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Semi Structured Interview: Public Perceptions of Family Resource Centers as Seen by Staff Personnel, with an Emphasis on the Undocumented Community

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Abstract

The value of Family Resource Centers in communities is examined in this research paper, with a focus on legal advocacy in undocumented communities. To begin, do Family Resource Centers provide sufficient resources to the undocumented population? By 2022, there will be over 3,000 FRCs in 30 states, serving over 2 million people per year. Second, how can the Family Resource Center best support Valley Palms' undocumented population? Finally, do Family Resource Centers play an important role in community development? These are some of the questions that helped lead the research when it came down to semi-structured interviews with employees from family resource centers, both in person and remotely. According to the findings, there are insufficient legal resources for Valley Palms' undocumented community. Another result was that family separation has negative mental health repercussions for children and adolescents. This study sheds light on the current immigration crisis in the United States. This research is critical because marginalized communities frequently face insurmountable barriers to being heard. Another important factor is that free access to legal services is critical in communities that are being persecuted by ICE.

Keywords

FRC, ICE, Legal Services, Mental Health, Undocumented Communities

**Semi Structured Interview: Public Perceptions of Family Resource Centers as Seen by
Staff Personnel, with an Emphasis on the Undocumented Community**

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JS 207: Seminar in Qualitative Research Methods

Dr. Edith Kinney and Dr. Vera Sanchez

November 21, 2022

Abstract

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I watched as a man in his late thirties entered the Family Resource Center at Valley Palms in San Jose, California, seeking the program coordinator for assistance with his legal affairs. He had just received a letter of deportation and had no idea who to turn to. I could feel his heart break, and sat uncomfortably as he was informed that there was nothing the Family Resource Center could do. The program coordinator possessed no knowledge of the legal sphere and had no information or legal advice to offer. A significant number of visitors walked through the doors to the Family Resource Center (FRC) that day. The FRC is a grassroots or classroom inclusive center of support that focuses on opportunities for families that reflect and respond to community needs, traditions, and values. (Russo, 2019).

However, the interaction I had been witness to left me with a lot of unanswered questions. To start, do Family Resource Centers offer enough resources to the undocumented population? As of 2022, there are over 3,000 FRCs in 30 states, serving over 2 million individuals each year. Patler and Pirtle (2018) estimate that there are currently 11.5 million undocumented individuals living in the United States. Second, how can Valley Palms' undocumented population be better served by the Family Resource Center? And finally, are Family Resource Centers crucial for community development? Having family members who are of mixed status, I am aware of the dangers and problems that undocumented people face; and how afraid they can be to ask for help or guidance for fear of deportation or government involvement. For the families that live in Valley Palms, the threat of discrimination, family separation, and persecution is all too real. This compelled me to conduct research and meet with the Family Resource Center staff to see how Valley Palms could better serve the undocumented

community.

Review of Relevant Literature

Insufficient legal resources for the undocumented community

The importance of legal programs is demonstrated in a study by Kerwin and Millet (2022) who found that 54% of nonprofit legal programs reside in seven states: California, Texas, Florida, New York, New Jersey, Illinois, and Georgia. However, these states are home to almost 64% of the country's undocumented population. This statistic depicts how countries with the largest number of undocumented people are deprived of crucial legal aid due to a lack of charitable legal-immigration knowledge and support.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, according to Kullgren (2003), severely limits the accessibility of numerous federal, state, and local government programs to undocumented immigrants. This in turn has a severe impact on our entire community, jeopardizing undocumented immigrants' access to services (Kullgren, 2003, p. 1632). This lack of accessible services is intended to deter illegal immigration to the United States (Kullgren, 2003, p. 1631). Lovato and Lopez (2018) state that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security deported 226,000 undocumented immigrant in 2017 as a result of increased immigration enforcement, which has ended in more than 3 million deportations since 2008.

