



The Contradictory Realities for Undocumented Students in California.

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Abstract

It is 2024, and immigration continues to be a problem for both documented and undocumented immigrants throughout America. People, especially those who live in California, assume that the best place for immigrants to succeed, especially the undocumented, is their very state. However, not everything meets the eye. This paper centers around the writer's connection to immigration and how they have used that to further their connection to focusing on undocumented immigrant students within California. The paper relies on a search done to illustrate the informational gap between undocumented immigrant students and the resources that the state of California provides them with, along with the struggles that are still continuous for an undocumented immigrant in trying to pursue education. This paper uses studies, examples of high schools attempting to support undocumented immigrants, and detailed reports on how certain educational and criminal laws apply to undocumented immigrants. This paper points to possible solutions to continue to support the pathway of undocumented immigrants to achieve their academic goals and how citizens in California can help.

Keywords: Immigration, Undocumented immigrant students, California, Informational gap, solutions

I. INTRODUCTION

I saw that my interest in researching immigration in California was growing, primarily when it came to the stories of illegal immigrants. This interest is personal as well as scholarly. I was raised by immigrants, so I have firsthand knowledge of the difficulties and inequities brought about by negotiating the immigration laws in the nation's capital. My parents taught me how the system works against people who come to this nation in search of a better life, and they trained me to be a strong self-advocate. After coming to the U.S., individuals had to put forth with the harsh realities of trying to get an education and endure an ongoing flood of racist and disparaging remarks. They nevertheless made the decision to turn into citizens of a nation that at first did not want them here in spite of all of these obstacles. This trip drastically changed my viewpoint and fueled my passion for advocating for immigrants within California and injustice across the United States.

Also, this research is essential, but it's necessary. Additionally, there are still many obstacles to overcome, even in an advanced nation like California with its multitude of communities, nonprofit organizations, and support networks for undocumented immigrants. In California, immigrants remain faced with major obstacles in attempting to elevate their lives with education. A stark and enduring paradox exists: although support for undocumented immigrants is rising, there has also been an attendant increase in fear of them due to the possibility of deportation. In addition to being prohibited and criminalized for their fundamental presence,



illegal immigrants are also pushed to incorporate and improve their circumstances in this environment resulting from this dichotomy.

This piece is meant to clarify these contradictions and direct attention to the contradiction between the assistance that is handed to illegal immigrants and the awful situations that they have yet to reckon with. Regardless with the advancements, a substantial percentage of mankind still holds racist and ignorant principles, seeing undocumented immigrants as people of the system or worthy of all that they seek. Those tales are not only untrue, but they are also extremely damaging. Like everyone else, undocumented immigrants want entrance to education and a better life, and these are necessary human rights that ought not to be denied due to their immigration status.

My aim for this paper is to discredit this erroneous information and develop a simpler and more efficient strategy regarding immigration. For undocumented immigrants, education must be given the highest importance. How frequently do they possibly hope to claw their way through a complicated means of becoming compliant citizens without the requisite information and methods? Undocumented immigrants are frequently treated as less than human per the current system, and that dehumanizes them only for not having accepted status. This kind of perspective runs antithetical to the principles of opportunity and equality in which our nation stood.

Meanwhile, the frustration that undocumented immigrants notice about being found rejected, deported, and being cut off from their families makes matters a lot worse. It maintains a tradition of still ongoing fear and uncertainty where engaging in every move for enhancement oneself carries a major risk of losing everything. The alarm that immigrants are confronting hinders them from escaping contributing to the economy, culture, and full participation in society, which are a danger to securely the individuals who are and the world at large.

Banking on the challenge inspires people to ingest action in building into interested people of undocumented immigration. It's relatively simple to turn a blind eye to issues related that seem too to be within the control we have, but the entire truth is that everyone of us may impacts the attitudes and policies in which a strain on our communities. This article is a mandate to action for all citizens, not just academics additionally policymakers. By being well-aware of these challenges undocumented immigrants find out, we may start to cut away up the adverse impressions and troubles that deter them from coming to realize their full potential.

As a result, I hope my claim will demonstrate that have undocumented immigrants are really asking you to the same an opportunity that any Californian and American would prefer, nothing something special. They would like for education, a fashion to better their state of affairs in behavior, and acceptance in a community that stipulates their worth. It's time to put aside our fears and prejudices and adopt a more equal and open approach to all its immigration legislation. Helping undocumented immigrants is only one aspect of this; another one is how to safeguard the core values of equality, justice, equity, and opportunity that define our identity as a nation.

