

Chapter 1: Introduction

The United States has been the world's leading destination country for immigrants from the 19th century until the present (Ueda, 2011). Reed Ueda, a history professor at Tufts University, referred to the United States as a permanently unfinished country because the country has been continuously built and rebuilt by immigrants (Ueda, 2011). The United States' immigrant population stood at more than 43.3 million, or 13.3%, of the total population of 321.4 million in 2015 (Zong, Batalova, & Hallock, 2018). According to Zong et al. (2018), immigrants in the United States and their United States' born children now number approximately 81 million people or 26% of the overall population. In 2015, Mexicans accounted for approximately 27% of immigrants in the United States, making them by far the largest foreign-born group in the country (Zong et al., 2018). Statistics showed that in 2015, approximately 51% of immigrants were female while 46% of the overall immigrant population (19.4 million people) reported having Hispanic or Latino origins (Zong et al., 2018).

One immigration issue that has been at the forefront of American interest was the high number of illegal immigrants, more commonly referred to as undocumented citizens, in the United States (Price, 2012). Undocumented citizens often lived in the shadows of American society (Price, 2012). Undocumented citizens were immigrants residing in the United States that did not have the official documents that were required by law to enter, live in, or work in a country legally (Vitter & Waslin, 2016). In 2014, two-thirds of adult undocumented citizens had lived in the United States for a decade or more, compared with 41% in 2005 (Passel & Cohn, 2016). Approximately 47 million Hispanic and Latinos lived in the United States, and nearly 25% of them were undocumented (Davies, 2009). Between 1970 and 2010, the residents of United States witnessed one of the largest mass migrations in modern history, in which a

movement of more than 10 million Mexicans entered the United States (Passel, Cohn, & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2012). No country has ever seen as many of its people immigrate to this country as Mexico had in the past four decades (Passel et al., 2012).

The most distinctive feature of the modern Mexican immigration wave was the unprecedented share of immigrants who came to the United States illegally (Passel et al., 2012). Mexico was and still is the leading country of origin of both legal and illegal citizens to the United States (Zeigler & Camarota, 2015). The Migration Policy Institute estimated, an independent non-partisan, non-profit think tank dedicated to the study of the movement of people worldwide, over 11 million undocumented citizens resided in the United States and that more than half (54%) resided in four states: California (28%), Texas (13%), New York (8%), and Florida (5%) (Zong & Batalova, 2016). The Migration Policy Institute also estimated that 71% of the undocumented population was born in Mexico and other Central American countries (Zong & Batalova, 2016). More undocumented Mexican citizens have stayed in the United States and have persistently attempted to smuggle their families into the country (Bostean, 2013, Griswold, 2012; Mindiola, 2011).

Gallup, a research-based global consulting company, provided data-driven news based on the United States and world polls in which the company conducted a poll from 2006-2011 that asked the American public how important it was that the government halted the flow of illegal immigration at the United States' border. In 2011, the results of the poll concluded that 53% of the respondents considered it extremely important (Lugo-Lugo & Bloodworth-Lugo, 2014). One common observed trend for Mexican migration to the United States was a common answer to the adversity in Mexico, to secure well-paying jobs (Bostean, 2013; Brown, 2013; Hellman, 2011). Understandably, many of those entering the United States illegally did so for financial reasons,

and that was the driving force for most undocumented citizens (Bostean, 2013; Brown, 2013; Hellman, 2011). Better wages in comparison to their homeland was very enticing and fueled a desire to build a new life in the United States (Bostean, 2013; Brown, 2013). Illegal or unauthorized immigration was a serious problem when studying financial issues, health care, criminal concerns, and job market considerations (Bostean, 2013; Brown, 2013; Hellman, 2011).

Mexican women that entered the United States through unauthorized immigration often gave birth to children. These children, by virtue of birthright citizenship, were United States citizens (Franz, 2013). The law of birthright citizenship, based on the 14th Amendment, centered on a jurisdiction that originally meant sovereign authority (Lee, 2005). Birthright citizenship originated from the traditional British common law of *jus soli*, in which persons born within the domains of an English territory automatically became English citizens, regardless of the alienage status of their parents (Lee, 2005). According to Ignatow and Williams (2011, as cited in Lugo-Lugo & Bloodworth-Lugo, 2014), the derogatory term *anchor baby* was used to describe children born in the United States to undocumented parents who thought that having a child would improve their chances of remaining in the United States. The stereotypical image of the term was one that captured the collective imagination of America in the last decade, with devastating consequences, because they were presumably associated with illegality, criminality, and illegitimacy (Lugo-Lugo & Bloodworth-Lugo, 2014). In this study, the negative, derogatory term *anchor baby* will be limited and replaced with *United States citizen child*.

