermore, my research recognizes the power of children's voices as they give a unique meaning to their subjective realities as members of mixed immigration status families. Children created their own subjective realities and covered how they interact with this world. Children were narrators and producers of knowledge. The findings of my data reflect on five salient themes that emerged throughout the photograph discussions.

Children and Politics

Children are often excluded from arenas of political discourse and practice that form an important platform for participation as citizens in communities (Griffiths and Parkes, 2010). Political discourse can have two arenas as described by Lister (1996): "'strong' and 'weak publics' according to whether or not they encompass decision-making as well as opinion-forming" (p. 171). Griffiths and Parkes (2010) add that children are rarely involved in political processes; consequently they have minimal opportunities to express their opinions and input into how policies and laws are formed in relation to their interests. Children in this study demonstrated an awareness of the issues surrounding the presidency election. All the children in my study were really clear about their feelings on the elected president Donald Trump. For example Lydia, an 11 year-old sweet and giggly girl spoke about her school in Fig. 1 and expressed: *"Me and my friends in school sometimes talk about Donald Trump and we say we don't want him to be our president. We wanted Hillary Clinton to be our president instead. My friends think like me too that Donald Trump is a bad person and if the kids voted we would vote for Hillary Clinton and not Donald Trump."*



Fig. 1 – By Lydia, 11, U.S. Born

Similarly, 12 year-old Leo said in a soft voice: *“He’s not a good President and he just wants white people here, just all white people. But I think there should be all kinds of people here: White, Mexican, Black, everybody can live here not just White people. And it makes me feel bad because like I’m Mexican and so he’s saying like we have to leave because you are not White pretty much... it sucks.”* As he talked, Leo rotated his head in a “no” motion, as if in disagreement. Julio, a 13 year old asked me, *“You know that song that YG made about Donald Trump that says ‘Fuck Donald Trump’?”* I responded, *“Yes, I’ve heard it.”* He laughed and said, *“I sometimes listen to it and I sing [he laughs loudly] I think... you know how all these Mexicans like me, because I’m a Mexican too and all these African American people hate him? And I think that like all this hate brings like... I think it makes it worse. Like I hate him too because like supposedly he’s saying that he’s gonna build a wall and every thing but, like, yeah.”*

Leslie, a 14 year old expressed with a saddened tone, *“I don’t support Donald Trump. Is just like bad that he thinks stuff about others and say all these crazy things about other people*

and now everyone is believing him that people that come from other countries are, like, drug dealers and all that stuff. Like other people are believing him and he's just making people think all this stuff that is not true and it's really affecting like every body. Everybody is going [along] with him and its just like basically all eyes are on us all the times so it's really bad that he's president."

Brenda, an 11 year old took a picture of the American Flag shown in Fig. 2 and when I asked her why the flag was important. She explained, *"Because, umm... because that's where, umm... that's from the U.S.A flag. Because that's where I was born at and my sisters too. But my mom and dad where not born at the U.S.A: They were born in Mexico. But umm... my mom has two sons in Mexico and my grandma is taking good care of them and she wants to go back to Mexico to see her sons but if she goes back to Mexico she might, umm... umm... get umm... go and see my brothers and if she wants to go back to umm San Diego she must, she cannot go back to San Diego because umm... she doesn't't have an ID for umm... to go to San Diego and she might get umm... caught from the police. If my mom does not have an ID umm... umm... I could umm... pay for and ID for my mom. And, and she can go to San Diego, and my grandma and my brothers can. And they will be happy now; you don't have to go back to Mexico."* Brenda at her young age resents the punishing effects of immigration laws. She is aware that her parents' undocumented status is what impedes her from meeting her brothers and grandma in Mexico. She becomes affected by the fact that her mother suffers for being separated from her sons in Mexico. And that if her mother leaves, there could be consequences. Brenda's as well as the other participants' social reality is complicated by a mixed immigration status.



Fig. 2 – By Brenda, 11, U.S. Born

Leo, took a picture to ‘A Day Without Immigrants-Boycott’ flyer, presented in Fig. 3. He explained: *“I took a picture of this paper that says ‘A Day Without Immigrants.’ It was for a day without immigrants and it made me feel bad because we had to miss school and my parents didn’t work so we could prove Trump that we are important in this country. That day immigrants stayed in their houses and didn’t go anywhere so we could show we are not bad people. That way the border patrol stops going and breaking into the houses and taking out Mexicans and stop scaring us. Because the border patrol are just going into houses since Donald Trump wants to take out all the Mexicans so they are trying to find every single Mexican so they could kick the out. So I am scared to go out, like when I go out with my friends to skateboard I like going and stuff but I am like also scared that they catch me and take me or something. That’s why I kind of want to show people and Trump that we are good people and only work.*



Fig. 3 – Leo, 12, Undocumented

In addition, Leo also shared another political image (Fig. 4) and discussed the meaning of it: *“This picture I took on the internet because it’s important. I think that it’s very important so people can see that like we should be treated like people like not by our races, like if you are Mexican you gotta be treated right, umm because they don’t treat Mexican people right. Like Donald Trump doesn’t want us here because we are bad, that Mexicans who come over here are just bad; they don’t help us and stuff and that’s not true, the things he says.”* He also added *“I took this picture too because I think all immigrants are not bad that all of them are good.”* I asked Leo if he felt inspired by the poster to which he responded: *“Yeah, it makes me like want to prove them wrong that we are not all bad, that we just came her to have a better life, not that we are just bad.”*



Fig. 4 – By Leo, 12, Undocumented

Children in this study demonstrated politically awareness as they voiced their concerns and feelings about President Donald Trump. However, it is interesting to note that none of the children in the study mentioned Obama in their discussion about the political climate despite him being the “Deporter in Chief.” They felt the repercussions of Obama as an architect of immigration enforcement because they did not necessarily develop an awareness about deportation in such a short amount of time. However, they expressed feelings based on the politic of hate expressed by Donald Trump and members of his administration. He has been effective in promoting a fear-mongering strategy and children are feeling and reacting. They are not passive learners; to the contrary, they are actually taking an active role and expressing how they feel about the political climate. The data indicate they are purging their frustrations with the system.

It is evident that children have powerful political thoughts and views driven by the realities that they navigate as members of mixed immigration status families. Based on their social realities and political messaging, children are able to articulate their own ideas, present

their own feelings, and react with a critical conscious. Children should not be overlooked in politics. Their understandings about politics is not “innocent,” but instead they maintain woke and attentive to issues that potentially affect them and their families. As a matter of fact, the active role that they are taking in this study captures the beginnings of possible activism. Findings inspire a potential connection to activism. For example, Leo “connected the dots” in terms of thinking of activism in the community. The fear that some of these children feel could be the motor that drives a new generation of social activism.

Deportation

Findings reflect that the world that children in mixed immigration status families are growing in is not as simple and passive as we would think. At young ages, children’s experiences are deeply affected by punishing laws. All children in this study had a heightened awareness of deportation and the fears that go along with it. Deportation is one of the clearest consequences of legal violence in everyday life because it threatens children’s familial ties by removal procedures (De Genova, 2002). In light of this, most children openly discussed the implications of deportation for them and their families.

Lydia took a picture of the front of her house, illustrated in Fig 5. She stated: *“My house is important because so we can stay safe from like Donald Trump and bad people. Like if Donald Trump comes we can stay safe because like there’s doors; there’s like two doors and we can stay safe there.”* When I asked if she thought that Donald Trump would go into her house, she added, *“Aja, and take us to Mexico but I don’t want to go to Mexico. He doesn’t like Mexicans and all my family is a Mexican; I was born here but I’m Mexican too... I think [she giggles]. It makes me feel kind of sad and scared because we’re going to Mexico but I don’t really wanna go to Mexico.”*



Fig. 5 – By Lydia, 11, U.S. Born

Alicia, a 13 year old shared a picture of her friends and cousin in Fig. 6 and spoke about how her fear of deportation grew once her cousin's dad got deported a few months ago: *"I have a cousin that's my age that her dad actually got deported like three months ago and she's still here and she's scared that her mom might get deported too if they go into her house like with her dad. It's difficult for my family to see my aunt and cousin cry because she's very scared and then she makes me more scared but I try to be there for her and tell her to not worry about it too much. We don't open doors since then so yeah."* Carlos, a 14th year old expressed with regret: *"Sometimes I tell my parents that they should've come here before I was born so that I could also be born here and that way there wouldn't be so many problems and no one could kick me*

out. But I also don't want to blame them because I know they try hard to give me and my brother and sister the best they can."