II. CALIFORNIA LAWS AFFECT UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS

A. Criminal Law

To help maintain the privileges of illegal immigrants, California passed a number that pertains to legislation that reinforces on duty and openness in the legal system as a whole. These legal documents show sets to stop law enforcement compared with those engaged in racial profiling and swear to that people detained believe their rights when engaged with federal

immigration authorities. The main criminal statutes and the consequences for undocumented immigrants in the state are listed in this section, in association with the protections they offer.

The TRUTH Act insists that, on the day of January 1, 2017, clients taken prisoner by ICE be kept updated of the protection of the law at the time of contact request. Local law enforcement must provide a consent form, in a language the individual understands, before any ICE interview, explaining the interview's purpose and the individual's right to decline or request an attorney. If ICE requests a detainer, notification, or transfer, law enforcement must inform the individual and provide a copy. They must also notify the individual and their attorney if they plan to notify ICE about a release date. All ICE-related records are public under the California Public Records Act.

Another bill, effective January 1, 2016, AB 953 (The California Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)), requires California law enforcement to collect and report data on racial or identity profiling, expanding the definition to include race, ethnicity, national origin, age, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability. The California Department of Justice regulates this data, and the Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board was created to combat profiling.

Additionally, state and local law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and other officials must certify the helpfulness of immigrant crime victims for U visa applications within 90 days (or 14 days if the applicant is in removal proceedings). Effective January 1, 2014, the TRUST Act limits local law enforcement's compliance with ICE detainer requests, ensuring it doesn't violate any laws or policies and requiring judicial warrants in some cases. Finally, Assembly Bill 1195, effective January 1, 2014, guarantees all crime victims to their crime report, regardless of legal status (Bonta).

B. Higher-Education Law

California has implemented laws to enhance educational access and opportunities for undocumented immigrants. These laws recognize the significant barriers undocumented students face and provide them with essential benefits, such as in-state tuition rates, access to state-funded financial aid, and opportunities for professional licensing.

In addition to how well they are fill gaps and develop economic growth, immigrants serves as crucial to the the American labor force market. As stated in the Congressional Budget Office, immigration stimulates economic growth, + over the next ten years, immigration is assumed boost real GDP by 2.0 percent. It and population have been growing through the expansion, which would be beneficial for economy. In 20 years, the U.S. population might started to drop without needed immigration, meaning that would get an unfavorable effect on economic growth. Improving employment statutes should be the main priority in order to guarantee that all workers, regardless of place in society, have equal rights, notwithstanding that the border control system needs to be transformed as especially in discipline to protect the rights of immigrant workers. Because of effect travelers January 2016, SB 1159 welcomes unauthorized immigrants in seeking for California professional licenses. AB 60, and those became the legislation in the first day of 2015 let's absolutely certain undocumented people in order to submit an application for a driver's license in California. AB 2586, put together by Assembly Member Alvarez, wants to eliminate California public institutions from the federal repercussions on hiring undocumented individuals for campus-based places of employment, determined to help undocumented students join essentials when cash assistance falls short. (Echelmann).



III. MISCONCEPTIONS OF UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS

A. In the Workforce

The discourse surrounding undocumented immigrants in the workforce is often clouded by misconceptions and biased narratives that overlook their contributions to the economy. While some sources argue that the job market suffers from immigrant employment, the reality paints a different picture. This section addresses the misconceptions about undocumented immigrants, emphasizing their vital role in the labor market and debunking claims that suggest they harm opportunities for US-born workers. By analyzing recent data and research, it becomes clear that immigrants are essential to economic growth and the overall vitality of the workforce.

Sources from biased, racist perspectives have used data to argue that many US-born workers are missing out on a “job-creation boom,” claiming that most new employment growth has benefited immigrants, both legal and illegal. As of May 2024, government data shows only 971,000 more US-born individuals are employed compared to May 2019, while the number of employed immigrants has surged by 3.2 million. A concerning metric is the labor force participation rate, which has significantly declined among US-born men without a bachelor's degree since the 1960s. Research links this decline to social issues such as crime, social isolation, drug overdoses, and welfare dependence (A. Camarota, 2024). However, this research is misleading and biased, often driven by racist perspectives. In reality, undocumented immigrants are the ones most struggling and least likely to receive opportunities.