These children were entitled to all the rights of United States' citizenship, including the right not to be deported, which could potentially be an attractive incentive to Mexican mothers. Ironically, their United States citizenship provided no security blanket for an undocumented mother during deportation proceedings, but subsequently, their citizenship provided societal

benefits such as welfare for the well-being of the child (Zayas & Bradlee, 2014). Undocumented citizens established roots, and their children became an integral part of an American social structure in which families were increasingly composed of members of varying legal status, known as mixed-status families (Dreby, 2012; Wessler, 2012). In 2014, the Pew Research Center, an independent non-partisan that provided information trends, estimated that there were 4.7 million United States citizen children living with an undocumented citizen parent (Passel & Cohn, 2016). Nearly 1 out of 10 families constituted a mixed-status family, and 85% of all undocumented households were comprised of United States citizen children (Mahr, 2008). Current immigration laws and public policy could no longer enforce the nature of this demography without directly affecting the lives of millions of United States citizens (Dreby, 2012; Wessler, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

Through its deployment in the anti-immigration discourse, the derogatory term *anchor baby* was used to describe the children of immigrant mothers connoted a citizen-child of an illegal immigrant migrant mother who presumably used her child's citizenship status to remain in the country, sponsor family members, and took advantage of social services such as welfare (Franz, 2013). Architects of this negative discourse like Samuel Huntington, director of Harvard University's Center for International Affairs, described the allure of having a child as a magnet that motivated women to migrate not because they were attracted to America's culture and creed, but because they were attracted by government social welfare and affirmative action programs (Franz, 2013). The problem was that Mexican mothers with United States citizen children are inclined to remain in the country as undocumented citizens (Ormonde, 2012). The problem occurs when an immigrant woman illegally migrates into the United States and has a child, who

automatically is a United States citizen, not subject to deportation (Ormonde, 2012). According to Gregory (2010, as cited in Lugo-Lugo & Bloodworth-Lugo, 2014), during a press interview the Speaker of the House, John Boehner, stated that automatic citizenship for the children of Mexican mothers born on United States soil provided an incentive for illegal immigrants to come to the United States, which attracted more people to this country.

Undocumented citizenship became a social problem centered on mothers remaining in the country because their children were United States citizens, which presented unique challenges for America's political leadership and immigration officials. Exploring the experiences of undocumented Mexican mothers and their United States citizen children provided a personal narrative of the phenomenon. Research that addressed public discourse from the perspective of the undocumented mother was limited; therefore, gathering their unique experiences provided a holistic understanding for organizational and political leadership.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this quantitative multiple-case study was to explore the perceptions of undocumented Mexican mothers through lived experiences to determine if birthright citizenship was an incentive that led to illegal immigration and fostered undocumented citizenship. By exploring these perceptions from lived experiences, an analysis of associated factors provided the rationale behind an immigrant mother's choice to have a child within the borders of the United States. These factors identified behavioral patterns that predicted future trends while providing an understanding of the people at the center of the phenomenon. Participants were encouraged to describe their experiences within the context of social interaction within the community, based on general daily encounters with the public.

The study was designed to gather perceptions on the immigration elements of birthright citizenship, undocumented citizenship, and illegal immigration from an illicit sample of the population. Gathering perspectives from their experiences on these controversial immigration issues provided the study with real-world context from the people at the center of the phenomenon. The study sought to determine if relationships existed between these immigration elements and social issues. An anonymous online survey was the best data collection tool because it mitigated identity disclosure of participants and provided easy access to through social media. Identity protection was an essential recruitment measure ensuring participants that their identity was safeguarded and privacy protected. An online survey was able to reach a clandestine population of society without participants being fearful of deportation due to identity disclosure to immigration or law enforcement officials.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

To gain a better understanding of the perceptions and decisions of Mexican immigrant mothers living as undocumented citizens with their United States citizen children, a relevant theory was discussed. For this study, the push and pull theory (Lee, 1966) was the overarching theory that guided in analyzing the concepts, literature, and data for this study. Lee (1966) was the pioneer scholar who worked on the push-pull theory stating that the theory of migration was based on three elements: 1) place of origin 2) place of destination, and 3) intervening obstacles. There were some positive pull factors at the place of destination that attracted immigrants and some negative push factors at the place of origin that compelled immigrants to migrate (Lee, 1966). According to Lee (1966, as cited in Krishnakumar & Indumathi, 2014), the volume of migration from one place to another was associated not only with the distance between places but with the number of people in the two places.