The Trump administration's punitive federal immigration policies in the U.S. put Latinx family structures and social support networks in danger by prioritizing deportation of all immigrants rather than just those with criminal records. The Department of Homeland Security's revelation of government intention to prosecute immigrants who are accepting public help has caused panic and fear amongst undocumented individuals (Benavidez, et al., 2021). It should come as no surprise that punitive measures from State-level immigration laws have a negative

impact on health outcomes by restricting access to basic necessities; limiting access to public benefits; and raising stress levels brought on by systemic racism and prejudice.

The detrimental consequences of family separation on children and adolescents in addition to the significance of mental health services.

By 2020, depression will be the leading cause of disability for all age groups according to the World Health Organization, as 20% of teens deal with depression and suicidal ideation. Surprisingly, Latina adolescents had higher rates of significant depressive disorder than other teenagers; and Latinx adolescents are the least likely to receive mental health services. Depression increases the chance of teen suicide, the third-leading cause of death in this age group (Garcia and Lindgren, 2009). Family members immigrating to the US often arrive separately and in succession, which adds additional stress. Some teenagers reunite with their parents after months or even years of being apart. Since this reunification is occurring during a teen's developmental stage, conflict is not uncommon (Garcia and Lindgren, 2009).

In mixed status immigrant households, involuntary family separations have a severe negative impact on the health of children and adolescents. About 5.1 million children, or 7% of all children in the United States, have at least one undocumented parent. A number of traumatic events may be associated with the deportation of one or more parents. This is especially true for kids who see a parent being taken away by force, lose a parent or caregiver suddenly, or become displaced because of economic instability (Lovato & Lopez, 2018). Unfortunately, the following psychological and physical effects are common in children and adolescents who undergo family separation: depression, behavioral issues, and inadequate academic performance (Dreby, 2012).

Schools, community centers, and family resource centers in the United States are seeing a decline in Latinx youth and families as a result of the increasing number of deportations.

Latinx people have reduced their use of medical clinics and social assistance groups out of concern of government cooperation with the ICE Agency. This is regrettably due to the trauma of family separation (Coleman & Stuesse, 2014). Undocumented people are reluctant to share personal information with service providers due to fears of deportation. This, in turn, impairs undocumented populations' access to physical and mental health care (Benavidez, et al., 2021).

The significance of encouraging community development through FRCs

A qualitative study suggests Family Resource Centers are essential for the child's development to promote agency, cultural appreciation, and community growth.

According to researchers, academic failure among Latino males starts in the primary school years, frequently endangering their opportunity to graduate high school and effectively matriculate to college (Brooms, et al., 2021). The Family Coalition Act mandates that Family Resource Centers (FRCs) achieve adolescent and family self-sufficiency. The FRC is also known to establish community development and assist community through child abuse prevention and individual support (Smith and Brun, 2016).

In terms of community development, FRC's have a solid reputation of achieving cost-effective results, such as: decreasing child maltreatment and neglect, enhancing children's academic achievement, and raising families' socioeconomic status (Russo, 2019, pg. 14). According to Waddell (2001), California has established FRCs and currently has 47 centers that are permitted to operate under the Children and Families First Act (Proposition 10) to implement a comprehensive information system to improve child development and foster community growth.

Research Sample

The research sample consisted of three interviews with respondents: Angelica Gomez, Marilu Gonzalez, and Edgar Garcia.

Angelica Gomez is 41 years old, from a middle-class background, and has a Bachelor of Science in Psychology with a minor in child development. Angelica informed me that she is a Catholic who identifies as Latinx. Her current position at Valley Palms is Program Supervisor. Ms. Gomez is also a single woman who resides in Sunnyvale.

Marilu Gonzalez is a 32-year-old, catholic, Latinx woman who considers herself to be low-income. Marilu Gonzalez, resides in the Valley Palms Complex. Ms. Gonzalez shared in the interview that she is undocumented, and that this study caught her interest. Marilu Gonzalez graduated from San Jose City Community College with an Associates degree in business. Marilu speaks Spanish and works as the FRC (Family Resource Center) Coordinator at Valley Palms. Marilu is a single mother with a 7-year-old son who has Down syndrome.

