

The Obstacles Chicano's Face in the United States

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Abstract

When coming to the United States many immigrants think the biggest challenge they face will be leaving their families. Many do not realize the real challenge awaits them when they arrive in the United States. One of the main challenges they face is that of discrimination, we see this discrimination in many forms one being the negative comments Americans use to describe them. Children are being raised to think these remarks are okay, and as viewed in the Cesar Chavez film, his son was a victim of discriminatory remarks. In this paper I am going to provide information from personal blogs of experiences that have affected their everyday lives. I will provide you with information that will help support how they are faced with a language barrier and how they have limited opportunities not only in employment but in the education system. No matter what society says about them they will continue to come to build a better life for their children and themselves. The struggles they face will not stop them from achieving this goal.

Key words: Immigrants, discrimination

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Challenges happened in everyday lives, but no one ever expected to be discriminated upon by complete strangers. Americans are so quick to judge without knowing the facts about immigrants. Without realizing that many of the immigrants are careless about what they can take away from the United States, they do only want nothing but the best for themselves and their children. When coming to the United States there are many things that not only the parents face but also the children. This does not only affect the immigrants that come to the United States but also those whose parents' background is different. For example, many Mexican-Americans also face similar challenges that immigrants face in the United States. In all reality the children are affected by the way Americans treat them and their parents. Migrating to another country isn't always the easiest things to do; in fact it is one of the most difficult things to do. When families migrate to another country they do not expect to have a horrible experience. There are many obstacles that immigrants face when they are in the United States, which affects the way they are able to live their everyday lives.

One of the many obstacles immigrants have to face when coming to the United States is the different language spoken. If a parent chooses to put their children in school, these students will most likely be put into an ESL class. ESL stands for English as a Second Language, this is for students who have trouble with English, and majority of the time the time they are children of immigrants. The average class will contain 15 students. Between 2010 and 2013, there have been 27 million young immigrants in the United States. With that said, less than one percent of public school teachers are ESL instructors. When will this be taken into consideration; the world is beginning to change and students are not getting the proper attention for their education. With only one percent of public school teachers, and an average of ten percent immigrants, how will these students ever become successful without

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the proper attention? Something to take into consideration for public schools is that they need more instructors for this specific job. The worst part is that there is one ESL instructor for every 150 students. This explains why in the one of the census in 2010 25 percent of Chicano/Latinos were reported begin able to speak "well or pretty well" English. When this occurs it causes Chicanos to have language barriers. The majority of the time they have trouble with parents. The reason that children begin to lose communication with their parents is because they are so focused on learning English they forget how to speak Spanish back at home. Sometimes when children try to learn English and stay focused on it they begin to lose their dominant language, although this is rare it does happen. Another barrier that Chicanos face is that of knowing enough English to communicate with a manager for a job. This is when the children must at times teach their parents the proper English so they can get a job. Communicating with someone who can determine whether or not undocumented get the job, is very important. The final barrier that Chicano children face in the United States is difficulty learning when the parents are not educated in that specific area. What I am talking about is when the student comes home from school with homework and they have questions on it, the parent is not able to help the student. This is when the students become frustrated with the idea of learning something that their parents are not even educated in. Some parents do not even have a high school diploma, but they put their children in school so their children or child can do better things with their life. "It is clear that language plays a role in critical role in maintaining the oppression of the Chicano people" (Marxists).

Aside from the language barriers immigrants' face, they also face limited opportunities for them and their children. Regardless of the race, no student learns as fast or even the same exact way; this plays a huge role when it comes to the education

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opportunities that Chicanos face. As immigrants they are known to be behind in the knowledge of United States history. Only about 57 percent of adult undocumented people graduated from high school. I also think that this is a problem for their children, especially when the children look up to their parents. This becomes contradicting because the parents want the children to do better than they have, but when the child sees that the parent didn't do as great than they just settle for that high school diploma. This begins to cause weak relationships between teachers, parents, and friends. There are three main categories that affect communication for students in school. The first one being, learner characteristics or personal traits, this consists of the way the student learns and ways that they learn in school. This also depends on the attitude of the student, as well as their motivation and personality. Another category that affects the communication for students is situational or environmental factors. This learning category contains the particular teaching styles the teachers have within the schools. Some other factors are the classroom and school settings that they are placed in. If the school they attend is not lively than the student will most likely not feel welcome when they begin to attend the school. The schools should have cheerful teachers, colorful posters, as well as encouraging quotes. This shows the students that their education is being valued. Situational or environmental factors also include the quality and exposure to English. Looking back at the amount of ESL instructors for the ESL students, this category does not seem very considered to the schools. I do not think that the children's success should be affected just because the school is not considerate of their education. Every child should be allowed the same opportunities when it comes to education. The final category that affects the students learning is prior language development and competence. When the students' parents