The push factors which forced individuals to move voluntarily were conflict, persecution, discriminating cultures, or famine (Krishnakumar & Indumathi, 2014). Poor economic activity and lack of job opportunities were also strong push factors (Krishnakumar & Indumathi, 2014). Pull factors were those factors in the destination country that attracted the individual to leave home (Krishnakumar & Indumathi, 2014). The lack of well-paying job opportunities in Mexico, coupled with a strong United States economy was push and pull factors that fostered Mexican emigration. Better wages in the United States in comparison to those in Mexico were very enticing and fueled a desire to build a new life in the United States (Bostean, 2013; Brown, 2013). People migrated for a number of reasons, but most studies indicated that economic factors primarily motivated migration (Krishnakumar & Indumathi, 2014).

In developing countries, basic factors pushing migrants toward developed areas with greater job opportunities were basic factors pushing migrants toward developed areas with greater job opportunities (Krishnakumar & Indumathi, 2014). Rosas and Gay (2015) claimed that pull factors for migration included socioeconomic factors, such as high demand for employment, land availability, other economic opportunities, and political freedom that immigrants experienced or enjoyed upon moving to the destination areas. Rosas and Gay (2015) further posited that there were two main forces needed to develop the push and pull trends of migration. First, the population increased in the area of origin and caused an increase in demand for natural resources, which pushed people out of their areas of origin. Second, there was hope of good economic condition in the area of destination that attracted people to cities (Rosas & Gay, 2015).

The neoclassical theory of international migration developed by Lewis (1954), and other researchers such as Fei and Ranis (1964), explained that international migration was due to geographical differences in the supply and demand for labor (Ranis, 2012). In countries where

the number of workers was high relative to the amount of capital, the average wage was low (Moral-Pajares, & Jiménez-Jiménez, 2014). The opposite happened in countries where the labor endowment was low relative to capital, and the resulting wage differential caused the displacement of workers from low wage countries to those of higher wages (Moral-Pajares, & Jiménez-Jiménez, 2014). Immigrants were more likely to relocate in areas with high per capita income and large established communities of foreign citizens in the host country (Moral-Pajares, & Jiménez-Jiménez, 2014).

In relation to Lee's (1966) push-pull theory, scholars of migration tried to explain migration through a number of theoretical perspectives. Theories emerged as generally accepted approaches to migration, and some of these theories explained the reasons and ways in which this process starts and others explained the perpetuation of migration. Adepoju (2007) stated that a developed consensus of these theories was not mutually exclusive, but complemented each other and applied to various types of migration including internal migration. Adepoju (2007) maintained that neoclassical economics model, the new economics of migration, the labor market theory, and world-systems theories were the main models that elaborated the beginning of the migration process, while networks explained its continuation. Whereas push factors drove immigrants out of their countries of origin, pull factors were responsible for dictating where those travelers ended up (Krishnakumar & Indumathi, 2014).

Nature of the Study

The purpose of the quantitative multiple case study was to explore the perceptions through lived experiences of undocumented Mexican mothers that (a) had a United States citizen child under the age of 18, (b) lived as an undocumented citizen, (c) entered the United States through illegal immigration and (d) were of Mexican descent. A quantitative approach in which a

correlation design focused on correlational statistic described the relationship between two variables (Mukaka, 2012). The study was based on a non-experimental design in which manipulation of the variables did not occur, but an interest existed to observe a phenomenon and identify if a relationship existed (Rutberg & Bouikidis, 2018). The study explored if a relationship existed between birthright citizenship and undocumented mother's children's United States citizenship while examining if a relationship existed between illegal immigration and undocumented citizenship. The correlational statistic technique showed whether and how strongly pairs of variables were related (Mukaka, 2012). Quantitative studies based on survey research provided a numeric description of trends, attitudes, and opinions of a population by studying a sample of the population (Creswell, 2014).