My final interview was with Edgar Garcia, a 26-year-old man. Edgar is a catholic, heterosexual, middle-class Latino. Mr. Garcia has a bachelor's degree in psychology and is now working on his master's degree. His position at the FRC in Valley Palms is community organizer (Family Resource Center). Edgar resides in San Jose and has been a community organizer for two years.

Methodology

In November of 2022 I conducted interviews with three individuals through Zoom. Zoom proved to be the most convenient option for respondents with hectic schedules. Each interview lasted approximately thirty minutes to an hour. My first interview was with, Angelica Gomez, which took place on November 16 from 4:00 pm to 5:10 pm. The second interview,

with Marilu Gonzalez, took place on November 23 from 5:00 pm until 6:00 pm. My final interview with, Edgar Garcia, had to be rescheduled twice; it was originally scheduled for the week of November 14, but my participant had a family emergency, making November 27 the best day to reschedule. Please keep in mind that I have changed the participants' real identities to the pseudonyms Angelica Gomez, Edgar Garcia, and Marilu Gonzalez.

The participants are employees of Valley Palms apartment complex's Family Resource Center. As a case manager for Fresh Lifelines for Youth (FLY), where I presently work, I have a relationship with the participants because I get to collaborate with the Valley Palms community and other non-profit organizations to provide the community with much-needed services. I had the honor of working with Ms. Gonzalez, Ms. Gomez, and Mr. Garcia in some seminars and community activities. I must admit that because of my involvement and prominence in the community, the Valley Palms personnel felt comfortable being interviewed by me because of the relationships and trust I had previously developed with them.

I think I was successful in making the participants feel at ease during the interviews by using a conversational style. There were times when I had to ask more questions because the participants would raise important points, which I wanted to learn more about. Due to the conversational format, the participants brought up innovative ideas and shared significant experiences that I had not considered in my research. Edgar Garcia, for instance, brought up the issue of the community's lack of legal support for undocumented people. Mr. Garcia also highlighted that the majority of resources currently offered are geared toward undocumented youth rather than undocumented adults. Ms. Gomez, on the other hand, addressed the undocumented community's lack of mental health support. Ms. Gonzalez provided critical information because she is undocumented and currently lives in the Valley Palms community.

Setting up the interviews and modifying the questions while interviewing the participants amounted to challenges in conducting semi-structured interviews. One of the techniques I learned from interviewing people came from our Justice Studies Department with Dr. Adams, who taught me that while interviewing, one should always take notes and have the questions printed out so you can cross out any questions that had previously been addressed. This was the best approach to tracking the questions and avoiding repetition. I implemented this strategy using my laptop. To avoid redundancy, I kept a tab of interview questions open on my laptop marked each question with an "X" if the participant had already responded to the question before I asked it. Setting up the participant interviews presented to be a challenge for me. I had to work around the schedule of one participant in particular since they had a family emergency. I contacted the participants via my work phone, email, and in-person reminders when I had to go to Valley Palms. The format that worked best for everyone was Zoom, and I was able to email the consent form to each participant ahead of time. Unfortunately, Zoom's recording system malfunctioned, thus all record of the hour-long interview with Edgar Garcia on the 27th was erased. It was a terrible and a demoralizing experience because I thought that it was one of the best interviews I conducted. Edgar Garcia graciously agreed to reconduct the interview the following day, November 28, from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm, after I promptly emailed him to ask whether he would be available to do so. I was open and honest with him about what had happened. Mr. Garcia fully understood and was delighted to conduct the interview again. I believe that my openness and apology for the inconvenience was redeeming and helped me resolve the problem. I also discovered the value of having a backup phone recording. I was in a panic when my laptop's Zoom recording crashed. At first, I was embarrassed to ask the participant to redo the interview because I had never experienced a problem like this. I didn't

know how to explain what had happened, but I'm glad I reached out, regardless of how repetitive I may have sounded in our second take of the interview. I was able to save this recording to my phone and laptop, then I was able to transcribe the audio via Otter AI. From there, I manually transcribed anything that the Otter AI application did not correctly pick up on. I also made sure to change the names of the participants to pseudonyms throughout my transcriptions.

