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IMMIGRATION AND SOCIAL WORK: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF SCHOOLS IN LIBERAL STATES

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IMMIGRATION AND SOCIAL WORK: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF SCHOOLS
IN LIBERAL STATES

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Social Work

by
Yenicka Avila
Stephanie Ibarra
May 2022

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ABSTRACT

The social work profession vows to defend society's most vulnerable populations, including undocumented immigrants. Yet, how immigration is perceived in social work education and the extent to which social works schools are integrated this concept in their mission statements and/or social media pages remain understudied in the existing literature. This study is a mixed-methods content analysis of 133 social work schools accredited (or in the process of accreditation) by the Council of Social Work Education (N = 133). It was hypothesized that the proportion of social work schools that overtly/covertly mentioned immigration in their mission statements and Facebook pages will be less than 50%. Quantitative findings support this hypothesis, while qualitative results (1) social work schools only make an abstract reference to immigration in their mission statements and (2) schools of social work integrate and embrace immigration more through there Facebook pages than their mission statements. A discussion of these findings for theory, research, social work practice, and social work education is provided.

Keywords: Immigration, mission statement, content analysis, social work schools, social media, mixed-methods research design, liberal states, thematic analysis.

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This thesis would not have been made possible without the continuous support and dedication of our research supervisor, Dr. Rigaud Joseph. Thank you for pushing us to new limits and always reminding us we are capable of the impossible. Your own passion for this profession has sparked our own newfound love for research, and we cannot wait to see how this thesis will impact the future generation of social workers. To the great friends we have made throughout this graduate program, thank you for going through the highs and lows with us.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all first-generation social work graduate students, who at times may have felt intimidated by the unknown. We hope you find your voice within our thesis and motivates you to continue to challenge the systems that impact us every single day.

“If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.” – Isaac Newton

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CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEM FORMULATION

Scope of Unauthorized Immigration in the United States

Unauthorized immigration is arguably one of the biggest social issues in the United States (US). Over the years, thousands of immigrants have crossed American borders or overstayed their US visas. Analyzing Department of Homeland Security data, Baker (2021) estimated the number of the unauthorized immigrant population in the US at 11.4 million in 2018. This estimate was not statistically significant from the 11.6 million of undocumented immigrants who lived in the country in 2008 (Baker, 2021). Figure 1 below traces the proportion of unauthorized immigrants in the US for the 2008-2018 decade.

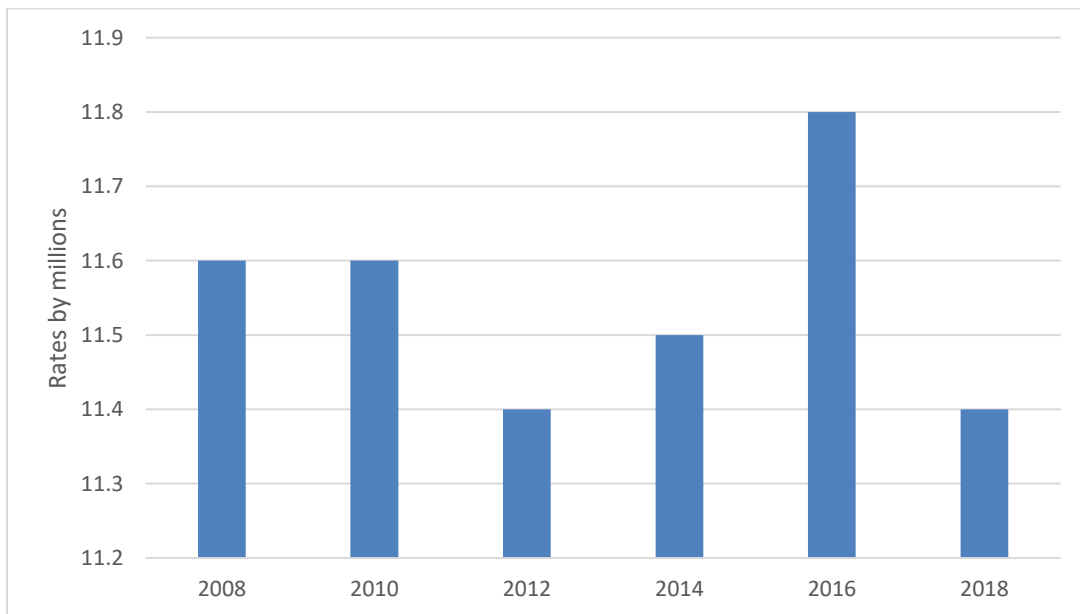


Figure 1. Unauthorized Immigrant Population in the U.S 2008-2018

According to Baker (2021), about half of the US' unauthorized population originated from Mexico. This is understandable considering the fact that Mexico shares borders with the US and faces significant economic challenges. The remaining half of immigrants come from various regional and faraway places, including the Northern Triangle (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras), India, China, The Philippines, Colombia, Brazil, Venezuela, South Korea, Vietnam, Ecuador. Figure 2 provides more precised estimates of the unauthorized immigrant population in the US based on their country of origin.

