Immigration Policies on Adolescent Trauma among Mixed-Status Latinx Families: A Systematic Review

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In recent years, immigration policies have exacerbated Latinx immigrants’ health-related vulnerabilities and threatened the health and well-being of children and youth in mixed-status families. Accordingly, the relationship between immigration status, immigration policies, and health has become an important public health issue in the United States. Navigating the long-term attention to immigration policies and their impacts. 

Since the last presidential election in November 2016, uncertainty in the Latinx community has escalated, and a series of Executive Orders early in the presidency substantiated concerns about the political climate and administrative actions. Of the articles, one was published in 2013, during the 44th administration, and the rest were published within the last three years (during the current administration) which does not offer a clear enough picture of the differences and shifts between Presidential administrations. 

All four samples were collected from the Southeastern region of the U.S., and this makes for a more homogenous population, which does not generalize to the Latinx population within the U.S. 

The examination of the effects of enforcement policies must go beyond undocumented persons themselves and capture the effects on U.S.- citizen family members, especially youth. And on those in liminal legal statuses such as DACA, TPS, or asylum seekers.

Adopting an intersectional and longitudinal research agenda can help guide future work on immigration enforcement policy and health.

### References


### Methods

- **Population**: Latinx youth and families
- **Study Design**: Systematic review
- **Search Strategy**: PRISMA flow diagram of the paper selection process
- **Included Studies**: Four studies
- **Exclusion Criteria**: No studies were excluded
- **Methodological Quality**: Studied using appropriate qualitative or prevalence analysis, and management of missing data (JBI items 1-10).

### Results

- **Study Characteristics and Quality**
  - **Combined**: n = 749 (Mage = 14.48), range: 12-16 years, & were based in the Southeastern U.S.
  - **Three studies** collected data from the adolescents and one study collected data from both the adolescent and primary caregiver.
  - **Two studies** used structured surveys & psychological measures of trauma, & the last one used written narrative.
  - **Two studies** used thematic analysis & the other two used statistical modeling: Logit models & hierarchical regression models.
- **Study Quality**
  - **All the studies** reported the sample size and provided a description of the sample.
  - **There were no issues across the studies that used the JBI in respect to the sample appropriately addressing the target population, the data analysis being conducted with enough coverage, valid methodological use, appropriate measurement and statistical analysis, and management of missing data (JBI items 1-9).**
  - **There were no issues across the study that used the CASP in respect of providing a clear statement of aims, using appropriate qualitative or prevalence methodology, using a research design suitable for the research aims, providing a clear statement of findings, and performing value-adding research (CASP items 1-6, 8-10).**
  - **There were some methodological issues (item 2 on the JBI and item 7 on the CASP) relating to ambiguous or unsuitable recruitment strategy, and adequately considering ethical issues.**

### Discussion

- **Lack of relevant literature suggests an incredible gap, especially within a topic that is in increasing need for support and information.**
- **Of the articles, one was published in 2013, during the 44th administration, and the rest were published within the last three years (during the current administration) which does not offer a clear enough picture of the differences and shifts between Presidential administrations.**
- **All four samples were collected from the Southeastern region of the U.S., and this makes for a more homogenous population, which does not generalize to the Latinx population within the U.S.**

### Synthesis

- **Four major themes emerged as being relevant to Latinx youth’s experiences with trauma within the context of immigrant policy and the political climate:**
  - **This is an understudied topic, especially within the context of developmental trajectories.**
  - **The need for more research grows increasingly as the population of Latinxs in the U.S. steadily climbs.**
  - **Migration as trauma provides support for a type of trauma that this population and often not well understood.**
  - **Risk for other internalizing disorders such as anxiety and depression are extremely prevalent in this community.**
  - **And to be culturally prepared and overall understanding of this community can help reduce barriers to care.**