Fig. 6 – By Alicia, 13, Undocumented

Findings presented above suggest that the fear of deportation raises anxiety in these children about family separation. The deportation of parents and/or family members, followed by a separation can be very traumatic for the children. The effects of punishing immigration laws that support deportation and separation extend to children. This is something that's creating social traumas unique for children growing up in mixed immigration status families. At a young age, these children understand policing and what it means to live under restrictive immigration laws.

Separation

For all children, family separation due to deportation is the most feared experience. Children and youth in households with unauthorized members live in fear of being separated

from parents or other family members should anyone be apprehended or deported. All children felt sad, regardless of their immigration status. When the topic of deportation surfaced in children's photos, many expressed concern as they led the discussion towards the fear of separation from their families. Some responded like Julio as he referred to his mother *"I also get sad because she doesn't have her papers, like me. I have papers because I was born here. When she works sometimes until like 9 or 10 at night, and she is coming back home, she gets me worried because they are having like all these stuff about the immigration and stuff like stopping people to take them back to Mexico."*

He continued holding the conversation about the fear of separation from his mother as he shared with me the meaning of his mother's application for permanent residency as illustrated in Fig. 7. He expressed: *"I took a picture of those papers because those are the papers that my mom needs to like become like legal, I think. So my step dad is helping her with her papers because he was born here and they got married so he can fix her papers. If my mom didn't have that, or she didn't fill it out, it's gonna be a risk for her to go out and stuff, so yeah. I want her to fill them out because it makes me worried every time she leaves for work or goes out dancing and yeah. I always tell her to be careful and like not drink and drive and yeah."* I asked him how he had learned about people getting stopped and being sent back to Mexico and he responded: *"Oh, because my grandma has said that there's retenes around in Oceanside. And then she went to her Zumba class and there were some around there. That's why now I tell her not to go, but she goes anyways. But I don't want anything to happen to her on the way because she also doesn't have papers and my grandpa too doesn't have any. I get so scared when they go out because what if they get stopped by the cops or border patrols. My grandpa works at painting and he comes back at 10 and also my grandma and my grandpa they go all the way to LA and*

like usually there's a lot of Migra over there so that's why I get worried every time they go over there."

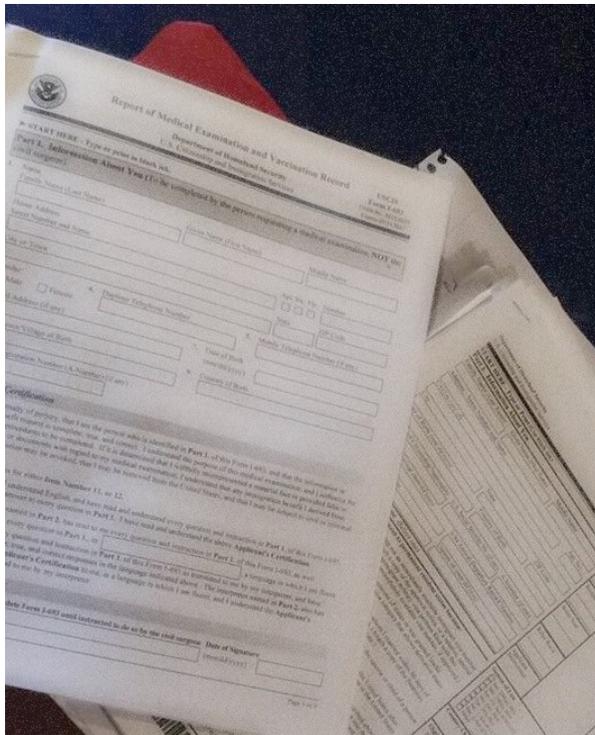


Fig. 7 – By Julio, 13, U.S. Born

Interestingly, just like Julio, all children in this study are aware of their immigration status as well as their parents' immigration status. This is due to them growing up under a social control that questions their and their families' freedom. To them this is a social reality that they internalize and manage to navigate on a daily basis. Sadly, a mixed immigration status can disrupt family dynamics if separation was to occur. Furthermore, it would deny children the opportunity to grow with their families and this can become harming at multiple levels. Because of their age, children are relatively dependent on their parents. This dictates their opportunities as children and sets the stage for their future upward mobility, or lack thereof, through

intergenerational transfer and accumulation of economic, social, and cultural capital (Lareau, 2003; White & Gager, 2007).

Reflecting on her parents' photograph, Leslie feared that potential separation and absence of her parents could negatively affect her. She shared: *"When I look at my parents' pictures and I think about the whole Donald Trump thing, what he's doing, it doesn't really affect me because... Well it does affect me like deep down. But, like, it doesn't really affect me right now because they haven't taken my parents to Mexico so I haven't had that experience. But until I do, then it will affect me a lot because I will realize like how much they go through to stay here. It makes me feel like my family is not safe and it worries me a lot that they can't do much like go out and stuff or drive. And with the whole thing that's happening here in Escondido. There's the border patrol. They are everywhere here now, so like my parents and whole family that doesn't have any papers, are always looking out. And so many people are affected here and a lot of people have been taken out like just these past weeks because of that and is mostly here."*

She later added, *"My family is always worried too and they are always talking about it and that's always on their minds. Like thinking that any time, they could get deported and we all get scared to think that they would also take more people in my family and I would be left alone. That scares me a lot. My mom asks me sometimes that if the border patrol takes her out that if I would go live with her to Mexico and I don't really answer because I am not really sure but it is scary for me because what am I going to do alone if we separate?"*

Similarly, Lydia described fear of separation as she discussed the importance of family through a family word display photograph shown in Fig 8. She explained: *"I took a picture of this because my family is important to me because they take me to a lot of places and I have to make them happy because they buy me what I need and pay so we could have a house to live."*

And my family is important because like I am the only one in my family like who was born here and, well, they are gonna kick them out so who's gonna pay for all this stuff now? So I get really scared because I'm gonna be the only one here with my tio, if my family like goes to Mexico we are gonna be the only ones here. So that's why I think my family should be together with me and it's important that we are together as a family."



Fig. 8 – By Lydia, 11, U.S. Born

Children in mixed immigration status families conceptualize deportation and the separation aspect of it through fear of being separated from their families. The anguish of idealizing the separation between them and their parents generates a form of emotional violence as they develop feelings of sadness just as displayed in their responses. Additionally, their responses suggest that we are not living in a time where children have innocence. Children in

this study adopted an understanding of what it means to be undocumented, regardless of their own status they reflect on the status of their families to interpret their fears. Thus, are aware of the immigration situation that's impacting their and their families' daily activities.

Family

Participants in this study evoke the importance of family as they shared their fears about separation as presented previously. Children in mixed immigration status families have a very close connection to their family; this is why the previous section caused them such distress. Their deep familial ties represent the crucial need for family's sustained presence in the lives of children. Leslie expressed about her family in Fig. 9, *"I think is meaningful for me because its like my family I've lived with them since day one so they mean a lot to me and I don't think I'd be the person I am today without them. Specially my mom, because she is like my best friend and I look up to her all the time."* Leslie, also shared the meaning of family to her: *"I took this picture and specifically on that date because it was on Christmas Eve. That's the day we are all together and we forget about everything else and we are just like all united and like no problems and we just have laughs and all of that. Why I took this picture too is because we've been going through a lot and we've lost family members, not like lost like they passed away but like being separated from us and stuff like that and in that picture we are all together."*



Fig. 9 – By Leslie, 14, U.S. Born

Leo shared in Fig 10: *“I took a picture of my family when I was little because my family is the most important thing in my life. I love them a lot. They do so much for me. I have a happy family and we love to go to restaurants and places a lot and we do everything together.”* Alicia added to the importance of family in Fig. 11 when she described her mother’s courage to raise her on her own, *“My mom is a single mom and she raised me alone since the border patrol took my dad back to Mexico. So, it makes me feel good that my mom can do everything alone. She works a lot and that sucks because I want to spend more time with her but she has to work a lot of hours to bring money for us. Everything she does for me makes me feel pretty confident about myself because she’s the only one who has been there for me since my dad isn’t here and can’t pay attention to me because he can’t come and I can’t go to Mexico. But I mean I have my mom... she is kind of like my dad too and we are a family.”*



Fig. 10 – By Leo, 12, Undocumented



Fig. 11 – By Alicia, 13, Undocumented

Storytelling as a Source of Resiliency

There is a central focus of families for the children in this study not solely because of the strong connection that they have with families, but storytelling by family members about immigration and life back in their country of origin served as a source of strength for the youth in this study. I learned that the role of storytelling and family history are powerful motivations children cite for pursuing their education and becoming successful human beings. According to some of the children's responses, their parents migrated to the United States with the idea that

their children would be offered a brighter future than what their parents' homeland would offer. Listening to the motives of migration through family stories, children appeared motivated to do well and to be grateful. For most of the children, photos elicited the stories of migration and the dreams their parents had and also stories of life in Mexico.