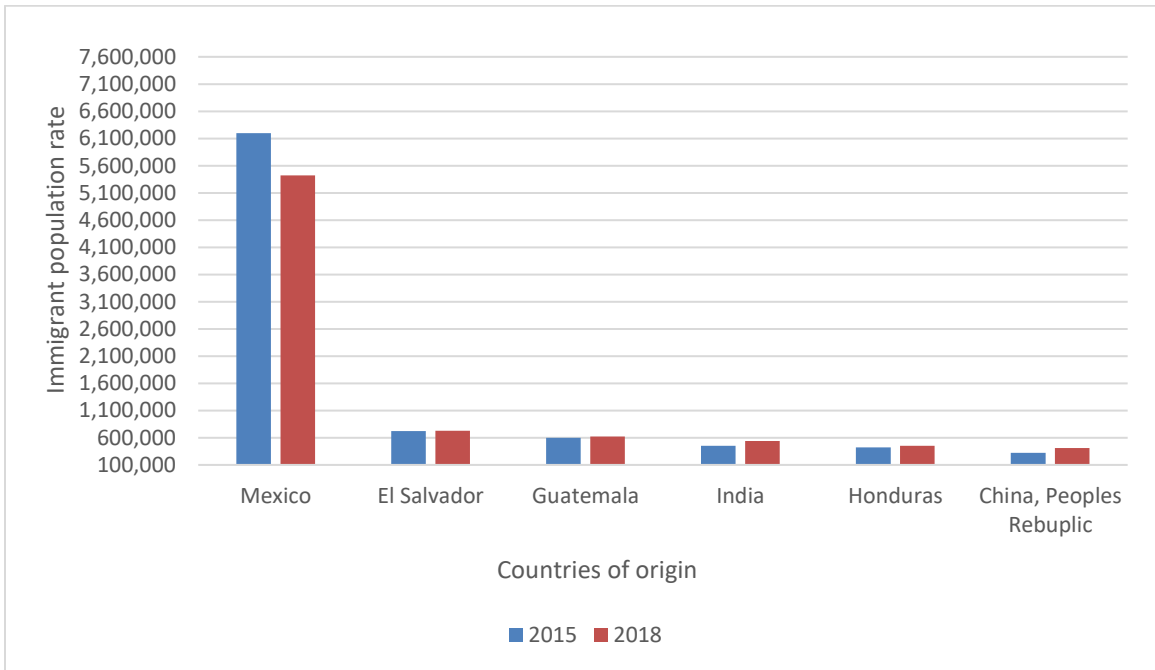


Figure 2. Unauthorized Immigrant Population in the U.S by Country-of-Origin 2015 & 2018

Meanwhile, Baker (2021) also found that unauthorized immigrants are concentrated in certain places across the US. Based on their share of unauthorized immigrants, California, Texas, Florida, New York, New Jersey,

Illinois, Georgia, North Carolina, Arizona, and Washington represent the top 10 destinations, respectively. Figure 3 exhibits the share of undocumented immigrants in the US by state between 2015 and 2018.

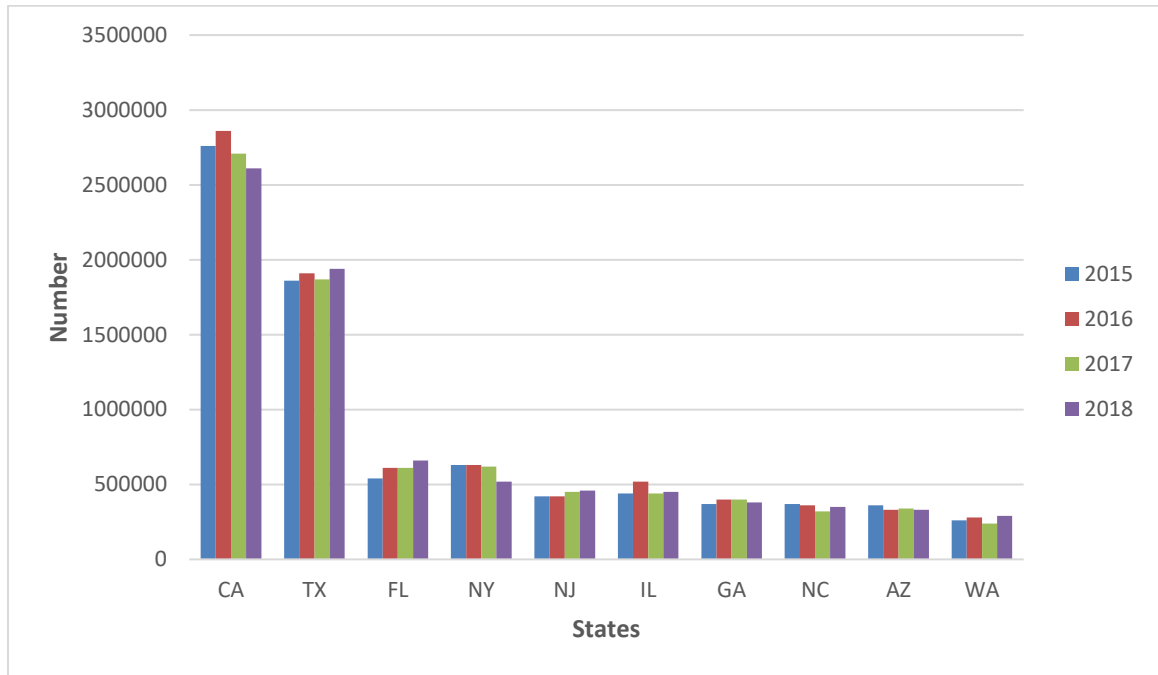


Figure 3. Unauthorized Immigrant Population in the United States per State of Residence

Federal Interventions Aimed at Unauthorized Immigration

Arguably, there are very limited interventions set in place in the United States that are aimed at promoting the well-being of unauthorized immigrants residing in the US, besides the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) program. Created by the Obama administration and first implemented in June 2012, DACA authorized the Department of Homeland Security to consider legal status requests from “certain people who came to the United States as children and meet several

guidelines...” (US Citizenship & Immigration Services, 2021a). These people may request consideration for a period of two years and are subject to renewal. If approved, DACA recipients may be eligible to work. However, the program does not provide recipients a path to citizenship.

Today, there are seven specific guidelines potential DACA recipients must meet. The first one being that the applicant must have been under the age of 31 as of June 15, 2021. The second guideline explains that the applicant must have been in the United States prior to their 16th birthday. The third guideline requires that the applicant must have continued to reside in the United States from June 15, 2007, up until the current date. The fourth guideline requires that the applicant must have been "...physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012, and at the time of making your request for consideration of deferred action with USCIS;" (US Citizenship & Immigration Services, 2021a). The fifth guideline calls for the applicant to have obtained no lawful status as of June 15, 2012. When referring to lawful status this means either: the applicant has never obtained lawful immigration prior to or on June 15, 2012, or if any lawful immigration status or parole had been obtained before June 15, 2012, it has expired since June 15, 2012. The sixth guideline requires that the applicant must be presently attending school, graduated from or earned a certificate indicating completion of high school, obtained a GED, or be a discharged veteran of the United States. The seventh and final guideline indicates that the applicant must be free of convictions of a felony, serious misdemeanor, or more than three

demeanors. This guideline also takes into consideration that the applicant must not be a safety threat to the public or national security (US Citizenship & Immigration Services, 2021a).

The DACA program was enforced as one of the "... immigration laws against certain young people who were brought to this country as children and know only this country as home." (US Department of Homeland Security, 2012). In addition, this program does not intend for young people who have contributed to the country and are productive members of this country to be removed and sent back to countries where these recipients may have never resided, much less speak the language. As of September 2020, there is an estimate of 640,760 active DACA recipients. There are approximately 46,560 DACA recipients with renewals still pending (American Immigration Council, 2021). Since its creation, DACA has survived multiple court challenges. Hence, the program has solid legal grounds.

Meanwhile, the TPS program postulates that citizens of foreign country qualify for legal status in the US, if the conditions in the country may "...temporarily prevent the country's nationals from returning safely, or in certain circumstances, where the country is unable to handle the return of its nationals adequately" (US Citizenship & Immigration Services, 2021b, para 1). Individuals who are deemed eligible for TPS shall not be removed from the United States, can access an employment authorization document (EAD), and can gain travel

authorization. Like DACA, this program does not grant an immigrant lawful permanent status.