A case study design was used for this study to determine the perceptions of the phenomenon while understanding contextual conditions relevant to the phenomenon (Yin, 2014). The general strategy for this case study relied on theoretical propositions. The propositions shaped the data collection by yielding analytic priorities (Yin, 2014). In this study, the relationship between undocumented immigrant mothers and their United States citizen children started with the proposition that birthright citizenship was a contributing factor that influenced this controversial immigration phenomenon, which fostered undocumented citizenship.

Case study inquiries are instrumental in evaluating complex elements in which in-depth analyses are developed (Creswell, 2013). A multiple case study rather than a single case study was chosen to accomplish the study's goals. A multiple case study allowed for analysis within each setting and across each setting while examining several cases to understand the similarities and differences between each case (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Yin (2014) described how multiple cases studies either (a) predict similar results (*a literal replication*) or (b) predict contrasting

results for predictable reasons (*a theoretical replication*). This was the best design for understanding and identifying the relationships between complex immigration elements of undocumented citizenship, illegal immigration, and birthright citizenship surrounding the phenomenon.

An online survey provided the data collection from participants. The purpose of the survey was to gather the perspectives through the lived experiences of undocumented Mexican mothers to ascertain if birthright citizenship influenced or contributed to their undocumented citizenship. Facebook was the recruitment tool used to solicit potential participants with similar characteristics. Facebook was chosen because nearly 1.4 billion people worldwide use it as part of daily life (Kosinski, Matz, Gosling, Popov, & Stillwell, 2016). Facebook offered access to large and diverse samples while the advertising platform targeted specialized populations defined by shared or specific characteristics (Kosinski et al., 2016). Facebook allowed the researcher to solicit a specialized population, undocumented Mexican mothers with United States citizen children and encouraged others with similar characteristics to participate.

Analyzed data framed a theoretical proposition based on the statistical significance of the survey questions. Predictive analytics, statistical correlation, and identification of emerging themes assisted in data analysis (Nie, 1975). IBM's Statistical Analysis in Social Science (SPSS) Predictive Analytics software assisted in statistical analysis of participant's responses. The software allowed the researcher to discover statistical inference to deduce properties of a probability distribution (Nie, 1975). Properties, referring to the population, were deduced by testing hypothesis and deriving estimates (Nie, 1975). The statistical model or set of assumptions was based on the variables.

The analytical technique used for data analysis was explanation building, which was a special type of pattern matching used to analyze the case study data by building an explanation about the case (Yin, 2014). The phenomenon explanation was based on stipulating a set of casual links about how or why something happened (Yin, 2014). The goal of this multiple case study was to build a general explanation that fit each case (Yin, 2014). The link for explanation building hinged on the influence birthright citizenship had on undocumented immigrant mothers and how their child's United States citizenship fostered their undocumented citizenship. The population for this study consisted of undocumented Mexican mothers with at least one United States citizen child. Each participant met the following requirements: (a) had a United States citizen child under the age of 18, (b) lived as an undocumented citizen, (c) entered the United States through illegal immigration and (d) were of Mexican descent.

Since the study used human subjects as participants, approval had to be obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Northcentral University. Adherence to all IRB requirements was essential after granted permission. The four major ethical issues in research with human subjects were protection from harm, informed consent, the right to privacy, and truthfulness with colleagues. Adherence to all ethical guidelines was required to ensure that the research was ethical, truthful, and fair to participants. Data collection from an anonymous online survey safeguarded a participant's identity from being disclosed. All participants were required to sign an informed consent form before taking the online survey, which included an option to provide their name with their associated answers. This line item option was offered although it did not ensure anonymity.

Research findings were analyzed honestly and without misrepresentation. All electronic survey data gathered and analyzed was transferred to an external hard drive and safeguarded in

the researcher's safe to assure privacy and protection. Study data will be retained for seven years then destroyed. All ethical guidelines were followed ensuring that the research was ethical, the findings truthful, and the data not corrupted.

Research Questions

The purpose of this case study was to gather the perceptions through the lived experiences of undocumented Mexican mothers with a United States citizen child. The research questions intended to determine if a relationship existed between birthright citizenship and an undocumented mother child's United States citizenship. The research questions also sought to determine if a relationship existed between illegal immigration and undocumented citizenship. To achieve the purpose of the study, if birthright citizenship was an incentive that led to illegal immigration and fostered undocumented citizenship, data collection was centered on the mother's perceptions through lived experiences. The research questions were as follows:

RQ1. What is the relationship between birthright citizenship and an undocumented mother's United States citizenship child?