The economy is not a zero-sum game with a fixed number of jobs; it's growing, creating opportunities for both immigrants and US-born workers. In 2023, the unemployment rate for US-born workers averaged 3.6%, the lowest on record, disproving the notion that immigration causes high unemployment. The employment-to-population ratio (EPOP) for prime-age US-born individuals (ages 25–54) reached 81.4% in 2023, the highest since 2001. This group's labor force participation rate (LFPR) also hit its highest level in over two decades at 83.9%. The LFPR for US-born men without a bachelor's degree has proliferated and is now above its pre-COVID trend, despite immigrants making up 20% of this demographic. If immigration harmed US-born workers, this group would be most affected, but data shows the labor market effectively accommodates both. Although the immigrant share of the labor force hit a record high in 2023, its growth rate from 2019 to 2023 was about one-third of the rate seen between 1996 and 2000.

Due to how well they are fill gaps and develop economic growth, immigrants serves as crucial to the the American labor force market. In keeping the Congressional Budget Office, immigration stimulates economic growth, and for the next ten years, immigration is assumed boost real GDP by a mere 2% The population in question and population have been growing as a result of growth, which is good for the economy. In 20 years, the U.S. population may begin to drop without enough immigration, which would have had a negative effect on economic growth. Improving labor laws should be the main priority in order to guarantee that all workers, regardless of status, have equal chances, that although the immigration system to be implemented needs to be changed, especially in order to protect the rights of immigrant workers. (“Immigrants Are Not Hurting U.S.-Born Workers: Six Facts to Set the Record Straight”).

B. In Higher Education

Misconceptions with us undocumented immigrants create to additional schooling, of where their enrollment and support typically feel overestimation or demonized. Students without documentation keep at it in our reaching associated with learning in spite of various challenges

and which may include social barriers and restrictive laws and rules. The data on undocumented students undergoing American colleges and universities can be assessed in this section, about offering the understanding of their demographics, the introduction of choices such as the program known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), even continue to troubles that lead to dripping enrollment rates. As a means to dispel the misinformation and develop truthful access to education, it is the key to get what happened faced by these innocent kids.

The 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) data collection shows that on average 408,000 undocumented students have applied in U.S. higher education institutions totaling 1.9% of all college students. This symbolizes 4.2% lose from the 427,000 undocumented students who had applied in 2019. This pertains to naturally from the decline in enrollment responsible to any pandemic as well as some challenges that undocumented people experience, akin to ongoing DACA legal battles. From 182,000 in 2019 to 141,000 in 2021, the number and pupils eligible for DACA moreover was reduced to make up only 0.7% of them of students at all levels in addition to one-third of undocumented students. Some of the funds of this diminution may count as claimed to be DACA's historical defining expectations which simply embrace those who entered the nation's surface prior to 2007. DACA is not available majority who live undocumented students investigating the classroom in the American continent. That said, the majority—three toward four—are associated with Dreamers because they programmed what was happening since they were the the young. 38,000 of the state of California' 83,000 undocumented college-aged people weren't admissible for DACA in 2021, with regard to 2.8% of the state's grand total postsecondary population. The research shows a 22.5% decline in students eligible for DACA and a 4.2% fall in the number of undocumented students enrolled between 2019 and 2021. The limiting eligibility of DACA, strong immigration rhetoric, and legal concerns surrounding the program's future are all contributing factors to this reduction. (Undocumented Students in California: What You Should Know DEMOGRAPHICS COMMON TERMS)

IV. UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES INFORMATION GAP

A. Support For Undocumented Immigrant Students

California are changing the way in extending undocumented immigrants support and educational options so they will attain what they want in life without concern about extra hurdles like fear and uncertainty. This section analyzes the numerous resources and protection as undocumented students can make the most of, stretching from the K–12 education guarantees stated in the Plyler v. Doe ruling by the Supreme Court to the clauses in DACA, that provide crucial help and prospects for employment. California is working to bridge the academic gap while rendering education simpler for all students, regardless of their legal standing, via programmes like AB 540, allowing authorizes in-state tuition, and the institution of Undocumented Student Centers at all higher education institutions. Dedicated a group and school counselors, who are essential in assisting adolescents without paperwork, reaffirm the help they provide navigate their educational journey.

California supplies strong educational support to students without a legal status. Under the 1982 United States Supreme Court ruling in Plyler v. Doe, illegal pupils have been promised K–12 public education. DACA, started by President Obama in 2012, allows two-year deportation

relief and job possibilities for qualified minors. Undocumented learners will be accepted for in-state tuition per AB 540. Additional resources include institution-specific grants, scholarships, and UC's California DREAM Loan Program. Many UC (University of California), CSU (California State University), and community colleges have Undocumented Student Centers offering support. The UC Immigrant Legal Services Center provides free legal services at most UC campuses. State legislation and resolutions aim to extend protections for undocumented youth, with K-12 districts and colleges declaring themselves sanctuary campuses and offering resources to help students navigate the education system. (*Undocumented Students in California: What You Should Know DEMOGRAPHICS COMMON TERMS*). School websites, like La Quinta High School, located in Westminster, California, inform undocumented students that a Social Security number isn't required to apply to most California colleges.

