

Social Justice

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Social Justice: Discrimination Against Immigrants In Schools

Although education is one of the most important factors contributing to success in life,  1 immigrant children and teenagers lack the opportunity to attend a school with proper instruction and guidance. Young immigrants face discrimination existing in different forms. Immigrant students are often looked down upon, along with disadvantages and racism pounding upon them during their critical years of schooling.

Simply by being an immigrant, the chances of enrolling into a school decreases. "There are an estimated 775,000 undocumented immigrants below the age of 18, many of whom face substantial obstacles to school enrollment" (Lee, 9)  2 In a public high school of Alabama, a student was declined from enrolling, for being born as a Latino. The teenager had immigrated to the United States from Mexico as a child. Even after the student's family proved their legal residency and enrollment application, the family's request was completely denied. The discrimination against the Latino teenager was evident, when the SPLC states that the principal of the high school did not bother looking at the documents they had brought with them. "Sometimes [the officials] are anti immigrant..." (Phelps 11). Although the laws thoroughly express the right for immigrants to enter a high school, the school advisors or officials tend to disregard these regulations and halt certain students from enrolling into their school, solely from having stereotypical views and dislike for immigrants. "Some districts were actively trying to

prevent them from becoming part of the school community. For example, enrollment for these children was often unreasonably and repeatedly delayed, in direct contradiction of state regulations" (Schneiderman 6).  3

According to the Department of Education, African American students were most likely to receive harsh punishment than white students in schools. "African American students comprise 15 percent of students in the collected data, but are 35 percent of the students who receive one suspension and nearly half of the students 44 person who are suspended more than once" (Vagins 6). Over half of the related arrests of students in school were linked with Black or Hispanic students. "Many of the nation's largest districts had very different disciplinary rates for students of different races. In Los Angeles, for example, black students made up 9 percent of those enrolled, but 26 percent of those suspended; in Chicago, they made up 45 percent of the students, but 76 percent of the suspensions" (Lewin 13).  4

Discrimination against children, particularly under the age of eight, in school has been significantly increasing throughout the years. Not only does discrimination occur at a personal level, but it may also result from standardized exams, especially the language or English portion of the state's assessment.  5 "Teachers may also express impatience when these students cannot fully express themselves or take longer to formulate responses" (Carnock 4). Education that requires patience and understanding is completely destroyed, and it develops into solely about fulfilling the demands of efficiency.

According to a survey, sixty-one percent of Latinos stated that discrimination against Hispanics is a major issue in the United States, acting as an obstacle against Hispanics from succeeding. "... Immigrants overall are much less likely than natives to have completed high

school and slightly less than natives to have at least a bachelor's degree" ("Immigrants in the United States: A Profile of America's Foreign-Born Population"). In a study conducted, it was said that less than thirty percent of Hispanic students graduated from high school in 2011. Shockingly, less than four percent earned an advanced college degree.



Teachers often work under pressure to prompt their students into achieving exceptional grades on these tests, which reflect on the ability and accomplishments of a teacher during the school year. Teaching under this type of compulsion can lead to a negative change in a one's teaching system. As teachers become more impatient and strict, immigrants tend to have trouble following their altered way of teaching. Immigrants are often looked down upon with lower expectations, thus given simple questions or tasks, instead of those that require creativity and hard-thinking. This diminishes the ability of an immigrant to improve their problem-solving skills and opportunity to grow as a student. There are early childhood education programs available to immigrants to close the academic skill gaps that exist. Nonetheless, "Access to ECE programs, especially access to high quality programs, is limited" ("Ethnic and Racial Disparities in Education: Psychology's Contributions to Understanding and Reducing Disparities").

One's potential as a teacher has a significant influence on a student. In other words, if a student is taught by a teacher lacking experience and knowledge, their path to triumph slowly diminishes. Nonetheless, immigrants encounter a disadvantage of being instructed by inexperienced and amateur teachers.

