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Racial, Income, Political, Tax and Healthcare Disparities in the United States of America: Thematic Literature Review

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Abstract

By covering the themes of racial disparities, political disparities, income, tax, and healthcare, it is possible to understand how institutional racism was ingrained in immigration policy and how this racism affects other critical areas. This literature review clearly shows that immigration policy was engineered to create an underclass of workers who would be willing to work under hard conditions while receiving relatively lower wages. Immigration policy has, however, not evolved to address the changing American society, which requires more inclusion and protection of rights, including those of immigrant workers. There is, therefore, the need for comprehensive immigration reform to address the challenges that characterize the current system.

Keywords: *Racial, Political, Tax & Healthcare*

1.1 Racial Disparities

The United States has had changes and shifts in their immigration policies from administration to administration. More often than not, these policies are unfavorable to the immigrants. Problems in inflexible and ineffective systems faced by immigration reforms have caused racial disparities. Individuals who lack official documents reside in the United States have been discriminatorily referred to as “illegal immigrants”. However, the immigration laws are so complex that it becomes a challenge for any immigrant who wants to get the required official documents to do so. President Obama made efforts to settle the immigration issue through programs like the DACA program. These efforts have, however, been eroded by President Trump’s immigration statements and policies about immigration. President Trump has, on multiple occasions, referred to

immigrants as criminals, gangsters, and rapists. Even in debates concerning immigration policies, the issue is discussed in terms of belonging, which has led to the dehumanization of immigrants even in the process of reforming immigration policies. This review, therefore, presents immigration as a race issue, providing the necessary historical context that supports this claim.

1.1.1 Research

Stuesse and Helton (2013) discuss how the restructuring of the agricultural industry over the years in Mississippi has led to the increased presence of Latin Americans in the state. While joining the poultry industry in the state, Latin Americans are interacting with African Americans in the same positions who have been fighting for a long time for equal economic opportunities. This essay, therefore, considers the implications of the demographic and cultural shifts in Central Mississippi, focusing specifically on Scotts county, which is the epicenter of the poultry industry, the largest employer in the state. This research was conducted through giving a historical context to the issue of immigration in the state with the objective of understanding immigration through the local histories of race. The research finds that immigration in the state is discussed in the context of race, the white employers are likely to disregard the sentiments of the black workers since they are of the opinion that the Latino workers would not have encroached on their jobs if they were willing to work harder. The African American perspective is, however, different; they are of the opinion that the reason why white workers stopped working in the industry is due to the fact that they demanded higher wages and unwilling to comply. The employers brought in black workers who were willing to work for lower wages, and when the black workers demanded more money, they were replaced by immigrants. Immigration in the state is therefore discussed within the broader social, economic, and political issues that affect the residents of the state. By connecting the transnational recruitment of Latino labor with the history of African Americans in the poultry industry, the study is effectively disproving the trope of historical amnesia that characterizes modern discussions of immigration. Demographic shifts in the state of Mississippi have not been an accident; they are a result of state policies motivated by corporate practices and fueled by public dialogue about race, work, and deservingness. The end goal has, however, been to create a large and expendable pool of disempowered low wage workers. Through racially based practices of labor control, they have been able to divide workers and weaken the possibility of unionization, which ultimately keeps labor costs low.

Milne (2016), further contextualizes the racial divide in Mississippi by adding a Native American perspective referencing the 18th century as the slavery empire took off in Southern Mississippi. The study does this by focusing on the Natchez district. The findings indicate that racial categorization began around 1720 when the Native Indians referred to themselves as the red men in order to distinguish themselves from the Europeans and the blacks who came to work as slaves. Both the French and the Natives assumed the other would be willing to be assimilated into their culture, especially considering the fact that the first Frenchmen who arrived in the region looked and acted like Native Americans. However, when the Natives observed the French dominate the Africans by making them work as slaves in the plantations and being considered as the underclass, they refused to be marginalized and considered an inferior race. The leaders of the natives began to refer to themselves as the red men and proceeded to form a coalition that ensured that they shared a united front in fighting the French; a race war would hence ensue, which would weaken the diplomatic relations between the French and other Indian nations. The British would then sweep in and take the American colonies belonging to the French and perpetuated the system of

categorization of race and the assertion of European supremacy in the region. Race, therefore, became an identifier of social position back in the 1700s.