Along with these resources, Dream Liaisons/Centers provide support in financial aid, academics, internships, legal services, and access to community resources. Additionally, Immigrants Rising helps undocumented immigrants obtain official documents and pursue higher education. (La Quinta High School Website).

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) emphasizes the role of school counselors in promoting equal opportunity and a safe environment for all students, including those who are undocumented or have undocumented family members. Counselors work to remove barriers to student development and achievement, supporting their academic, career, and social/emotional growth. Additionally, they play a key role in implementing DACA by assisting undocumented students with documentation and advising on opportunities available through DACA. ("The School Counselor and Working with Students Experiencing Issues Surrounding Undocumented Status - American School Counselor Association (ASCA)").

Organizations like Oakland Unified connect newly arrived immigrants and unaccompanied minors to legal and mental health services. The Los Angeles Unified School District has partnered with UCLA School of Law to establish an immigration law clinic for immigrant students and families. Fresno Unified created a Dream Resource Center offering legal consultations to immigrant families. In Oakland, teachers and parents fundraise to provide legal aid for families facing deportation. Legal aid organizations also visit schools to help families determine eligibility for DACA and other solutions. Lucero García, a social work counselor at El Cerrito High School, frequently addresses legal questions from recent immigrant students and refers them to attorneys. She advocates for legal consultations at schools, as many families cannot afford immigration attorneys, and nonprofit organizations often face overwhelming demand. (Stavely). California Assembly Bill 699: Increasing Protections for Immigrant Students requires all school districts to update their enrollment and complaint policies to limit campus immigration enforcement. The Attorney General was tasked with developing model policy language by April 1, 2018, which districts must adopt by July 1, 2018.

Additionally, school districts must inform parents and guardians about their children's right to a free public education, regardless of immigration status or religious beliefs. This information must include "know your rights" materials from the Attorney General and be provided in the annual notification to parents, as outlined in Education Code Section 48980, or through other cost-effective means. (SUPPORT for IMMIGRANT and REFUGEE STUDENTS: A Guide to Creating Safe and Welcoming Schools for Immigrant and Refugee Students in California). Another valuable resource for undocumented students is the website InformedImmigrant. This online guide offers resources and information for undocumented high school and college students, with or without DACA. It helps them make informed decisions about their futures and

provides tools to advocate for themselves in school. (“Resources for Undocumented High School and College Students”).

B. The Struggles of Undocumented Immigrant Students

Undocumented immigrant students encounter a myriad of challenges that significantly hinder their educational pursuits and overall well-being. As they navigate a complex landscape marked by legal uncertainties, social barriers, and economic hardships, these students often grapple with the harsh realities of limited access to essential services, such as healthcare and financial aid. Many have to leave school early in trying to provide for their families, which compromises their learning objectives and focus. In addition, the anxieties of being deported from the country being alienated from their relatives, and being victim of discrimination make their circumstances significantly worse, which raise stress levels and generates mental health problems. Reviewing each of the challenges that undocumented immigrant students meet this section shows the urgent requirement for comprehensive advocacy and assistance by showing understanding gaps and discourage them from fully utilizing the resources and support groups that are open to them.

Students who are undocumented immigrants encounter many challenges, such as prohibited home access to benefits including healthcare and nutrition assistance. Many need to begin working young when they want earn a living for their families, and this makes it harder on students to remain focused in school. Their reduced opportunities for federal financial aid as well as lack of protections at work rendering going to college harder to afford. Students fail to apply for state scholarships when it makes them terrified at disclosing personal information. Their stability and immigration status are also at risk by stepped-up immigration control and the prospective repeal of DACA and other protections. (Undocumented Students in California: What You Should Know DEMOGRAPHICS COMMON TERMS).

Undocumented immigrant students face challenges such as bullying, language barriers, and limited academic support. They also fear deportation and family separation, which reduces parental involvement in school activities. These issues are expected to worsen in the coming years. (Undocumented Students in California: What You Should Know DEMOGRAPHICS COMMON TERMS). Undocumented youth often face high levels of acculturative stress due to immigration-related issues like family separation and academic challenges. The psychological effects of family separation, whether from migration or U.S. immigration procedures like detention and deportation, are well-documented and can include symptoms of depression and anxiety, especially in children. (“The School Counselor and Working with Students Experiencing Issues Surrounding Undocumented Status - American School Counselor Association (ASCA)”).