According to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (2021b), Burma (Myanmar), El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Syria, Venezuela, and Yemen are countries currently protected under the TPS program. These countries are ravaged by either ongoing armed conflicts, environmental disasters, or epidemics. Those are eligibility criteria for the TPS program. Once the TPS status has been established for a country, a rescission seems difficult. Even the Trump administration, despite its best xenophobic efforts, could not eliminate the program for Haiti nationals.

Study Rationale, Purpose, and Significance

In most cases, immigrants come into the United States seeking a better future for themselves and their families. However, there are many barriers set in place to prevent them from becoming successful. These barriers are present in various settings, including education (Ballerini & Feldblum, 2021), health care (Dang et al., 2012; Hacker et al., 2015), workplace (Gleeson, 2010; Flynn et al., 2015), and public assistance (Bernstein et al., 2021). The often-traumatic experiences of immigrants both during their journey to the US and their isolated status inside the country lead to mental health issues among this population (Aguilar, 2019; Joseph, 2011; Sullivan & Rehm, 2005).

Given the challenges faced by undocumented immigrants in the US, social workers have a role to play. In fact, the 2017 Code of Ethics of the National

Association of Social Workers (NASW), through its first ethical principle of service that states that "social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems" (NASW, 2017, p. X) This principle entails that social workers should expand and rely on their knowledge and skills to provide this help, and effectively address social problems (NASW, 2017). In light of this principle, a course curriculum that strongly emphasizes immigration would prepare social work students to work effectively with immigrants and enable social work students to address the social injustice immigrants face in the US. The social work profession also compels its members to display competence in working with culturally diverse clients. In effect, NASW stipulates that social workers should:

.... demonstrate knowledge that guides practice with clients of various cultures and be able to demonstrate skills in the provision of culturally informed services that empower marginalized individuals and groups. Social workers must take action against oppression, racism, discrimination, and inequities, and acknowledge personal privilege. (NASW, 2021)

The purpose of this study is to conduct a content analysis on the extent to which schools of social work integrate immigration. This study focuses on schools in California, Illinois, New York, Washington, New Jersey, and Massachusetts which are six liberal states. These states have not only been homes to millions of unauthorized immigrants, but also governed by liberal

politicians who publicly call for pro-immigrant policies. Using Critical Theory, this study will attempt to answer the following set of questions:

- 1) To what extent have social work schools in California, Illinois, New York, Washington, New Jersey, and Massachusetts integrate immigration?
- 2) How do social work schools in California, Illinois, New York, Washington, New Jersey, and Massachusetts describe the concept immigration?

Significance of the Study

The findings in this study will have implications for social work theory, social work research, social work practice, and social work education. From a theoretical standpoint, this study will broaden understanding of critical theory, which encourages people to become knowledgeable about social systems in place, as well as power and liberation of members of minority groups. In terms of research, the findings in this study will extend the literature on unauthorized immigration. In effect, despite the high number of unauthorized immigrants in the United States, there is an insufficient amount of research on this topic. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct this study.

Regarding social work practice, this study—on a macro level—will raise awareness about the plight of the undocumented immigrants in the United States and call on policymakers at local, state, and federal levels to ensure a more human treatment of these people. On a micro level, this study may prompt

current social workers to consider whether their practice meets the needs of the unauthorized immigrant population in the United States. From a social work education perspective, school administrators and faculty can find inspiration in the findings in this study to prepare social work students to service the unauthorized immigrant population in an effective manner.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Existing Literature

Over the past few decades, social work scholars and researchers have written intensively about immigration, making this concept a reference point in the social work literature. In fact, the term immigration has appeared in both conceptual articles (Furman et al., 2013; Garcia, 2020; Hardina, 2014; Martinez-Brawley & Zorita, 2011) and empirical work (Al-Makhamreh et al., 2012; Bhuyan et al., 2012; Clements et al., 2020; Danso, 2016; Franco, 2021; Held et al., 2018; Mehrotra et al., 2017; Mehrotra et al., 2019; Olcoñ et al., 2020; Olcoñ et al., 2018; Rosales et al., 2018; Sanchez Mayers et al., 2020; Sisneros & Alter, 2009; Woo et al., 2021). Studies on immigration and social work follow three tracks: social justice, preparation and readiness for practice with immigrant communities, and content analysis.

The social justice track details studies that focus on the need to embrace cultural diversity, equity, and social justice in social work curricula (Franco, 2021; Mehrotra, 2019; Woo et al., 2021). The second track contains qualitative and quantitative studies that assess knowledge, attitude, preparation, and readiness of social work stakeholders for practice with immigrant populations (Al-Makhamreh et al., 2012; Bhuyan et al., 2012;

Danso, 2016; Held et al., 2018; Olcoñ et al., 2018; Sanchez Mayers et al., 2020; Sisneros & Alter, 2009). The third track—which is more consistent with the purpose of this study—describes research studies carried under the content analysis research methodology. Below is a synthesis of the literature on this track.

Synthesis of the Literature

Rosales et al. (2018) conducted a study with the purpose of gathering information about the organizational characteristics within mental health organizations which provide psychiatric care for a relatively large number of Hispanics in the United States. There was no theory that was integrated within this study. Rosales et. al (2018) utilized the method of content analysis to conduct this study and had a sample of 9,572 mental health organizations across the entire United States. In this study, Rosales et. al (2018) found that the two kinds of organizations that had a higher likelihood of serving Hispanic clients were non-profit mental health organizations which are rooted in community health centers and hospitals. On the contrary, it was revealed that organizations with the lower likelihood were those for-profit institutions and public agencies.

In addition, Mehrotra et al. (2017) aimed to understand how MSW courses in the United States conceptualize and integrate diversity and social justice within their course content. This was executed by conducting a content analysis on 27 MSW syllabi around the United States. Findings from Mehrotra et al.'s research (2017) demonstrated that although diversity and social justice courses aimed to

teach knowledge, skills, and values, the majority of syllabi demonstrated focus on knowledge with considerably less attention to skills.

Similarly, Mehrotra et al. (2019) later conducted a content analysis on the previous research conducted in 2017. The researchers aimed to examine the underlying assumptions of master of social work diversity and social justice courses as platforms for the embodiment of social justice and social work. The researchers integrated elements of critical discourse analysis, which views language as a form of social practice. Mehrotra et al. (2019) found that diversity and social justice courses are at the nexus of social work's contradictory relationship to both a professional project and a social justice mission. It was also found that most courses operated under the assumption that students identify with dominant U.S. positionalities, such as whiteness, middle class status, cisgender and heterosexual statuses. Furthermore, the findings revealed that course objectives and descriptions frequently either converged cultural competency and anti-oppression discourses and/or considered them as inherently compatible frameworks (Mehrotra et al. 2019).