Hing (2019) discusses the egregious act following Presidents' Bush push for immigration reform in 2004. A commission established by United Food and Commercial Workers international workers in 2008 reported abuse of ICE officials on immigrant workers, their families, and their communities. The commission spent more than a year conducting interviews, holding regional hearings, and soliciting information from several sources and found that ICE raids were riddled with racial profiling and were bringing about trauma to immigrant families, especially the children. The commission found that ICE officials targeted Latinos, especially Mexicans, while Chinese restaurants and other businesses with people of color were not subjected to the same harassment. The report found that undocumented white people were not treated with the same hostility, there is, for instance, no organized raids on undocumented Canadians who exist today, or undocumented polish immigrants who were rampant in Chicago in the 80s and 90s. The article points out that immigration laws have institutionalized a set of values that dehumanize, demonize, and criminalize immigrants of color, with Latino immigrants being the most affected. The institutionalized racism made possible by Bush's ICE raids desensitized the general public from the plight of immigrant communities. The racialization has, however, been masked through laws and operations that are justified in non-racial terms; racial profiling and discrimination claims, therefore, go ignored by those who are not directly affected.

Provine (2013) reinforces these findings after conducting an analysis of immigration enforcement in Arizona. Findings indicate that ICE disproportionately targets Mexican and Central American immigrants even though the government still maintains claims that immigration enforcement is race-neutral. The racial bias in Arizona can be found both at the local and federal levels, with the local police even getting involved in identifying and apprehending unauthorized immigrants. The federal and local mix in enforcement is, therefore, problematic due to the fact that entails, profiling, abusing traffic stops, hyper-surveillance, problematic searches, and unwarranted detention.

Cleaveland (2010) conducted a two-year pilot study of Mexican immigrants in New Jersey to investigate how day laborers perceive the struggle to support their families despite having anti-immigration legislation against them at every level of government. The study used semi-structured interviews and participant observation to collect data. Data were gathered into two intensive fieldworks in 2005 and 2006. The research was able to capture Mexican immigrants as they contest their characterization as illegal, which has implications of criminality. The participants were focused on distancing themselves from those who commit crimes and define themselves as hardworking individuals trying to make a living. These unauthorized workers are, however, met with tough law enforcement measures that make it hard for them to access health care and humanitarian resources. Empirical evidence from this study suggests that tougher enforcement measures are hindering their ability to support themselves and their family. This study intends to make social workers understand the circumstances of unauthorized immigrants and dissuade them from characterizations that exist in popular discourse, which paint them in a negative light. By having the perspective of the immigrants themselves, it is possible to make social workers develop empathy towards this population and make them more inclined to engage with them

Enriquez, Vazquez Vera and Ramakrishnan (2019) address how progressive sub-federal immigration policy attempts to decrease the negative consequences of illegality for undocumented immigrants in California. The study uses interviews with immigration serving organizations in California to determine whether all undocumented immigrants have equal access to driver's

licenses. The study is based on Assembly Bill 60, which prides itself on race neutrality. The study, however, argues that the implementation of the bill was shaped by racial based migration policy, and it reproduces racial based illegality. Given the anti-immigration stance of the Trump administration, state policy is the only hope for undocumented immigrants. California has always been at the forefront of immigration integration, going back to the 90s. State legislation in California has been able to help undocumented immigrants acquire post-secondary education, driver's licenses, professional licenses, healthcare, and protection from federal immigration enforcement. An inability to acquire a driving license is one example of racialized immigration; this is because one is likely to drive without a license, which increases the likelihood of running into immigration enforcement mechanisms. The study finds that even though the Californian law was designed with the objective of race neutrality prohibiting the collection of data about ethnicity and national origin, the issue ended up racial based due to the fact that illegality has become a Latino issue. As such, the access to AB 60 Driving licenses was not the same for Asian Americans, Africans, and other foreign nationals seeking it. This leads to the implication that immigration legislation is specifically targeted towards the Latino population even when positive; they, therefore, enjoy the fruits of positive legislation while they bear the brunt of anti-immigration sentiment and racist nativism.

1.1.2 Synthesis

All six researchers lead to the conclusion that immigration has essentially become an issue that has brought a racial divide in the United States, with Latino Americans being most affected by immigration policy. American government system treats immigrants differently based on their race. Steusse and Helton (2013) and Milne (2016) both provide a historical context of the racist origins in Mississippi how these origins affect the modern treatment of immigrants. Steusse and Helton (2013) show how white people in Mississippi were able to use the desperation of various racial groups of people to ensure that they would keep working no matter how low the wages or how bad the working conditions got. When white laborers became demanding, they were replaced by African American workers, and when they started to ask for better wages and working conditions, they were replaced by immigrants who were willing to work under the present conditions. Milne (2016) shows how the French and Native Americans fought for supremacy over the other and how neither of them succeeded. Instead, the British came and asserted European supremacy and brought their own methods of institutional racism. Hing (2019), Provine (2013), Cleaveland (2010), and Enriquez et al. (2019) show how rampant institutional racism is in the current society and how it is disproportionately biased against Latino immigrants. Hing (2019) focuses on the institutional racism present during the Bush administration, which would be characterized by constant raids mainly targeted towards Latino immigrant families and communities through ICE. Provine (2013) shows how both the local and federal police in Arizona are biased against Mexican and Central American Immigrants, targeting them even on the streets. Cleaveland's study shows how even the term Mexican immigrant has criminal connotations attached to it. Cleaveland (2010) shows how disadvantaged Mexican immigrants are, to the point that they cannot even access relief efforts. Enriquez et al. (2019) focus on AB 60 bill in California, which was meant to be a race-neutral bill but ended up being racially based instead.