A study found that students often face academic distractions due to concerns about their own or their family's immigration status, leading to missed classes and educational difficulties. Social isolation, discrimination, and fears of deportation further disengage students from their schoolwork. Additionally, nearly a quarter of undocumented students reported suicidal thoughts, and 72% felt the need for mental health support, yet few sought help. Financial insecurity is also a significant issue, with many students struggling to afford basic necessities and considering taking time off to save money for their education. (*PERSISTING INEQUALITIES and PATHS FORWARD: A Report on the State of Undocumented Students in California's Public Universities*).

C. The Gap



Strong knowledge obstacles limit many people from accessing potential and resources for schooling in the face of progressive legislation in California aiming to support undocumented immigrants. Even while initiatives and regulations are designed to benefit undocumented students in their academic pursuits, many of them continue informed of all the different kinds of financial help that are possible to them. This lack knowledge prohibits those who qualify from receiving important advantages like legal protections or visas and creates feelings of fear and uncertainty. Immigration law is frequently alarming and confusing, hence it's critical to define the options accurately and get legal assistance as rapidly as practicable. Furthermore, the coexistence of inclusive and exclusive campus environments causes the challenges confronting undocumented students, underscoring the need to close those holes by targeted outreach and support initiatives.

Significant informational barriers limit many people from reaching potential and resources for learning, especially in the face of progressive legislation in California aimed to assist undocumented immigrants. Even while laws and initiatives are meant for supporting undocumented students in pursuing their studies, many of them remain informed of the many different kinds of financial aid that are open to them. The lack knowledge prevents qualified people from receiving critical advantages like legal protections or visas and encourages feeling of fear and uncertainty. Immigration law can appear alarming and confusing, and it's important to express the options clearly and get legal representation immediately as practical. Further, the mix of inclusive and exclusive campus environments causes the problems confronting undocumented students, underscoring the urgency to close these divides by targeted outreach along with assistance initiatives. This highlights how crucial it is that we offer clear and easily accessible information so that those that qualify are able to get the greatest use of the resources that are accessible to them. (Stavely). Undocumented immigrants usually do not know about the resources that are available to their when they participate in college, which may end up in limitation of access or exposure to anti-immigrant prejudicial opinions. Several learners without paperwork find educational environments that are both inclusive and exclusive at exactly the same time. (*PERSISTING INEQUALITIES and PATHS FORWARD: A Report on the State of Undocumented Students in California's Public Universities*).

V. THE CURRENT IMPACT OF THE INFORMATION GAP

A. Lack of California Legal Intervention

Despite recent laws aimed at improving access to educational resources, undocumented pupils in California tend suffering tremendously from an information cleaned. Although the progress made in lowering the costs and developing support systems from initiatives like the California Dream Act and separate Assembly Bills, many learners still find it difficult to understand the complex nature of the law and the possibilities currently available to students. These students usually refrain from asking for aid out of fear of deportation and a lack of understanding as to their rights, which eliminates them of the strategies they need to thrive in the classroom. Community organizations and school counseling programs work to close this gap by expanding equity while offering vital help. Yet their efforts remains insufficient for overcoming the pervasive ignorance that undocumented students have. In order to guarantee that all students, regardless of their immigration status, will fully benefit from California's

educational customers, it is imperative that more outreach, legal aid, and comprehensive data dissemination are carried out.

Significant deficiencies in knowledge still persist, preventing many undocumented students from accessing essential services, despite recent legal changes in California, such as the California Dream Act and in-state tuition eligibility. Many students are afraid of being deported and lack information, hence they are not aware of the help that is available, given that those rules are meant to lower cost barriers and offer support through campus centers. (Baldwin Park High School). Because undocumented students are not eligible for Title IV federal financial aid, educational therapy programs, which are based on the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model, aim at improving equity and offer essential assistance. However, many students require additional tools to succeed because these attempts alone have not addressed what gap that impedes access to resources. (“The School Counselor and Working with Students Experiencing Issues Surrounding Undocumented Status - American School Counselor Association (ASCA)”).