Lastly, Holosko et al. (2015) conducted a content analysis of the top 50 ranked mission statements of school of social work. The purpose of the study was to explore the parallels between the content within these mission statements and the Council of Social Work Education's 10 core competencies. It was found that these mission statements were not aligned with the core competency

standards that are utilized to govern and uphold appropriate social work education curricula (Holosko et al. 2015)

Limitation of Existing Literature

Previous research of the current literature aims to focus on the integration of diversity and inclusion within social work course content in the United States. This study aims to focus more on the importance of the integration of immigration content within social work education in the United States. More specifically, this study will aim to analyze social work education in liberal states which contain a higher proportion of immigrants in their population. The research discussed was solely focused on MSW programs, and their course syllabi. Unfortunately, a course syllabus gives a small glimpse of what occurs in any given course from an institutional perspective. However, this study will take a deep look into both BSW and MSW programs mission statements as these statements are a deciding factor on whether students may attend a school or not. The keywords that will be utilized in this study place more of an emphasis on immigration and globalization, while the keywords that were used in previous research aim more at ethnic and racial diversity.

Synthesis of Theoretical Perspective Guiding this Research

A theory used in this research to address the issues unauthorized immigrants face in today's United States is critical theory (CT). Dating back to the 1920s, the general premise of critical theory asserts that human knowledge gained through social awareness and natural science can liberate the oppressed

and contribute to social change. The theory argues that "...by understanding social systems with a focus on power and domination, we can become more conscious of the need for change, and in turn work toward that change" (Salas et al., 2010, para 3). When applied to social work practice, critical theory provides a framework for understanding how social order runs, the roles people have in this order, the effects the system has on people, and what can be done to promote change.

According to Salas et al. (2010), the following criteria provide a guide for practice based in CT: (a) historical and cultural context, (b) power distribution, (c) self-reflection, (d) nonjudgmental inquiry, (e) values, and (f) awareness of the impact of action. Under CT, it is important to understand the factors that contribute to social issues over time; how power dynamics favor or marginal social groups; how a nonjudgmental approach can lead to respect for own beliefs and values as well as that of others; and how appropriate action can trigger social changes and thus contribute to social welfare (Salas et al., 2010).

Because CT is truly a guide to social action, it is essential to view this research through a critical theory lens. The application of CT to this research with respect to the social work practice is an excellent fit with the professional values of enhancement of people's wellbeing, promotion of social justice, and empowerment of oppressed populations.

Critical Analysis of Theoretical Perspective Guiding this Research

In evaluating the overall quality of Critical Theory, the Theory Evaluation Scale (TES) created by Joseph and Macgowan in 2019 was utilized. The TES is the first-of its-kind transdisciplinary measure (Joseph, 2021) and which has been widely used in the social work literature to analyze theories (Drew et al., 2021; Joseph, 2020a; Joseph, 2020b; Joseph, 2021; Joseph et al., 2022; Stoeffler & Joseph, 2020). The TES is a valid and reliable instrument for appraising theories in social work (Joseph & Macgowan, 2019).

When assessing the overall reliability and consistency of items in the TES, it was found that the item analysis concluded a reliability score of 0.88 (Joseph & Macgowan, 2019). The TES consists of nine criteria for which one scores the theory anywhere from 1-5. Consequently, this means the lowest score a theory may receive is a 9 concluding the theory is of poor quality. On the contrary, the highest a theory can score is a 45 reflecting excellent quality.

When evaluating the quality of CT with the TES, a score of 36 was generated, which is indicative of a theory of excellent quality (Please see Table 1 below). For the first criterion of the TES, which assesses the coherence of the theory, critical theory was scored a 5. The justification for this score is that the theory remains consistent throughout many different articles and is logical. The second criterion evaluates the overall conceptual clarity of the theory for which critical theory was scored a 5 as well. For the most part, CT is easy to conceptualize and when reading on critical theory people are able to understand

the assumptions of the theory. Furthermore, the third criterion assesses how well the theory outlines the basic assumptions.

As previously stated, CT presents its basic assumptions very concrete and clear therefore, it received a score of 5 for the third criterion. The fourth criterion focuses primarily on how well the theory discusses its historical connections in previous research. For this criterion, critical theory scored a 5 as well because before transitioning into the assumptions CT discusses the roots of the theory.

The fifth criterion in the TES, focuses on how well the theory can be tested through research methods such as observational and/or experimental methods. Critical theory scored a 2 in this criterion, because the research is very limited in regard to attempting to prove this theory to be false. Similarly, for the sixth criterion critical theory also received a 2. The sixth criterion assesses if the theory has been thoroughly tested and validated through empirical evidence. Moreover, for the seventh criterion critical theory received a score of 2. This criterion has an emphasis on whether the theory presents its limitations. Critical theory fails to present clearly its limitations, it has more of a progressive approach therefore, it has not been transparent about the limitations of the theory which may raise questions from the public. For the eighth criterion, critical theory did relatively good receiving a score of 5. This criterion assesses whether the theory places importance on the systems individuals interact with. Critical theory is based on the analysis of people's systems and how these systems affect their power in society. Lastly, the ninth criterion focuses primarily on if the theory recognizes

humans as important agents in their own environment. For this criterion, critical theory scores a 5. Critical theory initially was based on the general premise that if humans obtained more knowledge, all would be able to become a catalyst for change and liberate others.

In conclusion, based on the score of 36 the TES would conclude Critical Theory is a theory of excellent quality. However, we must be mindful that the TES does have limitations such as within-item grading subjectivity (Joseph, 2020a,b). In addition, another limitation that was indicated was that there was an overall theory quality trap (Stoeffler & Joseph, 2020). Given these limitations, it is critical to remain mindful that the overall scores and quality of critical theory may have been hindered.