2.1 Political Disparities

The constant lack of agreement on the proper immigration reforms has caused political disparities. The disagreements by Congress have brought a system breakdown in the United States. There are over 11 million immigrants in the United States whose legal status have not been regularized due to these differences in Congress. This political stalemate has moreover, led to a high level of political battle due to the massive increase in the number of undocumented immigrants in the country. In 2017, President Trump issued a directive that would intensify the screening process for immigrants and only let qualified and skilled people would be issued visas. This move ignited numerous political debates that called the directive as denying immigrants equal chances as well as violating their civil rights. This part of the review focuses on the political disparities that have come to define immigration reform.

2.1.1 Research

Bolaños Lopez (2017) analyzes the impact of unauthorized immigration has had on American society. The article contrasts and considers different academic analysis to highlight issues unauthorized immigrants face on a daily basis. The article specifically addresses how media portrayal affects the treatment of unauthorized immigrants and the legalization reforms initiative. The article finds that majority of Latino representation on TV is largely negative as they are often linked to crime, low income, and non-prestigious jobs. The media is critical in shaping how unauthorized immigration is perceived in the country, and media in the US is divided on illegal immigration with channels like Fox News being extremely biased against unauthorized immigration while CBS provides a way fairer portrayal. Debates around immigration revolve around unauthorized immigrants being considered as threats to national security while, on the other side, there are those who argue that the American reform would suffer from stricter immigration reform since these laws would reduce the workforce considerably. The article states that since 2012 the public discourse on immigration had stated to be positive; this was in part due to President Obama's immigration reform. The shift was also due to the fact that the Latino vote was the fastest-growing vote in the country while the white vote was shrinking as such even the Republicans were calling for immigration reform so as to be able to secure the Latino vote. After Obama won the second term, the Republicans were, for the first time advocating for immigration reform with a very small group in opposition. This article concludes that in order to increase support for legalization reforms in favor of immigrants there is need for the media to portray unauthorized immigrants more positively highlighting their contribution to American society

Judith (2018) examines the anti-immigration fervor following Trump's election, which has led to a zero-tolerance federal policy towards undocumented immigrants. President Trump's campaign and presidency have been characterized by the denouncing of US immigration policies with rhetoric supporting the criminalization of all immigrants. When he got into office, he set out to issue executive orders, which broadened and strengthened immigration reform throughout the country. His strategies have included establishing partnerships between ICE and local enforcement agencies, which has increased cases of racial profiling and harmed local economies. These policies have disrupted the learning of Hispanic students and separated many children from their parents. The strategy has resulted in family separation and family incarceration, which includes the incarceration of children. This study, therefore, finds Trump's immigration policy very divisive to the country and to be in violation of various civil liberties.

Shelton (2018) examines how critical race theory and Latino critical theory informs our understanding of race relation using a qualitative study focusing on 16 Latino college students. The question the study attempts to answer is who belongs, belonging in this context, focuses on the dehumanizing context of immigration discourse in the United States, which impacts opportunities for college education of Latino children. There is, for instance, marginalization on campus and as there is fear and stigma attached to immigrant students. This ultimately affects their professional development opportunities throughout their years of study. Over 65,000 undocumented immigrant children graduate from high school every year; however, their chances at a college education are threatened by their immigration status. The Development Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act was passed in 2010 allowed for conditional permanent residence for the youth if they served in the military for two years or completed two years at a four-year institution of higher education or graduated after two years from a community college. Even during the Trump era, some states such as California have continued to offer state-funded financial aid to undocumented students while States like Alabama and North Carolina bar undocumented students from public institution enrollment. President Obama, during his tenure, enacted one of the most beneficial executive orders to immigrants, which is the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). DACA is the only large scale initiative offering temporary relief from deportation for immigrants and has benefited many unauthorized youths with more than 728,000 immigrants since it was implemented in 2012. The DACA program is, however, under threat from the Trump administration since it was not codified as law by congress, and as such, it can be modified and abolished at any time. The study expresses concern over the future of DACA since President Trump has expressed his disdain for immigration. He, for instance, proposed building a wall to separate the US and Mexico; he has also refused visitors from 7 predominantly Muslim countries and all refugees. During his time in office, Trump has extended the authority of ICE, clearly sending the message that undocumented immigrants do not belong in the US and US institutions. This study finds that educational inequity is a human rights violation that ultimately affects the whole of US society. By fostering education equity, it is possible to increase opportunities for immigrants that ultimately increase upward mobility and their contribution to the greater society. As such, the study proposes that Latino students should experience belonging within the country's higher education institutions.