As he spoke about his mother's photograph, Julio reported: *"You know how other people cross and stuff? Like you know how they have to go through all that struggle and everything? I wanna like see how it like... I wanna see how they do it. Like, I wanna go down there and I wanna do it because I wanna experience like what they struggle and when the have to jump the wall. I wanna jump the wall to experience it... I don't know why. I just really wanna do it. Maybe I wanna do it to help other people and to me since, like, I was born here I don't think they can do anything to make me stay in Mexico. Like, I know I'm not suppose to do it because I have papers but I don't know, it's just a thing that I really want to do. I think that because I see people in my family do it. Like my grandma she almost broke her leg, like you know that wall thing, like she jumped it and it almost broke her ankle. She told me the story. She said that they were coming in a helicopter the border patrol and they were running and they were right there by the wall and my grandpa like helped her push her to the wall and she fell on her ankle and it almost broke it but then they started running into some plants I think and had to hide and they didn't catch them."* Julio continued, *"When they tell me that kind of story to me it feels like a surviving thing. Like I guess strong enough to survive because you know how they crossed and everything, I just wanna see like, experience it, you know how like there might be helicopters and like animals... I just wanna do it and to help other people."*

Similarly, as she looks at her grandparents' photograph, Leslie also reported: *"I took this picture because I really like admire them a lot because of what they've always been through*

because they are the first ones of all of us to, like the ones that came from Mexico to come the U.S. and like all they've been through and like they really had a tough time crossing the border and my grandpa is always telling us stories on how each of them crossed and my grandma too."

She continued: "I like hearing their stories because I like seeing the reality of what it is to like cross the border... So, like yeah. Like, I wanna see how it's like. I don't want to see it personally but like I wanna see what they've been through crossing the border so that I can be grateful to be born here. When I hear their stories it kind of makes me emotional because of what they went through at that time but at the same time like I think of them as like super strong because they didn't ended up like dying and all of that so yeah I just like, whenever I see them I just think to myself I have to be grateful and do good in school so that I can go to college one day and be someone in life."

Alicia shared with me a photograph of a movie scene called *The Giver* (Fig. 12) and read referred to an online description of the film and also shared her thoughts on its importance to her life: *"This is a scene from the movie called The Giver. I took a picture of it because I think it has a really meaningful message. It was really inspiring to me because it kind of had a message of appreciate what you have in life. Because in the movie... the guy in that picture is the only one who can see colors. He's the receiver and the giver gave him all these memories from things that he had in the past. Because they were a little town that got separated and everything was black and white. No one could see colors and one day there was a border line and of he could pass that border line, all the memories and all the color would come back to them and so I think it has a really nice message."*



Fig. 12 – By Alicia, 13, Undocumented

She then elaborated on how she connected to the message: *“My mom tells me stories of when she was little and she lived in Mexico. This movie makes me think of her stories how she said that she always wanted to be like a good daughter that helped her family out to get out of poverty and all that. And she’s always encouraged me with this one story when she was in middle school, in 6th grade I think. And, umm, that she woke up very early to go to school because it was far from her house and got back late and helped around the house and also took care of her little brother and sister like to change their diapers. She said before they didn’t have diapers so she had to use a cloth as a diaper for her baby brother and sister. She also said that since it was not diapers and it was cloth, she had to go to a river to wash the cloths to have new diapers for her baby sister and brother. And, also she worked with my grandmother selling cheese to other people in the town. So all that stuff that she tells me makes me be thankful that I have a better life than her in Mexico. This is why she brought me when I was two, so I could go to school because she didn’t get to graduate over there so I have to go to college and have a good job.”*

Leo highlighted the importance of the Mexican flag in Fig. 13: *“I took this picture because it has the Mexican Flag and that’s where we were born. So I love Mexico and I feel like*

I also belong there too. Like my parents tell me stories of when we were over there when I was a baby, that we lived in my grandma's house but we had to come here to have better jobs because in Mexico they didn't have that many jobs. And so I have to get a good job one day so that I can help my mom and dad because they came here to give me everything they can."



Fig. 13 – By Leo, 12, Undocumented

For the children in this study, family can provide an important sense of purpose and connection. Because children have enormous connections with their families, they find them inspiring, admirable and heroic. The meaningful family narratives ground empathy, curiosity, and a rite of passage in the children. Furthermore, children use these stories as source of strength. Despite the obstacles that children in mixed immigration families encounter at young ages, through storytelling they are able to framework a sense of gratitude and appreciation based on their families' histories. Children acknowledged their families' efforts and took those stories into consideration as they expressed life goals. The family narratives are powerful tools promoting resilience and the need to maintain strong familial ties.

Interests and Likes – Children “Being Children”

Children in this study are embracing a rich imagination through their special likes and interests as they discussed when sharing their photographs. Even with their challenging and shared realities, the different interests promote an idea of empowerment for each child to be an everyday kid in its unique form. When they speak about these things their agency is revealing and powerful as it demonstrates that children in mixed immigration status families learn to cope with the world in different forms. Furthermore, they attempt to find joy and also deal with sorrow.

Carlos is interested in birds (Fig. 14) because it brings him special memories of his earlier childhood, something that connects him to home and culture: *“birds bring special memories of when we used to live in Mexico. We used to have small pets like birds and stuff like that so I grew up with them and I would love to play with them and talk to them and stuff. Birds remind me of my country and since I can’t go back because I wouldn’t be able to come back well it feels nice to have birds here so they can remind me when I was little and lived in Mexico.”*



Fig. 14 – By Carlos, 14, Undocumented

Leslie shared a picture (Fig. 15) about a school project and what she is interested for her project: *“This one is about a project that we are doing for school about a community and it’s called the ‘10 percent project’. It’s a project that you have to help the community and it’s 10 percent of your grade. So I chose to help in a center where they help teen moms because I am into that. I like it because pregnant teens can get resources, clothes, and all this bunch of stuff to help them, or if they are like in a violent relationship they can also get help. So I really liked this place because I like all that about teen moms and learn what they go through.”*

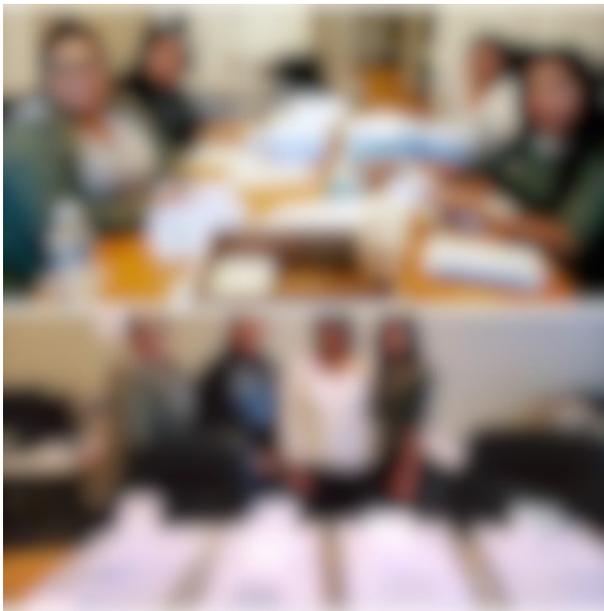


Fig. 15 – By Leslie, 14, U.S. Born

Lydia expressed about the puppy in Fig. 16, *“I took a picture of this puppy because he is behind some bars at the shelter and he should not be behind bars because I feel that if I was in there I would be really sad because I would feel like if I was in jail. That’s why when I grow up I want to be a vet to take care of animals and save them from the streets. When I go to the animal shelter I get sad to see them inside the bars but it also makes me want to grow up so I can go help at the shelter with the animals and play with them so they are not sad.”*



Fig. 16 – By Lydia, 11, U.S. Born

Julio spoke about the meaning of skateboarding in Fig. 17: *“I took a picture of my skateboard because I like riding my skateboard and I like to skateboard when I’m like bored or sad. Skateboarding makes me feel better and it helps me take energy out because my mom says I have so much energy and skateboarding calms me down a little. I like to skate at the skate park. I go skate with my two friends and either my mom or step dad take me. I skateboard a lot because I want to get better at it so that I can be a professional skate boarder and help people in Africa, like take them clothes and build them a house or something like that.”*



Fig. 17 – By Julio, 13, U.S. Born

The fact that children are able to present their likes and interests despite the unique challenges they face as members of mixed immigration status families counters the idea of immigrant children in the shadows. It is important to pay close attention to their agency and not necessarily compromise their realities to this disempowering narrative. More than them hiding in the shadows as we constantly hear in mainstream media, children in mixed immigration status families are navigating their lives by choosing when, where and how they reveal who they are. Even when demonstrating fear about the realities that they face; they don't forget about enjoying their childhood; they are mindful and aware but at the same time they are brave. Furthermore, they are claiming the things they want to do in their childhood with vibrant imaginations.

