

### **Reviewer comment-1**

I have read and reviewed, “Living undocumented during a pandemic: A qualitative study of DACA eligible students at a California State University,” and am recommending substantial editing to be suitable for this journal. I will provide feedback to the author(s) for revisions for publication.

1. The abstract discusses DACA workers and their contributions to the economy during COVID-19 but the introduction has a strong focus on the mental health strains experienced by DACA recipients because of the temporary nature of the deportation relief it provides as well as other factors such as pressure to support families financially, discrimination and social exclusion. Instead of meandering through the harms experienced by DACA recipients, the authors need to decide the article’s precise focus and develop an introduction and literature review accordingly.

The introduction and literature review should be focused so that it is clear where the gaps remain in the scholarship on immigrants and COVID-19, and then argue for how this article fills a gap in the extant research.

2. There are substantial problems with organization. After the methods, there is a sudden detour into a theoretical detoured into a theoretical discussion of Bronfenbrenner’s work. This theory is, of course, worthwhile for the analysis but it should have been used to frame the author’s discussion at the beginning of the paper and should be done so in a more facile way than statements such as, “This theory is helpful in analyzing the data because it provides a framework to deepen our understanding of the complexity of experiences the participants described.”

3. At one point the author argues that the study was phenomenological and then states that a content analysis was done. This conflicting information undermines the study’s credibility. There is no discussion of what makes this a phenomenological study, and how this approach informed both the design of the study, the structure of the questionnaire and the data analysis. At minimum, there should have been a discussion of the author’s efforts to bracket bias and assumptions to capture lived experience, which is the benchmark for a robust phenomenological analysis.

4. The author also states in the abstract that the paper presents qualitative findings from 60 respondents, but in the methodology, said only a subset of 12 are examined here. The author also states that this is a qualitative study but then includes bar graphs and descriptive statistics in the findings section. It is, of course, perfectly acceptable to present quantitative data to frame a qualitative discussion but the authors do not explain how the data contextualizes the qualitative findings.

5. The authors need to include citations at key points, such as at the beginning of the section under DACA during COVID-19. “They often were liaisons between their undocumented family members (many of whom were their parents and grandparents, members already at high risk for Covid complications) helping them navigate the healthcare system.” – Who made this point or is the author arguing by assertion?

6. The author argues at one point that healthcare information during the pandemic was not provided in languages other than English, which isn’t true. It may be that it was more difficult to obtain but the authors need to be much more nuanced in making this argument. I know that in one area where I engaged in research during the pandemic there was considerable effort by promotoras and nurses to provide Latino immigrant communities with healthcare information, including vaccine distribution.

In short, the issues identified above undermine the article’s credibility, and thus revisions will be required to make it suitable for publication in this journal.