Nowrasteh (2013), investigates President's Obama's attempt to enact an expanded and effective guest worker program that would be able to link American employers with skilled and low skilled foreign workers. The immigration reform was centered on the legalization of some unauthorized immigrants, border, and workplace enforcement to prevent the hiring of unauthorized immigrants and to increase the number of guest workers and legal immigrants. The study specifically focuses on the costs and benefits of guest worker visas. The study argues that a successful guest worker visa program would divert most unauthorized immigration into the legal system hence shrinking the informal economy. For this program to be effective, it would have to be easily enforceable in order to support economic growth in the country. The study finds that the problem with the 1986 Immigration reform and control act, which amnestied approximately 3 million uncommented immigrants, is that it failed to create a large and flexible guest workers visa program; unauthorized immigration hence continues decades later. This challenge can only be addressed by having a cheap and legal way to enter and work in the United States. The Bracero program and the one during World War 1 are examples of guest worker visa programs that work. They worked due to the fact that they were less regulated, were efficient, required fewer legal procedures to hire guest workers, and had a lower burden on the immigrants themselves. The current system is impeded by

expensive regulations, restrictive laws, and an uncaring bureaucracy, which makes it impossible for American employers and foreign immigrants to work together legally.

Johnson (2018) further breaks down the inefficiencies of the American immigration system, which has been unable to develop the necessary reforms to bring about a legalization path for the over 11 million undocumented immigrants in the US. Congress has been unable to develop policies that can contain the population of undocumented immigrants, which has more than doubled within the last three decades. This study finds that immigration has essentially become a high profile political battleground; this can be attested by the successful presidential campaign of Donald Trump; whose central slogan was an enforcement approach to immigration. Trump specifically targeted President's Obama unsuccessful attempts at immigration reforms, which resulted in him having to issue an executive order in the form of DACA instead of using Congress. This was admittedly a limited, temporary, and incomplete relief for a very pertinent issue in American politics. As such, Trump threatened to end these reforms upon his election, which brought panic for the Latino population in the country. This study, therefore, compares Obama's immigration policies and Trump's aggressive immigration enforcement. President Trump, for instance, endorsed the RAISE Act, which aims to reduce legal immigration by half as well as put a stop to chain migration, which ultimately implies that family reunification should not be the end goal for US immigration policy. The study reiterates that the country is in dire need of immigration reform, the Immigration and Nationality act cannot adequately address the contemporary labor and other needs of the nation in the global economy. The study also points out that not just any congress action will address the deficiencies of the current system. Enforcement of immigration policy brings about certain political and policy challenges, especially surrounding the prohibition of the employment of undocumented immigrants. Failure to address the employment and regularization of the status of undocumented immigrants could very easily increase the pressure for undocumented immigration. Executive orders by both Trump and Obama are, therefore, not enough to address the immigration issue. Congress needs to get involved and develop long term and far-reaching immigration reform. Meaningful immigration reform calls for reasoned national discussions about a system that is consistent with the nation's history, values, and needs.

2.1.1 Synthesis

All the writers agree that immigration reform in the country has been unable to fully address the political, economic, and social implications of undocumented immigration. Comprehensive reform is, therefore, necessary for the country to move forward, maintain the current labor force, and be able to recruit more foreign workers to work in the countries industries. Bolaños Lopez's (2017) article focusses on the importance of a shift in media representation of Latinos. Bolaños Lopez (2017) mentions that because the media is vital in shaping public opinion, it is an important tool in changing conversations surrounding Latino immigrants. Judith's (2018) study shows the impact of President Trump's anti-immigration campaign, which has been unfairly focused on Hispanic immigrants and which many have argued crosses the lines of civil liberties. Shelton (2018), on the other hand, focuses on the right of Latino students to have a chance to get higher education. The American system shuts out most immigrant students, especially those who seek to pursue a college education in a public college. Shelton's study shows that the system is especially biased against Latino immigrant students who do not have official documentation. Nowrasteh (2013) focuses on the immigration procedures for legally entering and working in the United States. The study finds that current systems are too complex and expensive for most immigrants to even consider, which is why the number of immigrants who come to the country illegally is so high. For the number to

reduce, the process of entering the country needs to be streamlined and less expensive for both laborers and employers. Finally, Johnson's (2018) study' highlight the differences between President Trump's and Obama's approach to immigration. He shows how Obama's reforms helped immigrants but failed because they were only short term solutions. President Trump, on the other hand, takes an approach that alienates immigrants from the public and treating them as subhuman. The study shows how both approaches fail and that better reforms need to be put in place. Reforms need to be made to ensure that immigrants are treated fairly and equally across America.