Technology and Social Media

The role of technology and social media were an interesting finding in this study. Although, the intention was to provide them with disposable cameras to take their photographs, all appeared more comfortable using their cell phones; they asked me if they could use their phones instead. With technology so handy, they are able to access social media. Almost all children in this study are consuming information about immigration through social media. It was clear during our conversations that they try to figure out what to do with that information. They are really navigating information through different social media platforms and this is where some of them draw some of their fears.

Lydia shared with happiness and ultrasound photo of her new sibling (Fig. 18). As she spoke about the pregnancy of her mother, she revealed: "We are so happy for my little baby sister, maybe it will be a baby brother, we are not sure yet but I want a baby sister to play with... But sometimes I get scared that my mom is pregnant when I remember the police that shoots women with Tasers" She described with a worried expression in her face, a news report that

showed police firing a Taser at pregnant women. When I asked her where she heard about this, she responded *“from the news. Umm... like I have seen how there’s pregnant ladies that police go inside their house and like they get out a Taser and shoot the pregnant ladies. That makes me scared a lot because my mom is pregnant and I don’t want the police to do that to my mom.”*



Fig. 18 – By Lydia, 11, U.S. Born

Julio spoke about some information he heard on the news when he shared a picture (Fig. 19) he saw on Facebook about a border wall *“I got this picture from Facebook because Donald Trump wants to build a wall. Because he wants to kick all the Mexicans, so he’s gonna bring them back to Mexico so he’s gonna build a wall so we don’t go back to the United States. And he wants the Mexicans to pay the wall instead of he has to pay it; he wants the President of Mexico to pay it.”* When I asked him how he knew about the border wall he responded *“In the news, that Mexico doesn’t wanna give him the money to build the wall and stuff. And the President of*

Mexico should not even pay for it because it's the United States that wants to make it, not Mexico. So it should be Donald Trump that pays for it and not Mexico. But walls shouldn't be built anyways."

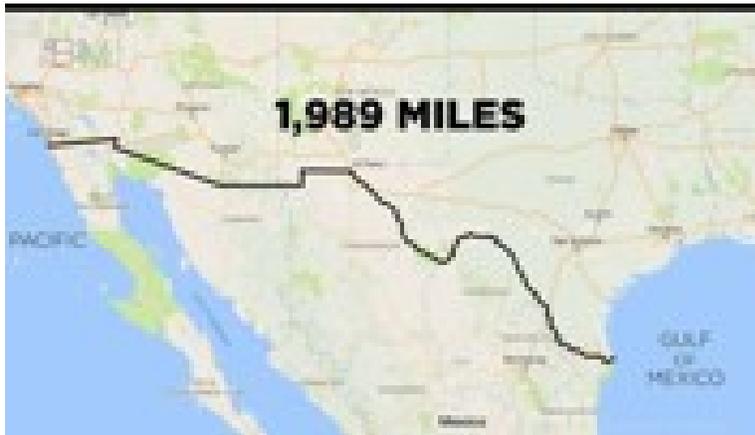


Fig. 19 – By Julio, 13, U.S. Born

Children in this study choose how to interpret what they consume in social media platforms and based on that create their own ideas. They care to learn about issues that are affecting them; therefore, find themselves attentive to what is happening in the world. Children are not passive beings or unaware; it's disempowering to categorize them as such. They understand exactly what goes on and many times they feel vulnerable because they often don't have the adult voice as a side. It's more common for the adults to speak up for issues that also concern and affect the children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

An immigration status as a result of a legal framework that ignores the family context in which a child lives and dismisses the child's best interest, then we are failing to look beyond a status that implicitly adopts the values of the current broken immigration system. Viewing children in mixed immigration status families only through the lens of an immigration status

creates the risk of distorting the viability of children growing up in these families. Navigating life through a punitive immigration system is significantly detrimental for children growing up in immigration status families; it affects their overall well-being.

There is considerable evidence confirming that current immigration policies and their practices create unique challenges for the children, their families, and their communities. In the midst of these abundant and extreme challenges, children and their families fight for family unity. This should not be the case: every child should have the right to grow up free of trauma and fear. However, it is evident that children in mixed immigration status families have to struggle with threats to their familial ties, instability and wellbeing. Despite the harsh immigration laws, children in immigration status families go about their daily lives, demonstrating resilience as evidence in their success as members of society, even with fear instilled. Because children are not passive and absorbing individuals, but instead active participants and producers of knowledge, it is imperative for policy makers to revise current legislative efforts towards an immigration reform that consists of family unity, improved lives for children in mixed immigration status families, and betterment of their communities.

The United States is in urgent need of a fair and just immigration reform. Immigration laws need to be reformed in the way that takes into consideration the best interests of children in mixed immigration status families. By strengthening the immigration system through an immigration reform, not only protects children from adverse impacts that have resulted from our broken immigration system but there is also a higher commitment to the principle of family unity. It is central to the aspect of childhood to really understand that this is a formative stage that establishes bridges to future health and substantial living, which then carries over to the overall well being of our coming generations. Policymakers need to hold the narratives of

children accountable in order to stop them from falling through the cracks of the nation's failing immigration system.

Neither side of political immigration debates pay adequate attention to children's needs and rights, nor are they protected by current policies. Fostering from previous recommendations, I agree that these bring attention to the center of political debates: protection to children's rights, reasonable pathway to citizenship for unauthorized members, and keeping families together by ensuring that enforcement efforts have appropriate protection for children and their families.

Ensuring the health, security and overall well being of children in mixed immigration status families requires the commitment to including children's voices in policies and decisions that affect children's lives. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1990), which was signed by President Clinton but never passed by the U.S. Senate, calls for decisions to be made in the best interests of the child (Article 3) and identifies the right of the child to be cared for by her/his parents (Article 7). Based on this, immigration reviews should introduce policies that demand children to have legal rights and representation in any proceeding that threatens to disrupt their familial stability.

The unique realities of children in mixed immigration status families should be an important part of the reflection when practicing acts such as deportation and removal procedures against their families. Through centering our policy debates on the consequences for children, we are more likely to press for policies and practices that are designed with their best interests at heart, and that ensure them a life of dignity and well-being. It is time to start seeing children in mixed immigration status families beyond a legal status. As a society we should not allow an immigration system that overrides the principle of family unity by ignoring the real family

structures in which children are raised. Viewing immigrant children and their families through the lens of their immigration status blocks the human aspect.

As members of this society it is important to understand that we don't live isolated from the issues that surround us. We are members of communities and families and mixed immigration status families, are no different; they are participants of our society. It is concerning that children in these families are growing up under punitive immigration policies, because the effects of such, contribute to the formation of children in mixed immigration status families who are also the future of society. Therefore, it is necessary that their experiences be voiced. Through my research I am not only validating experiences that have been diminished and suppressed but I am making a call to policy makers to ensure that immigration policies are intended for the well being of children in mixed immigrant families.

The increase in children in mixed status families is a mere reflection of the demographic changes in the United States; it calls attention to how immigration status can impact the experiences of children who are members of mixed immigration status families. Furthermore, the lives of children in mixed immigration status families is an important area of further research to be explored because its growing population requires further insight to justifiably attend their needs that are affected by a legal status. I hope that by understanding the prevailing problems affecting this population I bring awareness at a large-scale and call for a certain and just immigration reform that will allow a fair lifestyle for children and their families who live under the constraints of a mixed immigration status. Aside from the numbers, this problem needs to be addressed because all lives deserve to be humanized; they can't continue to be devalued through punitive immigration policies.

CONCLUSION

By exploring the lives of Latina/o children in mixed immigration status families, this study contributes to scholarly literature in the field of immigration. Immigration as a multidimensional issue can't continue concentrating attention solely on the undocumented aspect of it. Therefore, it was highly significant that children in mixed immigration status families were given an opportunity to voice their experiences through their own narratives and perspectives, something that is rarely done. Furthermore, the well-being of children in these families requires serious consideration by policy makers. It is my hope that by learning about their worlds as members of mixed immigration status families, policy makers sensitize to their needs and their lives be shaped in positive ways.

Findings in this study tell us that children have identified the strategies that they are engaged in, such as going to school, getting their education, and getting informed. All this information is seeking and they are learning to navigate their realities in a unique form. These children are doing a call for urgency, and we are seeing it through education, through looking out for their families, and involving themselves in the communities. Children in this study demonstrate themselves as social actors and perhaps activists and this inspires hope for a collective social action. People don't get involved until it affects them and my research shows that children are being affected and they are taking ownership of the situation by staying active and informed.