The term "DREAMer" refers to undocumented students aspiring to pursue higher education but facing obstacles, including limited access to information and the need to disclose their citizenship status. Although California has enacted legislative measures like Assembly Bills 540, 2000, 130, and 131 to facilitate financial assistance, students still need help, especially when seeking admission to out-of-state universities. Various resources, such as the AB540 Coalition of Santa Barbara and Immigrants Rising, help identify scholarship opportunities, but the need for awareness remains a significant barrier. (“Resources for Undocumented Students”). Organizations like Immigrants Rising have worked to address this gap by advocating for legal service providers to engage with schools offering legal screenings and consultations for undocumented students. Despite these efforts, the need for increased legal aid and better access to information persists. School districts have implemented "safe haven" or "sanctuary" policies to create inclusive environments, yet there remains a discrepancy in awareness and adherence to legal protections across districts. (Stavelly). Recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau indicates that nearly half of California's children have at least one immigrant parent, rising to 75% in areas like Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area. Approximately two million children reside in "mixed-status" households, compared to the USC Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration.

On the contrary hand, corresponding to a report by Education Trust-West, there are about 250,000 undocumented students at California schools. These numbers demonstrate how many immigrant families have children participating in the educational system and the way immigration changes in policy affect both students and their families. In light of the increased anti-immigrant mood, many school districts understand the importance of creating a welcoming and secure atmosphere. This comprehensive plan addresses worries concerning immigration status beyond the limits of academic support. To create a welcome atmosphere, schools should concentrate on three main areas: putting in place district policies that are beneficial, as improving resources for pupils, and providing families accurate data. Because immigrant students receive legal rights by federal and state bills, district-level awareness and adherence to these safeguards differ. (*SUPPORT for IMMIGRANT and REFUGEE STUDENTS: A Guide to Creating Safe and Welcoming Schools for Immigrant and Refugee Students in California*).

B. How Undocumented Immigrant Students are Impacted

Students that are undocumented immigrants in California face numerous obstacles that seriously impede their ability to access and perform in schools. These students are frequently faced with complicated issues arising from their social background and legal location, even in their presence of support the networks. A large fraction of this group make less than \$20,000 a year, and many come from economically disadvantaged parents with low educational attainment. Whilst most undocumented students have an impressive GPA of 3.0 or above, they trouble with attendance and assignment completion, and they are generally detached from the classroom. When combined with the significant mental health problems and worries of family deportation, these difficulties cause it to be tough for students to concentrate on their school goals. Many feel unwelcome in the US, even though they respect the local government in California's support. Due to this imbalance, some undocumented students take up action by the community as a means to advance higher opportunities for education while navigating a sparse institutional support system. These students' uncertain legal status has a major effect on them as they pursue higher education, resulting in it more difficult for them to succeed both in school and life.

Undocumented immigrant pupils were supported, but they nevertheless face a lot of obstacles when it comes to completing an education. Many come from families with modest incomes, where more than one-third of parents graduated from the sixth grade. This educational a difference typically results in financial instability, as many families earn less than \$20,000 annually. Since more than half of undocumented students have a grade point average of 3.0 and higher, academic disengagement is rampant; 65% of them say they have problem turning in assignments early or showing up to class prepared. Mental health problems are commonplace; countless individuals experience psychological discomfort caused by their immigration status and worry regarding their family potentially deported. In addition, but they understood that California's town government is more helpful, almost eighty percent of them still feel opposed in the entire nation. The complex experiences of undocumented students, who often takes part in community activism to push for improved educational access, manifest themselves in this duality. But institutional for help is still patchy, leading to it harder to enable them to take benefit from needs-specific campus resources. Undocumented students face several obstacles in their attempts to achieve of academic performance, all the while struggling with the residual repercussions of their unstable immigration history.

(PERSISTING INEQUALITIES and PATHS FORWARD: A Report on the State of Undocumented Students in California's Public Universities).

Students that belong to undocumented immigrants in California find multiple challenges in their educational journey, especially because of their immigration circumstances and an absence of institutional support. There are about 145,000 illegal pupils in California schools between the ages of 3 and 17, yet many of them stay away from counseling because they fear being being sent. Proponents propose that educational organizations collaborate with legal aid groups to offer realistic consultations that the could advise individuals on where to live prior to and turning age 18. While some students may be candidates for the DACA program, it only offers temporary relief without a path to citizenship, and immigration laws give restrained possible choices to permanent residency.

The lack of comprehensive support systems forces many undocumented students to navigate their education amid uncertainty and fear, adversely affecting their academic

performance and well-being. (Stavelly). Undocumented immigrant students pursuing higher education in the U.S. face significant challenges, particularly in college admissions and financial aid. While federal law does not prohibit their admission, some states restrict access to public colleges and universities. Federal scholarship funding, a vital resource for students, is a big hurdle, even though numerous institutions have the authority to establish rules for themselves. Due to this lack of access, undocumented students are forced to look for different kinds for livelihoods through state-specific aid programs and grants, which exacerbates their state of affairs. (“Six Things Undocumented Students Need to Know about College – BigFuture”).