3.1 Income

One of the most important contributors to a sustainable economy is agriculture. Most immigrants into the United States start in the agricultural sector. The small wages offered to farm laborers are unattractive to most American workers. As a result of this, 50-70% of farm labor is made up of immigrants. The undocumented workers, however, face intimidation, abuse, and exploitation since there are no laws protecting them. They are, for instance, forced to work under unsafe conditions because they don't have many options available to them. The introduction of undocumented immigrant workers into the American workforce is also presumed to reduces the American wage level, which leads to American workers treating immigrant workers with a lot of hostility. This part of the review, therefore, focuses on the disproportionate relationship between hard labor and low income for immigrant workers

3.1.1 Research

Spring (2018) follows the intricate history of African Americans and Latinos working in the poultry industry in the south. The study by the University of Southern Mississippi reports that after the civil war, African Americans took up the lowest paid, dirtiest, and most difficult processing jobs in the United States. However, in the last two decades, these jobs have been taken up by immigrants from Mexico and Latin America who are mostly undocumented. The study explores the effect of neoliberal economic policies on the United States and rural Mexico as well as the workers' responses to migrating and organizing. After covering these issues, arguments are presented on behalf of African Americans, Latino immigrant workers, and the chicken companies. The findings indicate that the poultry industry in the south has been characterized by ethnic succession, first with a labor force of predominantly African Americans followed by a predominately Latino workforce. The study reports a mismatch exists between the work available in the US and the workers who live in the US. Economic transformations have left the US with jobs nobody wants, and as such, they are shipped overseas or given to undocumented workers. The change in the workforce from African American to Mexican can be attributed to unionizing among African workers seeking better conditions and better pay and the erosion of the rural Mexican economy which has made Mexican workers more willing to take up these jobs despite the low wages and the tough working conditions

Fine and Lyon (2017) argue that domestic labor standard enforcement must be integrated into immigration reform proposals since immigrants are employed in industries with high violation rates. Without an element of strong labor standard enforcement, it will be impossible to satisfy labor shortages in ways through which unscrupulous employers cannot take advantage of the law to depress wages and working conditions. The article takes issue with the fact that labor standards and immigration reform are treated as separate issues despite the fact that immigrants

disproportionately take part in high risk, low wage industries. Therefore, by combining the two issues, it would be possible to have labor standards in place that protects the interests of all workers, including immigrants. This is necessary because employers in various industries leverage the immigration status of immigrant workers in order to keep wages low. Temporary work visa programs must, therefore, avoid increasing the vulnerability of immigrant workers. Temporary visa holders must hold the same rights as the other workers. These visas should remove any link between work and immigration status to prevent abuse of the program by unscrupulous employers. Immigrant workers must possess the same rights as other employees in the country as well as the necessary mechanisms to enforce these rights, such as unionization and private lawsuits. Various bills have been introduced in Congress proposing the subject, but none have been passed, one example is Protect Our Workers from Exploitation and Retaliation Act (POWER Act) which was introduced in 2011 by Representative Chu. This bill would have allowed immigrants to come forward and report abuse, exploitation, and labor laws violations as well as assist in the investigation of these issues without fear of deportation under the Immigration and Nationality Act. The article concludes by restating the fact that effective labor enforcement is necessary in order to ensure proper wages and working conditions for all workers regardless of their immigration status.

Rogers (2018) covers a case brought forward by workers at Koch Foods, who accused Koch supervisors of groping immigrant female workers, assault and even offer promotions in exchange for sexual favors. Koch, on the other hand, defended themselves by claiming that these accusations were fabricated so that these women can secure U-visas, which are offered to those who assist the government in investigating qualifying crimes under the Violence Against Women Act. Koch further argued that the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission certified these false claims in order to build a high profile class-based discrimination case against the company. The study reports that the fifth district court would remand the case back to the district court due to claims of mass fraud in the U-visa system. It was, therefore, up to the district court to come up with a U-Visa discovery process that would adequately protect the diverse and competing interests involved. This study, therefore, investigates the issue, the implication, and the discovery of issues in this case colliding with immigration policy. The U-visa program, in particular, has been surrounded by a lot of controversy since opponents claim that undocumented immigrants file fraudulent reports in order to obtain U-visas; at the same time, however, failure to have these programs in place can have legitimate victims more vulnerable. Opponents of the program now having the support of the Trump administration can now decline many of these visas and have applicants deported. The main purpose of this article, however, is to highlight the difficulties immigrants face in bringing cases against their employers hence leaving them vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

