

Undocumented Immigrants

For the past few years, many organizations have not supported aiding undocumented immigrants in their journey of education because they thought that these immigrants would only end up dropping out of school. On the education system, they would argue that illegal immigrants do not have the right to attend higher education, and those that are, are breaking the law. Therefore, if undocumented immigrants are going to college, then they will not be given financial aid. However, it is more beneficial to the economy to allow these students to go to school and receive financial aid.

Illegal immigrants such as Luz, a little girl who was brought to the United States illegally by her parents from Mexico, as stated by Christine Olson, “so many students came to the US not by choice, but because their parents took them here” (Olson) . She graduated from high school, but without the financial support she needed, she had no choice but to drop out from college and go to a more affordable one (Diaz-Strong, Gomez, Luna-Duarte, Meiner 96). To help students such as Luz, to receive an education the Dream Act was introduced in the Federal level and State levels. In the federal Dream Act (has not been passed by as a law), enabled immigrants graduating from high school to pay in-state tuition. However, the Dream Act on the federal level only affected ten states (California, Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin) (Diaz-Strong, Gomez, Luna-Duarte, Meiner 96). In California the Dream Act signed by Governor Jerry Brown, allowed illegal immigrant access to state aid at Universities and colleges (Patrick McGreevy, Los Angeles Times).

Even though the California Dream Act enforced immigrants to receive financial aid, in situations whereas, legal citizen criticizing undocumented youths for dropping out after high school tends to be a problem. Sometimes, it is not the course of the work that students find it hard to finish but the environment that they are in, which led to the why students backed away from education. Flores-Gonzalez did a research about labeling students, and in her study she concluded that, “school officials gave students informal labels of “school kids” and “street kids” (On the Wrong Side of Tracks 479). In this situation, the students doesn’t know what to expect because coming in from a foreign place and being labeled as a trouble maker, they can’t respond to it, but to only follow it. This will demotivate students to go to school. Once students get demotivated, they start to skip class and their grades will begin to drop. When that happen students will not be able to graduate and instead drop out of school. Thus resulting in an opinion of legal residents to think that, what is the use of aiding them when they will end up failing?

It is a contradictory to say that undocumented students drop out of school due to their not being educated enough to attend higher level education because these students do not have the chance to prove themselves. Of course, these immigrants have a hard time speaking the language, but it is something that can be learned. An uncle, who illegally immigrated to the United States when he was still in high school along with his family, is now a Dentist. It took him many years to be where he has gotten now, but with the dedication and time spent on the subject, he is now a professional. He now has a good paying job and soon to own his own clinic.

Coming to the United States, he knew no such words as “you” or “me.” Instead he went to high school where he began learning his alphabet, and in matter of months his vocabulary increased which made it easier for him to communicate. Being able to comprehend and communicate freely gave him the ability to understand the subjects being taught in school, which

led to him graduating. Even after graduating his English wasn't so great, but he still pursued and furthered his education without fail. He found a part time job and went to school full time. Even at work during his breaks he will always read his books, and after break went back to work. Sometimes in class he would feel drowsy, but always persevered. In the eyes of immigrants or illegal immigrants, they can't see what's happening, but they know exactly the situation they're in and if they don't act fast then life in the land of opportunity will end quickly. Thus being an immigrant they lack financial support for higher education and if the government is not allowing them to receive aid then the poverty rates in America will only increase.

President Barack Obama clearly states that, "education is the economic issue of our time" (Latinos and College Access), thus meaning that the economy is declining based upon citizen's who are not educated enough to be employed. In order to address this issue, the Dream Act attempted to give illegal immigrants a pathway for legal citizenship. Therefore, they'll be able to take part in higher education, and resulting in more scholars which will lower the percentage of unemployment rates. The Dream Act in federal level gives an example of how the students in higher education can affect the economy.

"The Dream Act will have important economic benefits. According to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, the Dream Act in its current form will cut the deficit by 1.4 billion and increase government revenues by 2.3 billion over the next 10 years.

According to a recent UCLA study, students that would be impacted by the Dream Act could add between 1.4 to 3.6 trillion in taxable incomes to our economy over the course of careers, depending on how many ultimately gain legal status. This income is substantially higher than the income they would earn if they were unable to attend and complete a college education. In fact, research indicates that the average college graduate

earned nearly 60 percent more than a high-school graduate. We have much to gain from doing right by these young people” (The Dream Act, 1).

By giving up on a portion of our economic wealth we can invest in the future, for example, after a student graduates from college and becomes a profession in the field of engineering and makes over 100 thousand a year. The more money he makes the more the government will tax that individual. As a result, the taxes collected will increase the government’s fund, which will allow the government to pay off their debts and thus resulting in the economy to be stable. This resolves the issue of not endangering the country but only helping it.

In summary, Christine Olson argued, “students should have access and opportunity for all students to achieve higher education regardless of status” (Olson). Undocumented students should not be deprived of the right to be educated in the United States because even foreign students can access higher education in America. As legal residents and citizens we should not only look upon the present, but we should look past that into the future where we could improve our economic status.

Works Cited

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