Children in this study negotiate methods that they feel can empower and that create a stronger voice as they get older to help others in struggle. These children are preparing a whole new generation of activism because they are all being affected by the same fear-mongering tactic. What is going arise from this fear and stress is a new generation of activism. In these children we could be seeing a glimpse of the new and strong generation to come; that will be

these effective change agents. The way the immigration system is affecting them and their families is a human rights violation a human rights tragedy and this is what's mobilizing Latina/o children in mixed immigration status families to become the creative force and dynamic source of innovations that or society needs to create social change.

REFERENCES

- Abrego, Leisy J. 2014. "Sacrificing Families: Navigating Laws, Labor, and Love Across Borders." *Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press*.
- Abrego, Leisy J. and Cecilia Menjivar. 2011. "Immigrant Latina Mothers as Targets of Legal Violence." *International Journal of Sociology of the Family* 37(1): 9-26.
- American Psychological Association. 2012. "Undocumented Americans." <http://www.apa.org/topics/immigration/undocumented-video.aspx>- vii
- Androff, Cecilia Ayon, David Becerra, Maria Gurrola, Lorraine Salas, Judy Krysic, Gerdes Karen, and Elizabeth Segal. 2011. "U.S. Immigration Policy and Immigrant Children's Well-being: The Impact of Policy Shifts." *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare* 38(1): 77-98.
- Applied Research Center. 2011. "Shattered Families: The Perilous Intersection of Immigration Enforcement and the Child Welfare System." *New York, NY*.
- Arbona, Consuelo, Norma Olvera, Nestor Rodriguez, Jacqueline Hagan, Adriana, Linares, and Margit Wiesner. 2010. "Acculturative Stress Among Documented and Undocumented Latino Immigrants in the United States." *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 32(3): 362-384.
- Argueta, Luis. 2010. "Abused: The Postville Raid." *New York, NY: Maya Media Corp*.
- Barrow, Christine. 2002 "Introduction: Children's Rights and the Caribbean Experience." In C. Barrow (Ed.) *Children's Rights, Caribbean Realities*, Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers 13-33.
- Becerra, David, David Androff, Andrea Cimino, M. Alex Wagaman, Kelly N. Blanchard. 2013. "The Impact of Perceived Discrimination and Immigration Policies Upon Perceptions of Quality of Life Among Latinos in the United States The Impact of Perceived Discrimination and Immigration Policies Upon Perceptions of Quality of Life Among Latinos in the United States." *Race and Social Problems* 5(1): 65-78.
- Boehm, Deborah A. 2011. "Out of place: Youth and deportation in the U.S.-Mexico transnationally." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of Anthropology of Children and Youth Interest Group, Society for Cross-Cultural Research, and Society for Anthropological Sciences, Charleston, South Carolina.
- Bonifacio, Kris A. 2013. "Undocumented Youth Struggle with Anxiety, Depression." *The Chicago Bureau*. [Chicago Bureau \(http://www.chicago-bureau.org/undocumented-youth-struggle-with-anxiety-depression/\)](http://www.chicago-bureau.org/undocumented-youth-struggle-with-anxiety-depression/)

- Bourdillon, Michael. 2004. "Children in Development." *Progress in Developmental Studies:Arnold*. 4(2): 99-113.
- Bloemraad, Irene, Anna Korteweg, and Gökçe Yurdakul. 2008. "Citizenship and Immigration: Multiculturalism, Assimilation, and Challenges to the Nation-State." *Annual Review of Sociology* 34: 153-179.
- Brabeck, Kalina, Lykes M. Brinton, and Cristina Hunter. 2015. "The Psychosocial Impact of Detention and Deportation on U.S. Migrant Children and Families." *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 84(5): 496–505.
- Brabeck, Kalina M., Lykes M. Brinton, and Rachael Hershberg. 2011. "Framing Immigration to and Deportation from the United States: Central American Immigrants Make Meaning of their Experiences." *Community, Work and Family* 14(3): 275-296.
- Brotherton, David C., and Luis Barrios. 2011. "Banished to the Homeland: Dominican Deportees and Their Stories of Exile." *New York, NY: Columbia University Press*.
- Capps, Randy, Jacqueline Hagan, and Nestor Rodriguez. 2004. "Border Residents Manage the U.S. Immigration and Welfare Reforms." *Immigrants, Welfare Reform, and the Poverty of Policy* 229–50.
- Capps, Randy, and Karina Fortuny. 2006. "Immigration and Child and Family Policy." *Washington, DC: The Urban Institute*.
- Capps, Randy, Michael Fix, Jason Ost, Jane Reardon-Anderson, and Jeffrey S. Passel. 2004. "The Health and Well-Being of Young Children of Immigrants." *Washington, DC: The Urban Institute*.
- Capps, Randy, Micahel Fix, and Jie Zong. 2016. "A Profile of U.S. Children with Unauthorized Immigrant Parents. *Migration Policy Institute*.
[Migration Policy http://www.migrationpolicy.net](http://www.migrationpolicy.net)
- Castañeda, Heide, and Milena Andrea Melo. 2014. "Health Care Access for Latino Mixed-Status Families: Barriers, Strategies, and Implications for Reform." *American Behavioral Scientist* 58(14): 1891-1909.
- Chaudry, Ajay, and Karina Fortuny. 2010. "Children of Immigrants: Economic Well-Being." *Washington, DC: The Urban Institute*.
- Chaudry, Ajay, Randy Capps, Juan Manuel Pedroza, Rosa Maria Castaneda, Robert Santos, and Molly M. Scott. 2010. "Facing Our Future: Children in the Aftermath of Immigration Enforcement." *Washington DC: Urban Institute*.
- Chavez, Jorge M., Anayeli Lopez, Christine M. Englebrecht, Ruben P. Viramontez Anguiano. 2012. "*Sufren Los Niños*: Exploring the Impact of Unauthorized

- Immigration Status on Children's Well-being." *Family Court Review* 50(4): 638-649.
- Clark, Cindy D. 1999 "The Autodriven Interview: A Photographic Viewfinder into Childrens' Experiences." *Visual Sociology* 14(1): 39-50.
- Clark-Ibáñez, Marisol. 2004. "Framing the Social World Through Photo-Elicitation Interviews." *American Behavioral Scientist* 47(12): 1507-1527.
- Clark-Ibáñez, Marisol. 2007. "Inner-City Children in Sharper Focus: Sociology of Childhood and Photo Elicitation Interviews." In G.C. Stanczak (Ed.), *Visual Research Methods: Image, Society, and Representation*: 167-196.
- Cohen-Ross, Donna, and Ian T. Hill. 2003. "Enrolling Eligible Children and Keeping Them Enrolled." *Future of Children* 13(1): 81-97.
- Collier, John Jr., & Malcom Collier. 1986. "Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method. *Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press*.
- Corones, Mike. 2015. "Tracking Obama's Deportation Numbers." [Reuters http://blogs.reuters.com/data-dive/2015/02/25/tracking-obamas-deportation-numbers/](http://blogs.reuters.com/data-dive/2015/02/25/tracking-obamas-deportation-numbers/)
- Corsaro, William. 1997. "The Sociology of Childhood." Pine Forge Press.
- Cullen, Francis T., and Robert Agnew. 2006. "Criminological Theory: Past to Present: Essential Readings." *New York, NY: Oxford University Press*.
- Delva Jorge, Pilar Horner, Ramiro Martinez, Laura Sanders, William D. Lopez, and John Doering-White. 2013. "Mental Health Problems of Children of Undocumented Parents in the United States: A Hidden Crisis." *Journal of Community Positive Practices* 13(3): 25-35.
- Dreby, Joanna. 2010. "Divided by Borders: Mexican Migrants and Their Children." *Berkeley: University of California Press*.
- Dreby, Joanna. 2012. "The Burden of Deportation on Children in Mexican Immigrant Families." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 74(4): 829-845.
- Dreby, Joanna. 2012a. "The Burden of Deportation on Children in Mexican Immigrant Families." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 74(4): 829-845.
- Dreby, Joanna. 2012b. "How Today's Immigration Enforcement Policies Impact Children, Families, and Communities: A View From the Ground." *Center for American Progress*. [American Progress https://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/DrebyImmigrationFamiliesFINAL.pdf](https://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/DrebyImmigrationFamiliesFINAL.pdf)
- Dreby, Joanna. 2015. "Everyday Illegal: When Policies Undermine Immigrant