Critique of the Interview Guide

It took about a month to produce my interview guide. By the time the interviews rolled around it was still a work in progress; but I knew I needed demographic questions and topics such as: FRC resource experience, undocumented FRC resources, and FRC beliefs and opinions, in my interview guide to assist me in developing my questions. I first practiced the questions with my sister who has experience working with the community, specifically with Catholic charities. After asking her my questions she let me know if they were too challenging or difficult to understand. I received excellent feedback which allowed me to drop questions that were too repetitive or extremely confusing.

I added more questions to my interview guide after I received additional feedback from my classmates and instructors. I included the following questions: How do you feel about today's political climate in regard to the undocumented community; Do you think the family resource center has enough resources for undocumented people; How can we better support the undocumented community in Valley Palms; and Is there a need for mental health resources in the community? The last question is extremely crucial because my initial interview revealed a lot about mental health. I had no questions about the Valley Palms community's mental health resources. When I changed these questions, my interviews became much more fluid, and I

received precisely the information I required to perform my research.

During my interviews, I also found that certain questions about their experience working at Valley Palms were repetitive. To correct for this, I adjusted my interview guide by deleting questions that were similar to pre-existing questions. Altogether, I felt like I had a solid interview guide that helped me get the information I needed to write my paper and conduct my interviews.

Self-Critique

In all honesty, I try to avoid studies or work that deals with injustices against the undocumented community. Why? You may ask. Well growing up in a family of mixed status, I witnessed firsthand the persecution, harassment, incarceration, and discrimination of undocumented individuals by officials, attorneys, and even judges at the ninth circuit. This type of work can be emotionally taxing; you have to have a strong mind and heart to be able to conduct such research. I was skeptical of my own ability to listen to the traumatic events occurring in undocumented communities that mirrored my own childhood traumas. I knew that listening to such experiences required a moral compass and sensitivity. Even though this is research, there is a real person on the other end of the interview. That was constantly at the forefront of my mind when I asked questions and conducted my interview. I wanted my participants to feel comfortable speaking openly about their experiences.

Empathy motivated me to do my best when interviewing participants. Even though I had a good connection with the participants I was about to interview, I felt a little uneasy at the start of each session. However, after the first interview, my nerves were gone, and I began to feel more at ease when asking questions.

I challenged myself by asking for clarification or adding unscripted questions in

response to the respondents' answers. I pushed my comfort zone by starting each interview with a small conversation. For example, with Ms. Gomez, I had the least rapport, so I started off by asking her how her day was going. "Well" she responded, before asking how my day was going and what I would be using this research for. This conversation, though brief, felt genuine.

Expecting the unexpected and adjusting mid-interview was something I was keen to accomplish as an interviewer. I realized that if you don't ask the correct questions or adjust accordingly, interviews can be brief. I made sure to give the participants a thorough description of what to expect during the interview, allowed them to ask me questions if something wasn't clear, and would check in with the participant to ensure they were following along. If I was expecting a long or tough question, I would always ask the participant if they would like an example or if they would like for me to further explain. I discovered that using this strategy made the participants feel more in charge and secure to ask me questions if they didn't grasp something.