Gonzalez (2015), in his book, examines the Bracero program following WW2, which allowed for over 4 million immigrant workers to move and temporarily work in the United States between 1945 and 1964. This program was meant to meet the labor shortage that was limiting the expansion of the burgeoning agricultural industry in the United States and essentially started some of the problems that can be observed in the current immigration policy. The program was based on an agreement between the United States government and Mexico, which ignored and failed to effectively address the rights of the Mexican workers. Gonzalez does not consider the agreement to be between two independent nations but a mother nation and her colony. Gonzalez compares this program to how the British used Indian labor and how the French used Algerian labor during their colonial regimes. Mexican labor was therefore deemed to be exploitative since it was only

used to advance the American economy. Gonzalez extensively describes the debilitating process that Mexican workers had to go through in order to get a Bracero contract both in Mexico and at the border; this process often resulted in sickness, dispossession, abuse, and the need to become a slave laborer during the training for the program. This labor has, however, contributed to the economic development of the United States since they provided a huge pool of cheap, accessible, and when applicable disposable labor to the United States. This book, therefore, shows that Mexican labor was exploited to lay the groundwork for the American economy; however, when their labor was no longer necessary these immigrants started being villainized, this narrative can be observed to this day. The migration into the US was, therefore, a result of US-designed policy, and even back then, these policies did not sufficiently protect the rights of Mexican workers.

Guan et al. (2015) contextualize the need for immigrant labor in the agricultural sector and how this issue is tied into immigration reform. Through a survey conducted among strawberry growers in Florida. The study seeks to give perspective to the concern of many crop growers in the United States who require a large workforce to grow, tender, and pack their crops. These farmers are sensitive to the cost and availability of farm labor, which is usually provided by immigrant laborers due to the fact that the work is physically challenging and relatively low paying, which makes these jobs unattractive to most of the workforce. However, a large portion of immigrant workers are undocumented, and with severe immigration enforcement policies, the labor pool for farmers is shrinking which has increased labor expenses, between 2001 and 2014, for instance, the average wage rate for hired farmworkers has increased by 51% from 8.01/ hour to 12.07/hour. The survey indicates that growers are increasingly concerned about the increased immigration enforcement since they are aware that the majority of their workforce is undocumented. Due to a shrinking labor force, they are also turning to the H-2A program, which allows foreign workers to work on temporary visas. The condition for this program, however, is that these workers do not take jobs away from legal US residents and, as such, do not affect wages from US residents doing the same jobs. Farm employers, therefore, have to pay a wage high enough to protect the domestic workers. The survey in Florida, for instance, indicate that the H-2A employers pay \$2 above the minimum wage in the state. They also cover the administrative cost associated with the visa and recruitment process as well as provide housing and transportation for these workers. The employers, therefore, consider this program to be cumbersome and expensive and therefore needs to be restructured. However, input from H-2A workers, however, suggests that the wage rate of 10.26/hour plus housing and transportation is still not sufficient. The wage increase is, however, undermining the competitiveness of these agricultural industries.

Martin (2017) further highlights the importance of immigrant labor in the agricultural industry in the United States. This research also indicates that unauthorized labor in the industry has decreased considerably in the last two decades. This has been attributed to an aging farm workforce, which is now settling down in the US with their US-born children. The report indicates that employers are responding through satisfying the current workforce in order to retain them, stretching their output by employing productivity-increasing strategies, substituting human workers with machines and supplementing the available workers with legal H2A guest worker visas. The study argues that immigration policies will likely determine which of the four approaches become dominant. The current system involves offering bonuses in order to retain the current employees as well as incorporating machinery in order to increase productivity.

3.1.2 Synthesis

These studies explore the importance of immigrant workers to the economy of the United States. Spring (2018) focuses on the history of immigrant laborers in the US poultry industry. The Industry first mainly employed African American workers, but when they unionized and stated demanded better working conditions, the industry shifted towards Latino workers who were willing to work at lower wages. Fine and Lyon (2018) argue that labor standards should go hand in hand with immigration reform. They show how employers sometimes offer lower wages to undocumented laborers as they have nowhere else to turn and no laws protecting their rights. Rogers (2018) seeks to show the vulnerability of undocumented immigrant workers. Rogers uses a case to show how immigrant workers can be dismissed simply because they are undocumented. This brings to light how easy it is for employers to mistreat immigrant workers who may feel like they have no other option as they would not even be taken seriously if they reported the issue. In his book, Gonzalez (2015) goes through how the Bracero program was put in place after WW2 to allow Mexican workers to temporarily work in the US. The laborers were treated horribly, and they worked under deplorable conditions. Gonzalez shows how even then; immigrant workers' rights were not taken into account. Guan et al. (2015) show how much farms in Florida rely on immigrant workers to stay on top of competitors. Guan's study shows that these farms cannot function without immigrant workers. Farm work is not attractive to US citizens who can get less labor-intensive and better-paying jobs, which makes it paramount for the farms to have access to large amounts of immigrant workers. Martin (2017) further shows the importance of an immigrant workforce to the US agricultural sector and how farm owners will make exceptions in order to keep them working on their farms.