Table 1

Critical Analysis of the Critical Theory with Joseph & Macgowan's Theory Evaluation Scale (TES)

Joseph, R., & Macgowan, M. J. (2019)

Criteria	Description	Score CT*
1	The theory has coherence.	5
2	The theory has conceptual clarity.	5
3	The theory clearly outlines and explains its philosophical assumptions.	5
4	The theory describes its historical roots in connection with previous research.	5
5	The theory can be tested and proven false via observational and experimental methods.	2
6	The theory has been critically tested and validated through empirical evidence.	2
7	The theory explains its boundaries or limitations.	2
8	The theory accounts for the systems within which individuals interact with people around them.	5
9	The theory recognizes humans as active agents within their environment.	5
Overall score		36

Theory quality based on overall TES score: Excellent

*Critical Theory

Table 1. Critical Analysis of the Critical Theory (TES)

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter clearly defines the research methods used to conduct this study. In addition, this chapter explains the research design of this study and goes into depth about how sampling was determined. The chapter will also include how data was collected and analyzed in this research study. Justifications for the research design, sampling size, researcher's hypothesis, and data collection procedures are given in this chapter.

Ethics/Protection of Human Subjects

Researchers in this study completed and obtained an ethics training and obtain Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) certification. Researchers sought and gained approval to conduct this study from the California State University San Bernardino Institutional Review Board. This study applied proper use of the COVID-19 guidelines per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) when applicable to ensure safety. This study did not involve human subjects.

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to explore the extent to which immigration content is integrated into social work schools mission statements and social media across six liberal states in the United States. As previously mentioned, this area of research is understudied, and this study aimed to contribute greatly to the

existing literature. The method that was used in this study is a mixed methods approach that included both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The quantitative approach of this study was utilized when examining how many social work schools in these six liberal states included immigration content in their mission statements and social media pages. A qualitative technique was utilized by defining and explaining how each school conceptualized and integrated immigration in their mission statements and social media pages.

Sampling

The sample for this study consisted of both accredited and non-accredited schools of social work across the six liberal states of: California, Illinois, Washington, New Jersey, New York and Massachusetts. The researchers utilized the accreditation directory on the Council on Social Work Education webpage (CSWE) to compile a list of both accredited and non-accredited schools in each state including both bachelor's and master's programs. For the purposes of this study, non-accreditation refers to candidacy and pre-candidacy statuses. The number of accredited social work schools by state were as follows: California (29), Illinois (24), Washington (7), New Jersey (10), New York (35), and Massachusetts (14). As for non-accredited social work schools by state the results were as follows: California (7), Illinois (1), Washington (0), New Jersey (2), New York (2), and Massachusetts (2). The total sample size for this research was composed of 133 accredited and non-accredited social work programs.

Data Collection Procedures

The researchers of this study were the primary source of this data collection. When collecting qualitative data, the researchers sought to define and explain how each school conceptualized and integrated immigration content in their mission statements and social media pages. The researchers searched for the terms “immigration” and its variants, including immigrants, foreign-born, migrants, and globalization. The inclusion of globalization/global context is important. As Bhattacharya and Shibusawa (2009), argued, “Understanding the impact of globalization on the contexts of immigration and the experiences of transnational activities that involve social ties and networking may help practitioners, researchers, and policy makers, to better meet specific needs of immigrant populations” (p.447). When transitioning into a quantitative approach, the data collection identified the number of schools that integrated immigration content in their mission statements and social media pages. Prior to initiating the collection of data, researchers assigned each school with a number to be identified as, throughout the study.

Sensitizing Concepts/Study Variables

This study includes the following key terms or sensitizing concepts: immigration, mission statement, content analysis, social work schools, and social media, mixed- methods research design, liberal states, and thematic analysis. For clarity purposes, this study defines each of these terms below.

- *Immigration*: In this study, immigration refers to unauthorized, foreign-born individuals who have migrated to the U.S.
- *Mission statement*: A summary of the values of an organization or institution.
- *Content analysis*: A research technique used to determine the existence of specific words, themes, or concepts, in any given text.
- *Social work schools*: Post-secondary institutions that provide aspiring social workers with the educational preparation necessary to enter the workforce.
- *Social media*: A technological outlet that enables users to participate in social networking. For the purposes of this study, the researchers focused solely on the social media platform of Facebook.
- *Mixed-methods research design*: A research method approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative data
- *Liberal states*: US jurisdictions/states historically governed by democrats.
- *Thematic analysis*: A data analysis method suitable to qualitative data.

Study Hypotheses

Based on directions from the existing literature, the researchers formulated the following hypothesis:

H_a = The proportion of social work schools in California, Illinois, Washington, New Jersey, New York, and Massachusetts that overtly/covertly mention immigration in their mission statements and Facebook pages will be less than 50%.

H₀ = The number of social work schools in California, Illinois, Washington, New Jersey, New York, and Massachusetts that overtly/covertly mention immigration in their mission statements and Facebook pages will be 50% or more.

Data Analysis

The researchers analyzed the quantitative portion of the data by hand, using basic arithmetic principles. Using a Word-document, the researchers assigned a number to each school and looked for key terms in the schools' mission statements and Facebook pages. Regarding the Facebook pages, the researchers primarily focused on the integration of immigration in the years ranging from 2012 to 2022. The researchers chose this year range because the birth of DACA occurred in the summer of 2012, which could have impacted the social work profession and its perspective on the immigrant population. For the qualitative portion of the study, the researchers applied the technique of thematic analysis to analyze how social work schools define/describe the term immigration. Both researchers separately analyzed

themes and met with their assigned research supervisor to discuss and conceptualize these themes.

Thematic analysis is a data analysis method that is suitable to qualitative data (Labra et al., 2019). According to Labra et al. (2019), thematic analysis contains six steps. The first step is familiarization with data, which enables the researchers to get a thorough overview of all the data that has been collected before initiating the analysis of data. The second step is generating initial codes which will be used to describe the content of the data. The third and fourth step are searching for and reviewing themes which is way to organize the content amongst the data and ensuring these themes are useful and accurate to the research. The fifth step is defining and naming themes which allows the researchers to formulate an exact definition for each theme, giving a general understanding of the data. The sixth and final step of a thematic analysis is presenting and discussing results which prompts the researchers to summarize the collection of themes found in the data and their contribution to the research (Labra et al., 2019).

The researchers created a codebook for the data and then organized the codes into themes. Only themes agreed-upon by the researchers and the research supervisor were included in this study. This is, arguably, a form of reliability. Indeed, the researchers judged that working directly under the supervision of an experienced faculty is more important than relying on themselves for the identification of the themes. In other words, because the

research team (two researchers and a research supervisor) agreed on each theme, this is perhaps as important as (if not more important than) obtaining interrater reliability through Cohen's Kappa.