My experience with Edgar Garcia was another instance where I stepped outside of my comfort zone. When Mr. Garcia brought up the disparity in mental health support for the undocumented community, which was crucial to one of my theme developments, I paused before asking detailed questions; since I did not have questions prepared on the subject. When I interviewed Marilu Gonzalez, she was vulnerable and had the courage to share in the interview that she is undocumented. As an interviewer, I made sure to thank her for sharing a bit of her story and for feeling comfortable to share with me her status, as well as her experience living and working in the Valley Palms apartment complex. When Ms. Gonzalez mentioned a lack of legal support in the FRC, I felt obligated to give some resources I had accumulated in my field of work. I was able to refer Ms. Gonzalez to the Asian Law Alliance Center, which provides pro

bono legal assistance to undocumented community members. I also introduced her to a Spanish-speaking legal advocate in the community whom I have had the pleasure of working with on prior occasions.

While I would like to think my interviewing skills are excellent, I realize there is room for improvement. For example, when my interview recording failed to transfer to my computer I was left with just my handwritten notes, which were insufficient to support my research. That being said, one area in which I would like to improve is note taking. Some of the participants spoke quickly, making it difficult for me to keep up with my handwritten notes because I am a slow writer. Another area for improvement would be time management. In between working a full-time job, attending school, and trying to make time for myself, it was sometimes difficult to schedule times to meet. I found myself conducting interviews late at night for certain interviewees. I would have loved to have asked Angelica Gomez more questions about the Valley Palms' lack of mental health resources, however her busy schedule was a limiting factor.

Overall, my interviewing abilities are well developed, which I attribute to my prior work as a student assistant for a qualitative study within the Justice Studies department. I believe that my prior experience with the Clean Slate Initiative Study, where I interviewed individuals with criminal records, helped me to prepare and provided me with interviewing skills that I used in this research. I felt more at ease and prepared to ask questions, and I also understood what to expect and how to ask questions to elicit more information from the participants. Dr. Adams's finest recommendation was to initiate and acquaint the participants at the start of the interview by asking how their day was, talking about the weather, and just making them feel comfortable before completing the interview.

Findings

Insufficient legal resources for the undocumented community

The following are my preliminary findings: as I went through my coding, I could clearly see the developing themes of insufficient legal resources for the undocumented community, the significance of encouraging community development through FRC's, and the detrimental consequences of family separation on children and adolescents, in addition to the significance of mental health services. To start, one of the biggest problems the FRC has in the Valley Palms neighborhood is the lack of legal assistance for the sizable undocumented population. Intriguingly enough, I came across a singular article that discusses the momentum of immigration lawyers interested in moving toward the abolition of deportation (Hlass, 2022). These immigration lawyers can play important supporting roles in efforts to radically transform the immigration legal system, which is gravely flawed and firmly rooted in racist hegemony.

President Barack Obama was known as the “Deporter in Chief” because he was responsible for the deportation of nearly three million individuals. The Deportation Abolitionists were a countermovement to Obama's deportation policy, opposing terminology that stigmatized the undocumented community. During Obama's presidency, deportation abolitionists used hashtags like #not1more and #defundhate to draw attention to his mass deportation movement (Hlass, 2022). It is crucial to recognize the political atmosphere in the United States and the anti-immigration rhetoric that underlies the harsh laws and policies that have an impact on low-income, vulnerable communities like Valley Palms.

“Muchas de las personas de esta comunidad necesitan apoyo legal desesperadamente. Me duele el corazón al pensar que mis vecinos necesitan este tipo de ayuda, diablos, yo también

necesito este apoyo, pero no hay suficiente dinero o personal en Valley Palms que pueda apoyar.” - Marilu Gonzalez, 32

(English Translation)

“Many of the people in this community desperately need legal support. My heart hurts thinking that my neighbors need this kind of help, hell, I need this support too but there is not enough money or staff in Valley Palms that can support.” - Marilu Gonzalez, 32