- Families.” *Oakland, California: University of California Press.*
- Elzbieta, Goździak M. 2014. “To Dream or not to Dream: The Effects of Immigration Status, Discrimination, and Parental Influence on Latino Children’s Access to Education *Migration Studies*, 2(3): 1-23.
- Enchautegui, María E., and Cecilia Menjívar. 2015. "Paradoxes of Family Immigration Policy: Separation, Reorganization, and Reunification of Families under Current Immigration Laws." *Law & Policy* 37(1-2): 32-60.
- Enriquez, Laura E. 2015. Multigenerational Punishment: Shared Experiences of Undocumented Immigration Status Within Mixed-Status Families. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 77(4): 939–953.
- Falicov, Celia J. 2007. “Working With Transnational Immigrants: Expanding Meanings of Family, Community and Culture.” *Family Process* 46(2): 157-171.
- Fix, Michael E., and Jeffrey S. Passel. 2002. “The Scope and Impact of Welfare Reform’s Immigrant Provisions.” *Assessing the New Federalism Discussion Paper 02-03. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.*
- Fix, Michael and Wendy Zimmermann. 2001. “All Under One Roof: Mixed-Status Families in an Era of Reform.” *International Migration Review* 35(2): 397-419.
- Fortuny, Karina and Ajay Chaudry. 2009. “Children of Immigrants: Immigration Trends.” *Children of Immigrants Research. The Urban Institute, Washington D.C.*
- Friedberg, Rachel, and David Jaeger. 2009. “The Economic Diversity of Immigration across the United States.” *Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration (CREAM) Discussion Paper Series. London: Department of Economics, University College London.*
- Golash-Boza, Tanya M. “Immigration Nation: Raids, Detentions and Deportations in Post-911 America.” *Paradigm Publishers: Boulder, CO.*
- Gonzales, Roberto. 2011. “Learning to Be Illegal: Undocumented Youth and Shifting Legal Contexts in the Transition to Adulthood.” *American Sociological Review* 76 (4): 602-619.
- Gonzales, Roberto. 2016. “Lives in Limbo: Undocumented and Coming of Age in America. *Oakland, CA: University of California Press.*
- Gonzales, Roberto G., Carola Suárez-Orozco, and Maria Cecilia Dedios-Sanguinetti. 2013. “No Place to Belong: Contextualizing Concepts of Mental Health Among Undocumented Immigrant Youth in the United States.” *American Behavioral Scientists* 57(8): 1-26

- Gonzales, Roberto G., Veronica Terriquez, and Stephen Ruszczyk. 2014. "Becoming DACAmented: Assessing the Short-Term Benefits of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)." *American Behavioral Scientist* 58(14): 1852-1872.
- Grover, Sonja. 2004. "Why Won't They Listen to Us? On Giving Power and Voice to Children in Participating in Social Research." *Childhood* 11(1): 81-93.
- Hagan, Jacqueline M., Brianna Castro, and Nestor Rodriguez. 2010. "The Effects of U.S. Deportation Policies on Immigrant Families and Communities: Cross-Border Perspectives." *North Carolina Law Review* 88(5): 1799-1824.
- Hagan, Jacqueline M., Nestor Rodriguez, Randy Capps, and Nika Kabiri. 2003. "The Effects of Recent Welfare and Immigration Reforms on Immigrants' Access to Health Care." *International Migration Review* 37(2): 444-463.
- Hardy, Lisa J., Christina M. Getrich, Julio C. Quezada, Amanda Guay, Raymond J. Michalowski, and Eric Henley. 2012. "A Call for Further Research on the Impact of State-Level Immigration Policies on Public Health." *American Journal of Public Health* 102(7): 1250-253.
- Harper, Douglas. 2002. "Talking About Pictures: A Case for Photo Elicitation." *Visual Studies* 17(1): 13-26.
- Hatten, Kristen, Tiago R, Forin, and Robin Adams. 2013. "A picture elicits a thousand meanings: Photo Elicitation as a Method for Investigating Cross-Disciplinary Identity Development." 120th ASEE Annual Conference and Exposition, 2153-5965, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Human Impact Partners. 2013. "Family Unit, Family Health: An Inquiry on Federal Immigration Policy." *Oakland, CA: Human Impact Partners.*
- Hernandez, Herminia. 2015. "An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of The Identity of Undocumented Mexican-Origin Adolescents Living in California." ProQuest LLC (<http://search.proquest.com/docview/1687822057>).
- Hill, Malcom. 2006. "Children's Voices on Ways of Having a Voice: Children's and Young People's Perspectives on Methods Used in Research and Consultation." *Childhood* 13(1): 69-89.
- Holt, Louise, 2011. "Introduction: Geographies of Children, Youth and Families, Disentangling the Socio-Spatial Contexts of Young People Across the Globalizing World." In: L. Holt, ed. *Geographies of Children, Youth and Families: An international Perspective*. London: Routledge, 1-8.
- Hurworth, Rosalind. 2003. "Photo-Interviewing for Research." *Social Research Update*, 40(Spring). Guilford, United Kingdom: University of Surrey.

- Hutchby, Ian. 2005. "Research Review: Children's Talk and Social Competence." *Children and Society* 19(1): 66-73.
- Jacobson, Robin D., and Elizabeth T. Durden. 2014. "Old Poison in New Security Bottles: Contemporary Immigration Restriction and the Detention Regime." *Migration Studies* 2(2): 235-238.
- Jordan, Shawn, Robin Adams, Alice Pawley, and David Radcliffe F. 2009. "The Affordances of Photo Elicitation as a Research and Pedagogical Method." *Proceedings of the Frontiers in Education Conference IEEE*, 0190-5848, Austin, TX.
- Kanstroom, Dan. 2007. "*Deportation Nation: Outsiders in American History*." Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Kohli Aarti, Peter L. Markowitz and Lisa Chavez. 2011. "Secure Communities by the Numbers: an Analysis of Demographics and Due process." *Berkeley, CA: Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Law and Social Policy*.
[Law Berkeley](http://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/Secure_Communities_by_the_Numbers.pdf)
https://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/Secure_Communities_by_the_Numbers.pdf
- Kolb, Bettina. 2008. "Involving, Sharing, Analyzing—Potential of the Participatory Photo Interview." *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 9(3): Art 12. [Resolving http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0803127](http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0803127)
- Komulainen, Sirkka. 2007. "The Ambiguity of the Child's 'Voice' in Social Research." *Childhood* 14(1): 11-28.
- Kroll, Brynna. 2009. "Living With An Elephant: Growing Up With Parental Substance." *Child and Family Social Work* 9(2): 129-140.
- Lee, Nick. 1998. "Towards an Immature Sociology." *The Sociological Review* 46(3): 458-481.
- Loeffler, Ta. 2004. "A Photo Elicitation Study of the Meanings of Outdoor Adventure Experiences." *Journal of Leisure Research*. 36(4): 536–556.
- López, Jane L. 2015. "Impossible Families: Mixed-Citizenship Status Couples and the Law." *Law and Policy* 37(1-2): 93-118.
- Lykes Brinton M., Brabeck Kalina, and Cristina Hunter. 2013. "Exploring Parent–Child Communication in the Context of Threat: Immigrant Families Facing Detention and Deportation in Post-9/11 USA." *Community, Work and Family* 16(2): 123-146.
- Mahoney, Diana. 2008. "Undocumented Adolescents: Building hope." *Clinical Psychiatry News* 36(5): 34.