Summary

In summary, to achieve the findings for this content analysis, the researchers utilized basic arithmetic principles to determine how many social work schools integrated immigration within their mission statements. The researchers utilized basic arithmetic principles to determine the number of social work schools that integrated immigration into their social media platforms specifically, Facebook. In analyzing the Facebook pages and mission statements, researchers also developed common themes to gain insight into how immigration was integrated.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Frequency Distributions

Table 2 displays the demographic characteristics of the sample in this study. There was a total of 133 schools of social work involved in this study, the vast majority were accredited by CSWE (88.7%). The remaining schools were either not accredited or in the process of accreditation (11.3%). The program levels analyzed in this study varied depending on the school. Some schools only had master of social work programs, or bachelor of social work programs at particular schools, while other schools had both programs at their universities. 30% of the programs analyzed were masters of social work, 30% were bachelors of social work and 39.8% were both masters and bachelors social work programs. While the majority of schools had a mission statement available (84.9%), the remaining had no mission statements readily available (15%). Similarly, not every school had a Facebook page for their social work programs, 44.3% did not have a Facebook page available while the remaining 55.6% of schools did have a Facebook page.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample (N =133)

Variables	N	%
Accreditation Status		
Accredited	118	88.7
Non-Accredited	15	11.3
Program Level		
MSW	40	30
BSW	40	30
Both (MSW, BSW)	53	39.8
Mission Statement		
No Mission Statement	20	15
Mission Statement Available	113	84.9
Facebook		
No Facebook Page	59	44.3
Facebook Page	74	55.6

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Quantitative Findings

Figure 4 and Figure 5 present the quantitative findings of this study regarding the integration of immigration in social work schools' mission statements and Facebook pages. In Figure 4, the findings demonstrated that less than a quarter (21%) of social work schools included immigration in their mission statements, while the vast majority (79%) of social work schools did not include immigration in their mission statements. Meanwhile, the findings in Figure 5 indicate that only approximately a third (32%) of schools included immigration within their Facebook page from 2012-2022, while the remaining two-thirds

(68%) did not include immigration in their page. Therefore, the hypothesis that the proportion of social work schools in California, Illinois, Washington, New Jersey, New York, and Massachusetts that overtly/covertly mention immigration in their mission statements and Facebook pages will be less than 50% was supported by the findings. In other words, this study rejects the null hypothesis.

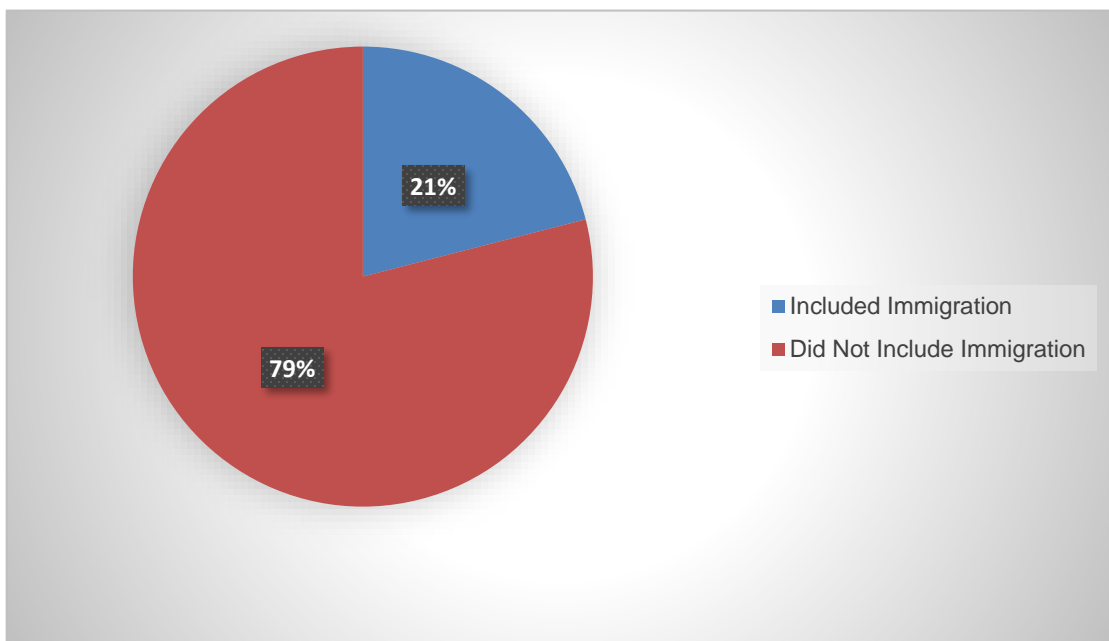


Figure 4. Integration of Immigration in Social Work School's Mission Statements

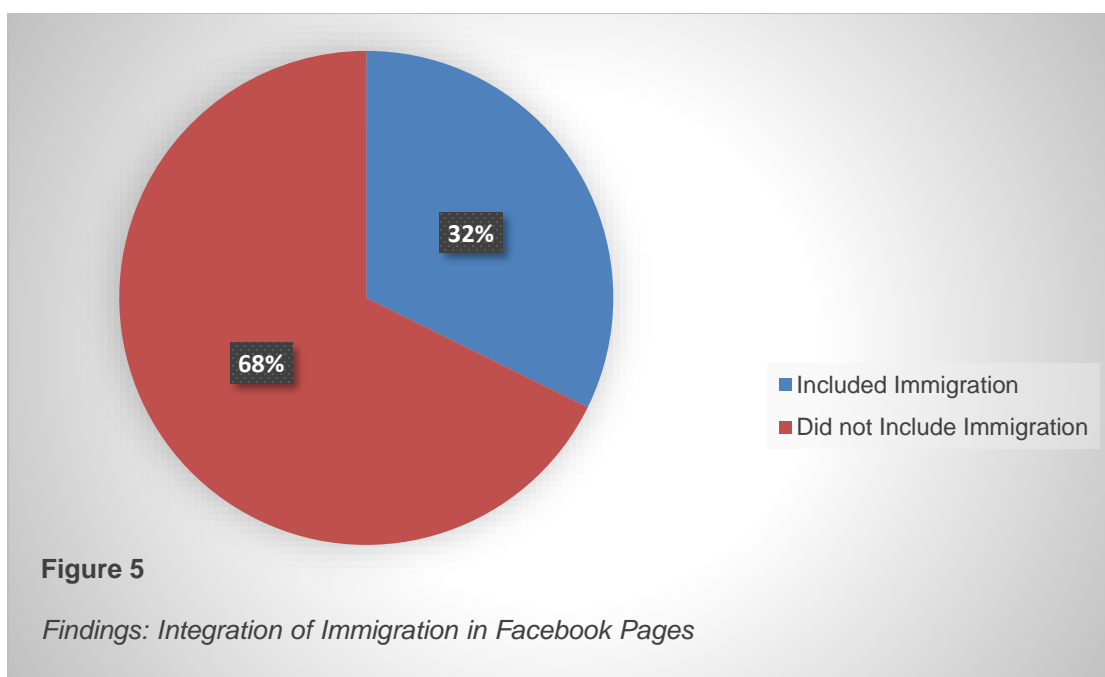


Figure 5. Findings: Integration of Immigration in Facebook Pages

Qualitative Findings

Contrary to the quantitative findings, which address the extent have social work schools in liberal states, the qualitative findings answer the question: How do social work schools in California, Illinois, New York, Washington, New Jersey, and Massachusetts describe the concept immigration? Table 3 exhibits two themes that emerged for the qualitative data: (1) social work schools only make an abstract reference to immigration in their mission statements; and (2) schools of social work integrate and embrace immigration more through their Facebook pages than they do their mission statements. Each of these themes is described below.