According to a study, noncitizens facing removal proceedings do not have legal counsel. Shockingly, 1.2 million immigration removal cases were handled between 2007 and 2012. A recent national analysis indicated that 63 percent of all people and 86 percent of people in detention lacked legal help or representation (Ryo, 2018). Unfortunately, there are significant flaws in the US immigration system. Once ICE starts a removal action, the immigration court must dismiss the case if the government cannot provide a sufficient reason for removal. The undocumented individual may request legal protection against deportation in the form of asylum, deportation annulment, and or status modification, if the case is not dismissed. The noncitizen will be required to leave the country if the immigration judge rejects legal assistance (Ryo, 2018). Undocumented people like Ms. Gonzalez and her neighbors in Valley Palms who are uncertain about their status anxiously seek free legal assistance, but are not actually given a fighting chance in this political climate riddled with a lack of legal support.

“Well, I just wish that the undocumented population, or community would be served better meaning that we would need to focus on the problems that are going through, and especially like I said, before, family separation, it's for me, it's such a sensitive subject. And I just think that the family needs the support. They need legal advice, they need financial help and

mental health support. So I just think that we need to understand that they're there, they exist, and this is happening.”- Angelica Gomez, 41

Angelica brought up a crucial point: Undocumented persons frequently go unnoticed and encounter enormous challenges that have an impact on our entire community. These challenges can include trauma, harassment, and persecution, among other things. In order for people to care and understand the realities of institutional racism that have put the lives of the underprivileged at risk, we need to rehumanize undocumented individuals.

The detrimental consequences of family separation on children and adolescents in addition to the significance of mental health services.

In addition to the disparities in mental health and dehumanization in the undocumented community, studies have shown that Hispanics are more likely to engage in heavy drinking and experience alcohol-related disparities. Higher rates of chronic liver disease and tickets for driving under the influence of alcohol were reported amongst Hispanics than non-Hispanic ethnic groups (Cano, et al., 2017). One study found that in 2005, Latinx youth had the highest high school dropout rate of any other minority groups in the United States due to poor mental health. (Harrison and Harrison, 2011). As was already established, research indicates that deportation-related forced family separations have a negative impact on Latinx children, youth, and families. Youth suffered a variety of adverse effects following a parent's arrest, detention, and subsequent deportation, including fear, anxiety, despair, trauma, behavior problems such as seclusion, hostility, and academic challenges (Lovato & Lopez, 2018).

“Well, there's so many that are just so difficult that, you know, there's a lot of trauma. And like they seek out some mental health support. There's also a lot of expenses to live here, it can be difficult. So having to just be on survival mode when it comes to paying rent, or paying

mortgage like it's a lot, lack of job opportunities can also be really limited for them because of their education, they don't possibly finish high school. So it's difficult.”- Edgar Garcia, 26

According to studies, many ethnic minorities reside in cities where they face extreme poverty and criminality, both of which are stressors that increase their risk of poor mental health (Garcia and Lindgren, 2009). For instance, some parents rely on their children to translate in situations of family separation, causing acculturation gaps within a family dynamic. This gap may cause family stress, a decline in parental effectiveness, and a rise in dangerous behaviors like substance abuse that are associated with poor mental health (Garcia and Lindgren, 2009). It is upsetting to observe the consequences of inadequate mental health support, which repeatedly surfaced in my interviews. The detrimental repercussions and lack of assistance for families were discussed by Valley Palms staff, who also saw firsthand the consequences of not seeking or receiving psychological help. When it comes to a connection to substance misuse, these families in Valley Palms are exposed to trauma in their communities, workplaces, educational institutions, and personal lives.

“Sé que hemos recibido muchas historias sobre separación de familias, deportación y, obviamente, como saben, jóvenes que están haciendo cosas que los llevan a un centro de detención juvenil. Sé que estos traumas deben afectar a muchas personas, estas son historias comunes que escucho de mis propios vecinos en esta comunidad.” - Marilu Gonzalez, 32

(English Translation)

“I know we've gotten a lot of stories about family separation, deportation, and obviously, as you know, young people doing things that land them in juvenile detention. I know these traumas must affect many people, these are common stories I hear from my own neighbors in this

community.” - Marilu Gonzalez, 32

Immigration, according to research, is the sole stressor for many of these undocumented individuals, since it prevents them from getting a driver's license or a job, both of which are essential for thriving in the United States (Garcia and Lindgren, 2009). This may be observed having an impact on the Valley Palms neighborhood, stories of trauma are all too typical in underprivileged areas.

