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Developing a Support Center without Borders: Enhancing Services for Students without Documentation

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Developing a Support Center without Borders: Enhancing services for students without documentation

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Purpose Statement

• The purpose of my project was to review literature on the challenges undocumented students face.
• This literature overview will be used to inform a summer research project.
Motivation

• As researchers have pointed out, there is a strong need for our communities and institutions to develop programs undocumented students so that we can secure their academic success.

• As Bhat reminds us, we have a responsibility of upholding “every student’s right to an education in a safe environment.”
Challenges

Undocumented students who enroll in four-year universities face many challenges:

• Limited opportunities for educational assistance
• Limited trained personnel in multicultural issues
• Limited avenues for financial assistance
• Limited psychological assistance
• Limited transition support
Educational assistance

Undocumented students have limited access to academic structures to support their success:

• Academic support services and programs
• Extra-scholastic activities
• Mentorship programs
Students without documentation have limited opportunities to fund their education:

• Small amounts of financial assistance for tuition
• Limited by eligibility requirements for scholarships and other funding sources
• Limited financial literacy
• Limited employment opportunities
Psychological assistance

Students without documentation have limited access to mental health professionals who understand psychological impacts of undocumented status:

- Sense of shame
- Sense of discrimination
- Sense of fear
- Sense of disconnect
Future discussions

As thousands of highly qualified undocumented students enter higher education institutions, scholars continue to debate the best ways to overcome barriers:

• Establish multicultural support programs and services
• Train faculty, staff, and administrators
• Expand college outreach and transition programs
• Develop more scholarship and grant opportunities
• Redesign mental health services
• Establish coalitions and partnerships
Research Foundations

From a school psychologist perspective, I want to evaluate how centers in Washington State can better serve and empower undocumented students:

- Improve academic achievement
  - Promote student motivation and engagement
- Promote Positive Behavior and Mental Health
  - Reinforce positive coping skills and resilience
- Support Diverse Learners
  - Provide culturally responsive services to students from diverse backgrounds
- Strengthen Family-School Partnerships
  - Help students transition between school and community learning environments
References


Questions?