4.1 Tax

Taxes paid by undocumented immigrants amount to 11.64 billion dollars every year by purchasing goods and services and paying property taxes and rent. In spite of their clear contribution to the economy of the United States, the increased number of immigrants into the country has raised concerns. Looking at the overall effect of immigrant levels over time, there seems to be an increase in the age-dependency of taxes due to the amount of tax expended on descendants of immigrants. This problem could, however, be solved by issuing undocumented immigrants legal status. This would increase their tax contribution by over 2.1 billion dollars each year. This part of the review focuses on the criticism that immigrants do not pay taxes and are thus a burden to the American economy

4.1.1 Research

Auerbach and Oreopoulos (2019), consider the fiscal impact of immigration over time using the technique of generational accounting. This technique not only allows for the consideration of the net contribution of immigrants to the fiscal balance but also for the size of impact relative to the overall imbalance. The technique also allows for the comparison of changes in immigration policy to other policies in terms of impact on fiscal balance and welfare of different generations. The study finds that whether immigration contributes or helps alleviate the fiscal balance depends on the extent to which the stress will be borne by future generations. If the fiscal imbalance currently estimated in the US is placed on the future generations, then the presence of new immigrants reduced the burden borne by the natives. Furthermore, when a policy of fiscal responsibility is

employed, the fiscal gain from immigration is reduced. Whether there is a gain, therefore, depends entirely on the extent to which government purchases rise with the immigrant population. Finally, the impact of immigration on the fiscal balance is, therefore, relatively small compared to the overall size of the imbalance itself. Immigration is, therefore, not a source of the existing imbalance or a potential solution to the imbalance.

Gee et al. (2016) investigate the tax contributions of undocumented immigrants, particularly at the state level. This is an attempt to disprove inaccurate and insufficient information surrounding this issue in public debates. The study reports that undocumented immigrants in the United States pay billions of dollars in state and local taxes. Furthermore, these tax contributions would increase considerably if the undocumented immigrants currently living in the United States were given a pathway to citizenship. The report provides state by state and national estimates on the current tax contributing of the over 11 million undocumented immigrants as of 2013. There is also a considerable increase in tax contribution if comprehensive immigration reform gave all these people citizenships. The findings indicate that undocumented immigrants collectively pay \$11.64 billion in state and local taxes. There would be an increase in 8.6% in contributions if all these immigrants were granted a pathway to citizenship. Finally, the executive orders by President Obama would result in an increase of \$805 million in contributions. This report, therefore, proves that undocumented do pay state taxes through sales and excise taxes, property taxes, and about 50% pay income taxes through Individual Tax Identification Numbers (ITINs) while those who do not file have their taxes deducted from their paychecks.

Cascio and Lewis (2019) investigate how permanent residency affects personal income tax participation and net income tax participation following variation from the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, which authorized the largest amnesty to this day. The findings indicate that becoming permanent legal residents increased the likelihood of migrants filing income taxes and receiving the earned income tax credit.

Fiegenbom (2017), on the other hand, set out to test the presumption by both politicians and laypeople that the mere presence of illegal immigrants in the labor market is responsible for the slow rate of wage growth in the United States. The findings indicate that undocumented immigrants are reducing wages for low skilled jobs; this, however, is a result of their illegality and not a consequence of their numbers. The major difference that exists between undocumented immigrant workers and legal residents is in their tax treatment. Even though undocumented immigrants pay less taxes, they do not receive benefits, which means they work more hours than low educated legal residents in the long run. The study also finds that deportation of undocumented workers would negatively impact the welfare of legal residents

Martin (2017) analyzes the promises made by President Trump during his campaign run. He, first of all, threatened to have Mexico pay for the wall that was to be built at the Mexico-US borders as well as to deport over 11 million undocumented immigrants currently in the US, half of whom are Mexican. He also threatened to reverse the executive order by President Obama, which gave some of the undocumented immigrants' temporary legal status. Martin reports that Trump's enforcement oriented approach would impact the relationship between federal, state, and government since he has threatened less federal funding to sanctuary states and cities. Many states and cities declared themselves sanctuaries, claiming that they would not cooperate with the Department of Homeland Security, which was part of the enforcement effort. Trump has proven to say true to his word since he has decided to withdraw funding from state and local law enforcement agencies that refuse to cooperate with the federal government to implement his immigration policy. These states have,

therefore, been forced to contend with less federal funding and are continuing to fight the Trump administration in court. This is a huge blow to these sanctuary states since federal funding is one of their primary sources of income.

4.1.2 Synthesis

These researchers, therefore, disproved that immigrants are a burden to the US economy. Auerbach and Oreopoulos (2019) show that the fiscal imbalances in the US are not caused by immigration. Gee et al. (2016) showed the contributions that immigrants make to the economy of the US. Immigrants pay billions of dollars in taxes to the US government in the form of both direct and indirect taxes. Cascio and Lewis (2019) found that immigrants were more willing to file their income taxes if they became legal citizens of the US. Fiegenbom (2017), on the other hand, shows that even though immigrants pay less taxes, they do not benefit from social security in the long run, which ultimately means that they work more hours than low-level legal residents. Finally, Martin (2017) focuses on President Trump's move to push his immigration policy. Trump has gone as far as cutting funding to sanctuary states that will not enforce his policy.