- Martinez, Lisa M. 2014. "Dreams Deferred: The Impact of Legal Reforms and Undocumented Latino Youth." *American Behavioral Scientist* 58(14): 1873-1890.
- Mass Allison, James Cohen, Sadie McCarthy, Gonwo Dahnweih, and Myia Franklin. 2016. "The Impact of Living in a Mixed Status Family on PK-12 Students." *Association of Mexican American Educators Journal* 10(1): 18-35.
- Massey, Douglas S. 2012. "The New Latino Underclass: Immigration Enforcement as a Race-Making Institution." *Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality*. [Inequality Stanford http://inequality.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/massey_new-latino-underclass.pdf](http://inequality.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/massey_new-latino-underclass.pdf)
- Mapp, Susan and Emily Hornung. 2016. "Irregular Immigration Status Impacts for Children in the USA." *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work* 1(2): 61-70.
- Mendoza, Fernando S. 2009. "Health Disparities and Children in Immigrant Families: A Research Agenda." *Pediatrics* 124(3): 187-195.
- Menjívar, Cecilia. 2006. "Family Reorganization in a Context of Legal Uncertainty - Guatemalan and Salvadorian Immigrants in the United States." *International Journal of Sociology of the Family* 32 (2): 223-245.
- Menjívar, Cecilia, and Leisy J. Abrego. 2009. "Parents and Children Across Borders: Legal Instability and Intergenerational Relations in Guatemalan and Salvadoran Families." *Across Generations: Immigrant Families in America*, pp. 160-189. New York: New York University Press.
- Menjívar, Cecilia and Leisy J. Abrego. 2012. "Legal Violence: Immigration Law and the Lives of Central American Immigrants." *American Journal of Sociology* 117(5): 1380-1421.
- Menjívar, Cecilia, Leah C. Schmaizbauer, and Leisy J. Abrego. 2016. "Immigrant Families." *Cambridge: Polity Press*.
- Miller, Cynthia, Aletha C. Huston, Greg J. Duncan, Vonnie C. McLoyd, and Thomas S. Weisner. 2008. "New Hope for the Working Poor: Effects after Eight Years for Families and Children." *New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation*.
- Mills, Gregory, Jessica F. Compton, and Olivia Golden. 2011. "Assessing the Evidence about Work Support Benefits and Low-Income Families." *Washington, DC: The Urban Institute*.
- Montes, Veronica. 2013. The Role of Emotions in the Construction Of Masculinity: Guatemalan Migrant Men, Transnational Migration, and Family Relations. *Gender and Society* 27(4): 469-490.
- Nilsen, Randy D. 2003. "Searching for Analytical Concepts in the Research Process: Learning From Children." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*

8(2): 117-135.

- Nord, Mark, and Anne Marie Golla. 2009. "Does SNAP Decrease Food Insecurity? Untangling the Self-Selection Effect." *Economic Research Report #85*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.
- O'Leary, Anna O. 2014. *Undocumented Immigrants in the United States Today: An Encyclopedia of their Experiences*, Vol. 1. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO/Greenwood Press.
- Oliffe, John L., and Joan L. Bottorff. 2007. "Further Than the Eye Can See? Photo Elicitation and Research with Men." *Qualitative Health Research* 17(6): 850-858.
- Ortega, Alexander N., Sara McCue Horwitz, Hai Fang, and Moira Inkelas. 2009. "Documentation status and parental concerns about development in young U.S. children of Mexican origin." *Academic Pediatrics* 9(4): 278-282.
- Park, Lisa S. 2011. "Criminalizing Immigrant Mothers: Public Charge, Health Care, and Welfare Reform." *International Journal of Sociology of the Family* 37: 27-47.
- Passel, Jeffrey S., and D'Vera Cohn. 2011. "Unauthorized Immigrant Population: National and State Trends, 2010." *Pew Hispanic Center*.
- Passel, Jeffrey S., and D'Vera Cohn. 2014. "Birthplaces of U.S. Unauthorized Immigrants." *Pew Research Center* <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2014/11/18/chapter-2-birthplaces-of-u-s-unauthorized-immigrants/>
- Passel, Jeffrey S., D'Vera Cohn, and Ana Gonzalez-Barrera. 2013. "Net Migration from Mexico Falls Zero – and perhaps less." Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center. <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2012/04/23/net-migration-from-mexico-falls-to-zero-and-perhaps-less/>
- Perreira, Krista M., Robert Crosone, Karina Fortuny, Juan Pedraza, Kjersti Ulvestad, Christina Weiland, Hirokazu Yoshikawa, and Ajay Chaudry. 2012. "Barriers to Immigrants' Access to Health and Human Services." *Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services*.
- Perreira, Krista M., Robert Crosone, Karina Fortuny, Juan Pedraza, Kjersti Ulvestad, Christina Weiland, Hirokazu Yoshikawa, and Ajay Chaudry. 2012. "Barriers to Immigrants' Access to Health and Human Services." *Washington, DC: The Urban Institute*.
- Qvortrup, Jens. 1994 *Childhood Matters: Social Theory, Practice and Politics*. Aldershot: Avebury.
- Robertson, Angela M., Remedios Lozada, Alicia Vera, Lawrence A. Palinkas, José Luis Burgos, Carlos Maguis-Rodriguez, Gudelia Rangel, and Victoria D. Ojeda. 2012. "Deportation

- Experiences of Women Who Inject Drugs in Tijuana, Mexico.” *Qualitative Health Research* 22(4): 499-510.
- Roblye-Zapata, Martha, Joseph G. Crzywacz, and Edgar Apanecatl-Ibarra. 2015. “Stress and trauma in mixed-status families.” Paper presented at the Center for Family Resilience, Oklahoma State University.
- Rosaldo, Renato. 1997. “Cultural Citizenship, Inequality, and Multiculturalism.” *Latino Cultural Citizenship: Claiming Identity, Space, and Politics*. Eds. William V. Flores and Rina Benmayor. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Rubio-Hernandez, Sandy P., and Cecilia Ayón. 2016. “*Pobrecitos Los Niños*: The Emotional Impact of Anti-Immigration Policies on Latino Children. *Children and Youth Services* 60: 20-26.
- Samuels, Jeffrey. 2004. “Breaking the Ethnographer’s Frames: Reflections on the Use of Photo Elicitation in Understanding Sri Lankan Monastic Culture.” *American Behavioral Scientist* 47(12): 1528–1549.
- Samuels, Jeffrey. 2007. “When Words Are Not Enough: Eliciting Children’s Experiences of Buddhist Monastic Life Through Photographs. In G.C. Stanczak (Ed.), *Visual research methods: Image, society, and representation*: 197-224.
- Skelton, Tracey. 2007. “Children, Young People, UNICEF and Participation.” *Children’s Geographies* 5(1–2): 165–181.
- Stolcke, Verena. 1997. “The ‘Nature’ of Nationality.” In *Citizenship and Exclusion*, edited by Veit Bader, 61-80. *New York: St. Martin’s Press*.
- Suàrez-Orozco, Carola, Hirokazu Yoshikawa, Robert T. Teranishi, and Marcelo M. Suàrez-Orozco. 2011. Growing Up In the Shadows: The Developmental Implications of Unauthorized Status. *Harvard Educational Review* 81(3): 438-473.
- Taylor, Edward W. 2002. “Using Still Photography in Making Meaning of Adult Educators’ Teaching Beliefs. *Studies in the Education of Adults* 34(2): 123–139.
- Tilly, Charles. 1995. “Citizenship, Identity, and Social History.” In *Citizenship, Identity, and Social History*, edited by Charles Tilly, 1-17. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Twine, France W. 2006. “Visual Ethnography and Racial Theory: Family Photographs as Archives of Interracial Intimacies. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29(3): 487–511.
- UNICEF. 2003. The State of the World’s Children.
http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/pub_sowc03_en.pdf

- U.S. Homeland Security. (2014). *FY 2014 ICE immigration removals*. Washington, DC: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Retrieved from [ICE Gov https://www.ice.gov/removal-statistics](https://www.ice.gov/removal-statistics)
- Vargas, Edward D. 2015. "Immigration Enforcement and Mixed-Status Families: The Effects of Risk of Deportation on Medicaid Use." *Children and Youth Services Review* 57: 83-89.
- Ventura, Carlos. 2012. "Nacidos En EE. UU. Viven En Pobreza." *Prensa Libre*. [Prensa Libre http://www.prensalibre.com/departamental/Nacidos-EE-UU-viven-pobreza_0_691730843.html](http://www.prensalibre.com/departamental/Nacidos-EE-UU-viven-pobreza_0_691730843.html)
- Wang, Caroline C. 1999. "Photovoice: A Participatory Action Research Strategy Applied to Women's Health." *Journal of Women's Health* 8(2): 185-192.
- Warren, Robert. 2016. "US Undocumented Population Drops Below 11 Million in 2014, with Continued Declines in the Mexican Undocumented Population." *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 4(1): 1-15.
- Waters, Mary C., and Marisa Gerstein Pineau. 2015. *The Integration of Immigrants Into American Society*. Washington, DC: The National Academic Press.
- Wessler, Seth F. 2011. "Shattered Families: The Perilous Intersection of Immigration Enforcement on the Child Welfare System." *New York, NY: Applied Research Center. SPH* https://www.sph.sc.edu/cli/word_pdf/ARC_Report_Nov2011.pdf
- Wessler, Seth F. 2012. "Nearly 205K Deportations of Parents of U.S. Citizens In Just Over Two Years." *Colorlines*. [Colorlines http://www.colorlines.com/articles/nearly-205k-deportations-parents-us-citizens-just-over-two-years](http://www.colorlines.com/articles/nearly-205k-deportations-parents-us-citizens-just-over-two-years)
- Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund. 2011. "Single Mother Poverty in the United States in 2010." *New York, NY: Legal Momentum*. <https://www.hlzk.njep-ipsacourse.org/sites/default/files/reports/single-mother-poverty-2010.pdf>
- Xu, Qingwen, and Kalina Brabeck. 2012. "Service Utilization for Latino Children in Mixed-Status Families." *Social Work Research* 36: 209-221.
- Yoshikawa, Hirokazu. 2011. "Immigrants Raising Citizens: Undocumented Parents and Their Young Children." *New York: Russell Sage Foundation*.
- Yoshiwaka, Hirokazu. 2012. "Immigrants Raising Citizens: Undocumented Parents and their Young Children." *New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation*.
- Yoshikawa, Hirokazu, Carola Suárez-Orozco, and Roberto G. Gonzales. 2016. "Unauthorized Status and Youth Development in the United States: Consensus Statement of the Society for Research on Adolescence." *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 1-16.