Hypotheses

H1. There is no relationship between birthright citizenship and an undocumented mother's United States citizenship child.

H2. There is a relationship between birthright citizenship and undocumented mother's United States citizenship child.

RQ2. What is the relationship between illegal immigration and undocumented citizenship?

Hypotheses

H1. There is no relationship between illegal immigration and undocumented citizenship.

H2. There is a relationship between illegal immigration and undocumented citizenship.

Significance of the Study

The researcher intended to understand a controversial immigration phenomenon through undocumented Mexican mothers' narratives revolving around the United States citizenship of their children. Their unique experiences and perspectives provided a first-hand account of the environmental, social factors, and communal challenges surrounding this controversial immigration phenomenon. Quantitative research often raised questions that were absent in discussions (Zyphur & Pierides, 2017). Perceptions from undocumented Mexican mothers are rarely captured in our nation's immigration discourse. The study explored if a relationship existed between birthright citizenship while capturing an undocumented mother's perception of their child's United States citizenship. The study also examined if a relationship existed between illegal immigration and undocumented citizenship. These relationships, or lack of, provided a foundational context of these immigration issues from the perspectives of individuals who had lived experiences.

The researcher intended to understand the psychological and emotional turmoil from an undocumented mother if faced with deportation and a choice whether to leave their child in the United States as an orphan or take them to Mexico as an exile from the country of their birth. As an orphan, the welfare of the child became collateral damage of the social welfare system (Zayas & Bradlee, 2014). As an exile, their socioeconomic opportunities such as better education, increased quality of life, and future employment often decreased (Zayas & Bradlee, 2014). Identifying and understanding choices that affected the welfare of their child provided the study with an understanding of why so many mothers have a United States citizen child and risk living as an undocumented citizen.

The significance of the study was to determine if birthright citizenship was an incentive for immigrant Mexican women to engage in illegal immigration with the sole purpose of taking advantage of birthright citizenship. Based on the data revealed, organizational leaders and immigration officials were better equipped to manage immigration reform through the prudent enactment of future public policy. The citizenship inquiry rationalized the risks involved with illegal immigration while categorizing certain push and pull factors associated with emigrational choices. The study ascertained if undocumented Mexican mothers intentionally remained in the United States after they gave birth and lived as undocumented citizens.

The study provided their unique perceptions through lived experiences and captured their challenges of living as an undocumented citizen. Identifying the rationale, incentives, and benefits being a mother to a United States citizen child validated the problem statement that Mexican mothers with United States citizen children inclined to remain in the country and live as undocumented citizens. The validation provided immigration officials and political leadership with an in-depth and a first-hand account, through the experiences of these mothers, of the rationale that fostered undocumented citizenship and circumstances surrounding illegal immigration.

Immigration officials and organizational leaders must manage undocumented citizenship and illegal immigration. In the latter part of the 21st century, the United States witnessed an increase of immigrants and a rise in illegal immigration (Bean, Brown, & Rumbaut, 2006). This rapid increase of immigrants, in which many held illegal status at entry into the United States, sparked public concern and led to bipartisan political debates on whether United States' admission and related settlement policies should be modified (Bean et al., 2006). Together with the increase in undocumented citizens, the number of immigrant children, who gained birthright

citizenship also increased (Bhabha, 2004; Price, 2012). These issues have shaped a political climate of negativity and resentment regarding this form of immigration.

Republican South Carolina State Senator Lindsey Graham spoke negatively and warned that Mexican women were crossing the border to have a child who automatically became a United States citizen, and argued that birthright citizenship attracted people for the wrong reasons (Lugo-Lugo & Bloodworth-Lugo, 2014). Iowa Representative Steve King introduced H.R. 140 in 2011, a bill that would have eliminated the automatic granting of United States citizenship to those born in the United States. According to King, the current practice of extending citizenship to hundreds of thousands of immigrant children must end because it created a magnet for illegal immigration into the country (Lugo-Lugo & Bloodworth-Lugo, 2014). President Trump's commitment and executive order to build a wall along the southern border, and have Mexico pay for it, has created tension between the two countries. Mexico's president, Enrique Peña Nieto, stated publically that he regretted and rejected the plan for a border wall (Stracqualursi, 2017).

Unfavorable remarks made on this public policy immigration issue by prominent political leaders of society, along with presidential executive actions, validated the political frustration regarding immigration reform, undocumented citizenship and this controversial immigration issue centered on children of undocumented immigrants granted United States' citizenship.