5.1 Healthcare

The US immigrant population receives limited socioeconomic resources and faces political and social marginalization. As a result, immigrants are a very vulnerable people. These vulnerabilities mean that they can only access low rate health insurance, which means they can only get low-quality health care. The increasing immigrant population led to the formation of acts like the Welfare Reform Act. This act was formed in an effort to reduce the burden of taking care of illegal immigrants to public programs. The act, however, also cut off most documented immigrants' access to public health care. The discrepancies in health insurance have made the immigrant population even more vulnerable because only 65% of them can get health insurance that allows them access to quality health care. This part of the review focuses on issues surrounding access to quality healthcare

5.1.1 Research

Escarce, Derose, and Lurie (2017) researched the causes of the vulnerability observed and experienced by immigrants. The research goes into the factors that influence the vulnerability of immigrants, including socioeconomic, political factors. Their research found that one of the main factors influencing their vulnerability is the socioeconomic background. Immigrants who move to the US are usually less educated than US-born citizens. They can only work in low skill occupations that pay them very low wages, and they end up living in poverty. Welfare reforms have also contributed to the vulnerability of foreign-born women and children born to immigrant mothers. Where an immigrant first settle is also a factor to be considered. If a Latino settles in an area where other Latino's are located, they will be in a much better position to get access to resources more easily. Lack of proficiency in English also limits the resources available to immigrants. Immigrants to the US who don't have a proper handle on the language are less likely to have insurance, go to doctors, or seek preventative care.

Philbin et al. (2018) discuss the social and economic policies that affect the health services that are available to Latino immigrants. The paper goes into how state-level immigration policies affect the overall health of Latinos. These policies: limit immigrant Latinos access to health services, increase structural racism, thereby increasing the stress level experienced by Latinos, limit the

access that immigrant Latinos have to food, work, and housing and affect the access that Latinos have to beneficial social institutions, including education.

Steusse (2018), in this article, uses his experiences as a coordinator of a Poultry Workers' Center's Workplace Injury project to analyze the lengths that companies will go to avoid reporting and treating the injuries of their undocumented workers. The article shows how companies use obstructionist nurses and company doctors to ensure that their undocumented workers do not seek any further treatment for any injuries they sustain in the workplace.

Yasenov et al. (2020) study the impact of expanding health insurance coverage to non-US born pregnant women and children who are lawful permanent residents of the US for the first 5 years of their residency. Yasenov and his colleagues were compelled by Federal policy changes that were enacted in 2002 and 2009. This policy led some states to expand their insurance coverage while other states feared that the insurance expansion would increase the number of pregnant women and children immigrating into their states in search of free health insurance. The study found that expanding the coverage of health care benefits would not lead to an influx in the number of pregnant women and children.

Jarlenski et al. (2016) conducted a study to observe the change in differences in low-income children's access to healthcare and health insurance. The study found that the disparities between immigrant children and the US-born children from low-income families had lessened over time. The research discovered that policy efforts are needed to maintain and further this progress.

5.1.2 Synthesis

Escarce, Derosé, and Lurie (2017) use their research on factors that influence the vulnerabilities of immigrants to show little access immigrants have to essential services. Immigrants don't even have the luxury of quality health care resources available to US-born citizens. Philip et al. (2018) show how disadvantaged immigrants are, especially Latino immigrants, due to immigration policies. Latinos don't get access to vital services like health care, which always puts them at a disadvantage compared to the US-born population. Steusse (2018) uses his article to show the failings of immigrant policies in taking care of immigrant workers. The article shows the extent of the mistreatment that immigrants face in their workplaces and how their employers get away with it. Yasenov and his colleagues conducted a study that showed that an expansion in the health care coverage of a state would not increase the number of women and children immigrating into the states (Yasenov et al., 2020). This study could be very important in determining the short term and long term costs of the program. Jarlenski et al. (2016) show how policy can make a difference in immigrant issues to close the gap between the services that immigrants and natural-born US residents get.

6.1 Conclusion

By covering the themes of racial disparities, political disparities, income, tax, and healthcare, it is possible to understand how institutional racism was ingrained in immigration policy and how this racism affects other critical areas. This literature review clearly shows that immigration policy was engineered to create an underclass of workers who would be willing to work under hard conditions while receiving relatively lower wages. Immigration policy has, however, not evolved to address the changing American society, which requires more inclusion and protection of rights, including those of immigrant workers. There is, therefore, the need for comprehensive immigration reform to address the challenges that characterize the current system.

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