The significance of encouraging community development through FRCs

Despite the fact that the FRC desperately needs more assistance and access to more resources, the FRC plays a crucial role in meeting the basic needs of the Valley Palms community. When the community comes together, it is inspiring to see how everyone works together and shows genuine concern for one another. In terms of community development, FRCs have a strong track record of delivering results that are both beneficial and affordable, such as reducing child abuse and neglect, boosting kids' academic performance, and improving families' socioeconomic status (Russo, 2019, pg. 14). The FRC builds and attaches the community agency by allowing open access that permits better response to specific community needs. This is one of the key aspects of the FRC. Individuals' social networks were strengthened, and they gained confidence to participate in community events thanks to the structured support (Giebel, et al., 2022).

“I have seen the power and community expansion in Valley Palms when it is fully staffed, but I also realize that I cannot do it all; frequently, I feel burned out and without support to organize events and give our large undocumented population more resources. I do my best to assist when people ask for simple things like assistance with rent, information on child

development, or assistance with food.” - Angelica Gomez, 41

The staff was eager to communicate that their objective is to collaborate with legal venues that can come and serve the community. However, it is clear that more has to be done to win the community's trust and increase knowledge of FRC services in the neighborhood of Valley Palms.

Conclusion

I learned a lot from these semi-structured interviews. Unfortunately, I discovered that this new area of research has received little attention and study. We need to look at the services provided to communities like Valley Palms and tailor them to the requirements of the community. It is regrettable that this paper is probably the only reflection that will be written for this community.

The significance of this research cannot be overstated; undocumented individuals are in need of advice and assistance. Families living in Valley Palms' Section 8 housing are facing unstable rent, a lack of legal support, police harassment, and even a lack of educational opportunities. Not to mention the trauma of family separation experienced by so many of Valley Palms' residents. The odds are stacked against these impacted families. The intricacy of family dysfunction in undocumented families is not sufficiently researched.

A policy implication that emerged from my interviews and research was the design and acceptance of workshops in the community. It is important that the community feels in charge, such as providing legal advocacy workshops and classes for community members to enroll, learn, and share knowledge. Working in the non-profit sector, I recognize that this may be expensive, but there are numerous non-profits in the community that can collaborate and

bring forth these desperately needed services in Valley Palms. One way to accomplish this is to train a community member by a legal staff of a nonprofit organization to explain peoples' rights in basic legal terms. This is not to claim that the community member will offer legal counsel, but they will know who to call in an emergency, and the very minimum of what to do if ICE knocks on your door.

Because of authoritative abuse of power, the undocumented community is sometimes blind to the power of information and knowledge. These types of initiatives can assist in giving the undocumented community agency and support networks.

In future research, I would like to delve deeper into the family dynamics of mixed-status families, visit other counties such as Kern to observe how their FRC operates, and eventually conduct an interview with an undocumented resident of the Kern County. In order to interview individuals without causing fear or drawing association to some authoritative body, I must first earn the community's trust. Otherwise, having conversations as candid as the ones between myself and Ms. Gomez, Ms. Gonzales, and Mr. Edgar will be challenging.

All in all, the community of Valley Palms is close to my heart as I see myself in them. I will continue to advocate for this community and share whatever resources or connections that I have. My goal is not to save lives. My goal is to protect people from enduring what I had to endure during my own family separation. I see hard-working families that resemble my own, in these neighborhoods fraught with hardship, suffering, and hurt in places that deserve healing.

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