Definition of Key Terms

Anchor Baby. The term for a child born in the United States to a foreign national mother who had no legal documents to support her stay in the country as a permanent resident. (Lugo-Lugo & Bloodworth-Lugo, 2014). *In this study, the derogatory term is limited and replaced with the term United States citizen child.*

Birthright Citizenship. A person's acquisition of United States citizenship by the circumstances of their birth. Children born within the borders of the United States and its territories were automatically United States citizens (Lee, 2005).

Exile. One of the two de facto classes in which children were forced to leave their country of birth with their parents to a foreign country (Zayas & Bradley, 2014).

Immigration. The movement of non-native people into a country to settle there (Passel et al., 2012).

Jus Sanguinis. A law of principle that a person's nationality at birth was the same as that of their natural parents (Stock, 2012).

Jus Soil. A law or principle that a person's nationality at birth was determined by the territory within which they were born (Franz, 2013).

Orphan. One of the two de facto classes in which deported parents must leave their children in the United States under the care of others often the child welfare system (Zayas & Bradley, 2014).

Stateless. A term used in the international legal instruments, which denoted individuals and populations with no enforceable assertions of a nationality (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1997).

Unauthorized immigration. The illegal movement of non-native people into a country to settle there (Price, 2012).

Undocumented citizenship. A group of people residing in the United States that do not have the official documents that were required by law to enter, live in or work in a country legally (Price, 2012).

Summary

This study provided an introduction describing one of the largest mass migrations into a country in modern history. In the past four decades, Mexico has been the leading country of origin of both legal and illegal citizens to the United States (Zeigler & Camarota, 2015). In particular, the study explored the perceptions through the lived experiences of undocumented Mexican mothers who had a United States citizen child to gain a deeper understanding regarding the incentive of birthright citizenship. Participants were encouraged to describe their experiences within the context of social interaction within the community and their perceived perceptions based on general daily encounters with the public.

The problem arose when Mexican immigrant mothers remained in the United States living as undocumented citizens due to their child's United States citizenship. This immigration dilemma has fostered bipartisan political debates and created a negative sentiment within American society (Franz, 2013). Birthright citizenship, based on the 14th Amendment to the Constitution is the public policy genesis behind the immigration phenomenon of automatically granting United States' citizenship to children of undocumented immigrants (Franz, 2013). Understanding the phenomenon through the lens of undocumented Mexican mothers, the central core of the phenomenon, provided an insight into the rationale behind the lure of birthright citizenship. The inquiry also provided an insight into the risks associated with living as an undocumented citizen. Their unique experiences revolving around their United States citizen children explained this continuous immigration dilemma and discourse.

This researcher conducted a quantitative approach case study inquiry through an anonymous online survey. The use of an online survey mitigated identity disclosure of participants and provided easy access to through social media, both essential due to a participant's illegal immigration status and sensitivity in the nation's immigration climate. An

online survey was able to reach a clandestine population of society without participants being fearful of deportation due to identity disclosure to immigration or law enforcement officials. Facebook was the recruitment tool used to solicit potential participants with similar characteristics. Facebook, because it has become a significant part of daily life for nearly 1.4 billion people worldwide, offered access to large and diverse samples, while the advertising platform targeted specialized populations defined by shared or specific characteristics (Kosinski et al., 2016).

The research questions determined if a relationship existed between birthright citizenship and an undocumented mother child's United States citizenship. The research questions also determined if a relationship existed between illegal immigration and undocumented citizenship. The inquiry based on the purpose of the study, if birthright citizenship was an incentive that led to illegal immigration and fostered undocumented citizenship, was collected from data centered on the mother's perceptions through lived experiences. Overall, the researcher gathered an understanding of the phenomenon by identifying behavioral characteristics, cultural beliefs, and shared practices that aided in the rationale of many undocumented Mexican mothers.

Their perspectives, personal experiences, and knowledge of the various environments provided the study with the assessments of the targeted domain. Individual personal descriptions expressed through perceptions and experiences provided the research with a philosophy and psychology aspects of having a child with United States citizenship. The researcher gathered the perspectives through the lived experiences of undocumented immigrant mothers were instrumental in understanding the foundational rationale surrounding this controversial immigration debate. This study revealed the patterns of behavior, language, and shared practices

of a certain cultural group. The over-arching goal was to determine clarity on the perceptions of this immigration phenomenon.