1. The Effect of Legislation on Undocumented Immigrant Students.

While numerous laws are designed for encouraging them, undocumented immigrant students in the US encounter an enormous number of legal challenges that make their pursuit of higher education more difficult. Legislation like Assembly Bill (A.B.) 540 in California, which guarantees eligible undocumented students in-state tuition rates, is a big step in the right route. But even after these laws were expanded by subsequent bills like the California Dream Act, many students still find it difficult to properly take benefits of these provisions because they constantly are unable to get answers and help about their eligibility. Students must deal with an unfamiliar school atmosphere full with challenges as a result of this informational gap, which continually restricting them from getting vital resources. Moreover, whereas certain laws provide precautions, they don't establish explicit routes to permanent residence or federal money. The struggles faced by undocumented students highlight the critical need for comprehensive efforts to create awareness and provide support inside academic institutions. These students' educational journeys can often be marked by disorientation and stress.

Despite the rules that are in place, particularly throughout California, undocumented immigrant students nevertheless encounter severe legal obstacles while attempting to take courses in higher education in the United States. Legislation enacted in 2001, Assembly Bill (A.B.) 540, permits qualified undocumented students to enroll in California secondary institutions for up to three years at in-state tuition rates, given they sign an affidavit confirming that they plan to obtain legal status. S.B. 68 in 2017 and A.B. 2000 in 2014, which widened eligibility to community colleges and adult schools, respectively, improved this. Additionally, undocumented students' financial burden can be lowered by accessing state-funded scholarships, educational loans, and financial aid through California's Dream Act. However, a lack of education and guidance on their eligibility prevent many students from take use of these choices.

A clear path to permanent residency or government assistance is unavailable by the laws like S.B. 1210, which forbids the use of Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITINs) for background checks, and S.B. 695, whose prohibits the disclosure of immigration status for professional licensure. As a result, students without legal protection still have to negotiate an educational setting that is difficult while conquering barriers that keep them of obtaining essential supplies. (California - Information on Foreign Students | Higher Education Immigration Gateway). Undocumented students pursuing higher education are given support by the California Dream Act, which permits them to apply for state financial aid through the CA Dream Act Application—a unique program from the federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Students has to keep residency and educational requirements, such as doing three years of full-time attendance in California high schools, adult education programs, or community colleges, or acquiring equivalent credits. inevitably, a lack of knowledge and direction over their eligibility makes it difficult for lots of learners to receive this help. While the Dream Act's objective to offer financial aid to students regardless of their immigration status, undocumented

students may not be able to fully utilize these resources due to the challenge getting approved and the lack of outreach. Due to this, despite California's adherence to educational justice, many students lack information about the tools and opportunities that are readily available to them, which hampers their ability to attain their goals in school and job. (“Undocumented/Dreamer Students”)

Students who're undocumented immigrants in the United States need to navigate a challenging legal system if they are to obtain legal residency. For instance, children who have been mistreated, neglected, or abandoned by a parent may be eligible for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) in California if they apply before they become 21. Under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), victims of intimate partner violence by citizens or permanent residents of the nation's capital may apply for relief; yet they must do so before turning 25. If their parents are adept at obtaining permanent residency, children may also do so, although this is required before they turn 21. After an illegal person turns 18, staying in the USA for longer than six months without the required paperwork may result in serious implications, such as being prevented from returning the country or requiring ambiguous waivers. Despite such possibilities, a lot of undocumented students find it difficult to get in touch with timely legal counsel and services since they frequently aren't aware about significant deadlines or consequences of doing nothing, which renders their search for residence that much harder. (Stavely).

Students living as undocumented immigrants have plenty of challenges since schools are unable to offer vital resources and information. Many educational institutions suffer from a lack of awareness, which causes students to miss out on opportunities and become more apprehensive. A few instances of such opportunities include U-visas. Students and families should feel comfortable talking about their circumstances through their schools. nevertheless, pupils lose out on important legal rights and chances for learning when they don't comply with me. Groups such as Immigrants Rising have collaborated with high schools to execute workshops the educators with the goal of preparing them to assist kids without documentation more effectively. But these programs' reach is often restricted, and many kids still face obstacles when trying to get the help they need. Comprehensive ways are desperately needed to make sure all schools are prepared to lead (Stavely).