Table 3

Study Themes

Themes	Description
Theme 1	Social work schools only make an abstract reference to immigration in their mission statements.
Theme 2	Schools of social work integrate and embrace immigration more through their Facebook pages than through their mission statements.

Table 3. Study Themes

Theme 1: The first theme identified was social work schools only make an abstract reference to immigration in their mission statements. There is no concrete reference to immigration; instead, the concept of immigration is veiled throughout schools' mission statements. In other words, this theme shows that schools of social work lean towards new terminology when referencing immigration. The new terminology encompasses terms such as “globally”, “global perspective”, “global context”, “global society”, and “global interconnectedness”. Below are examples illustrating this theme in school of social work’s mission statements:

...is dedicated to preparing competent generalist social work practitioners committed to promoting the well-being of all people and their communities, both locally and globally, through the use of all practice methods and based on an integrated curriculum design grounded in the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective dimensions and behaviors of the profession.

...We also educate students toward a greater understanding of social work, human rights, and social justice from a global perspective.

...We emphasize the intersections among this diversity across local and global context to promote social justice and human rights.

The MSW program prepares leaders in social work practice with children, youth, and families in a diverse local and global society. Acknowledging our global interconnectedness, we strive to understand and address the experiences of diverse people and societies; foster human and community well-being; and create a world that is socially and economically just and equitable.

Theme 2: The second theme identified is that schools of social work integrate and embrace immigration more through their Facebook pages than through their mission statements. Social work schools' Facebook pages were found to most commonly provide students with job opportunities in relation to the immigrant population, webinars/conferences discussing immigration and potential training certification opportunities for their students.

...MSW Department has always named specific under-represented and vulnerable groups in our mission statement. We want members of our

community who identify with these groups to know we are here with and for you. We will always stand up against injustice and we recognize the many intersections of identity and experience that shape our lives. We are pleased to announce the following additions over the past year, made in response to the sociopolitical climate and requests from our community.

Immigration status (Added 2/2020)

Religion (Added 2/2020)

Caste (Added 10/2020)

...The School of Social Work Diversity Committee invites you to join the Diversity Brownbag: (Mis)understanding Immigration: Our Role in Countering Popular Myths

... Practitioners in this mode are intersectionality conscious and aware of the social and historical context of oppressive practices in child welfare and ancillary systems. We will focus on racial and ethnic justice, disability justice and immigration justice.

The program will consist of a 12-week online seminar series to be held from May through August 2021.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

This mixed-methods study aimed to conduct a content analysis that analyzed the extent to which schools of social work-integrated and embraced immigration across the designated five liberal states: California, Illinois, New York, Washington, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. As previously mentioned, these states are known to be the home to many undocumented immigrants as compared to other states, consequently strengthening the significance of this study in relation to the social work profession. This study is significant by not only prompting current social work professionals to assess their own practice, but also calling on current educators and institutions to reevaluate and improve existing social work curricula with a focus on vulnerable populations, including the undocumented immigrants.

The researchers utilized a mix-methods approach, by utilizing basic arithmetic principles to determine the number of social work schools that integrated immigration into their mission statements and Facebook pages. The researchers also conducted a thematic analysis, which enabled researchers to gain a greater insight into how immigration is perceived and interpreted across social work schools in the twenty-first century. The quantitative findings revealed that the majority schools of social work amongst the sample used in this study did not integrate immigration into neither their mission statements nor in their Facebook pages. Meanwhile, the qualitative findings demonstrate that social

work schools subtly and discretely adopt a globalization terminology in lieu of immigration in their mission statements.

Consistency with Previous Research

The findings in this study are consistent with previous research on immigration in social work schools, particularly the work of Mehrotra et al. (2017), Mehrotra et al. (2019), Holosko et al. (2015), and Rosales et al. (2018). To some extent, the findings of this work parallel the work of Mehrotra et al. (2017) and Mehrotra et al. (2019) by showing a lack of institutional support for the plight of oppressed and underserved populations, in this case, the undocumented immigrants. With less than a third of schools of social work only subtly embracing immigration in their mission statement, the findings in this study also reflect the work of Olcoñ et al. (2020) who found a prevalent disconnect between social work education and the profession's ethical responsibility to effectively serve people with diverse backgrounds. This lack of diversity within social work education with regard to the inclusion of foreign-born populations was also evident in the work of Holosko et al. (2015) and Rosales et al. (2018), both of whom traced Latinos/Latinas in social work education.

Implications of the Findings

Implications for Theory

Critical theory encourages people to become conscious about social systems within our society, the power, and liberation of members of minority groups and how this consciousness can lead to social change. Critical theory is

justified by the findings of this research that reveal there is a deliberate lack of integration of immigration amongst social work education. The critical theory places importance on gaining a greater awareness on the ways in which we can effectively become catalysts for social change, however, our findings reveal that the current educational system places a bias against minorities consequently limiting the knowledge of future social workers. Minority groups in the U.S. are often vulnerable, and most commonly underserved. Unfortunately, based on the findings in this study, it could be concluded that the social work institutions strengthen this systematic bias.

Implications for Research

Although numerous studies pertaining to immigration exist in the literature, research in the area of social work education pertaining to the integration of immigration into social work institutions is scarce. This study therefore provides the opportunity to stimulate innovative research in the area of immigration within social work education.

In other words, both the quantitative and qualitative findings in this study expand the existing body of scholarship on immigration and social work education by exposing the lack of focus and emphasis on immigration in schools of social work's mission statements.

Furthermore, the methodology behind this research expands the current literature where the mixed-methods approach is still underused in the literature in the area of immigration in social work. Moreover, the content analysis nature of

this study extends the literature by adding to the work of the few others who have utilized this technique for inquiries on diversity and social justice in social work education (Holosko et al., 2015; Mehrotra et al., 2017; Mehrotra et al., 2019; Rosales et al., 2018). Meanwhile, the qualitative findings represent new knowledge. In fact, to the researcher's knowledge, the two themes in his study—social work schools only make an abstract reference to immigration in their mission statements, and schools of social work integrate and embrace immigration more through their Facebook pages than they do their mission statements—have not been captured in previous research.