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know some English, it is helpful to the student because this category all depends on the language spoken at home. There are many categories in which can affect the students learning. After researching, two types of the way language places a role in a Chicano's everyday life. The first one being the language of social interaction, also known as the basic interpersonal communication skills. Where this takes place in an informal setting, which is the way friends talk to each other. The second one is the language required for success in academics. This is also known as the cognitive academic language proficiency; when a student needs specific and direct teaching. One of the reasons that ESL students struggle so much with this category is because it involves a large degree of subject-specific background knowledge. When learning new information about an unfamiliar place, critical thinking can become a huge challenge, which is why so many student struggle in school. Beside the fact that education is a huge limited opportunity for education, so is health insurance. Since undocumented people migrate to the United States they come with literally nothing, this include health coverage for their families. A quarter of immigrants in the United States do not have health insurance. This is impactful because President Barack Obama has "tried" to help everyone in the United States be covered and this says a lot about whether Obama has kept his word or not. If health coverage is so important why is it that some people are still not is covered? Not only are they not covered by Obamacare, they have hard labor jobs. If they get hurt on the job the undocumented people are going to be the ones with the bill, and not only will they have to worry about providing for their families but on top of that a bill that should not even be there. The jobs that undocumented people are offered are field work. When working in the field these people become tired due to the long hours that they work. After talking to

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my uncle, who works in an asparagus field, he mentioned that he has to go to work at three in the morning and sometimes he works until noon. Working in a field of asparagus is a difficult thing; my uncle has also mentioned that being bent all day is one of the most difficult things about working. For all of the trouble and hardship that undocumented people go through when working in these hard labor jobs, the amount being paid is not worth it, but the reason that these people continue to do this is because they are doing a job Americans do not want to. Undocumented immigrants are twice as likely to be below poverty level. When thinking about the undocumented field workers, and this quote, the reason they are more likely to be below poverty level is due to the amount they get paid for their hard work. Undocumented immigrants that work in the field don't always get paid minimum wage, sometimes they get paid by the number of cartons or bins they fill.

Stereotypes happen to every race, the problem is that Chicanos get categorized, assumptions, and name calling done to them. As Americans the United States is violating human rights. "The U.S is also in violation of international human beings have the right to leave their homelands in search of a better life." Undocumented people do not come to the United States to take advantage of what the United States has to offer but simply to find a better life for their family. Another type of discrimination in which affected Chicanos is restricting Spanish in schools. Americans do not think about their opinions having a huge effect on Chicanos, especially undocumented immigrants. In the 1930's and 1954, racist opinions led to mass deportations where 100,050,000 were deported. This took place when Chicano's were the census defined them as white. For many years the Chicano people were considered the silent or forgotten minority. This is because no matter what they tried to do they were always and still are over powered by the voice of

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the other races. During the time the Chicano's were considered the silent minority, in California they were described as part of a distinct race. It's hard to believe that now the population of Chicano's is growing every year in the United States.

The SB 1070 law in Arizona also displays a discrimination act. When this law occurred many parents expressed concern about their own tenuous legal status. Although these undocumented immigrants are not here to cause any harm they still had to worry about being stopped and asked for their papers. This law is racial profiling, it is "a law that requires police to determine the immigration status when there is 'reasonable suspicion' they are not in the United States legally" (ACLU). Not only does did this law pass in the states of Arizona but also in five other states; being Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, South Carolina, and Utah. Due to this law children are forced to separate from their families.

After all, if crossing the border was not challenging enough, living in the United States will sure be. After researching all of the different challenges that immigrants face, from learning, language barriers, education opportunities, health care opportunities, and discrimination laws, Immigrants go through a lot. Looking back, once they arrive in the United States majority of the Chicanos do not let these challenges and obstacles get in the way of what they truly have come to do. When arriving there is one goal that they come with and that is to provide for their families and make sure that their children get a better education than they have. Living the 'American Dream' may seem luxurious but sometimes having you obligations set is one of the best things for families.

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