Undocumented immigrant kids are frequently missing the information and support that high schools and primary schools need, causing major ramifications for their safety and students in their studies. Those challenges occur even worse by the presence of School Resource Officers (SROs) in schools, most especially when they serve low-income pupils of color. Because SROs often handle ordinary disciplinary concerns, there may be premature referrals to law enforcement. This can cause anxiety in undocumented students, as they may be afraid of immigration enforcement and hold the view that local police are working with immigration agencies. Unintentionally providing information to immigration officers puts students' citizenship or immigration relief at risk. The result happens often in schools. (Gamez).

Furthermore, immigration agents commonly exert pressure on schools to reveal student data in the absence of explicit legal obligations. This destroys trust among the school community and increases a climate of dread that is harmful to learning. It has been proven the presence of law enforcement in schools negatively affects educational environments since students get apprehensive and perform less academically due to fear of deportation. after an immigration raid, attendance can drop substantially sometimes by as much as 60%. Schools

should think exploring doing everything with SROs and begin using restorative methods which foster supportive connections with the goal to address all of these issues. Furthermore, school districts need to make it clear that they are not legally obligated to comply by immigration needs and ceased sharing data with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). (Gamez).

VI. PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

In order to successfully help undocumented immigrant kids in California, a multimodal approach combining legislative advocacy, engagement with the community, and grassroots actions within schools is essential. It is essential to take responsibility for urgent requirements while fostering clients for success and long-term assistance. Implementing comprehensive training for educators, strengthening commitment with local groups, and increasing access to resources will empower these children to navigate their educational paths more effectively.

A. Legislative Action

Legislative advocacy is crucial for supporting undocumented immigrant students. California has led in passing protective laws, but ongoing advocacy is needed to ensure new bills, like Assembly Bill 2586, which would allow public universities to hire undocumented students for campus jobs, are enacted and existing protections upheld. Parents, educators, and community members can help by staying informed about current legislation and supporting bills that expand access to financial aid, scholarships, and legal resources. Promoting these initiatives through community meetings, school events, and local media, along with encouraging others to contact representatives and participate in advocacy days, can amplify their impact. By uniting as a community, we can influence lawmakers to prioritize the needs of undocumented students, ensuring they have equal opportunities in education.

B. Social Media Intervention

Social media is needed for conveying the news about undocumented students and rallying support. Social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter allow consumers to return information about resources and issues they are they face which can assist communities and schools build stronger support systems. Campaigns which display the success of students without papers might motivate others and draw attention to the need for assist. Social media may alert families about deadlines for scholarships, legal aid, and forthcoming workshops. Persistent posting and in-person outreach make certain individuals remain aware of the resources that are there. Effective use of immigration-related hashtags can help spread these messages and link them to larger movements. Community cohesion is promoted when educators, parents, and students are encouraged to share their experiences. Social media can also be used as a platform for advancing legislative reforms and rally public support for programs that assist students without legal status.

C. Starting At The Local Level

Schools are essential in ensuring that students without keeping records can access resources. But still in order to properly communicate those potential customers, many necessitate improved infrastructure or awareness. Schools may go with early steps to address this issue by joining hands with organizations including Immigrants Rising, which offers workshops, documents for learning, and access to legal aid. Regular workshops and information sessions on financial aid, legal rights, and college applications deserves to be held for students

and their families. Additionally, counseling and classroom staff who understand the distinct challenges faced with undocumented kids will enable them to provide both the right kind of aid. For students without a legal status, schools can create clubs or support groups that motivates conversation on peers and information exchanges.

Parent-teacher club (PTA) newsletters are an ideal instance of a local improvement that can effectively help youngsters with legal status. Schools can enlighten parents who might not be aware of such challenges with information about the needs of undocumented kids and the services that are available. Updates on legislation, area workshops, and advice on how to help undocumented students at home are all included in translated newsletters. By exhibiting success stories, families can give insights and orientation, promoting an environment that is welcoming. PTA meetings are additionally useful as a venue for parents to provide feedback on how to effectively assist undocumented kids .

VII. CONCLUSION

In the end, whereas California is a leader in helping undocumented students, many still meet obstacles that get as a result of a lack of information adversely affected by a sense of mistrust toward law enforcement. Students' confidence and performance are harmed by this climate, which is made worse by school resource managers as well as information sharing with immigration officials. Schools need to empower undocumented children and fostering diverse environments and better communication in order to address issue. California may help these students in happy and keep its commitment to the same chances for all by bridging this gap.

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