A Survey on Undocumented College Students' Resilience & Thriving

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Survey Study Details

Recruitment: Between January and June 2019, Dr. Jennifer Kam emailed recruitment flyers to Undocumented Student Services, "DREAM" Centers, and Undocumented Student Associations at four-year colleges and community colleges in 10 states, including AZ, CA, IL, TX, and MA.

Participant Payment: $10 Amazon gift cards for filling out the 25-minute online survey.

241 Undocumented College Students

- 77% Women
- 90% Undergraduates
- 75% Four-Year College
- 86% California
- 80% Born in Mexico
- 49% University of California
- 21 Mean Age
- 73% DACA
- 94% Had lived 11+ years in the U.S.

Age Range: 18-40
THE RESILIENCE AND THRIVING OF UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

(1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = unsure, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree)

**Successful Role Models:**
"You think about other undocumented or DACAmented people who are successful or are doing well in life."

**Strong Undocumented Identity:**
"You feel proud, confident, or secure of who you are as an undocumented or DACAmented immigrant."

**Empowered:**
"If someone has a problem with you for being undocumented or DACAmented, that's their problem."

"There's nothing wrong with being undocumented or DACAmented."
**Value Being Undocumented:**

"Being undocumented or DACAmented makes you special or unique."

**Optimism:**

"You try to imagine a brighter future, maintain hope that things will get better, or think things will eventually improve for undocumented or DACAmented students."

**Resilience:**

"I am able to adapt to change."

"I can deal with whatever comes up."

"I tend to bounce back after illness or hardship."

"When things look hopeless, I don't give up."

"I'm not easily discouraged by my hardships."
Important Note When Interpreting the Findings
The findings are based on self-reported survey data collected at one point in time. We cannot make claims of causality (e.g., deportation concerns cause poor sleep quality), and students' experiences likely change over time. Further, undocumented college students are a diverse group of students. Their experiences may vary by nationality, race, religious identity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, type of college, having DACA or not having DACA, attending college in a particular state, etc. Lastly, experiences reported here may not be generalizable to the larger population of undocumented college students in the United States.