Implications for Social Work Practice

The lack of emphasis on immigration in social work education, as revealed in this this study, is concerning in light of the social work profession's pledge to effectively serve the undocumented immigrant population. In fact, the 2017 NASW Code of Ethics states that "social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems" (p.X). It is critical that social workers develop a strong set of social work skills that effectively address the needs of the undocumented immigrant population to fulfill this ethical duty. Given that the majority of social work positions are occupied by those who have either a bachelor's or master's degree in social work, the findings in this study are alarming. In effect, social workers' ability to serve a broad range of clients, including immigrants, arguably depends on the effectiveness of their training in social work education. The findings in this study therefore call on social work

stakeholders to take reasonable steps toward ensuring that social work students receive adequate preparation and training to effectively engage the undocumented immigrant population.

Implications for Social Work Education

Social work school administrators and faculty can find inspiration in the findings of this study to prepare social work students to serve the unauthorized immigrant population in an effective manner. The findings of this study should provide a call to action on the leaders of these institutions toward promoting immigration in current social work curricula, as proven by the measly 21% of social work schools that emphasize immigration to some extent in their mission statements, and the 32% in their Facebook pages. Even in liberal jurisdictions where the number of immigrants is comparatively higher, the majority of social work schools have failed to integrate immigration within their mission statements and Facebook pages creating a culture within their program that does not embrace immigration. The next generation of social work students can benefit from the findings in this research, which can increase their knowledge in current social work education and may prompt these students to find an institution that will effectively prepare them to become versatile social work professionals.

In response to the findings, there are many changes that came to the mind of the researchers. When identifying the most feasible, an adequate proposal in the short-term to alleviate this issue is to integrate immigration in the existing curriculum such as the courses: human behavior in the social environment

(HBSE), macro practice, micro practice, leadership in social work, etc. In the long term, a stand-alone course solely focused on preparing social work students to work with the undocumented immigrant population would strongly integrate immigration amongst social work institutions.

Elsewhere, the findings in this call on the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) to reevaluate its current accreditation process and create a systematic approach in which all social work schools should effectively integrate immigration within their institutions. The current CSWE accreditation process should hold the same ethical responsibilities and values that the NASW Code of Ethics urges social work professionals to abide by when granting accreditation to institutions. As things stand, the CSWE accreditation process places little importance on the integration of immigration in social work education. Seeking, securing, and awarding grants to social work schools for the development and integration of immigration into their curricula could be an initiative for the CSWE.

Limitations

As with any research study, researchers will always run into limitations. One limitation is that this study only looked at social work schools' mission statements and Facebook pages. This study did not explore other possible venues for immigration content, such as course syllabi. Additionally, this study overlooked the perspectives of current social work students and professionals who could have provided a better account of whether they feel as though there was an integration of immigration within their social work education. Furthermore,

the findings are limited in that the researchers did not include every social work school across the United States, but only those located in liberal states.

Recommendations for Future Research

The recommendations for future research would be to address the limitations in this study. In particular, researchers should explore social work students' perspectives on the integration of immigration in the curriculum. In addition, it would be beneficial to consider all social work schools under the CSWE's radar, including those in the process of accreditation. Furthermore, future researchers can even look beyond the United States, to include other countries such as Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, etc. The findings in this study only reveals the tip of the iceberg that is the apparent lack of integration of immigration within social work education. This study invites and encourages scholars and researchers to unveil what has yet to be discovered with respect to immigration in social work education.

APPENDIX A:
IRB APPROVAL LETTER



Yenicka Avila <006836993@coyote.csusb.edu>

IRB-FY2022-58 - Initial: IRB Admin./Exempt Review Determination Letter

1 message

do-not-reply@cayuse.com <do-not-reply@cayuse.com>

Wed, Oct 27, 2021 at 10:04 AM

To: 005916049@coyote.csusb.edu, 006836993@coyote.csusb.edu, Rigaud.Joseph@csusb.edu



October 26, 2021

CSUSB INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
Administrative/Exempt Review Determination
Status: Determined Exempt
IRB-FY2022-58

Rigaud Joseph Yenicka Avila, Stephanie Ibarra
CSBS - Social Work, Users loaded with unmatched Organization affiliation.
California State University, San Bernardino
5500 University Parkway
[San Bernardino, California 92407](#)

Dear Rigaud Joseph Yenicka Avila, Stephanie Ibarra:

Your application to use human subjects, titled "Immigration and Social Work: A Content Analysis of Schools In Liberal States" has been reviewed and determined exempt by the Chair of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of CSU, San Bernardino. An exempt determination means your study had met the federal requirements for exempt status under 45 CFR 46.104. The CSUSB IRB has weighed the risks and benefits of the study to ensure the protection of human participants.

This approval notice does not replace any departmental or additional campus approvals which may be required including access to CSUSB campus facilities and affiliate campuses. Investigators should consider the changing COVID-19 circumstances based on current CDC, California Department of Public Health, and campus guidance and submit appropriate protocol modifications to the IRB as needed. CSUSB campus and affiliate health screenings should be completed for all campus human research related activities. Human research activities conducted at off-campus sites should follow CDC, California Department of Public Health, and local guidance. See CSUSB's [COVID-19 Prevention Plan](#) for more information regarding campus requirements.

You are required to notify the IRB of the following as mandated by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) federal regulations 45 CFR 46 and CSUSB IRB policy. The forms (modification, renewal, unanticipated/adverse event, study closure) are located in the Cayuse IRB System with instructions provided on the IRB Applications, Forms, and Submission webpage. Failure to notify the IRB of the following requirements may result in disciplinary action. The Cayuse IRB system will notify you when your protocol is due for renewal. Ensure you file your protocol renewal and continuing review form through the Cayuse IRB system to keep your protocol current and active unless you have completed your study.

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ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES

This was a two-person project where authors collaborated throughout. However, for each phase of the project, certain authors took primary responsibility. These responsibilities were assigned in the manner listed below.

1. Data Collection:

Joint effort Stephanie Ibarra and Yenicka Avila

2. Data Entry and Analysis:

Joint effort Stephanie Ibarra and Yenicka Avila

3. Writing Report and Presentation of Findings:

a. Introduction and Literature

Joint effort Stephanie Ibarra and Yenicka Avila

b. Methods

Joint effort Stephanie Ibarra and Yenicka Avila

c. Results

Joint effort Stephanie Ibarra and Yenicka Avila

d. Discussion

Joint effort Stephanie Ibarra and Yenicka Avila