Yoshikawa, Hirokazu, Erin B. Godfrey, and Ann C. Rivera. 2008. "Access to Institutional Resources as a Measure of Social Exclusion: Relations With Family Process and Cognitive Development in the Context of Immigration." *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* 121: 73–96.

Zayas, Luis H. 2010. "Protecting Citizen-Children Safeguards Our Common Future." *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* 21(3): 809–814.

Zuckerman Stephen, Timothy A. Waidman, and Emily Lawton. 2011. "Undocumented Immigrants, Left Out Of Health Reform, Likely To Continue To Grow As Share Of The Uninsured." *Health Affairs* 30(10): 1997-2004.

Information Sheet

Invitation to Participate

My name is Diana Garcia-Mellado. I go to school at California State University San Marcos. I am inviting you to participate in a research study about children's lives and how they see the world around them. Your parents will also give permission for me to work with you. This form will tell you about the project to help you decide whether or not you want to be part of it.

What am I being asked to do?

If you decide to be in the study, here is what we will do:

- 1) Take photographs of important things in your life
 - a. I will give you your own camera!
 - b. We will talk about how to use the camera.
 - c. I will explain that you can take photographs of anything that is important to you in your life – home, school, friends, family, playing, and more!
 - d. You will have one week to take your photographs.
- 2) When I print out your pictures, I will put them in a photo album
- 3) I will call your parents to find a time to talk about your photographs
 - a. Our conversation about your pictures will take 30 minutes.
 - b. You will tell me about each picture.
 - c. If you give me permission, I will record our conversation so I can remember everything you tell me about your photographs.
 - d. You will keep the photo album after the project has been completed. I will not keep your pictures nor a copy of them unless you give me permission to do so.

What are the benefits to me for taking part in the study?

Being a part of this study may not have direct benefits to you, but it will help me learn more about how children see the world around them. It's something that adults sometimes don't pay attention to or even understand.

What if...?

Some kids might get bored with this project due that the interviews can take more time than planned. If you get bored, just let me know and we can take a break or just stop the project.

Some kids might feel sad or upset talking about their photographs. If you feel sad or upset, just let me know. We can take a break, you can skip talking about the photograph, or we can even stop the project. We will do whatever makes you feel comfortable.

Who will know that I am in the study?

If you decide to be in the study, I will not let anyone else know how you respond or act as part of the study. Even if your parents or teachers ask, I will not tell them about what you say or do in the study.

Do I have to be in the study?

No, you don't. The choice is yours. No one will get angry or upset if you don't want to do this. And you can change your mind anytime if you decide you don't want to be in the study anymore.

What if I have questions?

If you have questions about the study, you can ask me now or anytime during the study. You can call me at (760) 687-5684 or e-mail me at garci368@cougars.csusm.edu. You can also call my teacher, Marisol Clark-Ibanez, who speaks Spanish at (760) 481-4630. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the IRB Office of my school at irb@csusm.edu or call them at (760) 750-4029.

I am excited to do this project with you! Thank you for your time and participation!



Children's Lives through Photographs

Parent Information Sheet

Dear Parent (caregiver/legal guardian),

My name is Diana Garcia-Mellado and I am a graduate student in the Master's of Art in Sociological Practice at California State University San Marcos. I am conducting a research study to understand the worlds of Latino/a children in mixed immigration status families. The purpose of this form is to inform you and provide information about the study.

Why is my child being invited to take part in a research study?

I invite your child to take part in this study because I think it's important to hear and see what children think about the worlds they live in.

What will my child do as part of this research study?

* If you allow your child to be part of the study, your child will be given a disposable camera and asked to take photographs of the things that are important to your child.

* Your child will have about a week to take photographs. You can let me know when your child is done or I can contact you to check in as how your child is doing with the photographs. Once your child is done, I will make sure to stop by at your best convenience to pick up the cameras to develop the photos.

* Once I develop the photographs that your child took, I will contact you to ask for a time that is best convenient for you and your child so that I can sit down with your child and look at the pictures your child took. I will let your child express about the photographs he/she took. I will ask your child why those certain photos were taken and let your child lead the conversation about his/her photos. This conversation about your child's photos will be recorded so that I can fully concentrate on what your child has to say.

* The discussion about the photos will take about an hour. You and your child can choose where I can talk with your child. Whatever location you want – for example, your house, at school, or the library.

What happens if I later decide to withdraw my child from the research study?

Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. Your child may decline participation at any time. You may also withdraw your child from the study at any time; there will be no problem.

What are the benefits for my child to be in this study?

Although, there may be no direct benefit to your child, the possible benefit of your child's participation will help me learn more about how children see the world around them. It's something

that sometimes we as adults don't understand and it's important that they have opportunities to talk and express what they think about their own worlds. Also your child's stories about the photographs he/she will take will help me and other researchers better understand the lives of Latino/a children in families that live under different immigration statuses. One day, this might lead to improvements at schools and communities, for kids like your child.

What happens to the information collected for the study?

I will be using a "fake" name to protect your child's identity. I want to make sure that your child is able to share his/her photographs and stories without being worried that someone will know who he/she is. This is one of the big rules in research studies!

The photographs are used when I sit down with your child and talk about the photos and not necessarily shared with anyone else but me and my professor. Any photographs that do end up getting shared in a presentation or article will not have faces clearly shown, as I will make sure to blur them. I want to protect the identity of those in the project – your child's and the people he/she might take photographs of.

Is there any way being in this study could be bad for my child?

There are several risks involved with participating in this study; however, I will explain the **safeguards**, the ways in which we will try to protect your child and the data from these risks.

Risk 1: Your child may feel upset or emotional about photos that he/she took but remind him/her about situations that are sad. **Safeguard:** I will remind your child that he/she can stop the conversation at any time or skip any photos that he/she finds upsetting.

Risk 2: Your child may feel shy, scared or bored talking for a while. **Safeguard:** I will make sure to ask throughout the conversation if your child is "feeling bored, tired, and or scared" or if he/she "feels okay to continue talking about his/her photos. If your child is okay to continue, we will continue but if he/she isn't feeling okay, I will give him/her the option to take a break or stop the conversation.

Risk 3: Your child may have limited time because you might be working and/or have obligations and also your child might have homework or school. **Safeguard:** The time, day, and location will be established by you and your child. You will also know up front that the conversation with your child is expected to take place about an hour. However, you will be reminded before and through out the conversation that you and your child can stop or delay the conversation at any time.

Risk 4: Although, I will not, by any means be asking your child about immigration statuses; it can happen that your child if he/she is aware may disclose it during the

conversation as he/she shares his/her photos. You, as a parent may feel hesitant to have more ways that might identify your child or any of your family members as undocumented for fear of deportation. **Safeguards:** We are taking many precautions to protect your child and family's identity:

First, we will only be using a number to identify your child. This number is assigned by the order in which the conversation took place.

Second, I will know who your child is but I will not write down your child's name at any point in the research process.

Third, when contact information is needed, I will ask you how and if you wish to receive your child's transcript so that you feel comfortable and safe about your child's safety.

Fourth, the recordings of the conversations will be kept by me in a locked electronic folder located in my laptop which is also locked at all times and placed in a safe spot at my house where no one has access to it other than me.

Fifth, when I write up the analysis for the final report, I will change or remove any identifying information that would link your child or any other person to the data.

Who should I contact for questions?

If you have questions about the study, please call me at (760) 687-5684 or e-mail me at garci368@cougars.csusm.edu. If you have any questions about your child's rights as a participant in this research or if you feel your child has been placed at risk, you can contact the IRB Office at irb@csusm.edu or (760) 750-4029.

What happens if I don't want my child to participate in this study?

If you decide to decline participation of your child in this research study, please sign below and send this form back to me. You can call me to personally pick it up and I will pick it up. You can also e-mail it to my e-mail address.

Thank you for your time. I hope I was able to explain this study well and that you will allow your child to participate ☺.