Place Matters: Undocumented Latinx Students in College

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Undocumented Young Adults in a Shifting Legal Landscape

Federal
- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (2012)
- Ineligible for federal financial aid

State
- In State Tuition Laws
- Varied financial aid policies
- Educational Bans

Institutions
- Institutional Aid
- Student Support Services
The role of place for college access and experiences in college for Latinx UYAs

Undocumented young adults beyond traditional immigrant gateways
(Morando Lakhani 2013; Martinez 2014; Cebulko & Silver 2016; Burciaga & Martinez 2017; Roth 2018; Silver 2018; Gomez Cervantes 2019)

Differential effects of undocumented status & DACA by place, by form (urban/rural) & other key factors such race/ethnicity, education
(Wong & Garcia, 2017; Martinez & Salazar, 2018; Flores, Escudero, and Burciaga, 2019; Gonzales & Burciaga 2018; Garcia & Schmalzbauer 2017)

The role of institutions in shaping the college-going experiences of undocumented students
(Golash-Boza and Valdez 2018; Hsin and Ortega 2018; Enriquez 2019)
Educational Belonging

Educational belonging/exclusion

- Highlights the **presence** and **absence** of opportunities for full participation in the education system

- Captures a range of experiences that are shaped by **contextual differences**
Educational belonging in California

Key Issue: Full participation in the college experience

College: Aspirations of participation ➔ Blocked opportunity ➔ Altered expectations ➔ Incomplete sense of educational belonging

“My dream has always been to be able to represent the U.S. in another nation... I can’t get internships to get any experience for that because I need to be a citizen.” (Maritza, 20)
Educational Belonging in Colorado

Key Issue: Financial aid & robust undocumented student support services

College: Aspirations for full participation → Blocked opportunity → Altered expectations → Incomplete educational belonging

“I would say the biggest way would be financially not receiving money from the government (federal or state financial aid) and not receiving financial aid from the school, that’s been a challenge for my family.”
(Fernando, 20)
Educational belonging in Georgia

Key Issue: Access-Educational ban & Economic Ban

High School: College aspirations ➔ Blocked opportunity ➔ Altered expectations ➔ Incomplete Educational Belonging

They came here to give us a better life, to get a better education. The fact that I can’t get it frustrates me. It makes me angry….The fact that they’re limiting me to not only my potential, my success, my education, my right as a human being to get that education frustrates me.

(Diana, 22)
Incomplete Educational Belonging at Different Points in the College Pipeline

- Highlights the **presence** and **absence** of opportunities for full participation in the education system
- Captures a range of experiences that are shaped by **contextual differences** by socio-political context and institutionally
Implications for Policy & Practice

• College Access Policies
• Financial aid: state & institutional
• Trainings for key student support offices
• Institutionalized spaces

• Vibrant undocumented immigrant movement and mobilization
Thank you!

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