According to a research, in Passages Academy, 61 percent of teachers were absent more than ten days of the school year, where 47.9 percent of students are Black and 43.7 percent of students are Hispanics. Not only did the teachers miss ten days of school, but they were also not

licensed legally and did not reach the certification requirements. On the contrary, a school with only 11.8 percent Black students and 14.2 percent Hispanic students, only 21 percent of teachers were absent more than ten days. More than eighty percent of teachers were able to obtain their state license legally. "Minority students, to an overwhelming degree, disproportionately attend underfunded and under-resourced schools. The result is that students whose families already face hardship are placed at an even greater disadvantage. For example, according to the U.S. Department of Education (DOE), in schools where more than three-quarters of the students were classified as low-income, "there were three times as many uncertified or out-of-field teachers in both English and science" ("Discrimination in Education"). If a teacher lacks experience, they are most likely inadequate of understanding and adjusting themselves to environments filled with various cultures, languages, and backgrounds. It becomes very plausible for teachers to lack communication with not only the student, but also the student's parents. "The MPI study points out that Latino immigrants' children are more likely to attend schools that are not only high-poverty and low-performing, but also hire teachers with little experience..." (Gross 7).


As for enrolling in universities, privileges of obtaining scholarships and low tuition are not available to undocumented students, regardless of how intelligent or talented one may be. Sox says, "Policies that require undocumented students to pay out-of-state tuition in state institutions of higher education often prevent these students from accessing higher education" (Sox 3). High tuition halts an immigrant student from enrolling, even if they are accepted to their dream college. If he or she cannot afford to pay the required amount, they must choose to enroll into another college that offers cheaper tuition, or merely give up their dreams of becoming a college student.

On the other hand, young immigrants also confront discrimination and racism from fellow students. "Young Latinos are most likely to say they or someone they know has experienced discrimination. Four-in-ten (40%) of those ages 18 to 29 say this, compared with a third of those ages 30 to 49 (34%) and those ages 50 to 64 (32%)" (Lopez 10). Children are often incapable of understanding different cultures and ethnicities. Unfortunately, immigrants are highly likely to become victims of bullying in school. "For example, some refugee/immigrant students are bullied because of a lack of understanding of cultural norms related to hygiene, appropriate dress for boys vs. girls, how to make friends, boundaries and personal space, etc" ("Refugee Children in U.S Schools: A Toolkit for Teachers and School Personnel"). It is fairly uncomplicated to develop immigrants into targets of bullying, as bullies can easily point out and mock one's race, skin tone, and accent. Slurs and offensive name-calling are thrown at students of color. For religious immigrants, such as Muslims wearing hijabs, their religion can induce harassment from students looking for subjects to bully.

Numerous citizens of the United States consider immigrants as unnecessary workers who are incapable of improving America. Unlike stereotypical thoughts, a majority of immigrants are not workers who plan to wander off from country to country. "Despite the perception, the majority of Latino immigrants in the South is not migrant workers, but young families and individuals who are starting their own businesses or choosing to work full-time in factory and domestic jobs" (Sox 1). Instead, parent immigrants are those who make an effort in establishing a stable home and position in the United States. The children of those immigrants can become one of America's biggest futures, as long as they are supported educationally. Student immigrants should not be neglected, for they show the greatest capability of spreading their

wings. Their cultural differences and struggles to adapt to a new country are able to spark different yet wonderful thoughts. Young immigrants should not be neglected; as an alternative, educational organizations should be created to support immigrants who are behind in school. School districts shouldn't dwell on the performance of standardized tests, because students are much more than the results of exams. In addition, school lessons or programs that teach native students about the moral iniquity of racism and the importance of appreciating different cultures should be established to prevent racism occurring against immigrants. Extra effort should go into supporting immigrants who show the capability of shaping America into a better country.

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Instructor

Well done. Note comments throughout the paper and on the rubric

PAGE 1



Comment 1

some?



Comment 2

No comma

PAGE 2



Comment 3

Try to end paragraphs with your own words and ideas



Comment 4

Try to shorten longer quotes



Comment 5

Explain further

PAGE 3



Comment 6

Include more of your own ideas here



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Word choice error:

Sometimes choosing the correct word to express exactly what you have to say is very difficult to do. Word choice errors can be the result of not paying attention to the word or trying too hard to come up with a fancier word when a simple one is appropriate. A thesaurus can be a

handy tool when you're trying to find a word that's similar to, but more accurate than, the one you're looking up. However, it can often introduce more problems if you use a word thinking it has exactly the same meaning.

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